XVI.—A New Genus of Termitophilous Staphylinidæ.

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Read February 11th, 1889.

The careful and enthusiastic studies of Mr. J. Beaumont, Superintendent of Motive Power of the Panama Railroad, upon the habits of the Termites of the Isthmus of Panama, have already been made known to the Academy through Mr. P. H. Dudley.

During the progress of these investigations, Mr. Beaumont had the good fortune to discover a very remarkable Staphylinide, living in the nests of a species of *Termes* or allied genus, which latter is at present in the hands of Dr. H. A. Hagen, of Cambridge, Mass., for identification and description.

Through the kindness of Mr. Dudley, I am enabled to present the following diagnosis of this interesting addition to our Termitophilous fauna.

TERMITOGASTER n. gen. (Aleocharini.)

Head moderate in size, very slightly narrowed behind the eyes; sides arcuate; neck wide. *Eyes* well developed, moderately convex, but slightly prominent, finely faceted, rounded, subtruncate anteriorly, more pointed behind; facets not convex. *Antennæ* slender, anteriorly and flexibly geniculate, inserted in rounded apertures on the upper surface of the front, almost adjoining the antero-superior margin of the eye, almost equal in diameter from base to apex; all the joints loosely articulated and subcylindrical; basal joint elongate, almost as long as the next three together; second distinctly longer than wide, a little shorter than the third, and longer than the fourth; five to ten slightly shorter, decreasing gradually in length, the latter about as long as wide; eleventh as long as the two preceding together, conoidal and obtusely pointed at apex. *Front* transversely truncate, short. *Labrum* transverse, moderately strongly and broadly sinuate at apex, the apical portions membranous and transversely foveate in the middle. *Mentum* and submentum in a single piece without trace of suture, nearly flat, thin, coriaceous, smooth and polished, large, broadly rounded at base,

more narrowly so at the sides of the dilated basal portion, the sides and base coarctate, and without basal angles, narrowed anteriorly, the sides becoming broadly sinuate; apex truncate, angles right and scarcely rounded; apical edge with two widely-separated setæ. *Ligula* short and broad, prolonged between the widely-separated palpi in a thick membranous mass; palpi small, three-jointed; third joint slender and subulate; basal joint more robust than the second. *Maxillæ* very large, exerted and slightly visible from above; lobes small, robust, densely ciliate; palpi very irregular, four-jointed; basal joint minute; second large, strongly transverse, acutely ellipsoidal anteriorly, obliquely truncate posteriorly, the truncate surface large, flat, and membranous; third one-half longer than wide, not one-half as wide as the second, slightly narrowed toward apex, which is truncate; fourth oblique, slender, and subulate. *Mandibles* slender, feebly arcuate, not extending beyond the exerted membranous mass of the ligula, acute; the right with a small acute tooth near the apex. Basal plate of maxillæ prolonged outwardly in a short, slender spine which is distinctly visible from above.

Prothorax well developed, subquadrate. *Pronotal hypomera* narrow, not very strongly inflexed, deeply emarginate almost to the lateral edge anteriorly by the coxal cavities; the latter very large, approaching very near the lateral edges and the apical margin, completely and widely coalescent; the coxæ completely surrounded by white membrane. *Prosternum* very short, the median portion twice as wide as long, slightly tumid, truncate behind, and not entering the intercoxal space. *Coxæ* rather large, compressed, feebly convex anteriorly, and with the exterior edge rather acute.

Mesothorax short. *Scutellum* distinct. *Mesosternal* side-pieces ample, diagonally divided, the suture straight and tangent to the elytral humeri at base. *Intermediate coxæ* distinctly separated, slightly shorter than the anterior, moderate in size.

Metathorax moderate, slightly exposed at the sides by the elytra; the latter much shorter than the pronotum, apparently connate. *Metasternum* not impressed, convex, the episterna narrow and linear; epimera not visible. *Posterior coxæ* horizontal, conical, moderate, very narrowly separated.

Abdomen very strongly dilated, in great part membranous; the dorsal plates entirely surrounded by white membrane, those forming the feebly reflexed margins narrowly separated from the dorsal surfaces of the segments; sides consisting of tumid white membrane, with a slender, oblique setose line of chitinous material at the side of each segment.

Legs slender, moderate in length, coarsely setose. *Tibiæ* without trace of terminal spurs. *Tarsi* cylindrical, moderate in length, sparsely setose, compressed throughout, five-jointed on all the legs, the fourth joint ankylosed with the fifth, but distinctly visible; basal joint as long as the two following, and, in the posterior, as long as the entire

remainder; fourth and fifth together short, in the posterior as long as the second. *Claws* small, slender, strongly arcuate, with a small, vertical, obtusely pointed tooth near the base.

The five-jointed tarsi would seem to point to a relationship with the *Aleocharæ*, but the maxillary palpi and abdomen isolate it widely from every type of that group which I have been able to examine. The large, white abdomen is probably very extensible, and while moving amongst the *Termites*, the insect must be difficult to distinguish from them without close examination; in fact we have here a very interesting case of mimicry.

The articulations are all composed of this delicate and very extensible white membrane, so that in the dried state the specimen is extremely fragile.

The genera *Corotoca* and *Spirachtha* of Schiödt also have the widely distended semi-membranous abdomen here described, and the former seems to possess some characters in common with *Termitogaster*, the principal points of resemblance apparently lying in the antennal and tarsal structure; *Spirachtha*, however, is widely different in nearly all its characters and need not concern us at present.

The basal joint of the tarsi in both *Corotoca* and *Termitogaster* is very much more elongate than the others. In the latter the fourth joint is short and rigidly ankylosed with the fifth, although the suture and the emarginations above and beneath are very strongly marked, and could not possibly escape observation if examined, and, as Schiödt ascribes but four joints to the tarsi of *Corotoca*, either this fact must have been overlooked or the tarsi are really different in structure in spite of their similarity in general form.

The divergencies of structure are, however, fully as marked as the resemblances. The maxillary palpi of *Corotoca* are very different in form, the first joint being minute, the second clavate, the third subglobose, and the fourth small and cylindrical, with the apex obtuse; the eyes, also, are very large and reniform, and the mandibles edentate.

***T. insolens* n. sp.**—Anterior portions slender; abdomen very strongly inflated; piceous-brown, pronotum black, under surface, legs and chitinous portions of abdomen pale brown, membranous portions pure white. *Head* much shorter and narrower than the prothorax; front tumid

between the bases of the antennæ; surface throughout shining, almost glabrous and impunctate; antennæ about as long as the head, prothorax and elytra combined. *Prothorax* slightly wider than long; base and apex subequal, subtruncate; sides nearly parallel, broadly, feebly arcuate, sinuate at apical two-fifths when viewed laterally; surface moderately convex, shining, excessively finely and feebly subreticulate, and covered sparsely with extremely short fine setæ, having three feeble impressions arranged transversely near the middle of the disk, the lateral prolonged slightly behind; surface also feebly impressed toward the middle in front of the basal margin; disk with a few coarse erect setæ. Scutellum large, prominent, elevated above the elytra, rough, finely setose. *Elytra* connate, slightly narrower than the prothorax; sides nearly straight, very slightly divergent from base to apex; the latter broadly, roundly emarginate throughout the width; disk three-fourths as long the prothorax, flat, polished, glabrous, impunctate, convex at the sides, slightly setose and rough on the basal slope, also roughened on the vertical flanks which are not beaded beneath. *Abdomen* nearly three times as wide as the elytra, widest in the middle; sides strongly arcuate; chitinous surfaces coarsely reticulate, shining, sparsely and coarsely setose. Under surface sparsely setose. Length 2.7 mm. (contracted).

Colombia (Panama 1).

The abdomen consists of the normal number of segments—six, besides the small terminal segment. The labrum is separated from the anterior margin of the front by a short bond of membrane.

The sexual characters cannot be determined from the single specimen above described, which is probably a female. There are four specimens known, one of which is in the Museum of Comparative Zoölogy at Cambridge, Mass., and two still in the possession of Mr. Dudley.