"MEIGEN'S FIRST PAPER ON DIPTERA."

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In attempting to settle the status of names affecting the nomenclature of any class of animals or plants, unless this is done in an impartial manner the reader will be unable to form an unbiased opinion from the statements set forth. The present remarks are called forth by a perusal of the article under the above caption, which appeared in the CANADIAN ENTOMOLOGIST for October, pages 370 to 373.

No student who has seen Meigen's paper of 1800, or Mr. Hendel's reproduction of it, can truthfully say that the author has not complied with the rules adopted by the International Zoological Congress. There is, first, the name of the proposed new genus in proper Latin form, then a description of the genus, followed by a statement of the number of species known to the author as belonging to the genus. The author, therefore, had a correct idea of binomial nomenclature, and, so far as he went, he applied it in this paper. That a genus can be founded without being accompanied by the name of any species, is allowable under Article 2 of the International Code, which holds that "The scientific designation of animals is uninominal for subgenera and all higher groups." It has not infrequently happened that an author has founded a genus in one number of some journal without any mention of species, but has treated the species in a subsequent number, and students have almost universally taken the first date as the real date of the genus, a view held to be correct by the Code. The case of Meigen's generic names is similar to this, the difference being that before treating of the species (in 1804) he published a second paper on genera (1803), changing several of the names given in his previous (1800) paper. In a few cases such changes were allowable on the score of preoccupation, but in the other instances the changes were unjustified, and therefore the old names must be restored under Article 25 of the Code—the well-known law of priority.

As to the contention that these old genera of Meigen are invalid on the score of having no type species, Rule 7 under Article 30 of the Code covers this point: "In case a generic name without designated type is proposed as a substitute for another generic name, with or without type, the type of either, when established, becomes *ipso facto* the type of the other." On this principle, the type species of any one of Meigen's genera of 1803 is the type of his corresponding genus of 1800. Among the generic names of 1803, no less than twenty were also unaccompanied by the name of a species, yet these very generic names, with few exceptions, are now in current use.

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That Meigen's names are *nomina nuda*, as has been claimed, is clearly erroneous; each is accompanied by a description, which effectually removes them from this class of names.

Nor have these names been entirely neglected since they were first published in 1800. Latreille, in his "Histoire Naturelle des Crustacés et des Insectes," Vol. III, published only two years after Meigen's paper first appeared, used several of them as subgenera, and in giving a resume of Latreille's classification, Meigen himself connected most of them with his 1803 names (see his "Klassifikation und Beschreibung der europäischen zweiflügeligen Insekten," 1804, pages xv-xxiii).

Article 32 of the Code holds that "A generic or a specific name once published cannot be rejected, even by its author, because of inappropriateness." There is, therefore, no escaping the using of such of these names as are not synonyms or homonyms.

There are, and always have been, obstructionists in almost every field of science. Osten Sacken refused to use the old generic names of Rondani in the Cecidomyiidae, and Grote steadfastly rejected those proposed by Hübner in his "Tentamen"; yet both of these classes of names have since come into general use. Our individual preferences amount to but little; what the rank and file of the students of this and of future generations are going to do in the matter of nomenclature is all-important, and any effort to prevent others from following well-recognized rules and scientific usages cannot, by any method of reasoning, be regarded as being in the best interest of science.

SOME NOTES ON *METAPELMA SPECTABILIS*, WESTW.

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On August 12, 1907, I captured a male of this species on the window of the Insectary at Cornell University. While it agreed fairly well with Westwood's concise description given in Proc. Zool. Soc., Lond., III, p. 69, 1835, and in his Thesaurus Entomologicus Oxoniensis, p. 149, I could not make sure of its identity without having the female, as the description is evidently based upon that sex alone.

Through the kindness of Dr. E. P. Felt, of the New York State Museum, Dr. L. O. Howard, and the authorities of the United States National Museum, I now have before me eight males and seven females. Three of these specimens were determined by Dr. W. H. Ashmead.

Westwood's specimen was from Georgia, and as the description is inaccessible to many, it is here reproduced:

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