

An Observation of Dr. Johnstons of Pomphret, communicated by him to Mr. Lister, and by him sent in a Letter to the Publisher, concerning some Stones of a perfect Gold-colour; found in Animals.

THAT no page of this Letter may be empty (saith Mr. *Lister*) I shall transcribe for you an Observation of Dr. *Johnstons*. In the *German Philosophic Ephemerides* of the year 1672, I meet with these words of Doctor *Wedelius*, Obs. 246. pag 439. *Possidet particulam Calculivaccini, instar Auri foliorum fulgidi*; the subje&t of that Observation being an Enumeration and the Description of several Stones found in divers Animals, as in Doggs, Hoggs, Staggs, and in Cows also; of which last the now quoted words are all he saith. I do begg Dr. *Johnstons* pardon for having kept by me two years an Observation of this nature, which he was pleased to communicate to me, and which yet was so surprising, that I had not the assurance to offer it to you, being, in this as well as in all other matters, relating to the *phænomena* of Natural History, very diffident. What reasons I then had to doubt of the truth of this Observation, he best knows, and I shall not trouble you with; being a little more confident since I read the words of D. *Wedelius*, that the Stones sent me by the Learned Doctor were such indeed, and not some Insects Eggs, as I once did verily perswade myself they were.

His Letter bears date *April 22. 1672.* from *Pomphret*.

About this time twelve month (saith the Doctor) one *Thomas Capidge*, a butcher of *Pomphret*, killed an Ox for the shambles, in which nothing was observed, preternatural, till the Bladder being blown by his servant, there was some thing observed sticking to the inside with a dusky froth; Keeping the Bladder half-blown, the butchers Son, who first discover'd it, knocked with his hand on the side and the bottom of the bladder, to make it settle to the neck, and by shaking and squeezing it got out the froth, and about *two hundred* little globular stones of several sizes, the biggest being about this (O) circumference; others like pin-heads or mustard-seed. He

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rubb'd the slimy froth from them, and they appear'd of a dusky yellow colour and smooth. Some he broak, and the rest he kept in a paper; which when dry, they were like *Seed-pearl*, but more smooth, and of a *perfect gold-colour*, and so ever after continued, as you see them. Viewed in a Microscope, they appeared very polished, and without any rugosities: The Figure in most was sphærical; in some a little compressed; the colour like *burnisht gold*. I broke one or two of them with some difficulty, and I found by the Microscope, that it was only a thin shell that was so orient and bright, the inner side of which shell was like unpolish'd gold; The inmost substance was like brown Sugar-candy to the naked eye, but not so transparent: The taste was not discernable. In Spirit of Vitriol they shrunk much and wasted, but continued their colour, (possibly by reason of the outward skin, which, it seems, in these was as difficult to dissolve as in true pearls:) Likewise *Aqua fortis* would corrode and dissolve them tumultuously.

Thus far the Doctor. I do not question (so concludes Mr. Lister,) but he hath store of these *güilt* stones in his cabinet; for, as I remember, he was so choice of them, that the parcel he sent me to view, was order'd to be returned again; at least, none of them remained with me.

I am

Yours.

York March 12.

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Extracts