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THE LARVÆ OF *DORATIFERA CASTA*, SCOTT.

By W. J. RAINBOW, F L.S., F.E.S., Entomologist.

(Plate xxix.)

During a visit to Bathurst in February last, Mr. J. A. Thorpe collected, together with other material, a large quantity of the larvæ of a "Cup" Moth—*Doratifera casta*, Scott. These creatures were in thousands upon the leaves of various Eucalypts, some being minute, some half-grown, and some mature or nearly so.

This species was described and figured by Scott.¹ In the work referred to the author says :—"The larvæ are of frequent occurrence in March, and widely distributed, as we ourselves have procured them at the Turon, and in our own immediate vicinity on the Lower Hunter, the distance between the two places being fully 130 miles. They feed upon the leaves of various Eucalypts, principally confining themselves to the upper surfaces, which they speedily consume, leaving untouched the inferior epidermis and nervures, so that from their congregated numbers, the boughs of the trees which they infest appear as if scorched by a hot wind, the leaves becoming shrivelled or rolled up."

Mr. Thorpe informs me that in the district around Bathurst, the bush was being devastated by these larvæ, and that the further one drove out from the settlements, the worse they were, both saplings and trees being covered by them. The foliage of the trees affected appeared quite bleached.

In the accompanying illustration (Pl. xxix.), photographed from material collected by Mr. Thorpe, the half-grown larvæ will be seen congregated upon leaves and feeding upon the epidermis as described by Scott. Many of the leaves collected at Bathurst had had the epidermis eaten off on both sides, and some of them had been almost completely demolished. In captivity the younger larvæ appeared to content themselves with the epidermis merely, whilst those fully grown ate right through the leaves.

The fully grown larva is about 23 mm. long, thick, anterior and posterior extremities obtuse, velvety-black, and provided with four longitudinal rows of thick, yellow, spine-like protuber-

¹ Scott—Australian Lepidoptera, i., 1864, p. 18, pl. vi.

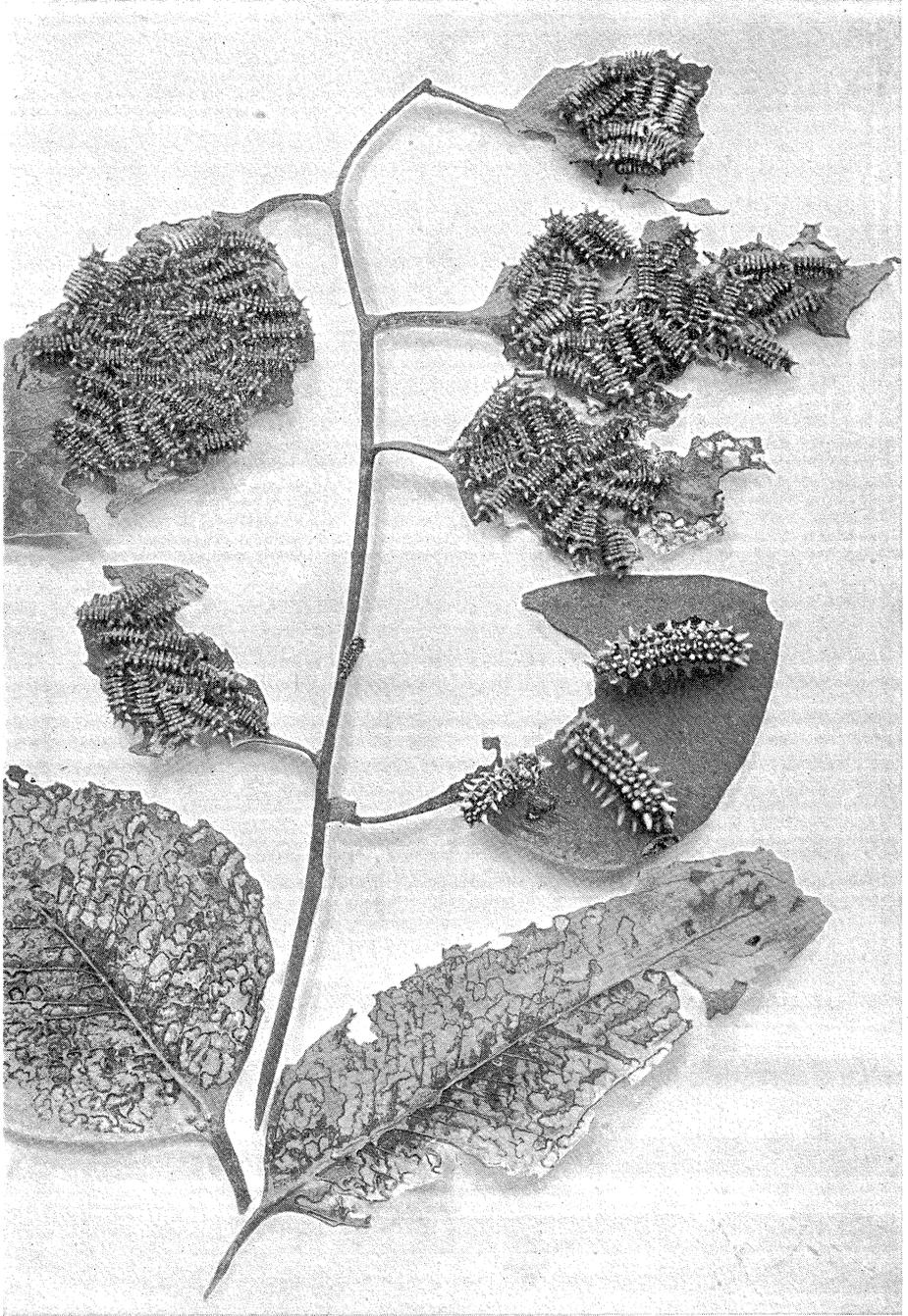
ances, all of which are furnished with short, stiff bristles and rather long hairs; of these protuberances, those constituting the two lateral rows, and the anterior and posterior pairs of the dorsal series, are much the largest; upon the thoracic segments there are, as is usual with *Doratifera* larvæ, four tubercular projections each of which is armed with urticating spines, and these can be thrust out for defensive purposes when the creature is irritated or annoyed; between the rows of spines there are numerous pale coloured spots; the larvæ are somewhat flattish or depressed along the dorsal line.

The cocoon is shining brown, about 11 mm. long, ovate, brittle, and attached to the food plant by threads.

EXPLANATION OF PLATE XXIX.

DORATIFERA CASTA, *Scott.*

Spray of Eucalypt with leaves covered with larvæ. The majority of these larvæ are about half-grown, but two examples upon a single leaf are fully grown, or nearly so. There are also two bleached leaves from which the epidermis has been eaten.



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