

POPULAR ENTOMOLOGY.

HALISIDOTA TUSSOCK MOTHS.

By ARTHUR GIBSON.

Among the insects which occur at Ottawa more or less commonly every season, are three different kinds of arctian moths belonging to the genus *Halisidota*. They are all of about the same size, measuring, when the wings have been expanded, from one and a half to two inches, and not one of the three would probably ever be picked out in a collection of insects as being specially attractive, or as possessing any particular or striking beauty. In the realm of nature, however, it is by no means only the so-called attractive or beautiful objects that are studied; all have their place in this interesting world of ours, and even the smallest or most inconspicuous-looking insect will be found worthy of some thought and investigation biologically.

The genus *Halisidota*, according to the latest revision, is not an extensive one in North America, there being only eight species found north of Mexico. The majority of these are southern or western in range, but, as above stated, three of them, viz., *H. tessellaris*, S. & A., *H. maculata*, Harr., and *H. caryæ*, Harr., may be found in the Ottawa district almost any season.

The moths of these three species emerge from their cocoons during the month of June, and, being nocturnal in habit, only fly at night. Like all insects they vary in numbers with the seasons. Some years the moths are noticeably abundant, others the reverse, but, as a rule, these insects may be collected any season in either the larval or adult states of their existence.

The perfect insects, as is the case with hundreds of other kinds of moths, are attracted to lights, and everyone has noticed on warm, close evenings, during the months of June and July, the swarms of insects of all kinds which fly around the electric lights, particularly those in the outskirts of cities and towns. The attraction which these arc lights have for insects is well known to the entomologist, and anyone desirous of securing moths for study can easily collect ample material during almost any warm evening from May till October.