RESEARCH NOTES

A CARPET BEETLE LARVA (COLEOPTERA: DERESTIIDAE) FROM THE DIGESTIVE TRACT OF A WOMAN

On July 21, 1953, a woman forty-three years old in London, Ontario experienced a sensation of peri-anal itching, and suspecting the presence of pin-worms, examined a stool following a bowel movement. As it was found a small, dead "worm". When examined by the writer this proved to be a larva, 7 mm. long, of a beetle of the genus Attagenus as identified with keys in B. E. Rees (1943). Classification of the Derestidae (lurder, hide, and carpet beetles) based on larval characters, with a key to the North American genera. U.S. Dept. Agric. Miscell. Publ. No. 511). It closely resembled the larva of Attagenus piceus (Rees). A. piceus is a beetle of cosmopolitan distribution and its larva feeds on furs, skins, woolen fabrics, stored grains and cereals (Blaisowe, J. R. 1951. Insects and Hygiene. Methuen and Co., London).

K. Matheson (1950. Medical Entomology. Comstock Publ. Co., Ithaca) points out that cases of castaneuria, the infection of tissues by beetle larvae, relates to larvae of the Derestidae and Tenebrionidae and that infection probably occurs through eating of food containing eggs or larvae. H. L. G. T. (1953. J. Amer. Med. Assn. 96: 1571-1572) reports a case of larvae of A. piceus infecting the nose of a girl. In the case of the woman at London, as reported by the present writer, the larva was probably ingested with food.

Clinical data in this case were contributed by C. A. Cline, M.D., who was the physician investigating the case and the larva was submitted to the writer for identification, by W. M. Wilson, M.D., of the Regional Laboratory, Ontario Department of Health, London.—W. W. Jones, Department of Zoology, University of Western Ontario, London, Ontario.