examining a few bones and some dust that a murder had been committed during the latter part of February of the year before last —and then be absolutely justified by the dying confession of the suspected party. The chief danger to be feared from Mégnin's imitators is that they might tend to indulge in guesses having no very solid basis and to apply rules to countries and climates where they were inapplicable. We considered that before any safe deductions can be made in the case of Canada a number of comparative observations must be made to show how far the data obtained from French fauna hold good here.

It is very much to be regretted that in addition to giving the generalisations and medico-legal applications made by him, M. Mégnin has not also given us the assistance of his numerous observations which underlie these deductions, that we may know accurately the degree of variation of dates actually met with under definite conditions of experiment.

For convenience we have arranged in tabular form the dates which Mégnin assigns for different fauna to attack the body, as far as these can be determined from the literature above mentioned, though, of course, considerable latitude must continually be allowed for variations, and for this latrelation M. Mégnin is not personably responsible.

The principle is that the products formed at different epochs in the progress of decomposition attract certain forms and repel others.

The typical course of events shown by the table may be summarised as follows: While the body is still fresh it attracts the diptera *Musca*, *Curtonevra* and *Calliphora*. After decomposition has set in, the flesh flies *Lucilia* and *Sarcophaga* are attracted. Later, when fatty acids are formed, the body is invaded by the beetle *Dermestes* and by the moth *Aglossa* (this latter we have never met with in our Canadian observations, but it is apparently very common in France). Later *Pyophila* of the diptera and *Necrobia* of the coleoptra appear, as the condition becomes caseous. After this comes a period of ammoniacal decomposition marked by liquefaction of the tissues into a blackish pulp, during which stage a group of coleoptera, *Necrophorus*, *Silpha*, *Hister* and *Saprinus* are met with, as well as the diptera *Ophira*, *Tyreophora*, *Phora* and *Lonchea*. In the next stage the tissues dry up and are invaded by acari, the debris and excrement of which form a powdery deposit. Subsequently, with the progressive drying of the tissues, *Aglossa* (2nd generation) reappears, together with the moth *Tineola* and the coleoptera *Attagenus* and *Anthrenus*. Finally, when nothing but the dried ligments remain on the bones, two forms of coleoptera, *Tenebrio* and *Ptinus*, appear and devour these.

In the case of buried bodies, the fauna are said to be much less varied and to consist mainly of *Phora* and *Ophira* in the diptera, and *Philontes* and *Rhizophagus* of the coleoptera, together with any diptera which have gained access to the body before burial.