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## NOTES ON LYTTA (BLISTER-BEETLES).

BY E. W. CLAYPOLE, YELLOW SPRINGS, OHIO.

During the present summer three species of *Lytta* have been very abundant and destructive here. The Striped Blister-beetle (*Lytta vittata*) in the early part of the season, about the end of June, began to do mischief to the Potato plants, especially where they were weedy. Later on, about the middle of July, this species was joined by the White-edged Blister-beetle (*L. marginata*), and both together fell upon the later kinds of Potato (in my garden the Buckeye). Now (August) the Black Blister-beetle (*L. atrata*) may be seen in company with the former two where a few belated plants afford them any green fodder. The last mentioned of the three, however, did not arrive in time to do any serious harm to the Potato, but turned its attention to a large bed of Sunflower belonging to my children, and are preying upon their yellow petals greedily. From twelve to twenty may be often seen upon a single plant.

All these three species "play possum" when frightened, but not all in the same way. The black one drops from the plant as does the Colorado Beetle (*D. 10-lineata*), but does not fold in its legs and antennæ and roll about. It lies just where it falls for some seconds, with limbs in the position in which they were when it dropped. The white-edged and striped species fall as if struck dead, but always alight on their feet or gain them immediately, and stand looking warily about them. If no danger seems near, or if an attack is made upon them, they run, and having the longest legs of the group, they run fast and are difficult to catch. But their bodies being soft, they are easily crushed. Their juices, as their name implies, are exceedingly blistering, and soon raise a water blister on the skin if applied to it. Hence they are often used locally as a substitute for the Spanish Fly.

The presence and voracity of these Blister-beetles make it very difficult to keep a bed of potatoes clean by hand-picking of any kind, but of course Paris Green or London Purple is as destructive to them as to the