

turbed when in this position, because it depends upon this attachment to draw itself from the old larva skin. Of six pairs which I tried to raise from the eggs in only one case was I successful, not because they are difficult to rear, for I have had very excellent success heretofore, but I was obliged to trust to inexperienced hands for a short time, and they were not properly fed. This pair are now in the cocoon, and I anticipate that they will come out ♂ and ♀, presuming this to be the law of their nature from the fact of there being two eggs laid together. I hope for further facts the coming season, and that those who have conveniences for raising larvæ will give their attention to the subject.—PHILIP S. SPRAGUE, Boston, Mass.

INSECTS AS FOOD.—In this utilitarian age perhaps the most important question in entomology is to find out in what way insects can be employed for the benefit of mankind. A most curious instance has lately come to my knowledge which I think may interest some of our readers. My informant, M. Guérin-Meneville, a well known sericulturist and economic entomologist, showed me some dark-coloured cakes resembling somewhat brown bread. These cakes are eaten extensively among the poorer classes and natives in the City of Mexico. They are made exclusively with the eggs of two kinds of water-bugs (*Corixa femorata* and a species of *Notonecta*.) The natives cut quantities of reeds and other aquatic weeds, and strew them on the borders of the great lake near the city, and they are soon coated with eggs laid by the insects. These eggs, which are about the size of a mustard-seed, are deposited so abundantly as often to cover the plants entirely. The natives "harvest" these plants, and after exposing them some time in the sun to dry, scrape off the eggs, and either keep them in that state for future use or pound them at once into meal. The perfect insects themselves are not neglected, for they are caught in great numbers and hawked about the streets as food for cage-birds and poultry, which are very fond of them. It is surprising that the raids which are practised against these insects in two of their states do not apparently diminish their numbers; they, however, multiply to such a degree, that notwithstanding the tribute they have to pay, enough survive to supply the natives with food year after year, M. Guérin-Meneville received samples of the insects, the eggs, "seed," meal, and cakes; but unfortunately the latter accidentally became saturated with spirits of wine in which a snake had been preserved, so that it was impossible to taste them.—E. L. Ragonot, 33 Rue de Buffon, Paris (*Science Gossip*).

We hear that the "Ladybirds," which excited so much curiosity last autumn, have reappeared in large numbers in the neighborhood of New Wandsworth. So early an appearance will surprise most of us who have been wont to regard these visitors as summer guests.—*Nature*, March 3.