OBITUARIES



Harry Scott Smith 1883-1957

Harry Scott Smith, Professor of Biological Control, Emeritus, at the University of California, passed away suddenly at his home in Riverside, California, on November 28, 1957.

Professor Smith was born at Aurora, Nebraska, November 29, 1883. His early life was spent on the farm and his education was obtained at the University of Nebraska, from which he received the A.B. and M.S. degrees in 1907 and 1908, respectively. Here he came under the influence of Lawrence Bruner and became his assistant for a short period after graduation. Then followed an appointment as Expert in the Bureau of Entomology, U. S.



Harry Scott Smith

Department of Agriculture, first to study natural enemies of the cotton boll weevil, then the gypsy moth and finally the alfalfa weevil. On the last problem he travelled to Italy in search of natural enemies for importation into the United States. There he met the emiment Italian entomologist, Filippo Silvestri, and began a close association that continued until Silvestri's death in 1949.

In 1913 Smith was appointed Superintendent of the California State Insectary, then under the State Commission of Horticulture, with the primary responsibility of reorganizing the biological activities in the State and of placing that work on a sound scientific basis. This was accomplished to a substantial degree during the following 10 years, and in 1923 the research activities in biological control were transferred to the University of California. Professor Smith continued in charge of the Department until his retirement in 1951.

During his long period of service in directing the biological control work in California, Professor Smith developed the program for the mass production and utilization of *Cryptolaemus montrouzieri* in the control of the destructive mealybugs infesting the citrus orchards of the State. Mass production programs, perhaps best exemplified by that with *Macrocentrus ancylivorus* against the oriental fruit moth in 1944-46, were typical of his approach to many field problems in biological control.

The successes in biological control in California during this

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period include complete suppression of the citrophilus mealybug through parasites imported from Australia in 1928, an achievement comparable to that of the control of the cottony cushion scale by the vedalia beetle 40 years before. The destructiveness of the black scale on citrus has been very greatly reduced through establishment of imported natural enemies, and the same is true of many less important pests.

To extend more fully the utilization of natural control agencies in pest control, the Laboratory of Insect Pathology, under Dr. E. A. Steinhaus, was set up within the Department in 1945, the first such unit in the United States. It has since attained world-wide recognition as a teaching and research center.

Professor Smith was responsible for the first attempt at biological control of weeds in the continental United States this being against the Klamath weed, *Hypericum perforatum*, in northern California. Leaf-feeding beetles of the genus *Chrysolina*, obtained from Australia, brought about a spectacular decline of this pest throughout the infested area.

Professor Smith's interests extended much beyond the field of biological control. The California plant quarantine system was under criticism at one time and its regulations were believed to be discriminatory against products from other states. A committee under the chairmanship of Professor Smith was appointed to study both the biological and economic aspects of the subject. The committee's report entitled "The Efficacy and Economic Effects of Plant Quarantines in California," published in 1933, brought the whole subject into proper focus and did much to standardize interstate plant quarantine practices.

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Other interests included that of the development of resistance in insects to insecticides, which was the subject of his presidential address before the American Association of Economic Entomologists in 1940. Also, he was a keen student of ecology and population dynamics as bearing on biological control problems, and several of his papers on these subjects received wide recognition.

Professor Smith served as a member of the Invertebrate Consultant's Committee for the Pacific, Pacific Science Board, from 1948 and was a delegate to the International Congress of Entomology (1928) and the Pacific Science Congress (1933, 1949). He was a member of Sigma Xi, Delta Tau Delta, and Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. In the American Association of Economic Entomologists he served as vice-president in 1924, president in 1940, chairman of the Pacific Branch in 1924, and was elected to honorary membership in the Entomological Society of America in 1957. In recognition of his professional attainments the University of Nebraska conferred upon him the honorary degree of Doctor of Science in 1953.

Professor Smith is survived by his wife, Psyche Bruner Smith, five children and 10 grandchildren.

Prof. Harry, as he was affectionately known to his associates and a host of friends, will be long remembered for his never failing kindness and consideration for others and for his stimulating influence on all who were associated with him.

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