

incessantly wage upon one another for individual tenure. In a pleasurable and profitable manner this is borne in upon us, and we are now able to conserve our neighbour's interests as well as our own, by seeing at a glance which is the useful, and which is the destructive insect, without ruthlessly destroying all that comes to hand.

Thus attaining a deeper insight into the ingeniousness they display to evade enemies and preserve their type, we are led on to ponder over the brevity of their little day, and the amount of labour they can press into it.

When we consider how many causes are working together against them, and shadowed as they are every second by perils innumerable and foes untold, the great wonder is that so many survive. But, Nature, as if to make amends, has liberally endowed them with active and passive means of defence in their spears, knives, stings, poisons, etc., with tricks of mimicry and cunning, to lessen the dangers they are heir to; for each one that is swept off the earth there are hundreds more to rise up and replace it. Every baby insect as it puts in an appearance, knows its special mission in the land, begins with that end in view, and carries it on faithfully and well until "Life's curtain is quietly rung down" upon its daily round.

Many people imagine that little winged insects grow into bigger ones; as for instance, small flies, moths or beetles; such, however, is not the case. When any insect attains wings it is full-grown, though many from different causes, circumstances, food, etc., may not be as large as they had a right to be. The body of a matured insect is divided into three well-defined parts, technically known as the head, the thorax, and the abdomen. In the course of their existence nearly all have to pass through three distinct transformations, more or less complete, and are subject to three different states; but it is only when they

finish the last change that they are insects in the true sense of the word.

The peculiar characteristics of these three transformations have been scientifically named to distinguish each stepping stone to the perfection of the higher life.

The first, or early form after quitting the egg, is the larva, signifying a mask, or spectre, for then the future outline is hidden, and it does not appear what it shall be.

The pupa is the second, or doll-like state, indicating its lack of movement, and the period when it is generally swathed and inactive.

Imago is the third and last condition as a typical winged, or perhaps wingless, creature.

In the upward and onward tendency of their successive states we are afforded a beautiful emblem of progression, beginning, as they do, in a lowly material form, and advancing at every step by a gradual and regular process towards some better and more complete end.

Most perfect insects have horns, known as antennae, which feel about and seemingly express their sensations and their language. Many ideas have been set forth by different naturalists as to their true use, but it is most generally supposed that they hear, smell, and feel, with them.

In the world of insects it is the mothers who have all the hard labour, but they never rebel, and they show the most marvellous forethought in their instincts, employing various and ingenious precautions in building and providing for their families before creeping away to die, as happens in most cases. Many of their homes alone would command our attention from the curious manner in which they are constructed, attached, and hidden. As a rule they are placed near surroundings of a protective coloring, and within reach of the particular food their children require to be reared on; for they know how to prepare and put in readiness what will be most congenial to their com-