

*Trichogramma minutum* Riley, in  
Relation to *Sitotroga cerealella* Ol.  
in Mysore

EVER since the potentialities of *Trichogramma minutum* Riley, a well-known Hymenopterous egg-parasite, in the field of biological control of certain types of harmful insect pests of cultivated crops, were discovered, the eggs of the tiny grain moth, *Sitotroga cerealella* Ol. common over a large part of the world, have been in use, principally in U.S.A. for the mass rearing of the parasite in the laboratory before liberation of the latter in infested fields.

When experiments were first started in Bangalore about a decade ago to test the suitability of different insects, to act as laboratory hosts for the mass production of *Trichogramma minutum* Riley, found to parasitise the egg masses of the principal moth-borers of young sugarcane in Mysore State, the grain moth, *Sitotroga cerealella* Ol., was, for obvious reasons, one of the locally occurring insects whose eggs were exposed to the action of the parasite. It was found, at the time, that the parasite persistently refused to take to those eggs. It was not possible to explain this curious fact and further attempts were not made.

Attempts were, however, renewed recently, and now the parasite is found to accept the same host eggs that once proved to be unacceptable. Some 24 generations of the parasite were bred out of the eggs of *Sitotroga cerealella* deriving a slightly different biological strain of the parasite.

Before an explanation of this behaviour in host preference on the part of the indigenous race of the egg parasite, *Trichogramma minutum* Riley, is put forward, it is thought advisable to make further observations. In the meantime the fact that the eggs of *Sitotroga cerealella* Ol. were definitely acceptable here to the sugarcane moth-borer egg-parasite, for breeding and multiplication, on however small a scale, requires to be recorded.

Whether the same host eggs (*S. cerealella*) will serve in India, quite as well and on as large a scale, as in U.S.A. and other places, for purposes of mass production of the parasite and whether they can successfully compete with, or prove better than, the eggs of *Corcyra cephalonica* St. at present in extensive use, as the host, in the parasite laboratory at Mandya in Mysore State, is quite another matter, requiring further investigation.

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A Meteor

A MOST extraordinary meteorological phenomenon occurred at about 9-20 on the night of the 7th September 1940. A meteorite of unusual size and brilliance shot across the sky right overhead of us from east to west throwing out sparks of white light in profusion on either side of its dazzling trail, paling the electric lights all round for a few seconds. It appeared to come down in a big curve, and as it neared the horizon, its head turned reddish and the streak behind, bluish green. There was a thud like that of distant gunfire and a low roar for about a minute. The phenomenon was distinctly visible at several stations in the district, as I have been informed. Even people enjoying a circus show at Beawar, 32 miles S.W. of Ajmer, were attracted by this exciting object, and hundreds living in the open, in a Famine Relief Camp saw it. All declare that they never saw the like of it in all their life. Probably some of the villagers in Marwar living on the borders of Ajmer-Merwara, will be able to locate it.

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