

ness). It will be seen, therefore, that with regard to frequency of meteors this later portion of the shower was not to be compared with that witnessed before midnight. Twelve meteors, including one of the first magnitude and two even brighter, were mapped between 11h. 30m. and 13h. on the night of the 9th; four of these were Geminids.
W. E. BESLEY.
70 Vincent Square, S.W., December 16.

Slug following a Closed Trail.

My attention was drawn a few days ago to a brown slug, about 2½ inches long, which had made for itself a closed iridescent track on the concrete flooring of a conservatory. I could not find at what point it had got on to the curve, which ran at one end into a damp part of the concrete, but, in four hours from the time I first saw the slug, it had made three complete circuits and two-thirds of a fourth, always keeping the whole of its body on the trail. The latter, of a uniform breadth of 3/16 inch, varied considerably in curvature, but nowhere presented any very sharp corners, and measured, roughly, forty inches round. Though the rate of progression was sufficiently slow, the slug rested on the track for seven hours, after which, thinking it dead, I touched it and found it had not quite dried up. Indeed, without elongating its body, it began to move and laboriously shifted its position by about an inch. There it remained (the time being then 10 p.m.), waiting, perhaps, for the influence of a more humid atmosphere, for morning found it moist and healthy, breakfasting more than a yard from the near and damp end of the track, which it must have reached by completing the fourth circuit, as there was no trail other than the closed one alluded to. If slugs are in the habit of following old trails, it does not appear that the present specimen had any previous experience of a re-entrant path, but that it depended solely on ocular intelligence of the path in advance.

VINCENT DANIEL.
151 Crwys Road, Cardiff, December 13.

Animals Feeding on Poisonous Plants as Food.

APROPOS of the various instances quoted of animals feeding on poisonous plants, it may be of interest to mention that in this part of India (the North-west Provinces), goats frequently eat, without any ill effect, the leaves and green stems of the "Akaúa" or "Madar" (*Asclepias* or *Calotropis gigantea*), the milky juice of which is an acrid poison for human beings, and is frequently used as such in infanticide cases.

CHAS. A. SILBERRAD.
Muttra, India, November 18.

THE FUMIGATION OF TREES.¹

THE San José Scale was first discovered by Prof. J. H. Comstock, near San José, California, in 1879, and was named by him *Aspidiotus perniciosus*. It has been found in various parts of the world, and its original habitat has not yet been ascertained with certainty, but is conjectured to be Japan. In 1893 it was

¹"Report on the San José Scale in Maryland, and Remedies for its Suppression and Control." By W. G. Johnson, A.M., Entomologist. (*Bulletin* No. 57 of the Maryland Agricultural Experiment Station, College Park, MD., August 1898.)

first discovered in the Eastern States, having been introduced about six years before with some infested plum-trees from California, in the attempt to obtain an improved plum which should be proof against the attacks of the plum-weevil; but this laudable object proved the means of introducing a much worse pest into the Eastern States. According to the pamphlet before us, it has now been introduced into no less than thirty-three States, besides Canada and British Columbia, chiefly from the centre of infection in New Jersey. The State of Maryland is badly infested, large orchards of plum, pear, peach, cherry, &c.,

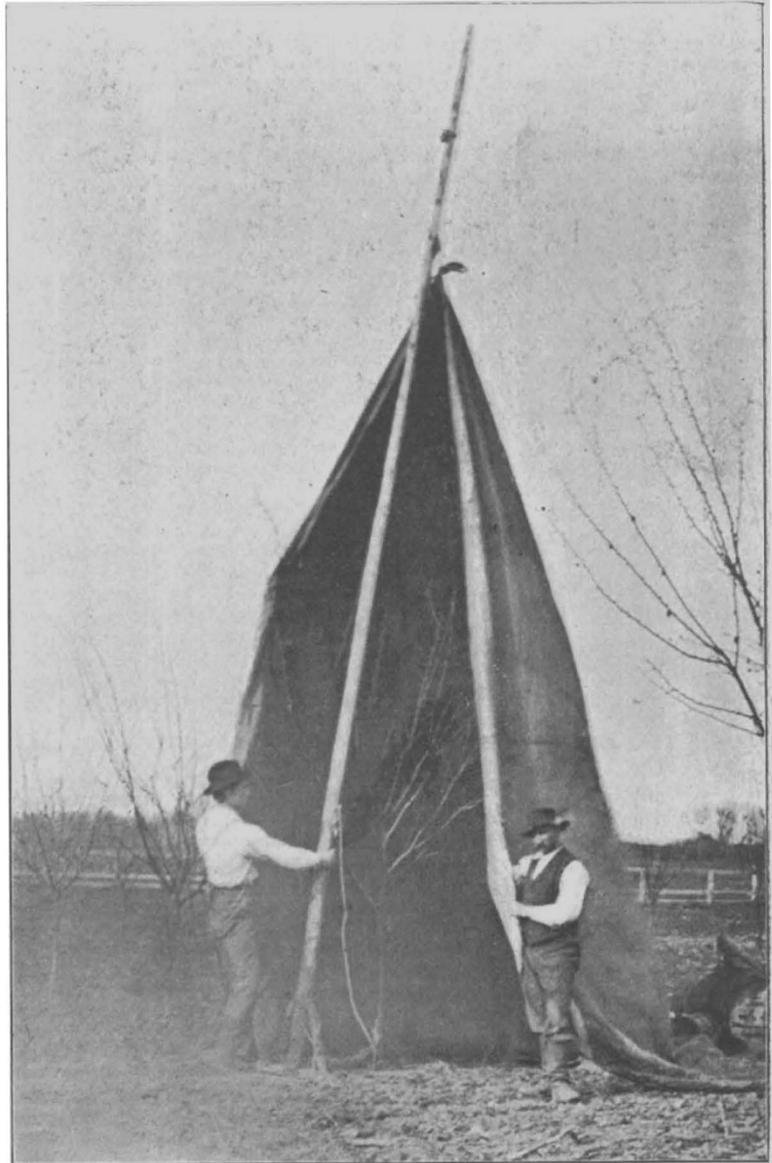


FIG. 1.—Placing a tent in position over a plum-tree.

having been almost entirely destroyed by it in some localities. The insect attacks trees and plants in a similar manner to other *Coccidae*, attacking a great variety of plants, and spreading over leaves, trunk, branches, and fruit indiscriminately. The effects of various remedies are discussed by Prof. Johnson, spraying with whale-oil soap, and fumigating with hydrocyanic acid gas, appearing to be the most satisfactory and efficacious remedies.