

of food was very irregularly given and short in quantity, yet the moths produced from them consisted of four males, full sized, and eleven females, some of these latter being much below the average of the species in size."

I presume that the reason Mr. Fletcher supposed that the result may have been very different was because he had read in "Newman" the result of an experiment performed by an American lady, I think Mrs. Treat, who, having underfed a lot of larvæ, succeeded in producing all males, the inference drawn being that males were simply underfed females. I wrote some notes on this subject for "Newman," thinking that Mrs. Treat's paper had appeared originally in that publication. It seems, however, that it did not, and I now reproduce the substance of those notes here, as more likely to meet the eyes of all concerned.

First, then, I would remark that this clearly is not Nature's method of "controlling sex." If a batch of larvæ, say of *V. antiopa*, all feed on the same elm, there will be produced both males and females, although the feeding must be alike for all. But there is an excellent opportunity afforded Mrs. Treat of testing the value of her theory, by the larva of *Thyreus Abbottii* (Swains.) It is well known that the male larva of this species is altogether different in color from that of the female, so the sexes are easily distinguished.

Now, if Mrs. Treat will take the female larvæ, and by underfeeding it produce male imagines, the thing will be more satisfactory. I am not unaware that in Hymenoptera food is said to have a good deal to do with the production of sex, but still Mrs. Treat's experiment cannot be considered as conclusive.

Hasty generalization is a fault to which we are very liable, and doubtless the ambition to discover a new law is very laudable. A case of this nature occurs in your No. 5, vol. 6. In a paper appearing in that number, Mr. Gentry, of Germantown, fancies he has discovered the law which produces difference of color in caterpillars of the same species. Now, to be of any value, this law must be universal, and the facts of the case do not show any such universality. Mr. Gentry thinks that the difference in color and markings where this occurs is attributable to the difference in the chemical constituents of the food plant at different seasons of the year. He selects as one instance the larva of *Eacles imperialis*, and gives, correctly enough, three varieties of color. But, unfortunately, these varieties occur at one part of the season as well as at