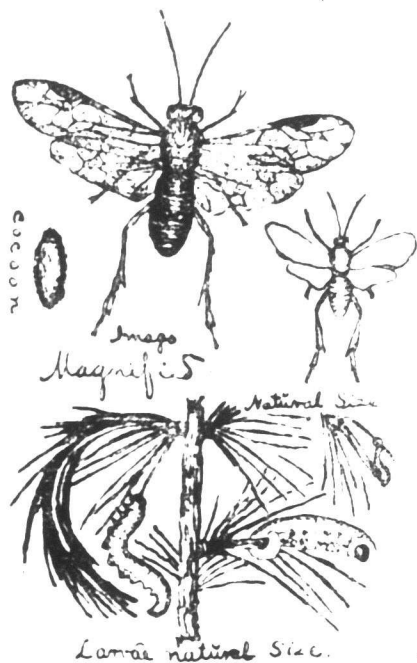


FERNDALE NOTES.

TEN YEARS FROM BOSTON TO HALIFAX.

The Larch Saw Fly (*Nematus Erichsonii*, Hartig.)

Walking through the Young memorial gate into the beautiful park of which Halifax has good reason to be proud, about the commencement of the holiday, we looked at the fine larch trees among the spruce and pines to see if the prediction made by the REVIEW last September and repeated this July was showing any sign of fulfilment: if the Larch Saw Fly first noticed near Boston in 1880, in the borders of Quebec in 1882, in New Brunswick in 1884, in Western Nova Scotia in 1888, would reach the heart of Nova Scotia in 1890, and leave behind it the brown spines of the tamarac as if they were licked with flame. But the Halifax tamarac was green. Among its still branches we noticed a fly, simply a house fly it appears in the distance, but one with strange tastes, for it flew lovingly in and out around the branches as if it had a special affection for the fragrant boughs. We bade a midsummer farewell to the park, and after a few weeks at the Summer Science School and its picturesque surroundings, again returned, to find the larches of Point Pleasant changed into scorched skeletons as lank as the spectres of the tamarac swamps of Maine which a few years before foreboded their destiny. Westward and northward have these small four winged flies flew some thirty and odd miles per year, until now the perimeter of their widespread devastation passes through Halifax and beyond Ottawa.

We figure roughly above the insect in its various stages. It belongs to the order Hymenoptera, and

family *Tenthredinidae* (the Saw-flies, so called on account of their saw-like apparatus for boring holes in the bark of twigs in which their eggs are placed). The fly may be described thus: Head and thorax as well as the nine-jointed antennæ black, together with the base and tip of the abdomen; segments two to five and part of the upper and whole of the lower surface of segment six of a rich waxy orange color; first and second pair of legs yellowish, the thighs a little darker and slightly tipped with black above, and the third pair of legs much longer than the others, with legs yellowish, but claws black, while in the fore legs the claws are yellow. The wings are black veined, with a tawny fore margin on the costa, The dark spot—the stigma—near the tip of the wing, black. The fly emerges from its cocoon about the first of July. The eggs are laid in the terminal young shoots of the larch (*Larix Americana*). Within a fortnight they are hatched. The larvæ eat the leaves rapidly, moulting four times, the first three times changing color and appearance very much. When mature it is about one and a quarter inches in length, blueish-white above with two double rows of black tubercles on middle segment, greenish beneath, head and thoracic feet black; prolegs, seven pairs, green. Before they pupate a brownish hue is assumed. They generally drop to the ground and spin an oval cocoon, brownish, about half an inch in length. The perfect pupa stage is not attained until next spring.

The larches do not always wither from the first attack; but recurring attacks are sure to kill them. No method of stopping the ravages of the pest has yet been discovered.

SISYPHUS.

A great many of our provincial papers are referring to the unusual destructiveness of the Colorado Beetle to the potato this season, and some want to know why the government is not taking means to exterminate the pest. Well, it is rather late to talk of extermination now, if we could not think of it before. When the Colorado Beetle coming along the isthmus, first folded its wings to alight on the territory of Cumberland County, in 1882, was the proper time to exterminate him in the Province of Nova Scotia. Nor were measures of a mild degree wanting. The Agricultural Society of Pictou at once published an illustrated circular fully describing the insect, and showing how to treat him. These were placarded all over the country. And the Provincial Society had a second edition of the same distributed and placarded in the west of the province. The result was that com-