THE AMERICAN TENT CATERPILLAR.

(*M. americana* Fabr.)

This is the tent-building species so common in orchards during May and June; it should not be confused with the Fall Webworm, which constructs larger tents during the latter part of the season.

Fig. 1. Small Tent of American Tent Caterpillar.
Half natural size.

The adult (see Fig. 4) is a medium-sized moth, with a wing expanse of one and one-half inches or less, reddish-brown in colour, with two oblique white bands across each fore-wing near the middle. The male is distinctly smaller than the female and has densely feathered antennæ or feelers.

The caterpillar, Fig. 6, when full grown is about two inches in length. It is black, sparsely clothed with yellowish hairs and has a whitish band bordered with reddish-brown lines along the middle of the back. There is a row of blue spots along each side, with reddish-brown and yellow lines and markings on the sides below.

The Egg-mass.—The eggs are usually deposited in thick ring-like masses about the twigs (see Figs. 2, 3 and 5). Each greyish-black mass contains from 150 to 350 eggs firmly embedded in, and completely covered by, a glue-like liquid which hardens and holds the egg safely in position until they hatch in the following April, and often for long afterwards. The ends of the egg-masses are usually noticeably more sloping than those of the Forest Tent Caterpillar.

Life-history and Habits.—The egg-masses of this species are found near the tips of the twigs during the winter. The young caterpillars hatch from the eggs during the first warm spring days, just as the apple buds re opening, in fact often before any leaves have appeared. They feed first upon the varnish-like covering of the egg-masses, if the buds have not opened, and soon attack the opening buds or young leaves. The caterpillars from each egg-mass begin at once the construction of a silken tent in a nearby crotch (see Fig. 1). During fine weather they feed at intervals upon the neighbouring foliage, and take shelter within the tent when not feeding