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XVII.—Description of a new species of *Polistes* from South America

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indistinct; no tarsal fold. The tibio-tarsal articulation of the adpressed hind limb reaches the shoulder. Skin smooth above and below. Dark brown above, with blackish spots; a black band on each side of the head, passing through the eye; a black transverse band between the eyes; vent in a large triangular black spot; sides of body and limbs finely white-dotted; lower surfaces coppery brown, dotted with whitish and spotted with dark brown.

From snout to vent 27 millim.

A single female specimen; Warragul, Gippsland, Victoria.

XVII.—*Description of a new Species of Polistes from South America.* By W. F. KIRBY, F.E.S., Assistant in Zoological Department, British Museum (Natural History).

THE following interesting species of wasp has lately been acquired by the British Museum.

Polistes orbitalis.

Exp. al. 22 millim.; long. corp. 14 millim.

Black, clothed with very fine down.

Head black, clypeus, orbits, and mandibles yellow; clypeus entire, slightly convex, rather wider than long; mandibles with the teeth blackish; antennæ black, scape yellow beneath, second joint (and sometimes more slightly the tip) reddish beneath; thorax black, prothoracic lobes more or less completely red, with all the sutures narrowly yellow; tegulæ red; scutellum black, narrowly bordered with yellow behind, and with two yellow lateral spots on the sutures before and behind the metathorax, which is deeply channelled above, the channel being bordered with yellow lines; abdomen black, the first two segments bordered behind with pale yellow, the third segment bordered behind with darker yellow, and with a nearly detached oblong spot on each side both above and beneath; the fourth and fifth segments are similarly marked, except that their colour is almost entirely yellow (except the fourth beneath); the sixth is nearly similarly coloured above, but beneath it is marked with a wide, shallow, reddish crescent with the curve directed forwards; the terminal segments are almost entirely yellow. A slender broken median line is visible on the yellow parts of the abdomen above.

Legs red ; front coxæ yellow, the four hinder ones black, streaked with yellow on the sides ; front femora black at the base and beneath, middle femora with two black stripes, and tibiæ and tarsi varied with black ; hind legs almost entirely blackish above.

Wings smoky hyaline, yellowish towards the costa, as in *P. pallipes*, St.-Farg., to which this species is most nearly allied ; but the second submarginal cell is smaller and irregularly hexagonal, and the recurrent nervure which enters it is much more distinctly curved outwards in the middle than in *P. pallipes*.

Collected by Herr Michaelis at Lagos, Brazil, Feb. 2, 1887.

The nest and a quantity of grubs were also obtained. The former much resembles that of *P. tepidus*, Fabr., figured by Saussure ('Guêpes Sociales,' pl. viii. fig. 1), except that the pedicel is thicker.

XVIII.—*On new Species of Formicariious Histeridæ, and Notes on others.* By GEORGE LEWIS, F.L.S.

HAVING at the present time a fairly complete collection of the known *Heterii* and of the species in the genera which resemble them, I have interspersed with the descriptions of new species notes on some of the characteristics of such of the old ones as have not hitherto been fully dealt with by authors. I refer chiefly to the specific differences exhibited in the sternal plates. The first *Heterius* known to naturalists was described by Olivier in 1789 as *Hister ferrugineus* ; the second, *puberulus*, by Motschulsky in 1837 ; and even as late as 1868 only seven species appear in the 'Munich Catalogue,' as two of the nine given by Harold stand now in *Satrapes* and *Echinodes*. Our list now contains thirty-three, and I propose to separate twenty-four of these from the others under the generic name of *Sternocælis*, as the meso- and metasterna are widely and deeply excavated, leaving only those in *Heterius* which correspond more or less in the structure of the mesosternum with *Hister ferrugineus*, Olivier ; and these last really agree better with *Eretmotus* than with *Sternocælis*.

I do this the more readily because the structure of the sternal plates in the Histeridæ is very important, and in studying the family careful regard must be paid to it.