

NATIONAL MUSEUM GETS FAMOUS BEETLE COLLECTION

The insect collection of the National Museum, already one of the most valuable in the world, has been enriched by the well known beetle collection of the late Col. T. L. Casey, whose study of these insects had earned for him an international reputation.

For several decades Col. Casey collected beetles, large and small, for he had a preference for those of microscopic size, at the numerous army posts at which he was stationed in the United States and in the different countries in which he saw foreign service. The resulting collection comprises an accumulation of North American beetles which is one of the most complete in existence and contains as well many rare specimens from South America and other parts of the world. Col. Casey published in all twenty volumes and many shorter scientific papers on the beetles to which he devoted so much of his life.

Being a private collector of independent means, Col. Casey was able to indulge his fancy and at the same time add to the sum total of scientific knowledge, by studying many rare, little known species for which most specialists can spare little time from their investigation of insects of greater economic importance.

The Casey collection does include, however, many economic species that attack standing timber as well as numerous genera of weevils that are injurious to the roots and seeds of crops. These groups are being rearranged and made available for study in the Museum; those of greater economic importance receiving earlier attention so that specialists may have access to them for study at as early a date as possible.

This collection brings around 6,000 type specimens to the National collection, including nearly 4,000 not in its possession before, and opens up to scientists a wealth of valuable material for study.

IS TOBACCO INJURIOUS?

"To smoke or not to smoke, that is the question". Sir Humphrey Rolleston of the medical faculty of Cambridge, in a recent lecture before the Harrowgate Medical Society, has summed up the existing evidence pro and con as to what tobacco actually does to one, with the conclusion that it is not so bad as many would have us believe.

There are several outstanding features, however, that are not so reassuring. Psychological tests show that smoking lowers mental efficiency from 10 to 23 per cent. While these results are not conclusive, said Sir Humphrey, it shows a definite lessening of capacity to work. It is also suggested that premature senility is induced in heavy smokers by the sedative action of nicotine on the nervous system.

Experimentally it produces definite degeneration of the arteries in rabbits but authorities believe that if tobacco smoking is really a cause in arterio sclerosis, it is a slow one, so mingled with the general conditions of old age that discrimination of the actual factors are almost impossible.

"The effect on the stomach," said Sir Humphrey, "is important; X-ray bismuth