

## THE MIGRATION OF SOME NATIVE LOCUSTS.

BY NORMAN CRIDDLE, TREESBANK, MANITOBA.

We read from time to time, and have done so for many years past, of vast hordes of locusts darkening the sky, as they sweep onward, from unknown breeding grounds; how they devastated the crops and ate up every living leaf in any locality they happened to make a stopping place, and in fact left behind a desolate and leafless waste where a few hours previous all had been luxury and beauty. Such is said to be the case, at times, in parts of Africa, India and certain South American countries. There is, however, no longer any mystery connected with these visitations. Science has explained all that; has discovered the breeding grounds and is doing much to eliminate the injury by guarding against attacks and providing for them when they occur.

We are not, as a rule, apt to associate our common grasshoppers—many of which, however, are true locusts—with those devastating species. In fact, of all our many different kinds we usually claim but one as truly migratory, namely, the Rocky Mountain Locust, *Melanoplus spretis*, the locust made famous by having a special commission appointed to investigate its ravages. This species, in the past, has done immense damage to vegetation mostly in the United States, but it also invaded a great portion of Manitoba in the seventies, and is specially remembered on account of its having practically swept the Red River Valley clear of vegetation. Since then there have been two minor outbreaks confined to southern Manitoba, the locusts having evidently flown from somewhere south. In spite of the prevalence of this species in Manitoba at times it is very doubtful whether it can be classed as a native, a distinction which, after all, we are not anxious for.

Leaving out *M. spretis* we have still several destructive species, foremost among them being the Lesser Migratory Locust, *Melanoplus atlantis*, with several minor lights such as *M. gladstoni*, *M. femur-rubrum*, *M. angustipennis*, *M. packardii*, *M. minor*, *M. bivittatus* and others, all of which are very injurious at times and migrate regularly during the months of July and August.

It is a wonderful thing this migration. Few animals are free from a desire or instinctive stimulus to move to other parts and so spread the species. Plants, also, are constantly doing it by means of their seeds, and those that cannot go far by their own exertions, fasten themselves to such as can, and so, as with ourselves, air, land and water, are all made use of for the purpose of travel.