British Museum (Natural History)

EXOTIC MOTHS

SERIES No. 6

5 Cards in Colour

Set E 27

One Shilling

a

b

c

EXOTIC MOTHS

(a) (*Amaxia chaon*) (b) (*Automolis semiovalina*)
 (c) (*Automolis garleppi pallipennis*)

Natural size

BRITISH MUSEUM (NATURAL HISTORY)

POST CARD.

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MATTER.

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PRINTED IN
GREAT
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a

b

c

EXOTIC MOTHS

(a) (*Leucodonta bicoloria*) (b) (*Cerura esmeralda*)

(c) (*Stauropus chloë*)

Natural size

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a

b

c

EXOTIC MOTHS

- (a) (*Campylotes desgodinsi splendida*) (b) (*Nevrina procopia*)
(c) (*Orybina flaviplaga*)

Natural size

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a

b

c

EXOTIC MOTHS

(a) (*Bombyx mandarina*) (b) (*Bombyx mori*)

(c) (*Bombyx huttoni*)

Natural size

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a

b

EXOTIC MOTHS

(a) (*Pterothysanus noblei*) (b) (*Hibrildes neavi*)

Natural size

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EXOTIC MOTHS.

Series No. 6.

This series exhibits considerable variety, both with regard to the families of moths represented, and their places of origin. The first card shows three moths of the family *Arctiidae*, which have been selected from the large number of species known from South and Central America in order to illustrate their diversity of form and colour. On the second card are figures of three beautiful moths from Burma and neighbouring countries. Three species of *Notodontidae* are shown on the third card, and the fourth displays the common silkworm moth and two of its close allies. The last card in the series figures Indian and African examples of the little known family *Pterothysanidae*.

E 151 (a). *Amoxia chaon*.

This pretty moth is one of the finest of the Central and South American *Arctiidae*, of which there are many beautiful species. In spite of the large number of species, the life histories of very few are known.

E 151 (b). *Automolis semiopalina*.

This curiously patterned South American Arctiid was first figured by Felder in the *Heterocera* of the *Reise Novara*. It is not common, and nothing is known of its earlier stages.

E 151 (c). *Automolis garleppi pallipennis*.

As may be seen by comparing this figure with the preceding, the genus *Automolis* comprises moths of remarkably diverse pattern. These moths are by no means common, and few are known in their early stages.

E 152 (a). *Campylotes desgodinsi splendida*.

This beautiful moth belongs to the family *Zygaenidae* (sub-family *Chalcosiinae*) and has been figured from a perfectly fresh specimen recently received from Burina, with the view to placing on record the richness of its colouring. Unfortunately, these rich colours tend to fade in the specimens. This insect is not common, and nothing is known of its early stages.

E 152 (b). *Nevrina procopia*.

This curious and strikingly marked member of the family *Pyralidae* occurs from North India to New Guinea, and is represented also in Formosa and the Liu-Kiu Islands.

E 152 (c). *Orybina flaviplaga*.

This figure shows a Burmese specimen of a member of the *Pyralidae*. The moth is known also from Sikkim and Assam.

E 153 (a). *Leucodonta bicoloria*.

This glossy white moth, prettily marked with orange and black, is found in Central Europe, Anaurland and Japan. About the year 1860, specimens were taken in the south of Ireland, and also in Burnt Wood, Staffordshire, and Barrett mentions the capture of a specimen near Exeter in 1880; with these exceptions the species is unknown as a British insect. The caterpillar is pale yellowish-green, rather lighter on the upper surface, with green lines of which the centre one is the darkest; there is a green-edged yellow line along the spiracles. It feeds on birch during July, and pupates in a compact silken cocoon spun up between leaves. The moth emerges in the following May or June.

E 153 (b). *Cerura esmeralda*.

One of the most beautiful species of the South African *Notodontidae*. The caterpillar feeds on species of *Protea*, and constructs a tough cocoon on the stem of the plant.

E 153 (c). *Stauropus chloë*.

Although closely allied to our Lobster Moth, this beautiful West African species possesses much more brilliant colouring. The British species takes its name from the curious caterpillar, which has long legs somewhat resembling those of a lobster. The early stages of this African moth are not known.

E 154 (a). *Bombyx mandarina*.

The majority of the more typical *Bombycidae* occur throughout the Indo-Australian region, with a few species in Africa, whilst there is in America a group of moths which apparently belong also to this family. The species figured here is from Japan and China, and is the closest known ally of the Silk-worm moth, shown below it. It may be that the Silk-worm moth originally possessed a strongly marked pattern like that of this species, and that hundreds of years of domestication have produced the present appearance of *Bombyx mori*. The caterpillar bears some resemblance to the common silk-worm, and is greyish-brown in colour, with the fourth and fifth segments distended, giving it a humped appearance; the fourth segment bears a black eye-spot with an inner red ring, and the sixth a black eye-spot with an inner grey ring. The caterpillar also carries a short tail-horn like that of the hawk-moth caterpillars. It feeds on mulberry.

E 154 (b). *Bombyx mori*. (Silk-worm Moth).

Though this interesting moth is not so well known as its caterpillar, the common Silk-worm, there must be few people in the world who are unacquainted with the insect or at least with the facts concerning its valuable silk cocoons. The silk produced is of the highest commercial value, and the insect has been domesticated for a very long period, and has become distributed throughout the world, though, of course, not in the wild state. Its original home is not definitely known, but it seems not unlikely that it was formerly a native of North China, and it may be that it was originally a moth more like *Bombyx mandarina* [E 154 (a)], to which it bears a close resemblance. The Silk-worm itself feeds on the mulberry, and before turning into a chrysalis, spins the beautiful cocoon which has proved of such great value to commerce.

E 154 (c). *Bombyx huttoni*.

It will be noticed that this Indian moth does not resemble so closely the common Silk-worm moth, *Bombyx mori*, as does *Bombyx mandarina*, the first species shown on the card. The caterpillar too differs considerably, and is a very striking object. The thoracic segments are much distended dorsally, while each of the abdominal segments 2 to 7

and 9 bears a pair of spine-like processes and the 8th possesses a single somewhat larger process. The colour of the full fed caterpillar is yellowish-white, beautifully and closely marbled over with orange, dark ash-grey, leaden blue and brown. The cocoon is large and not so compact as that of *Bombyx mori*, and the silk is of good quality, but the caterpillar is not so amenable to domestication as is the Silk-worm.

E 155 (a). *Pterothysanus noblei*.

This strange looking Indian moth flies in the day-time, and is shaped more like a butterfly than a moth. One curious feature it possesses is the long fringe on the inner margin of the hindwings. Nothing is known of its early stages. The family name is *Pterothysanidae*, which includes also the moths of the genus *Hibrildes* [E 155 (b)].

E 155 (b). *Hibrildes neavi*.

This African moth is apparently allied to *Pterothysanus*, and has the same day-flying habit. In addition, it bears a striking resemblance to the butterflies of the genus *Acraea*, having the same habit of resting by hanging from a grass stem or other support with wings folded over its back. Its flight is different from that of the *Acraeas*. The early stages are unknown.

Set E 27.

July, 1924.