

# Entomological Department.

## The Sheep Maggot Fly.

At a meeting of the American Institute, held in New York last May, a paper on this troublesome insect was read by the Hon. L. A. Morrill, as follows:—

"Sheep during the summer months are subjected to extreme annoyance from flies, principally *Estris Ovis* or gad-fly, and the several varieties of worm, or maggot flies. Fine woolled sheep from the compactness of their wool, do not suffer from the attacks of the latter, unless from scours or wounds, but the English long-woolled varieties are especially exposed. The insects passing under the name of fly, though most troublesome in July and August, attack sheep from May to September inclusive, depositing their eggs among the wool, in general about the tail, the roots of the horns, or any part which affords, from its filthy condition, a prospect of suitable provision for the maggot. When the eggs are hatched, a process which is, in sultry weather, almost instantaneous, the maggot invades the skin, and speedily brings the adjacent parts into a fit state for the reception of succeeding members of its species. The backs of long-woolled sheep, and from their exposure, more liable to be selected by the flies as a receptacle for their eggs than the corresponding parts in such as are covered by a short, thick fleece. No sooner has the maggot begun its operations than the sheep becomes uneasy and restless, rubbing itself on fences and trees, and endeavoring by every means in its power to free itself from the annoyance. Teased by the constant irritation, fever soon sets in, and if the sheep is not relieved by the shepherd's aid, death will inevitably follow:

"It is only a few years since that attention has been drawn to the history of the insect pests which originate the mischief. In a valuable paper, containing the results of observations made on this subject in the highlands of Scotland, and published in the *Quarterly Journal of Agriculture*, they are thus described: "The flies which are so troublesome to sheep, consist of four species, viz.: The *Muscar Cæsar Cadaverina*, *Vomitario*, and *Carnaria*, of Linnaeus. *Muscar Cæsar* is of a shining green color; *Muscar Cadaverina*, the thorax shining bluish, the abdomen green, like the *Cæsar*; *Muscar Vomitario*, thorax black, or dark blue gray, abdomen dark, glossy blue; this is the common blue-bottle, or flesh fly; *Muscar Carnaria*, gray; the thorax has three black longitudinal markings on the upper surface; the abdomen is checkered. In all instances the green flies were the first to attack, and this is the common opinion among shepherds. After a time, when the maggots commenced gnawing the flesh, the putrid stench which was thereby occasioned attracted other species. The blue-bottle was very common, more numerous than both the former species, and perhaps contributed most to accelerate the death of the animal, after the others had commenced. In five days after the larvae are hatched, they arrive at full growth, provided they have plenty of food; they then cease to eat, and seek to assume the pupa state, crawling under the ground two or three inches. Here they remain about fourteen days, when the shell cracks, and the imago, or fly, appears. The correctness of this description of their transformation Blacklock attests, from having watched their habits during his anatomical pursuits in the summer months. To ward off the attacks of flies, various substances obnoxious to them have been recommended. Tar, with spirits of turpentine, may be applied about the ears, horns, and tail; while others prefer a little melted butter or lard, thickened with flour of sulphur, put along the sheep's back, which is, on the authority of Blacklock, an effectual preventive. I have preferred a mixture of tar and turpentine to anything else, as nothing is so abhorrent to all insects as the odor of turpentine. Sheep farmers cannot be too vigilant during the summer months, and if any of their flocks are affected with scours or wounds, they should be got up without any delay and the above application made. Rams should be still more closely watched, especially the Saxons and Merinos, whose pugnacious tempers incline them so frequently to battle, often inflicting wounds around the bases of the horns which are certain to call the flies. Many valuable rams have been lost from this cause, which watchfulness might have prevented.

## Noxious Insects.

The Hessian-fly (*Cecidomyia destructor*) has made its appearance in the neighborhood of London, Ont., and has done a great deal of injury to the spring wheat. The Colorado beetle (*Doryphora decemlineata*) is very abundant throughout Western Ontario, but, we are happy to say, is being well kept down by the intelligent farmers of that district, who wage an exterminating war upon it with Paris green. In its eastern progress it has nearly traversed the Province of Ontario, but not yet in sufficient numbers to occasion much diminution in the potato crop. To the south-east we learn that it has invaded Maryland and Pennsylvania. In the neighborhood of London and Guelph, Ont., we observe, with great regret, that the locust trees are being rapidly destroyed by the ravages of the borer (*Arhopalus robinie*, Forster). Young Apple and Mountain Ash trees are also suffering grievously from the attacks of the *Duprestis* borer (*Chrysobothris femorata*, Fabr.) About Port Hope, Ont., this summer, the Forest and American Tent caterpillars (*Clisiocampa sylvatica* and *Americana*) have been more than usually numerous and destructive.—*Canadian Entomologist*.

ANTS ON LAWNS have been checked by using flour of sulphur where boiling water cannot be used.

PERIS RAPE.—This destructive pest of the cabbage and allied plants has now come as far west as Port Hope; it is almost as abundant in our garden as the common *Colias philodice*. No doubt it will proceed as far as Toronto before the close of the season. We have not yet perceived any particular depredation from its larvae in the kitchen garden, but we fear that we shall not long enjoy this immunity.—*Canadian Entomologist*.

POISONING BY PLANTS AND INSECTS.—A standing antidote for poison by oak, ivy, etc., is to take a handful of quick-lime, dissolve it in water, let it stand half an hour, then paint the poison parts with it. Three or four applications will never fail to cure the most aggravated cases. Poison from bees, hornets, spider bites, etc., is instantly arrested by the application of equal parts of common salt and bicarbonate of soda, well rubbed in on the place bitten or stung.—*Boston Journal of Chemistry*.

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