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## ON THE EARLY STAGES OF *PLUSIA PRECATIONIS*, GUENÉE.

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EGG.—Flattened-globular or button-shaped, sometimes with an impressed spot in the centre of the upper side; upper part grooved, grooves narrow, interspaces roughened; milky white; transverse diameter about  $\frac{1}{2}$  m. m.

LARVA.—*First stage*: Body deep green, two dorsal, a subdorsal and stigmatal white line, the latter the most distinct; piliferous spots green, usually tipped with black, each bearing a short black hair; venter deep green, unmarked; head pale green. Provided with only 12 legs.

*Second stage*: Same as first, and with an indistinct whitish line on the dorsal space; subdorsal space usually tinged with black.

*Third and last stage*: Same as second; body robust, tapering anteriorly; length at maturity  $1\frac{1}{4}$  inches.

CHRYSLIS.—Of the usual shape, blackish brown, terminates behind in a short, thick, cylindrical projection, rounded behind and tipped with one or two small hooks; antennæ and leg cases project beyond the wing cases in the form of a small bulb; length from 13 to 15 m. m.

In the larvæ of this brood I observed only two moults, and if there is a greater number of moults than this they probably occur prior to the first moult mentioned above. Just before moulting the larvæ left their food and collected on the ceiling of their cage.

In some of the captured larvæ which I have reared the piliferous spots were sometimes entirely black, or had a black basal annulation; sometimes the head was surrounded with black, or had a black streak on each side; in many of them all of the white lines, except the stigmatal, were obsolete.

On the 17th of May, 1880, I enclosed a female *precationis* in one of my breeding-boxes in which some grass, clover and plantain were growing. In the afternoon of the next day she laid about 50 eggs, placing them singly, or in small rows or patches, on both the upper and under sides of