

way; the next morning as I went by the same place I looked if it were still there; but not seeing it, was passing on again, when, on the opposite side of the path, and half buried behind a tuft of grass, I found it, and in the feathers and underneath the bird were at least half a dozen *Necrophorus velutinus*, four of which I secured. The distance this had, to all appearances, been dragged in one night, was over six feet four inches. Soon after the eggs and their decomposing receptacle are buried, the young larvæ hatch and begin to devour. They soon grow into long, fleshy grubs, narrowed at each end and having the segments distinctly marked, and the upper surface of each one armed with a horny plate, which has strongly toothed edges. These plates serve the larva in the stead of legs, of which it has only three very weak and small pairs. With the assistance of the horny segment-plates, it is enabled to force its way through the soft material in which it lives by alternately lengthening and shortening its body. As these insects during this period never change their locality, legs are useless; but when, after having spun a cocoon, in the earth laid dormant all the winter, and emerged the following spring as perfect insects, they lead an active, roving life, strong and slender legs, suited to their requirements, are provided, showing how nothing useless is created in nature, and how no necessary is found to be wanting.

There are many curious instances on record of the instinct displayed by these insects in providing food for their future young. In Westwood's "Modern Classification of Insects," mention is made of an instance in which some of these insects, in order to get possession of a mole fastened to a stick stuck upright in the ground, undermined the stick so that it soon fell to the earth. From an observation by M. Cadet de Vaux, it appears that while several individuals of some species of *Necrophorus* labour in concert, those of others work alone.

Latreille states that the larvæ of *Necrophorus* entirely consume the buried carcass, leaving neither skin nor bone. Hence it seems that the number of workers is proportioned to the quantity of food necessary for the support of their progeny.

One of the most objectionable features about these handsome and interesting insects is a habit they have of exuding a most fetid fluid, which is derived from the putrid food they feed upon. Unluckily, none of their tribe are free from this objectionable habit, and they never entirely lose the odour.

Among those insects which do good by preventing others from doing harm are found those predacious kinds which live on other insects, and they adopt the most effective means, viz., killing and eating all they find. They belong chiefly to the following families: *Cicindelidae*, or Tiger-Beetles, are bright metallic-tinted, merciless freebooters, armed with sharp, cruel jaws, and furnished with powerful wings and legs. In the larval state, too, they are very rapacious, living in holes in the ground, and only leaving their heads out; they seize and devour every insect which is unlucky enough to come within their reach.

The *Carabidae* are a large family of most useful insects, which destroy innumerable destructive larvæ of *Lepidoptera* and other insects. *Calasomas* are particularly active in killing the different species of cut-worms which work such havoc among all spring crops. There are many most valuable and beautiful insects among the *Carabidae*, the general appearance of which should be known to all, as both in the larval and perfect states they do an incalculable amount of good by keeping down insect enemies.

A very useful family of beetles, because they keep in check the destructive *Aphides*, is known by the name of *Coccinellidae*, or Lady-birds, and it would be well if the good they do were as well known as they are themselves.