

No. 1.— *The Fossil Ants of North America*¹

By F. M. CARPENTER

I. INTRODUCTION

SIXTY-THREE years ago, when the first fossil insects were discovered in American Tertiary rocks, a new era began in the study of the geological history of the insects. Early expeditions under the stimulating leadership of Dr. S. H. Scudder, with the coöperation of the United States Geological Surveys, secured collections of over 20,000 specimens in the Florissant shales alone. For the most part, the material gathered at this time was described by Scudder between the years 1867 and 1900, when he was finally forced into inactivity by paralysis. For a short period of five years the Tertiary insects of the country were entirely neglected, but in 1905 the work was again taken up by the University of Colorado. The following year Professor W. M. Wheeler, Professor and Mrs. T. D. A. Cockerell, and S. A. Rohwer collected extensively at the Florissant locality, and in 1907 also a large expedition was made to the same beds under the direction of the American Museum of Natural History, Yale University, the University of Colorado, the British Museum of Natural History, and the Royal Irish Dublin Museum. The insects found on these two expeditions have chiefly been described by Professor Cockerell, Professor H. F. Wickham (Coleoptera), Professor C. T. Brues (Parasitic Hymenoptera), and S. A. Rohwer (Tenthredinoidea).

The long illness which Scudder endured after 1900, and which finally caused his death ten years later, prevented him from completing the investigations on the Florissant insects, so that when his collection was donated to the Museum of Comparative Zoölogy in 1902, fully half of the specimens were unstudied. This unworked material was found by Professor Wheeler to include over 4,000 ants which, together with as many more obtained on the later expeditions, were turned over to him for study. At about that time Professor Wheeler was occupied with the preparation of a monograph of the ants of the Baltic amber and after he had finished this task, he was prevented by other matters from carrying out his intention of describing the Florissant ant fauna. In 1925, at the suggestion of Dr. Wheeler, I undertook the study of these

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