

the Metamorphoses of Alaska Coleoptera, the Tenthredinoidea, and the few Sphegoidea and Vespoidea obtained. Mr. Nathan Banks describes the Arachnida and Neuropteroid Insects; Mr. O. F. Cook, the Myriapoda; Mr. Justus Watson Folsom, the Apterygota; Mr. A. N. Caudell, the Orthoptera; Mr. Theo. Pergande, the Aphididæ and Formicidæ; Dr. Wm. H. Ashmead, the Homoptera and Hymenoptera; Mr. O. Heidemann, the Heteroptera; Mr. Rolla P. Currie, the Odonata; Mr. E. A. Schwarz, the Coleoptera; Dr. H. G. Dyar, the Lepidoptera; and Mr. D. W. Coquillett, the Diptera. Each writer gives a list, with dates and localities, of the species assigned to him and describes the new forms. Altogether the entire collection consisted of 1,001 species, of which no less than 344 were considered to be new to science, and are accordingly named and described in these volumes.

It is evident from the foregoing summary that a very important addition has been made to the knowledge of the insects of the far north-western regions of North America, regarding which nothing has been known, except in the order Coleoptera, which received much attention from early Russian investigators and was more recently catalogued by the late Dr. John Hamilton. It will now be comparatively easy for travellers in the future to collect and identify the insects found in Alaska, and our friends in British Columbia will obtain in these volumes a large amount of valuable information regarding the forms inhabiting that portion of our country. To them, indeed, this work will be indispensable, and it should find a place in all the public libraries of the Province.

JOCULAR ENTOMOLOGY.

The remarks of Prof. Aldrich on the above subject in the March number of the CANADIAN ENTOMOLOGIST suggest to me the existence of a good deal more humour, intentional or otherwise, in scientific (?) nomenclature than appears on the surface. It must sometimes be very difficult, if not impossible, for an author to choose a name, especially one not preoccupied, having some reference to specific characters, habitat, or *modus vivendi*, and it is quite obvious that thousands of names in existence were never intended to have any such reference whatsoever. The custom of naming things after people, whether they lived many years B. C. or in more modern times, or after classical myths, might become intolerable if carried too far, and it seems as if a little humour, which is often the fresher for being unconsciously suggested, is bound to creep in

somewhere. And why not? It is surely an improvement on so much of the dog-latin, or what may just as well be termed cat-greek (not to mention the false concords!), with which scientific lists are crowded. It is hard enough at times for one who, like myself, has no pretensions as a classical scholar, to make so much as a vague guess at the translation of names that are grammatically correct, without trying to discover their application too. To hear the pronunciations often given to names must have made many a schoolmaster squirm. And why do not describers more often state their reason for a name when that is not self-evident?

I was the other day arranging in series, previous to examination, a species I had received by mail. There were 5 or 6 specimens, and they had but one antenna each, some the right and some the left. As I looked at them I wondered whether such an accident had ever given birth to the name *alternata*. Can it have been the condition of the type specimen to which the name *Leucania imperfecta* was intended to refer? Or did successfully-replaced wings, antennæ, etc., give rise to the application of *refecta* to an *Oncocnemis*? Alas! there must be many a type to which *trita* would be much better suited than the name it bears, and Sir George Hampson, who has the care of the types at present, can perhaps tell us whether Morrison's *Agrotis intrita* does not require redescription, say, as it has travelled far, as *fracta*. I cannot find that a description of *dirupta* has ever been published. The mail clerks send me lots. It seems to have a very wide range, and is referable to a large number of genera. One might be excused for wondering whether when Walker described *Dryobota illocata* he was doubtful as to its affinities. Such apparently was really the case with Prof. Smith sixteen years after Grote had redescribed the species. But reference to Prof. Smith's Catalogue shows that lack of a locality label on the specimen evidently suggested Walker's name. Would that all collectors would endeavour to obviate this application of the name again. "Retained" is often the final comment made—and, I must admit, generally in full justice—by specialists to collectors on new forms sent for naming. Yet, strange to say, *relenta* is not yet in use in the N. American Lépidoptera. There is, however, a *Xylopharia remissa*, which in this sense may or may not have been misapplied. These suggestions might doubtless be carried very much further.—F. H. WOLLEY DOD, Millarville, Alberta.

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