



Who is there, indeed, that has not set one on outstretched finger and sung to it in childish glee, "Lady-bird, Lady-bird, fly away home, your house is on fire and your children all burned!"? In France they are much regarded also, and called by children "Bêtes à bon Dieu," "Vaches de la Vierge," etc.; and in England they are termed Lady-cows as well as Lady-birds.

The general colours of these insects are yellow, red or orange, with black spots; and black, with red, white, or yellow spots; their shape is hemispherical, and though they vary somewhat in size, an average specimen bears a considerable resemblance in size and figure to an ordinary split pea; they have but very short legs and therefore creep but slowly; their powers of flight, however, are considerable. When alarmed they fold up their legs under the body and drop to the ground, and if handled they emit a yellowish fluid from the joints of the limbs which has rather a strong and disagreeable smell. In old times this fluid was considered to be an admirable specific for toothache! We have never, however, possessed sufficient courage to test its qualities in this respect ourselves!

As every one knows—or certainly ought to know by this time—the Lady-birds, both in their larval and perfect states, feed upon the obnoxious plant lice (*Aphides*), and are thus of the utmost service to the gardener, orchardist and hop-grower. Some species also prey very successfully upon the dreaded Colorado beetle, and assist beneficially in reducing the numbers of this new insect plague.*

More than thirty species of this family of beetles are known to inhabit Canada. Attention has so frequently been drawn to them in the course of these reports, that we need do no more than say—spare their lives and encourage their propagation by all means; they are the most useful class of insects that we have.

We have now enumerated all the leading varieties of beetles that are in their several modes serviceable to mankind. If any of our readers are now enabled to distinguish between insect friends or foes of this order, we shall feel well repaid for any trouble that these descriptions may have cost us. Our limited time and space preclude us from going on to other orders in this report; when another year comes round we hope, however, to have something further to say upon the subject.

* Vide *Second Annual Report*, p. 72.