

EDITORIAL

THE CENTENNIAL OF DR. L. O. HOWARD

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June 11, 1957 is an important date for entomologists, for it is on this day that we celebrate the one hundredth anniversary of the birth of a famous entomologist whose life began at Rockford, Illinois in 1857. Dr. Leland Ossian Howard, Chief of the Bureau of Entomology, United States Department of Agriculture for nearly a quarter of a century, probably did more to promote entomology in the United States than has any other person. Nor did his efforts stop here. Through his numerous trips to foreign countries and because of his world-wide contacts, his impact on entomology in many parts of the world was strongly felt.

Dr. Howard is perhaps best known to mosquito workers as a world authority in medical entomology. He was the first in the United States to report on the use of kerosene to kill mosquito larvae and his experiments led to the universal use of petroleum oil as a mosquito larvicide.

One of his important books, entitled "Mosquitoes—How They Live, How They Carry Disease, How They are Classified, How They May Be Destroyed," which contained the facts that malaria and yellow fever are mosquito-borne, was published at precisely the right moment. At that time (1901) yellow fever was the scourge of Havana and Panama and his recommendations were put into immediate use to help rid both areas of the disease. Later, in collaboration with H. G. Dyar and F. Knab, he embarked on a more ambitious scheme and produced the classic work, "The Mosquitoes of North America, Central America, and the West Indies."

The book gave a great impetus to mosquito studies and early control efforts.

He was a prominent supporter of campaigns against disease-carrying insects and the slogan, "swat the fly," became a national one.

Dr. Howard was an intellectual giant who made outstanding contributions in many other fields of entomology. He received numerous medals and awards not only in the United States but also in foreign countries. He was a member of practically every entomological society in the world and took part in many international scientific meetings. The many honorary positions he held are too numerous to mention here.

Among his more than 900 publications, were included such books as "The Insect Menace"; "The House-fly, Disease Carrier"; "A History of Applied Entomology"; "The Insect Book" and "Fighting the Insects: The Story of an Entomologist."

Howard was known for his interest in and kindness to young entomologists and was a great stimulus to them. And now today, one can easily detect the enthusiasm which entomologists feel toward him. In fact, in Washington, D. C., the enthusiasm has reached such proportions that a dinner in his honor was held on June 11, 1957 at the Cosmos Club where he was a prominent figure for many years. Our only regret is that Dr. Howard was not living to participate in the celebration. As his daughter Lucy says, "Father would have enjoyed every minute of it."