

Cabbages attacked by this disgusting insect are unfit for both man and beast. I have heard of cows being killed by eating heads of cabbages thus attacked, but do not vouch for the truth of it.

The remedies hitherto tried are salt, tobacco, cresylic acid, soap, and guano; but although I have tried none of the above, I am convinced that hardwood ashes are the easiest applied and the most effectual.

P. E. BUCKE.

Ottawa, Dec. 20, 1871.

NOTE BY ED.—The reader, as well as our correspondent, will find a full description, with illustrations, of this newly imported cabbage insect (*P. rapæ*, Linn.) in the CANADA FARMER for March, 1870, p. 3. We are glad to learn that he has found so simple and apparently effectual a remedy for its ravages as hardwood ashes—unleached, of course. Dusting with powdered white hellebore would, we have no doubt, be found even more serviceable, though to be sure a more expensive material. In England this worm has been greatly kept in check by the attacks upon it of a small parasitic fly (*Pteromalus pygæus*, Linn.), but until very recently this friendly insect had not been observed on this side of the Atlantic. To Mr. Sprague, of Boston, and his young son, is due the credit, we believe, of first observing this parasite in America; they have very kindly sent us a number of specimens of it. In Massachusetts and New York it is already making a perceptible difference in the number of the destructive rape caterpillars, and will no doubt ere long keep them within due bounds all over the country.

Pieris Rapæ Parasite.

It will doubtless be an interesting item of intelligence to many of the readers of the *Naturalist*, that the parasite, so anxiously looked for, as the only hope of preserving the cabbage crop of our country from the destruction threatened it by the ravages of *Pieris rapæ*, has already entered upon its labours, and in so efficient a manner as to promise immediate beneficial results.

During the latter part of September I was informed that a number of chrysalids of *P. rapæ*, which had been collected by a gentleman in this city, with a view of obtaining specimens of the imagines for drawing, instead of disclosing the butterfly, gave out a number of small flies from each. Some of them having been brought to me in compliance with my request, I was delighted to find them to be of the genus *Pteromalus*, which includes so many of our valued parasitic friends, and probably of the species which has been found so serviceable in Europe, in destroying the several cabbage butterflies there existing—viz., the *Pt. pygæus* of Linnaeus.

From the close resemblance which many of the *Pteromali* bear to one another, it is not

safe to assert positively that we have really been favoured with the importation of the European parasite, to aid in the work of subjugation of the European pest; but should further examination prove this to be the case, it will be not only a most interesting event in its scientific aspect, but also in the pecuniary results which must necessarily follow it.—J. A. LINTNER, N. Y. *State Museum of Nat. Hist.*

[We have also raised this parasite in considerable abundance, and also received specimens from Vermont. We have likewise reared a Dipterous parasite from the cocoons. *Ens 1—American Naturalist.*

The Study of Entomology.

Every farmer should know something of entomology; enough at least that he may become conversant with the habits of insects destructive to the principal farm crops. By this means he may often counteract the depredations of these pests; and especially will he be prepared to meet intelligently the species that are attacking crops to a greater degree every year. Many of them are not new. Like all other animal life, insects increase just in proportion to the facility with which they may procure food and the absence of their foes. The lower the organization, the more prolific the species. This seems to be a general law of nature, hence the sudden influx of these insidious depredators, and hence the value of certain knowledge in relations to their instincts and habits.

People may now be pretty well informed in relation to the habits, etc., of the codling moth, the curculio, various borers, and many others of the more common varieties of insects, and also in relation to the proper modes of keeping them in check. If every agriculturist, however, received as a part of his education, technical knowledge in relation to some of the more important sciences relating to agriculture, and only so far as they do relate thereto, it would be but a little time comparatively until we should be able, from the mass of practical knowledge developed, to successfully combat not only these foes to the farmer, but also what is false in practice in other directions.—*Western Rural.*

The Ants of Peru.

Dr. Peeping describes the ants of Peru as most numerous in the Lower Andes; they are from an inch in size, and of all colours between yellow and black. In the huts are seven different species. One of the very useful kinds, which does not attack man unless provoked, is the Peruvian wandering ant, which comes in endless swarms from the wilderness, where it again vanishes. It is not unwelcome, because it does no injury to plantations, but destroys innumerable pernicious insects of other kinds, and even amphibious animals and small quadrupeds. "Of

these ants," says Dr. Peeping, "the broad columns go forward, disregarding every obstacle, and millions march close together in a swarm that takes hours in passing; while on both sides the warriors, distinguished by their size and colour, move busily backwards and forwards, ready for defence, likewise employed in looking for and attacking animals which are so unfortunate as to be unable to escape either by force or by rapid flight. If they approach a house, the owner readily opens every part, and goes away, and all noxious vermin that may have taken up their abode in the roof of palm leaves, and insects and larvae, are destroyed, or compelled to seek safety in flight. The most secret recesses of the hut do not escape their search, and the army of ants, as the natives affirm, overpower large snakes, for the warriors form a circle around the reptile while basking in the sun. On perceiving its enemies, it endeavours to escape, but in vain, for six or more of them have fixed themselves upon it, and, while the tortured animal endeavours to relieve itself by a simple turn, the number of its foes is increased a hundred-fold. Thousands of the smaller ants from the main column hasten up, and in a few hours nothing remains of the snake but a clean skeleton."

Injurious Insects.

Something may still be done to prevent the increase of predatory insects. The pupæ of some of them lie dormant in the earth. The cocoons of others are concealed under old bark, also in cracks and crevices in dead trees or fences, etc. After leaving the fruit the apple-worms generally take refuge under the old bark of the trees, where they spend their cocoons and remain dormant until summer, at which time they come forth as perfect codling moths, ready to deposit their eggs in the blossom end of the young fruit. If bandages of hay or straw ropes, cotton-batting, etc., have been put around the trunks at the right time, great numbers of the cocoons will now be found under them, and they can be easily destroyed. Borers should be searched for in the collars of the trees, and destroyed by thrusting a strong wire into their burrows. The eggs of the tent caterpillar are deposited in rings near the forks of the smaller branches. They glisten in the sun, and may be easily detected and destroyed.—*Western Rural.*

THE FLYING SPIDER.—I witnessed the flight of a spider a few days ago under circumstances that were novel to me, and probably may be so to some of your readers. While sitting near a window in my study engaged with a book which lay before me on the table, one of those little creatures of that species with whose feats of acrobatic I was long familiar, appeared running across the leaf. I had never seen any of them except