

Mr. Fairchild, in answer to a question, stated that the Fiji eye-disease in its milder form lasts, in its acute stage, 4 or 5 days and then gradually dies away.

—Mr. Banks read the following paper :

A NEW SPECIES OF THE GENUS HALARACHNE.

By NATHAN BANKS.

In 1847 Prof. Allman described a remarkable mite which he had discovered in the nares of a seal from the Irish Sea. Unable to place it in any of the then existing genera, he established for it the new genus *Halarachne*, and named the species *H. halichæri*, after the genus of seal on which it occurred. He characterized the genus as follows: "Palps free, filiform, mandibles didactyle, sternal lip bifid. Legs with last joints terminated by two hooks and an intermediate three-lobed caruncle. Body entire, elongate, subcylindrical, furnished anteriorly with a dorsal plate; eyes none."

He placed the genus in the vicinity of *Dermanyssus*; a position which I believe to be correct. For many years little or no attention was given the mite. However, in 1884, Nehring, a German mammalogist, obtained specimens from the same seal, and published a note upon it. He maintained that it was related to the *Ixodidæ* rather than to the *Gamasidæ*, chiefly on account of its shape, general appearance, and especially the posterior position of the stigmata.

Kramer, the acarologist, saw the specimens and wrote a short article upon the mite, dealing principally with its anatomy. Haller in 1886 gave a few notes upon it. In 1889 Nehring published another note upon it. Its peculiar habitat is, doubtless, the reason why so few specimens have come into the hands of acarologists; and thus the genus has rarely been mentioned or treated in systematic works.

A short time ago Dr. Motter brought me some examples of a mite given him by Dr. Hassall, who took them from the bronchial tubes of a seal that had died in the Zoölogical Park. At first I thought it related to one of Kolenati's genera of bat-mites, viz., *Lepronyssus*; but soon discovered that it was a species of *Halarachne*, closely allied to *H. halichæri*. The genera erected by Kolenati in the *Dermanyssidæ* have not been generally accepted, and there is much uncertainty regarding them. But the great difference in habitat, and doubtless the position of the stigmata, will separate *Halarachne* from all other *Dermanyssidæ*. The breathing pore is situate just above the fourth coxa, and a line from it extends around and behind the coxa. In *Dermanyssus* the stigmata are a little farther forward. The mouth-parts

are, however, chelate, and of the true Gamasid type. The palpi are free, and the other characters do not depart from those of *Dermanyssus* sufficiently to merit notice. The shape of the dorsal plate and elongate body are rather anomalous, but not characters of importance. I shall therefore consider *Halarachne* a genus of *Dermanyssidæ*, not greatly differing from the other members of that family; but showing certain adaptive characters that fit it for its peculiar surroundings.

Our species appears to be different from the European form; and I describe it as follows:

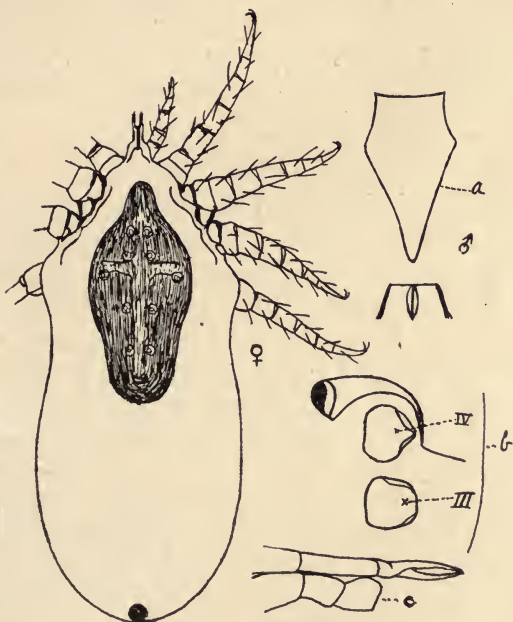


FIG. 15.—*Halarachne americana*: *a*, sternum of male; *b*, stigmata and coxæ; *c*, mandible; all enlarged. (Original.)

Halarachne americana, n. sp.

White, hard parts pale yellowish; smooth, body narrowed in front, contracted behind the fourth pair of legs, broadly rounded at tip; a dorsal shield on basal half, narrow in front, broadest before the middle, then tapering behind, but broadly rounded at tip, showing an irregular cross and some geminate spots; a small round hard spot near tip of body at the anus; legs short and stout, second pair stoutest, with a few short bristles, and two claws at tip, the terminal joint longer than the others which are subequal; stigmata just above the fourth coxæ; sternal plate truncate in front, sides nearly parallel at first, then concavely tapering to the bluntly-pointed apex.

The male (perhaps not quite adult) is smaller than the female, and the abdomen does not extend much beyond the dorsal shield, and is much narrowed behind; the sternal plate is of about the same shape as that of the female, behind it there is a transverse line from each end of which there extends back a short dark line; in the middle is an elongate pointed genital opening.

Length ♀ 2.6 to 2.8 mm.; ♂ 1.8 mm.

Habitat—Bronchial tubes of a seal (*Monarchus tropicalis*).

HALARACHNE Allman.

Ann. & Mag. Nat. Hist., 1847.

H. halichæri Allm.

Ann. & Mag. Nat. Hist., 1847.—Allman.

Sitzungsber. d. Ges., naturforsch. Freunde zu Berlin, 1884, pp. 57-64.—Nehring.

Zeitschr. f. Naturw., 1885, pp. 46-74.—Kramer.

Zool. Anz., 1886, pp. 52-55.—Haller.

Humboldt (Dammer), 1889, p. 315.—Nehring.

Habitat—On *Halichærus gryphus*.

H. americana, n. sp.

Habitat—On *Monarchus tropicalis*.

Dr. Motter, who had seen the specimens taken from the dead seal, stated that the air-passages were swarming with the mite, which, however, did not appear to have been the cause of the death of the seal.

Dr. Gill suggested that Mr. Banks might, to advantage, exchange the specific name *americana* to *monarchi*, from the genus of the seal in which it was found. He objected to *americana* for the reason that the host of the type species is quite as American as the host of the new species.

Mr. Banks objected to adopting the name *monarchi*, since the genera of vertebrates no less than of arthropods are frequently changed.

—Mr. Ashmead read a paper entitled "On the Genera of the Xyelinae.* This was a technical paper giving the characteristics of four genera of this group belonging to the fauna of the United States and forming a distinct family Xyelidæ, which he had separated from the Tenthredinidæ. These genera are Xyela,

* Published in Psyche, May, 1898, p. 214.