

Looking at the table, one is at once struck by the small number of genera and species represented out of a total of diptera, coleoptera, acari and lepidoptera occurring in France, so that in practice their recognition becomes a relatively easy matter.

It must be kept in mind that Mégnin's observations apply to human bodies. One is also struck by the absence of several forms well known to attack the flesh of dead animals, birds or reptiles; either they do not appear in the above list, or only appear at a much later date. The burying beetles, for instance, which attack game left exposed for a few days, will not attack human bodies under several months. Hence observations conflicting with Mégnin's work which rest upon observations on other animals, horseflesh for example, have, to our mind, very little practical value, what is wanted being rather multiplication of observations upon human remains, when all the conditions as to dates and meteorological conditions are accurately known. In this direction we have made some studies, which will be mentioned later, and others are still in progress. The possibility that some of the fauna may be attracted by the clothes and not by the bodies we have not found to be a serious obstacle.

Our observations now extend over a period of two years. As far as we are aware, no American or Canadian observations on this subject have been published, so that we had no direct information as to how far the dates and successions, laid down by Mégnin, might hold true of the climate of Canada. As to the comparative frequency of occurrence of various European, American and cosmopolitan genera and species there is considerably more information, though this is for the most part recorded in transactions and books not generally accessible.

To illustrate the difference in climate we have tabulated the mean monthly temperatures of the air and soil for Montreal, Greenwich and Paris and the soil temperatures for Montreal and Greenwich (the depth of soil temperature for Paris not being quite identical). The differences in summer temperature are very much less than one might expect, and this may explain the general correspondence of our results with those of Mégnin. The climate of Canada is peculiar in having a long, cold winter, (during which the ground is deeply covered with snow, which prevents the frost from penetrating deeply) followed by a hot summer. The interval between winter and summer is short. Everything is in full leaf within about a month after the disappearance of the snow, and during the warm weather temperatures from 80° to 95° Fahr. (27° to 32° C.) are not uncommon. Thus the temperature of the surface soil in summer is rather higher at Montreal than at Greenwich, and probably very near that of Paris,