

But if they are allowed their own way they wander about in great numbers to the base of the smooth barked young twigs and insert their sharp tiny beaks into them and drink in the sap of the tree. One of the small antennæ of the insect is magnified very much at Figure 8.

S. But how do they build the scales over themselves?

T. In a few days a very fine waxy wool grows all around its body as in Figure 3. This wool is something of the nature of shellac which is secreted from the body of an insect in a similar way. It at last forms a shell over the insect which looks something like Figure 4, then 5, and finally like Figure 6. The shell sticks to the bark with the insect underneath. In August it commences to lay its eggs under the broad part of the shell, which grows in the direction of the narrow part, pushing the insect, as it were, before it, until sometimes as many as a hundred eggs have been found under the body of the scale, with the dried up remains of the insect itself, compressed into the extreme narrow end. The eggs remain protected under this covering through the winter until next spring.

S. Are they hurtful to the trees?

T. When numerous they are very injurious, and if not prevented, in June they can spread from one tree to another easily and are sometimes found on the pear, the plum and the currant bush. How would you destroy them?

S. With the soap and washing soda solution in June.

S. I would scrap them off in autumn or winter, so that their eggs would be destroyed by the wet and the frost.

T. Very good. But I should tell you that the male insect which is very small, has also a tiny pair of wings, and that they are nearly related to the visible plant lice, and therefore belong to the order *Hemiptera*.

THE Halifax *Critic* says: Mr. F. Blake Crofton's second paper on "Haliburton, Thinker and Writer," was admirably read on a recent evening before the N. S. Historical Society by Mr. S. Harrington, Sir Adams Archibald in the Chair. Those who were unable to attend missed a high intellectual treat. It would be impossible in any space we can command to do justice to it, but we earnestly hope that both lectures may be put before the public in some form accessible to all, for it is certain that no reading Nova Scotian ought to be ignorant of what has been so admirably done by Mr. Crofton for the reputation of Nova Scotia's greatest writer and almost prophetic thinker.

### AMONG THE CONSTELLATIONS.

No. VII. — SOUTH-WESTERN CONSTELLATIONS OF APRIL EVENINGS.

"There they stand  
Shining in order, like a living hymn  
Written in light."

—N. P. Willis.

Late in the evening Taurus will be setting north of the west point of the horizon. Notice, that the whole heavens seem to describe a circular path around the North Pole Star as a centre. The Milky Way runs diagonally through this field—from between Perseus and Auriga right through the faint-starred Monoceros. Auriga, the charioteer, is not far from the zenith. Alpha of the first magnitude is called Capella. Alpha of Taurus was called by the Arabians Aldebaran (accent on second syllable). The Pleiades are well to the west, while Beta of Taurus, called Nath, in the tip of one of the Bull's horns, is near the Milky Way. Alpha of Orion is known as Betelgeuse, Beta as Rigel and Gamma as Bellatrix. The rhymster's directions can now be followed:

"From Rigel rise, and lead a line through Bellatrix's light,  
Pass Nath upon the Bull's north horn, and gain Capella's height—  
Where a large triangle is formed, isosceles it seems,  
When Beta is with Delta joined to lustrous Alpha's beams."

Alpha of Canis Major is the brightest star in the heavens, also called the Dog Star as mentioned in our previous number. Alpha of Canis Minor is called Procyon, which means in Greek, the "forerunner of the dog," alluding to its appearing on the horizon shortly before the appearance of Sirius. A line through Gamma and Alpha of Orion eastward will pass above Procyon and its lonely companion Beta of the third magnitude. Right above these twin stars are Castor and Pollux in Gemini. Castor is the northern one, Alpha; Pollux is Beta.

Taurus, Gemini and Cancer are three signs of the Zodiac. The sun's path each year lies through them. About May 19th the sun will be below the Pleiades; about June 1st, above Alpha Tauri (Aldebaran); about June 10th, below Beta (Nath); about July 10th, below Castor and Pollux in Gemini, and towards the end of the month in Cancer. Next month we shall look in the same manner at the constellations in the south-eastern sky in the early part of the evening.

[NOTE.—We regret that a star-map, intended to accompany this article, could not be prepared in time.]