

eat voraciously, and a single specimen will soon destroy the greater part of the leaves of the plant on which it has been placed and on several others near by. When full grown this larva is 3 inches long, or more, and about the thickness of the fore-finger, green, with paler stripes along the sides of the body. When disturbed it raises its head in a threatening manner and looks quite ferocious, but is incapable of inflicting any injury.

HARVESTING.

When the leaves approach maturity they gradually lose their deep green colour and assume a yellowish hue, which, in some varieties, is mottled with deeper markings of the same colour. The veins of the leaves become swollen and the substance of the leaf feels thick and gummy. At this stage the tip of the leaf becomes somewhat brittle and the midrib will usually break with a clean fracture if the tip is sharply doubled back; the leaves are then ready for harvesting. When the leaf is sufficiently matured, the sooner it is cut the better, as it is liable to injury from frost or other unfavourable weather. The usual method is to cut the plant down nearly to the ground and suspend the stalk with its leaves attached in a suitable drying-house where, when dried, the leaves are stripped and packed. The other method which is sometimes followed by those who cultivate tobacco on a small scale, or where labour is plentiful and cheap, is to strip the leaves from the plants in the field, gathering them as they mature and stringing them on twine or wires attached to laths or strips in such a manner as to allow each strip with its load of leaves to be handled separately. These are then placed in the drying-house to cure. By this process a better quality of leaf is obtained but at a larger cost for labour.

Some growers split the upright stem of the plant before cutting, with a sharp knife down the middle to within 4 or 5 inches of the base, then withdraw the knife and cut the stalk off close to the ground. This plan is said to be convenient for hanging, as the stalks can be placed astride the strips on which they are suspended and the leaves on stalks thus treated dry more rapidly; they are, however, more apt to slip off the sticks when moving them.

Another method is to pierce through the stalks with a V-shaped spear made of iron or steel, with a socket large enough to admit the end of a stick on which the tobacco is to be hung. The stick is set upright on the ground, fitted with the spear at the end, when the tobacco is lifted, one stalk at a time, and thrust on the spear, which passes through the stalk, about six inches from the base. The sticks are usually made $4\frac{1}{2}$ feet long, and afford space enough to suspend eight plants. When one stick is filled, the spear is taken off and attached to another, and this process is continued until the plants are all hung. Other growers prefer to suspend the plants by tying them to suitable sticks with twine.

Cutting should begin as soon as the dew is off the plants in the morning. Cut with a hatchet or suitable knife, grasp the stalk with the left hand and bend it well to the left, so as