

However, we have adopted the recent naming as being more descriptive.

The insect is practically omnivorous; if it shows any preference at all it is for the more sensational forms of literature.

**Description and Control:** This pest is beyond description and almost beyond control.

In addition there are various parasites whose work is not so noticeable, but whose presence in any library is undesirable. Among these may be mentioned:

The Tardy Worm,—*Cunctator* pre-

hensilis, so called from its dilatory methods and its habit of grasping and retaining any book wanted for examination purposes.

*Streptocumulus immemor*, or the "Absent-minded Collecting Beetle," and others too numerous to mention.

Lack of space and a rigorous editor preclude an exhaustive discussion; but enough has been said to point out the path for future research. It is high time that readers co-operated with a view to exterminating these pests of the library.

## Mosquitoes

By ERIC HEARLE, B.S.A.

**M**OSQUITOES have at one time or another left their mark on most of us, and everyone realizes that they take a piercingly keen interest in humanity in general. It seems only fair that we should reciprocate this interest, and on our side seek to probe into some of the mysteries of their existence.

Few people, however, appreciate the mark that mosquitoes have left on the history of the world; and it is indeed almost incredible that such small, flimsy insects should mould and modify the destiny and population of whole continents. The fertile plains of Africa might have been the centre of the world's civilization; but, instead, the deadly swarms of mosquitoes, and the malaria carried by them, have shut Africa off from progress more effectively than the greatest natural barriers could have done. It is due to them that Africa has remained the "dark continent" and many of her tribes advanced no further than our ancestors of the stone age. Ross says: "for cen-

turies the successive waves of civilization which have fertilized Europe and America have broken themselves in vain upon its deadly shores."

From the earliest historical times we find mosquitoes to have been of astonishing importance. Those who saw the siege of Babylon pictured in "Intolerance" can visualize for themselves the retirement of the army of Sapor, King of Persia, who was obliged to raise the siege of the city of Nisibia because of a "plague of gnats" that attacked his transport animals and caused his army to retreat.

Greece only degenerated after malaria had sapped her strength; and it appears that Alexander the Great, lamenting that there were no more worlds to conquer, was himself conquered by the bite of a mosquito. Probably from the same cause, Rafael met his early death, and the production of his masterpieces was untimely ended. The prevalence of malaria in Italy in early days is borne out by the fact that the great artist's