

## PRACTICAL AND POPULAR ENTOMOLOGY.—No. 14.

## WORK FOR JUNE—CATERPILLAR HUNTING.

BY ARTHUR GIBSON, DIVISION OF ENTOMOLOGY, CENTRAL EXPERIMENTAL FARM, OTTAWA.

Everyone interested in the study of insect life eagerly awaits the approach of spring. It is at that time, probably more than at any other, that the keenest interest is shown in the subject by the majority of our collectors. How often, however, one begins enthusiastically in spring to collect insects of *all* kinds, becomes fascinated with the work and within a very short time gathers together a collection worthy of some notice; but, frequently, as the season advances, the interest begins to lag and soon something else takes the attention and the subject is dropped. Many a good beginning is thus ended. The month of June is distinctly the time of greatest interest to study the life-histories of insects. Many collectors, while continually adding specimens to their collections throughout the season, pay little attention to their habits or try to discover any new facts concerning their life-histories. The work of many of our collectors would be rendered more attractive and much more valuable if they would only take time to give a little attention to the early stages of the insects which they collect or study in the perfect state. This short article is merely a plea to beginners or collectors of a few years, to take up some *special* branch of the work in the hope of finding out new facts which, while adding much to their own pleasure, will also be of use to others who may be making a more critical or extended study in the same order of insects.

Taking it for granted, then, that the beginner, or even the collector of some years, wishes to pay special attention to butterflies and moths, late spring is a splendid time to hunt for their caterpillars. There is a fascination about rearing insects to the perfect state which is never experienced in the ordinary collecting of the imagoes. Then, besides, there is the charm of discovering some new fact which was hitherto unrecorded. Many of our caterpillars pass the winter in a half or full grown condition, and if collected in May and June soon become mature and change to the pupal state. Thus in a very short period the beginner will gain much experience which will be of service to him when endeavoring to trace out the complete life-history of a species. Even if his chief desire is to obtain perfect specimens, he will be well repaid with the result of his labours.