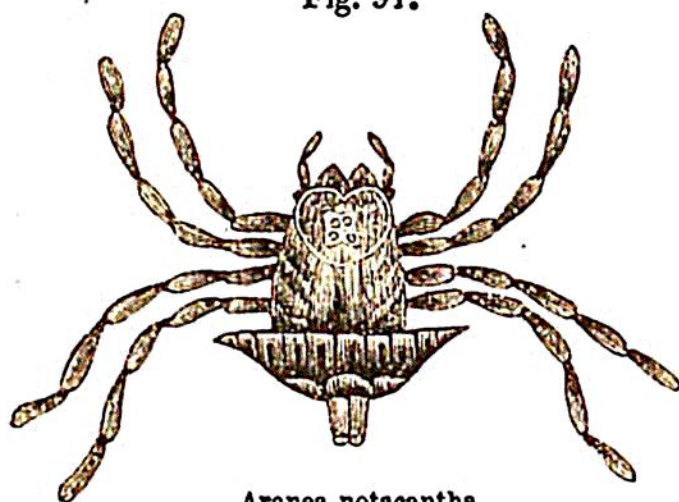


sunny rails, window-sills, &c.: when one of these spiders, which are always upon the watch, spies a fly or a gnat at a distance, he approaches softly, step by step, and seems to measure the interval that separates him from it with his eye; and, if he judges that he is within reach, first fixing a thread to the spot on which he is stationed, by means of his fore feet, which are much longer and larger than the others, he darts upon his victim with such rapidity, and so true an aim, that he seldom misses it. Whether his station is vertical or horizontal is of little consequence, he can leap equally well from either, and in all directions. He is prevented from falling by the thread just mentioned, which acts as a kind of anchor, and enables him to recover his station, when, without such a help, he would be, as it were, driven out to sea.

We see in these latter instances, that though the art and means of weaving snares to entrap their prey have not been granted to these hunters and vagrants, yet that their Creator has endowed them with increase of agility, and the power of moving, without turning round, in all directions, which fully make up to them for that want.

Fig. 91.

*Aranea notacantha.*

Before I conclude this history of spiders, I must mention a very remarkable one, described and figured by Freycinet, under the name of *Aranea notacantha* (figure 91), but which appears to belong to no known genus of the Order. It is stated to have

at its posterior extremity a long cylindrical tube, terminated by two eyes!! But this, surely, must be a mistake. At the anterior part of the thorax are four eyes, in a square,