

opinion, to be compared to a deviation in excess of the normal number of joints in the antennæ of males ; indeed, so very rare is this the case, that only a single instance has been, to my knowledge, recorded ; this occurs in the genus *Pheidole* (*Æcophthora*, Heer), the male of which has seventeen-jointed antennæ. The above remarkable phenomena are quite sufficient to awaken our curiosity and beget a desire to investigate the structure of these wonderful creatures, but it forms a mere prelude to perhaps the most incomprehensible, or certainly at present impenetrable, mystery which is to be found in the entire range of the insect world ; I allude to the amazing variety in the size and situation of the eyes ; in some species these organs occupy the greater part of the head, in others they are reduced to so minute a scale that they are only perceptible under a considerable magnifying power, in many species they are entirely obliterated. If the presence or absence of the eyes proved to be an index to the habit of the species, the mystery which at present surrounds the subject would have no existence, but such is not the case : species whose habits are to a considerable extent subterranean, are furnished with these organs, whilst others, whose habit is to live and forage above ground, are without eyes. In the genus *Pseudomyrma* all the species have very large eyes, occupying in some instances the whole of the sides of the head ; in some ants the eyes are placed high on the head, in others, as in *Æcodoma*, they are situated low down near the base of the mandibles. The presence or absence of ocelli is equally remarkable : in the workers of the genus *Formica* they are usually present, but a few exceptions are to be met with ; whilst in the genus *Myrmica* and its allies the ocelli as a rule are obliterated, they are however present in the males and females of the entire family. The number of ocelli is usually three, but in many instances they are reduced to two, whilst in the genus *Atta* and *Æcodoma*, in some large-headed workers, the number is reduced to one, and this is not placed in the usual situation on the vertex, but on the face near the base of the clypeus.

These brief allusions to exotic forms, it is hoped will beget an interest in the minds of some members of the Entomological Society, and lead them to pursue the investigation of the *Formicidæ*, which, it will be seen, possesses an equal, if not superior interest to any other family of insects.

There is still another point of view in which we must briefly survey them ; the unceasing industry of these creatures has always been held up as a pattern to man for his guidance in that