

## NOTES OF THE PAST SEASON.

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### THE CURRANT WORM (*Nematus ventricosus*, KLUG).

This troublesome pest has been in most localities as abundant as ever during the past summer. Whatever checks nature may have provided to prevent its excessive increase, they seem, as yet, to avail but little, for the larvæ continue to swarm in hundreds and thousands on currant and gooseberry bushes throughout the summer, demanding constant vigilance and liberal supplies of hellebore if the foliage is to be preserved.

For the benefit of those who may not possess copies of our previous reports we have introduced again figures of this insect with such additional notes on this species in its various stages as we have been able to gather during the summer.

FIG. 7.



Fig. 7 shows the eggs as they are laid on the under side of the leaves. These eggs (described from specimens found on the 28th June) are when first laid about  $\frac{3}{100}$ ths of an inch long, nearly cylindrical, rounded at the ends, white, glossy and semi-transparent. Eggs found on the same bushes, the same day, but probably laid some days before, measured  $\frac{4}{100}$ ths of an inch in length with a corresponding increase in diameter. From this it is reasonable to infer that the eggs increase in size before hatching, the elastic membrane which forms their covering expanding with the development of the enclosed larvæ. The eggs, of which we have examined large numbers, we have never found embedded in the substance of the leaf (as some have stated they are) to any perceptible extent; careful examination under a powerful microscope has failed to reveal any abrasion of the surface after the egg has been forcibly removed.

FIG. 8.



Fig. 8 represents the larvæ nearly full grown, and Fig. 9 the perfect insects, the smaller one being the male, the larger one the female.

On the 19th of June, on going into the garden about 7 A.M., we noticed these perfect insects flying about in scores in sunny spots, around and under gooseberry bushes; in about an hour afterwards when visiting the same spot for the purpose of capturing some, only one here and there could be found, and these had settled on the bushes. A male and female were captured and enclosed in a gauze bag, which was tied so as to enclose a small branch of a gooseberry bush, with several leaves on it, all quite free from eggs. When examined in the evening of the same day, the female was seen laying her eggs; the next morning, on opening the bag, it was found that 48 eggs had been deposited during the interval, the female being still very active. On the