DEAR SIR,—

Mr. Bates is quite right in saying *Doryphora* will eat *Solanum dulcamara* and *Datura stramonium;* they have preferred these to tomatoes in my garden. A friend found them eating *Hyoscyamus.* The present season seems exceedingly favourable to production of *Nematus* and other grubs destructive of the currants and gooseberries.

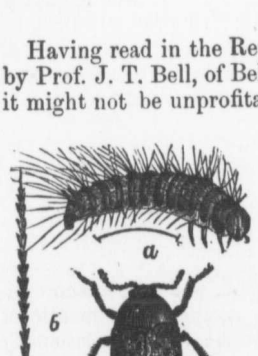
H. H. CROFT, Toronto, Ont.

SOME OBSERVATIONS ON THE BACON BEETLE DERMESTES LARDARIUS.

BY CAROLINE E. HEUSTIS, ST. JOHN, N. B.

(From the Canadian Entomologist.)

Having read in the Report of the Entomological Society of Ontario for 1877 an article by Prof. J. T. Bell, of Belleville, Ont., entitled "How to Destroy Cabinet Pests," I thought it might not be unprofitable to record my own observations on *Dermestes Lardarius.*



In the accompanying figure 1, both beetle and larva are shown, magnified; the hair lines placed by the side of each indicate the natural size.

Early in the summer of 1876 I captured four beetles, three males and one female, and placed them in a glass jar with a piece of the meat on which I found them feeding. I observed the female deposit a number of eggs on the meat, but before any were hatched I left home, and was absent about five weeks. On my return I found a large and flourishing colony of larvæ, most of them full grown.

My object in rearing these insects was not to study their natural history, but to find out the best means to destroy them. I put a piece of camphor gum in the glass as a first experiment. The effect on them was very slight. They appeared a little uneasy at first, but in a minute or so commenced crawling over the camphor quite unconcerned. I had heard of a clothier who rolled tallow candles up in webs of woollen cloth to preserve them from the attacks of the "moths," and I resolved to try its effects on *Dermestes* larvæ. With this view I put a small piece of tallow in the glass, and the effect was almost instantaneous. It was quite ludicrous to see the stampede which commenced. Never did insect evince more terror or disgust than did these pests. They fled pell-mell to the side of the jar, but as there was no way of escape, they were obliged to yield to "circumstances over which they had no control." The closest observation failed to detect one going near the tallow. They remained for several days huddled together by the side of the jar in a confused mass.

Satisfied with my experiment, and being very busy at the time, I put the jar away, and on looking at it about a fortnight afterward, I found but one beetle and that one *dead,* of all that large family. As all the larvæ and three of the four beetles had disappeared and "left no trace behind," I naturally concluded that they had been driven by starvation to prey upon each other. There was no possibility of escape from the jar, and my conclusion seems reasonable, even if I cannot prove it.

I have ever since kept tallow in trunks or presses where there are woollen garments, blankets or furs, and I have had nothing eaten up to the time of writing. In preparing my boxes for mounted specimens, I put bits of tallow between the strips of cork and cover with paper gummed to the sides of the box, and I have not had a single specimen injured by *Dermestes* or any other cabinet pest. As tallow is cheap and can be obtained in either town or country, I would heartily recommend it to both housekeepers and naturalists. To the former it would be much better and less disagreeable than the snuff, tobacco, pepper and other preventatives which are put on furs with such unsatisfactory results. Although such a remedy as Prof. Bell recommends might do for the cabinet, it would be neither pleasant nor safe to have about our clothing.