REPORT OF THE STATE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE ON THE WORK OF EXTERMINATION OF THE GYPSY MOTH. JANUARY, 1898

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MASSACHUSETTS STATE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE

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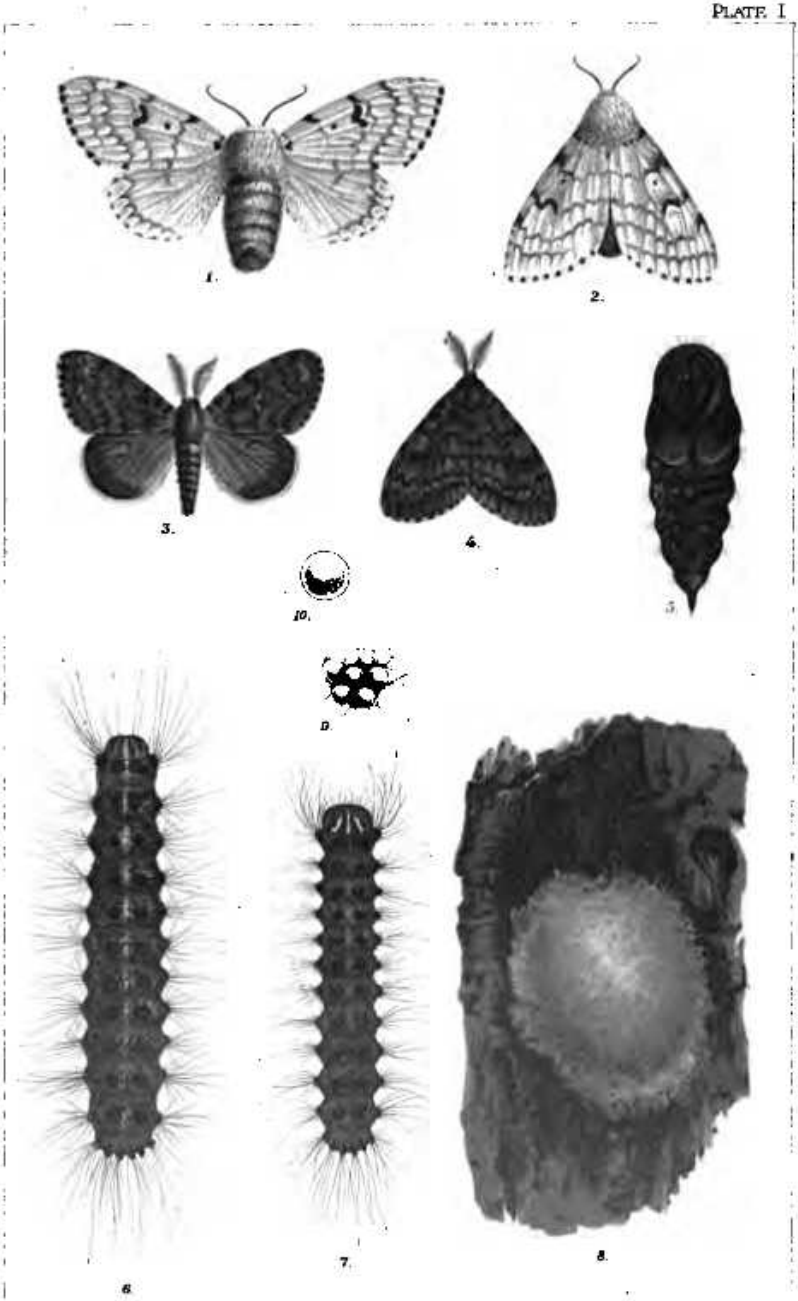
PLATE I.



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GYPSY MOTH.

An Explanation of Plate I, with a Short Description of the Different Forms of the Gypsy Moth and its Feeding Habits.

The Eggs.

[Fig. 8, cluster of eggs on bark; Figs. 9 and 10, eggs magnified.]

The eggs are deposited in clusters, averaging about six hundred eggs each, and covered with yellow hairs from the body of the female moth. These egg-clusters are usually found in sheltered places on the bark or in the crevices and cavities of trees, stumps and undergrowth; also on fences and buildings and in the crevices of stone walls and other objects, near the plants or trees on which the insect feeds. The eggs are laid in July, August and September, and hatch after the foliage starts in the late spring or early summer of the ensuing year; therefore the insect passes the fall, winter and early spring in the egg.

The Larva or Caterpillar.

[Figs. 6 and 7.]

When first hatched the caterpillars are less than one-fifth of an inch in length. As they grow larger they may be seen in clusters upon the trunks and branches of trees or in the cavities and other hiding-places where they gather in June, July and the first part of August.

The Pupa.

[Fig. 5.]

The caterpillar when fully grown sheds its outer covering and becomes a pupa or chrysalis. This usually occurs in July or August. The pupa may be found in the same situations as the eggs. In Massachusetts the insect usually remains in the pupal state from ten to thirteen days, emerging as a moth at the end of that period.

The Moth.

[Figs. 1 and 2, female; Figs. 3 and 4, male.]

The female moth usually deposits her eggs very near the abandoned pupa case, and within a few hours after emerging from it. She dies soon after. The male is a rapid flyer. The female does not fly.

Habits of the Caterpillars.

The gypsy moth feeds only when in the larval or caterpillar state. In Massachusetts the eggs of the gypsy moth begin hatching about April 20, and the young continue to emerge until the middle of June. The length of larval life varies somewhat according to circumstances, but probably averages at least ten weeks; therefore the feeding season in this country lasts about four months. When the caterpillars are first