

But while these beautiful flies appear to us so idly and innocently employed, they are, in fact, the greatest tyrants of the insect tribe; and, like the hawk among birds, are only hovering up and down to seize their prey. They are the strongest and most courageous of all winged insects; nor is there one, that they will not attack and devour however large it may be. The blue fly, the bee, the wasp, and the hornet, form their constant prey; and even the butterfly, that spreads so large a wing, is often caught and treated without mercy. Their appetite seems to know no bounds; they spend the whole day in the pursuit, and have been seen to devour three times their own size in the capture of a single hour. They seize their prey flying, with their six claws, and tear it easily to pieces with their teeth, which are capable of inflicting troublesome wounds.

The males are exceedingly salacious and seek the females with great ardour; and no sooner does one appear than two or three males are seen pursuing and endeavouring to seize her with all their arts and agility. The instrument of generation in the male is placed very different from that of any other insect, being immediately