

*Coleüra sechellensis*, n. sp., Peters.

This species is not only considerably larger than *Coleüra afra*, but it also differs in the spurs being proportionally much shorter—not so long as the tibiæ, but about one-third shorter. The colour is a sooty brown. The following are the measurements:—

	metre.
Total length .....	0·080
Head .....	0·021
Height of ear .....	0·011
Breadth of ear .....	0·005
Tragus .....	0·019
Tail .....	0·028
Upperarm .....	0·0565
Forearm .....	0·011
Thigh .....	0·020
Leg .....	0·023
Foot .....	0·0105
Spur .....	0·0165
Leg-membrane across the middle .....	0·033

I found this bat on Mahé, Praslin, Silhouette; and I believe it to be the only insectivorous bat to be met with in the islands.

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LVII.—*Notes on the Transportation of Living Fish from South of the Equator to Europe.* By ED. PERCEVAL WRIGHT, M.D., F.L.S., Professor of Zoology, Trinity College, Dublin.

MY very good friend Dr. J. E. Gray records, in the 'Annals' for October last (*antea*, p. 319), the fact that Mr. Moore had succeeded, in September, in importing into Liverpool from the River Plate the first living fish that had been received from the south of the equator. This note brought to my mind the fact that I had succeeded in bringing as far north as Paris, in the month of December last (1867), specimens of the only freshwater Cyprinoid of the Seychelles Islands, i. e. *Haplochilus Playfairii*, Gthr.; and as it is a matter of some interest that the results of all such experiments should be recorded, and the means adopted for carrying them out known, I venture to give here the following extracts from my notebook:—

"This little fish is rather common in the mountain-streams on the eastern side of Mahé. These streams are perennial; but



they flow in very deep rocky channels which are sometimes filled up by immense boulders or blocks of granite which have fallen off from the mountain's side; the stream then flows silently beneath them, reappearing at some distance. Here and there, as the water makes its way over some projecting ledge of rock, there will be a tiny waterfall, and below this a deep rock-pool. It is in such that these little fish abound. Large specimens will be met with about four inches in length, but in general they are not more than about three inches long. The colour of the body in an adult specimen is a light olive hue; but the opercular bones are streaked with red lines, and seven longitudinal rows of red spots correspond to the series of scales. The red on an olive-coloured ground has a very pretty effect; and *Haplochilus Playfairii* would be a very pleasing addition to our freshwater aquaria. These fish were easily caught with a small water-net; they were of an inquisitive turn of mind; and when I let the net float for a few moments in the water, it was always sure to be inspected by some of the older fish, who would even go so far as to enter it—a fact of which I generally took advantage, and, drawing the net in, would transfer them to a bottle of spirits. One little stream (the one which supplied the Government Hospital and Dr. Brooke's house, in which I was residing, with water) abounded with these fish; and as the stream was not far from the house, the thought struck me, would it not be possible to keep them in an aquarium, and watch their habits. The great heat, however, was against this, and specimens brought home to live generally died very soon, so that I despaired of ever bringing any to Europe alive. However, the day before the mail for Europe was expected, I took a dozen of them from the nearest rock-pool, and placed them in a large foot-bath in my bed-room: the next morning three were dead. The 'Erymanthe' made her appearance in the roadstead about 1 o'clock, and I was obliged to go at once on board. I had a vast number of packages, including a young leopard, now in the Zoological Gardens, which had been brought from Zanzibar and was given to me by my friend Commander Bradshaw, of H.M.S. 'Star,' and some three dozen birds; and it was with some difficulty that I succeeded in bringing with me a small eight-ounce glass jar with the nine fish. A sail of about an hour brought us to the mail-steamer; and when, after some necessary delays, I got on board, they were all still living. I was not on board many minutes when I found that the 'Erymanthe' would not start until early the following morning, so as to allow the Bishop of Mauritius to have service on shore and to take farewell of the Seychelles; and as the bishop was to be



my guest for the day, I returned once more to shore. It was about 10 o'clock in the evening when I again got on board, and in the meanwhile two of my fishes had died. I placed the rest in a water-jug; and though they were in rather a sickly condition, they soon revived; one, however, jumped out of the jug unnoticed, and thus lost his life; the remaining six lived on, in apparently the best of health, until I reached Suez. The fresh water in the Seychelles is very full of iron; the water on board the 'Erymanthe,' from being kept in iron tanks, was also impregnated with the same metal; and I was in the habit of pouring out a quantity of the water each morning, and filling the jug up again with fresh water let fall from some distance, so as to aërate it as much as possible. Every fly caught on board was given to the fishes; and I took advantage of my few hours sojourn at Aden to lay in a small store of insects, with which to regale them while in the Red Sea. At Suez I was detained for some time by the custom-house officers, but at last succeeded in getting the fish, birds, and leopard (it went by the name of a cat) into a railway carriage otherwise unoccupied. Just as the train was about to start, the officials came to take the leopard from me; but by this time I had let her loose in the carriage, and when she saw their dark faces (she never had at best a fancy for blacks), she jumped up to get at them in a manner that so alarmed them that they at once ran away and left us alone. After a few hours railway travelling, I found the fish beginning to gasp for air; the motion of a railway carriage so churns the water, that it soon becomes unbreathable. I, however, changed the water at Cairo, and brought them alive to Alexandria: here I placed them for a couple of days in a glass vase of Nile-canal water; but, whether from its coldness or from its being so full of mud I know not, in one night two died. I then got some rain-water, placed a piece of iron in it, and left it in the kitchen of my friend's house, and the others seemed to be all right. From Alexandria to Marseilles we had a very cold and stormy passage; but still I landed at Marseilles with my four fish alive; they went with me to, and spent a whole day and night at Hyères, and they then commenced what was to them a journey of death towards Paris. The jolting of the express train was very great, and ere we reached Lyons two had died: here I changed the water, and had still hopes of bringing the remaining two to London. To avoid the shaking as much as possible, I had suspended the bottle from the ceiling of the coupé; but at Dijon a lot of people got into it, and I was obliged to bundle up all my possessions into a small corner on the floor; and so it happened that when daylight dawned, and we stopped



at the terminus on the Boulevard Mazas, the *Haplochili* had gasped their last, and could only be said to have just reached Paris to die. I have wondered several times since, what became of these two. They were good specimens; their colours were not as bright as if, instead of being choked or drowned in water, they had been drowned or choked in spirits; but the bottle had on it a label with their name and country, and I left it behind me in the railway carriage."

Thus my experiment failed; but I doubt not that, with a little more care, it would have succeeded; and I feel sure that ere long this pretty freshwater fish will be brought into France, and so make its way into England. The intelligent and energetic officers in charge of the mails between Réunion and Paris have many facilities for carrying this project into effect; and as there is only three days of the three weeks' journey to be accomplished by rail, the difficulties of railway transit are not insurmountable. My belief is that this little fish would become a great favourite in this country. I would commend the subject to the consideration of M. Geoffroy St. Hilaire, the able Secretary of the Jardin d'Acclimatation of Paris. With such zealous assistants as he has in my friends Capt. Rappatel of the 'Erymanthe,' and M. Richard, Agent de l'Administration des Postes, he need experience no difficulty in having brought to Paris any of the land or freshwater vertebrates to be met with in the islands off the east coast of Africa.

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LVIII.—*Descriptions of some new Genera and Species of Alcyonoid Corals in the British Museum.* By Dr. J. E. GRAY, F.R.S., V.P.Z.S., &c.

SOME years ago we received from Mr. Jukes some animals in spirits. Amongst these is a fleshy Alcyonoid, which lives on the naked axis of a *Gorgonia* apparently belonging to a genus and species that I have not before seen described. Unfortunately the specimen has no habitat attached to it, and it is not in a very good state; so I have been waiting in hope of another specimen arriving in a better condition and with its locality stated; but being now engaged in naming the undetermined species of this group, I shall proceed to describe it.

This Alcyonoid has much resemblance to the genus *Nephthya*; but it differs in the slenderness of the branches and branchlets, the distance between the polypes, and the outer surface of the polypes being entirely destitute of fusiform and other spicules.





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