NATURAL HISTORY.

The Eggs of Eels.—We direct attention to an alleged discovery of eggs in eels, and also to the fact that both sexes had been observed nearly two hundred years ago. The following extracts are made from the Proceedings of the Royal Society about the year 1690:

"Until about twelve months since, it was currently believed that eggs had never been seen in eels, and it was considered quite an interesting discovery when a New England fisherman then discovered them in situ, and also observed specimens of eels both of the male and female sex.

"Thus a vexed point which had been discussed for two hundred years, was settled satisfactorily, when, as I understand, Professor Packard confirmed the fisherman's discovery.

"Recently, while looking over some papers read before the Royal Society of England, dating very far back, I found that a Mr. Benjamin Allen about the year 1690, read a paper before the society, claiming to have examined two eels, and 'found one with egg,' and another with 'fixed young ones, fastened to very small placentæ each, which was fixed to the intestine.' 'The eggs were on the outside of the intestine.' He also said, 'the parts distinguishing the sex are discoverable; those of the male affix to the extremity of the kidney; the female had a slender gland transversely lying near the bowel.'

"A discussion followed, and a Mr. Dale raised a doubt on account of Mr. Allen's anatomical details being inconsitent with nature, and from the fact of Leuwenhoek finding a uterus in all eels he examined, and also 'masculine seed,' from whence he conjectured they were Hermaphrodite.

"He, however, so far confirmed Mr. Allen on one point, as to state that one Walter Chetwynd, Esq., had in the month of May, 'found them to be viviparous, by cutting open the red fundaments of the females, from whence the young eels would issue forth alive.'

"No other member is reported as having spoken on the subject, and so the matter rested."

The Mode of Suckling of the Elephant Calf.—In some of the accounts recently published of the birth of an elephant in a menagerie in America it is stated that up to this time naturalists had always believed that the elephant calf obtained its mother's milk by means of its trunk, and not directly by the mouth.

Whether this be the case or not, Aristotle was certainly an exception, as the following passage from the twenty-seventh chapter of the sixth book of his "Historia Animalium" (Ed. Bekker, Oxford, 1837) clearly proves—"Ο δὲ σκύμνος, ὅταν γένηται, θηλάζει τῷ στόματι, οὐ τῷ μυκτῆρι, καὶ βαδίζει καὶ βλέπει εὐθὺς γεννηθείς.—"And the calf, when it is born, sucks with its mouth and not with its trunk; and it both walks and sees as soon as it is born"— (Nature.) J. C. G.

At a recent meeting of the Buffalo Microscopical Club Mr. Jas. W. Ward exhibited a piece of glass which had been over a picture on one of the walls of his residence. It was covered with a very peculiar and interesting species of fungus, and withstood the action of soap and water in attempting to remove it. He attributed the growth to the exhalations of the breath of persons who had been in the room, and since noticing this fungus on the glass had examined several of a similar nature in other rooms and found them alike. Mr. Ward's observations brought forth an interesting debate, relative to the observations of the different members of the Club on similar growths. Dr. Howe thought it similar to the fungus which attacks the body of the *Musca domestica* (house fly). These are contagious, and can be given by one fly to another. Dr. Barrett likened it to the fungi which permeates the walls of hospitals and other public buildings. President Kellicott, since the matter had been brought to his notice, had examined the windows of the Central School building, and the City and County Hall, and found fungi on them, although not to such an extent as on the glass Mr. Ward exhibited.

Since the publication of Mr. Ward's notes, a Mr. Thomas Garfield has written to the *Scientific American* attributing the so-called fungus to a stain, or rust, which is often observed by glass makers on glass, caused by an excess of soda or potash, which produces an efflorescence. Mr. Ward, however, re-affirms that the patches are fungi, and he is satisfied of their vegetable and superficial nature.

MICROSCOPY.

The Hayden Trial Evidence.—Dr. Treadwell writes to the "*American Monthly Microscopical Journal*" disclaiming the assertions regarding the possibility of identifying human blood, which had been attributed to him. It was charged that Dr. Tredwell claimed, after measuring only four corpuscles (having accidentally lost the others), that ranged from $\frac{1}{2357}$ "to $\frac{1}{3366}$" in diameter, to have asserted: "I am quite positive that these *were human blood corpuscles*, and that they did not belong to the pig, sheep, goat, horse or cat." Dr. Tredwell now says, "I gave no opinion whatever as to any blood being human blood, except in distinction from the blood of some animal or animals named, and I defy any person to show that I have ever expressed such an opinion in any of the numerous cases in which I have testified."

On the half shell.—Mr. K. M. Cunningham suggests a quick way of getting marine diatomaceæ: by taking a peck of fresh oysters and brushing the back of each into a basin of water, this process will give Pleurosigmæ and Coscinodisci in abundance.

Thin glass covers.—A microscopist has taken the trouble to measure the thin glass covers purchased at a first class house, and found that in two ounces but one third was correct in their thickness $\frac{1}{150}$ to $\frac{1}{200}$ of an inch, two thirds belonging to a cheaper grade. Only one sixty-eighth were $\frac{1}{200}$ of an inch in thickness, the majority being only fit for opaque objects.

Infection from Mosquitos.—The discovery that mosquitos carry filaria in their probosces, and infect the human subject with that much dreaded worm parasite, has attracted considerable attention among the English Microscopists. The matter has been brought before the Quekett Microscopical Club, by Dr. Cobbold, the President, who is one of the highest authorities on this subject. Particulars of various cases were given in which it was proved that those suffering from filaria had received the contagion from mosquitos, and mosquitos themselves infected with filaria were shown.

Filaria are very minute worm-like parasites, which on entering the human body, breed until they increase to countless numbers. By recent advices we learn they have the power of entering and leaving the blood at pleasure; they usually invade the circulation about seven o'clock in the evening, and increase until about midnight, after which time they retire to other parts of the system.

Trichinæ in Fish.—It is again asserted that trichinæ have been found in fish, this time at Ostend, in Belgium. This is against previous experience, but as it is stated the worms were found in the flesh, it appears more probable that the statement may be correct.

Curious fungous deposit.—Dr. P. C. Jensen gives a drawing in "*New Remedies*" of a peculiar organized deposit, existing in a number of specimens of Acid Phosphoric. Dil., of commercial grades. Under a power of 75 diameters its appearance is that of a fibrous network very analogous in appearance to the Tela Contexta, as found in the mosses, anastomosing and exhibiting very well defined oblong muriform cells placed end to end. In the interstices of its central ramification are seen small bodies resembling nuclei. These nuclei are nearly double the size of the diverging fibres constituting the mass of the deposit. The color of the deposit is of a grayish white, with diffusive and elastic properties.