

Utetheisa ornatrix, L, and other Insects
attacking Sann Hemp in Trinidad.

W. Victor Harris, B.Sc.

SANN HEMP, Crotolaria juncea, has recently been introduced into Trinidad and other islands in the the British West Indies as a cover crop. Though still in the experimental stage, it is giving every indication of success and is being taken up on a large scale in several localities in Trinidad. In its original home, India, it is attacked by larvae of the Red spotted Ermine Moth Utetheisa pulchella L¹, which, to quote Lefroy² "is a common insect of the plains, the moth flitting about herbage in the day. It is widely scattered over the Old World. The brightly coloured caterpillar feeds upon Sann Hemp and wild Crotolaria." The closely allied neo-tropical species U.ornatrix, L is common in Trinidad, on the weed Crotolaria retusa which is of frequent occurrence on waste ground, roadsides, and along traces. This wild Crotolaria is very similar in appearance to Sann Hemp and it is not surprising that the introduced species soon became attacked. It was found, under laboratory conditions, that larvae could be changed from one food plant to the other without detriment, that larvae hatched from eggs laid on one would immediately feed on the other, and that females laid their eggs indiscriminately on sprays of the two plants together.

The damage is done mainly by larvae boring into the developing pods and eating the young seeds. Minor damage results from their feeding on the young leaves. In Trinidad it has been found that practically all the damage is done to pods developing during the wet season, July to December. After this latter month
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