

# BIOLOGY AND ECOLOGY OF ORIENTAL TERMITES (ISOPTERA)

NO. I.—*ODONTOTERMES PARVIDENS* HOLMG. AND HOLMG. SEVERELY  
DAMAGING THE BARK AND CONTRIBUTING TO THE DEATH OF  
STANDING TEAK TREES IN UTTAR PRADESH, INDIA

BY

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(With two tables and a plate)

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## I. INTRODUCTION

The termite, *Odontotermes parvidens* Holmgren & Holmgren, is a bark feeder and makes mud-plaster coverings on the trunks of trees; it does not make narrow, tubular mud-galleries like *Odontotermes obesus* (Rambur), the common mound-building termite. Beneath these mud-coverings the workers feed on the bark and sometimes even damage the sapwood of standing trees. *O. parvidens* does not build mounds but breeds in underground nests. It has been recorded as damaging the following timber species in India: *Duabanga sonneratioides* Ham., *Melanorrhoea glabra* Wall., *Pinus longifolia* Roxb., *Shorea robusta* Gaerten f. and *Sterculia villosa* Roxb. (Beeson, 1941, p. 552). It is also a serious pest of the roots of *Cajanus cajan* Linn. (Millsp.) (= *indicus* Spr.) (Rattanlal & Menon, 1953, pp. 83-84), and in my files I have a record of it on *Litsaea polyantha* Juss. in Assam. The present is the first record from teak, *Tectona grandis* Linn. f.

*O. parvidens* occurs practically all over India and goes up to an elevation of about 6,000 ft. above sea-level in the Himalayas.

## II. OBSERVATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

In May 1952, Dr. K. Kadambi, Assistant Central Silviculturist, kindly informed me that teak (*Tectona grandis* Linn. f.) was dying in the Pharanda Range, Gorakhpur Forest Division, Uttar Pradesh, and that the bark showed signs of white-ant attack. Sometime later, specimens of damaged teak were received from the Range Officer,



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