

know of one, no matter how obscure the subject or how little advance has yet been made in the direction of its elucidation.

"Hope springs eternal" in the breast of the entomologist, and patience and perseverance have in him their "perfect work," until Nature relents, or is caught "off guard," and the secret, so carefully hidden, is revealed.

I am tempted to enumerate some of the discouraging circumstances encountered by the biologist in this field.

Among the *Lepidoptera*, a majority of the *Bombycidae*, *Geometridae* and *Noctuidae* adapt themselves readily to the conditions of the rearing cage. They accept the food provided and make the best of it, even after it has become a little dry, which must sometimes occur when the caretaker is pressed for time. They thrive in the closer and darker air, and take such exercise as they require within their narrow walls of glass and wire-cloth, and when the metamorphic impulse comes they contentedly weave their cocoons in the corners of their prison, or bury themselves in the two or three inches of cemetarial earth in the bottom of the cage, and safely pass those mysterious transformations which give to this class of beings their pre-eminent interest.

But there is a great deal of individuality, or rather, specificity, in insects, and not infrequently specimens of larvæ are found for which the collector taxes his ingenuity in vain to provide. Not the freshest of leaves, the cleanest swept earth or the most well-aired of cages will seem to promote their development. They wander about the cage with an exhausting activity that pathetically suggests a realization of their imprisoned condition. They nibble languidly at their food, and aimlessly spin mats of web in inconvenient places, over the cracks of the door or cover, for instance, and, before long, comes the morning when they are discovered dead and discolored in the bottom of the cage, *and no more of them to be obtained until another season*. Or perhaps the cocoons are spun or the transformation to pupæ safely effected under ground, and the entomologist has full confidence that in due time he will obtain the much desired imago, and, when it may be expected, watches hourly for its emergence, and is rewarded by the appearance of an *Ophion* or a swarm of *Tachina* flies, or of some still smaller enemy, whose existence he did not even suspect.

Again, the collector may be obliged to delegate his cares temporarily