



FIG. 1.

figure, which has been kindly lent by Prof. J. A. Lintner, shows the female natural size. The sexes differ very little. The male is slightly smaller. Westwood says :—" Indeed, as the females are destitute of an exerted ovipositor, it is only by a minute inspection of the veins of the wing covers that the sexes may be distinguished. The females in this family are not able to make a noise, the veins of their wing covers being more regularly disposed. The males are, moreover, distinguished by having eight ventral segments in the abdomen, whilst there are only seven in the females." (Mod. Class. I, 443). There is only one species of Mole-cricket recorded from Canada. It is of the form shown above, of velvety seal-brown colour, which is darkest on the thorax. The wing covers are greyish, with dark veins, and the true wings are white and folded together like a fan. They are much larger than would be imagined from their small tail-like tips, which show beyond the wing covers on the back. The most remarkable feature of these insects is the strong fore-legs, with their expanded paw-like shanks, which bear four claw-like curved and hollowed projections at the lower edge ; two of these are jointed at the base, and are in fact claws. The feet consist of three joints, which are attached about the middle of what, by the shanks being twisted obliquely outwards, is now the outside instead of the lower side. They consist of three joints : the first and second are large and claw-like, the second the smaller but reaching almost as far as the tip of the first ; the third is very small indeed, and bears two weak true claws. The first two tarsal joints being of the shape described give great strength to the insect's " paw " when used for digging, for they lie right in front of the two articulated projections of the shank which fit closely to them, and the weak terminal joint lies between. The adaptability of these limbs for their required use is at once seen by the rapidity with which these insects dig down out of sight again when disturbed.

As stated above, Mole-crickets are nocturnal in their habits. They live in moist ground and near streams, where they sink their burrows some inches beneath the surface ; but also throw up little ridges as they burrow nearer the surface, like miniature mole-runs.