

"Whatever the larva feeds upon, it will not have much to eat for the next six weeks, as the whole country is covered with snow yet (April 5), two to three feet deep, and I do not expect to see the last of it in the swamps till the end of May!"

SNOW FLIES.—The first mild days, about the beginning of March, every winter, bring out, on the banks of the River Credit, an immense number of neuropterous insects, called in this neighborhood "Snow Flies," from their habit of crawling over the surface of the snow, and appearing when it is even two or three feet deep. Their proper name is, I think, *Capnia Pygmaea*, Burm. (*Perla Nivicola*, Fitch, "Winter insects of E. New York"—a work that I have not seen); a technical description of them is given in Hagen's "Synopsis of N. American Neuroptera," p. 32. They are of a shining black color, with dusky black-veined wings, which are rudimentary in the male, but rather ample in the female; the antennae are rather long, with numerous articulations; the abdomen is terminated by two long setae; the female is usually about double the size of the male, but the individuals of each sex vary very much in size, some males being under a-fifth of an inch in length, while some females are over half an inch. I once found a few individuals crawling on the deep snow near a stream back of Cobourg, on March 1, 1865; but in this neighborhood they literally swarm for some weeks on the bridges, trees, &c., and on the snow about the river, even coming into houses some seventy feet above the water. In 1867, the first specimens appeared on the 26th of February; in 1868, on March 8th. This year I saw the first specimen on March 2nd, a bright, mild, thawing day, snow about two feet deep on the level; March 7th, a few more were seen; March 21st, quite numerous; April 10th, still plentiful. Their early appearance, long before the departure of the snow, must afford a welcome supply of food to the small birds that anticipate the advent of spring.—C. J. S. B., Credit, Ont.

THE ALDER-BUD GALL.—Another gall is common at Quebec on the Alder (*Alnus incana*, Willd). These galls are formed by the insect early in June, when the young buds are springing from the branches. I have counted from three to six orange-colored larvæ in each of these galls. They occupy separate cells between the thick young leaves, which are thus deformed by the puncture of the insect, forming a gall either round or semi-conical. One of these galls, about twelve months in my possession, was lately opened. It contained four orange-colored larvæ, one pupa of the latter, and one Inquiline of a brilliant green color. I sent this gall to Mr. Armistead, who informed me that although larger, it is similar to one on the European Hazel. I intended to have traced out the insect that produced them, but having to go to Labrador during the summer of 1867, I had not another opportunity to obtain specimens. In order to further investigation, I may mention that this gall will be found in June, in a wood north-west of Spencerwood.—W. COUPER, Ottawa.