tion of the contents showed that they were largely subsisting on the saw-fly larvæ. The normal phytophagous habits of this vole are well known, and this raises a fine question as to the real economic value of the animal in the case of the present attack; this will be discussed later.

Insect Parasites.—It sometimes happens that an insect pest which has assumed large proportions in a certain region disappears almost as quickly as it appeared. This is often due to the fact that the insect parasites of the injurious insect increase to so great an extent that almost every individual becomes a host and is consequently destroyed. As in the case of lepidopterous larvæ the chief parasites of the saw-fly larvæ are the larval stages of the Ichneumons and certain other minute Hymenoptera. The larvæ of certain Diptera, such as the Tachinidæ, are also parasitic on the saw-fly larvæ. One of the objects of the present investigation was to discover what species of parasitic insects affected *Nematus erichsonii*. So far two parasites have been found, one of which is an Ichneumon, which Mr. Claude Morley very kindly identified for me as *Mesoleius aulicus*, Grav., and the other was a dipterous larva.

Mesoleius aulicus, *Grav.* (Fig. 4).—It was found that the proportions of cocoons which contained this parasite varied in batches of cocoons from different plantations. From one batch of 136 cocoons 13 Ichneumons emerged that is, 9·4 per cent. of the larvæ had been parasitised; a batch of 176 cocoons from another plantation yielded only 6 Ichneumons, that is, only 3·4 per cent. of the saw-fly larvæ contained the parasites. It is of importance to study the numerical proportions of the parasites in the different localities, as it may eventually be found that in certain localities the percentage of cocoons containing parasites is so great that some practical benefit may accrue from the distribution of these highly parasitised cocoons in localities where the percentage of parasites is much lower. This species of Ichneumon appeared to be fairly numerous this year, as I saw several on the wing during my July visit to the affected plantations.

*Description of M. aulicus.** —This insect belongs to the

* For a full description, see *E. H. Ashton.* "Forsök till uppställning och beskrifning af de i Sverige funna Tryphonider." *Kongl. Vetens.-akad. Handl.*, 1855, p. 134.