

## STUDIES ON SOME WEST INDIAN WHITEFLIES

### I. INTRODUCTION.

At the request of the Colonial Office a general study of the family of the Homoptera, Aleyrodidae, was commenced in February, 1958. The earlier part of the work, including a review of the economic literature referring to whiteflies, is submitted as a thesis for the Diploma of Imperial College, London. It was decided to use the year at the Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture to obtain a greater knowledge of the systematic problems for which the family is notorious. Also in view of the lack of information on the biology of members of the sub-family Aleurodicinae a study was made of the life history and habits of one species.

The work may be divided into three parts:

1) As thorough a study as time permitted was made of a) the biology under laboratory conditions and b) the morphology of one species of Aleurodicus.

2) Collection, examination and identification was carried out for as many other species as possible. This part of the work was hampered by the fact that many undescribed species were found and also because the delimitation of genera in the Aleyrodinae is very difficult.

3) A review of the very scattered literature on the subject was made, and a list compiled, of the species recorded from the West Indies. The value of this list from a zoogeographical point of view is still limited, owing to the highly fragmentary nature of our knowledge of whiteflies.

In addition to the above much time was spent in examining early literature on the subject, in view of the fact that I.C.T.A. library maintains a collection of old journals rarely seen outside the larger museums.