

CHRYSOPE LARVA IN A NEW ROLE.

Recently I received from my friend the Rev. Father Burke, of Alberton, Prince Edward Island, one of the curious cocoons of the Lace-winged Fly (*Chrysopa* sp.) with the statement that the larva had bitten a friend of his three times. I was somewhat surprised at this and wrote for further particulars, when, at Father Burke's request, the following interesting letter was written by Mr. John T. Weeks, of Alberton, P.E.I. :

"In reference to the insect forwarded to you by Rev. A. E. Burke, I may say that a few nights before enclosing the insect, my little girl was rehearsing her lesson to me when I felt something bite me on the back of my neck. I put up my hand but could not feel anything. Shortly afterwards I felt another bite, and still could not catch anything. It bit again, and I pulled off my coat and vest and asked my little girl to look if there was anything on the back of my neck. She found the insect in question, and I put my magnifying glass on it, and as it was different from any insect I had ever seen, I brought it to my office to show it to Father Burke, when he suggested that we enclose it to you. It agrees exactly with your drawing in your letter to Father Burke."

The Lace-winged flies are extremely interesting not only for their predaceous habits which make them rank amongst the most beneficial insects, but from their remarkable transformations. The eggs are beautifully netted and are borne erect on slender hair-like pedicels. The larvæ are active elongated creatures tapering to each end and furnished with long scissor-like hollow mandibles by means of which they seize their prey. This consists, ordinarily, of other insects, chiefly plant lice, of which they destroy enormous numbers. The jaws are hollow, and through them they suck up their liquid food. When full grown these larvæ spin small round pearl-like cocoons, which are remarkable for their exceeding smallness, as compared with the size of the larva which packs itself away inside them, and the large size of the gauzy-winged, golden-eyed, but terribly malodorous fly which emerges from them.

J. FLETCHER.