

The Canadian Entomologist.

VOL. X.

LONDON, ONT., AUGUST, 1878.

No. 8

SOME OBSERVATIONS ON DERMESTES.

BY CAROLINE E. HEUSTIS, ST. JOHN, N. B.

Having read in the Report of the Entomological Society of Ontario for 1877 an article by Prof. J. T. Bell, of London, Ont., entitled "How to Destroy Cabinet Pests," I thought it might not be unprofitable to record my own observations on *Dermestes*.

Early in the summer of 1876 I captured four beetles, three males and one female, and placed them in a glass jar with a piece of the meat on which I found them feeding. I observed the female deposit a number of eggs on the meat, but before any were hatched I left home, and was absent about five weeks. On my return I found a large and flourishing colony of larvæ, most of them full grown.

My object in rearing these insects was not to study their natural history, but to find out the best means to destroy them. I put a piece of camphor gum in the glass as a first experiment. The effect on them was very slight. They appeared a little uneasy at first, but in a minute or so commenced crawling over the camphor quite unconcerned. I had heard of a clothier who rolled tallow candles up in webs of woolen cloth to preserve them from the attacks of "moths," and I resolved to try its effects on *Dermestes* larvæ. With this view I put a small piece of tallow in the glass, and the effect was almost instantaneous. It was quite ludicrous to see the stampede which commenced. Never did insect evince more terror or disgust than did these pests. They fled pell-mell to the side of the jar, but as there was no way of escape, they were obliged to yield to "circumstances over which they had no control." The closest observation failed to detect one going near the tallow. They remained for several days huddled together by the side of the jar in a confused mass.