

weak instrument may justly be deemed one of Nature's master-pieces. It is so very small, that the extremity can scarcely be discerned through the best microscope. That part which is at first obvious to the eye, is nothing but a long scaly sheath under the throat. At the distance of nearly two-thirds of it, there is an aperture, through which the insect darts out four stings, and afterwards retracts them; one of which, however sharp and active it may be, is no more than the case in which the other three lie concealed, and run in a long groove. The sides of these stings are sharpened like two-edged swords; they are likewise barbed, and have a vast number of cutting teeth towards the point, which turns up like a hook, and is fine beyond expression. When the gnat, has tasted any fruit, flesh, or juice, with the point of its case, which it uses like a tongue: if it be a fluid, the animal sucks it up, without playing her darts upon it; but if there be any obstruction, it exerts its strength, and pierces through if possible. After this, it draws back its stings into their sheath, which it applies to the wound, in order to extract, as through a reed, the juices which it finds inclosed. In the winter the gnat ceases to eat,
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