

if there shall not be enough specifically to distinguish them, and hinder them from being sampled by any thing of the spoils of the Sea or fresh waters or the land-snails; my argument will fall, and I shall be happily convinced of an Error.

*Another Letter, written of the same Gentleman, from York Sept. 13. 1671. enlarging his former Communications in Numb. 75. about Vegetable Excrefcencies, and Ichneumon-Worms.*

SIR,

**I**N my last Paper about *Vegetable Excrefcencies*, I was wholly silent of the opinion, which Mr. *Willoughby* is pleased to favour; and because that worthy Gentleman hath so far made it probable, that now it seems only to depend upon the good fortune of some lucky Observer, I am willing to reassume my former thoughts, that all those odd Observations, we have made of the *Births* of *Ichneumons*, do but beget in me a strong belief, that they have a way yet unheeded, whereby they do as boldly, as subtly, convey their Eggs within the Bodies of Insects and parts of Vegetables.

A fifth and last proposition of that Paper \* was, that the substance of many *Vegetable Excrefcencies* seemed not to be the food of the worms to be found in them. My meaning was, that the substance of the *Vegetable Excrefcencies* in which those *Ichneumon* worms were to be found, was rather augmented, than diminished or worm-eaten. And the like conformity of their feeding within Insects is well observed by Mr. *Willoughby* \*, that the imprægnated Caterpillars seem not to be concerned, though their bodies are full of Insects of a quite different kind, but go on as far as they may towards the achievement of the perfection of their own species. Thus I have seen a *Poppy-head* swoln to a monstrous bulk, and yet all the Cells were not receptacles of *Ichneumons*, but some had good and ripe seed in them. I shall not refuse Mr. *Willoughby* (though you know upon what grounds

\* See Numb. 75. p. 2254.

\* See above in this very Tract.

grounds, I have twice done it to you) the satisfaction of an Answer to my 10th *Quære*, by him resolved negatively: It is true, the swarms of the *Ichneumons*, coming out of the sides of Caterpillars, do immediatly make themselves up into bunches, and each particular *Theca*, from the Cabbage-Caterpillar (for example,) is wrought about with yellow silk, as those from the black and yellow-*Jacobæa*-Caterpillar with white, but as for web to cover those bunches of *Theca's*, I never observed it but in the green Caterpillar so common in our *Lincoln-shire*-heaths, which are affixed to Bents or other plants. These in truth never deceived but my expectation, for I verily thought I had found, when I first observed them, a Caterpillar equivalent to the *Indian* silk-worm; but having cut them in two, and expected to have found a Caterpillars *Chrysalis* in the middle, there presented themselves a swarm of *Ichneumons*. These are as large many of them as my thumb, that is, at least four times bigger then the *Folliculus* or Egg-bag of any English spider that I ever saw yet. By good fortune I have not thrown away the boxes, wherein I made the Observation concerning *Ichneumons* feeding upon the Eggs of certain Spiders. I have had them in several boxes, some 8, some 10, some 12 days in *Vermiculo*, feeding upon the very cakes of Spiders-eggs, before they wrought themselves *Theca's* for further change; and they seldom exceeded the number of 5 to one cake of Eggs, &c. so that you may assure Mr. *Willoughby*, this is no conjecture, but a real observation accompanied with more circumstances, than I am willing at present to relate.

An Account