

THE BIOLOGICAL CONTROL

of

CLIDEMIA HIRTA. D. DON.

---

Introduction.

A great deal of interest has arisen in Biological Control during recent years, and readers, wishing to gain an insight into this subject, will find an extraordinary good summary of work already done, in two articles, contributed by Dr. A.D. Imms to the April and May numbers of Tropical Agriculture 1931. (Also vide Biological Control. -by Thomson).

Dr. Imms has dealt with the subject from two aspects - viz. the Biological Control of Insects - and the Biological Control of Weeds, by means of Insects.

It is under the latter category this work comes.

Nature of Problem.

*Clidemia hirta* occurs in Fiji as an obnoxious weed, causing great annoyance and financial loss to growers of economic crops on this island. Work has been done previously in an attempt to control this weed (vide Agricultural Journal, Department of Agriculture, Fiji. 1928 & 1929). At one time, hope was placed in the introduction of *Leothrips urichi* from Trinidad, (vide Agricultural Journal Department, Fiji. 1929), but this proved to be a partial failure.

*Clidemia hirta* occurs in Trinidad as a wild plant, but causes no harm to any of the economic crops. Apparently, in this island it is under sufficient natural control.

The partial results obtained by the introduction of the thrips, induced Mr. Hubert W. Simmonds to visit Trinidad towards the end of 1929, in search of other means by which the control of this weed in this island was effected. During his stay, he discovered that the fruits of this plant were attacked by internal feeders, viz caterpillars, and also by a gall-forming chalcid.