

ENTOMOLOGY FOR BEGINNERS.

The Common Woolly Bear (Spilosoma virginica).

BY THE EDITOR.

The caterpillars known under the common name of "woolly bears" belong to the family of Arctians, and most of the species in the moth state are very pretty objects. The commonest of all the species is *Spilosoma virginica*, a pure white moth which appears on the wing in May, when it deposits its clusters of round yellow eggs on the under side of the leaves of many plants. In a few days these hatch into minute hairy caterpillars, which for a time feed in company and devour at first the under

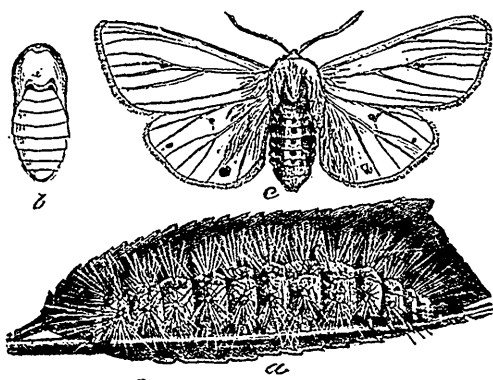


Fig. 9.

side of the leaf only so that it assumes a scorched and withered aspect. In a short time, however, they part company, each one choosing his own course, and blessed with good digestive powers, they eat freely of all parts of the leaf. The full grown caterpillar (fig. 9, *a*) is nearly two inches long, thickly clothed with hair usually of a yellowish color, but not always so, for some are light brown and others a darker brown. The head and feet are usually yellow, and the hairs arise in little tufts from small yellow tubercles arranged nearly in rows across the body. In the spaces between the segments there are darker lines, sometimes brown or dark brown, and occasionally nearly black; there is a dark line along each side, and the under surface is also of a dark shade.

When full grown the caterpillar seeks some sheltered nook in which to change to a chrysalis, attached to the under side of a board, under the bark of a tree or in some crevice in a fence, wherever it is dry and secluded. Having fixed on a suitable locality, the larva proceeds to divest its body of the covering of hairs, and with these woven together with