
At a meeting of the committee, April 17, 1792, it was resolved, that for obtaining information of the facts necessary for forming the natural history of this insect, *before its entire evanishment from among us*, it be recommended to all persons whose situation may have brought them into acquaintance with any such facts, to communicate the same by letter, addressed to Thomas Jefferson, Esq., Secretary of the State to the United States.

Nine questions were proposed, on which information was particularly wanted. I quote here only the first.

“In what year, and at what time of the year, was this animal observed for the first time? Does it seem to have made its appearance in this country only of late years, or are there any reasons for supposing that it was known in any part of the United States previously to the commencement of the late revolution?”

The resolutions of this meeting are printed in full in Carey's *American Museum* (Philadelphia, 1792, vol. xi., June, pp. 285-287) by the committee.—Thomas Jefferson, B. Smith Barton, James Hutchinson, Caspar Wistar. The *American Museum* was discontinued after 1792. The last volume contains no report of the committee.

As is obvious from the first question, it was at this time not settled whether the insect had been observed here before the revolution, or not. Mr. A. Fitch quotes the publication in the *American Museum*, and stated that no report had been made by the committee. The importance of this question, and of a committee with Jefferson at the head, led me to ask Prof. J. P. Lesley whether the old minutes of the Philosophical Society contain any unpublished report, or anything else relating to the Hessian Fly. I received from Mr. Henry Phillips, jun., secretary of the society, the following answer, under date of March 28, 1884:—

At the request of Prof. Lesley, I have examined our old minutes in reference to the Hessian fly, and append on next page the results of my search. I know *positively** that before the revolution our newspapers are full of communications in reference to the Hessian Fly *eo nomine*. I cannot call to mind any one paper, but I remember perfectly frequently seeing these articles when reading for other purposes. I cannot find that the committee ever reported.

* The Italics are by Mr. H. Phillips.