

electric lights, and none of whom had ever found a butterfly to be attracted to these lights.

—Mr. Howard also presented brief notes on *Rasahus thoracicus* Stal. and *Xylocopa cubæcola*. The *Rasahus* is a ferocious Piratine bug, which was one of the very few insects attracted to light at San Jose de Guaymas, Mexico, in the early part of April. It flew through the open windows in considerable numbers and lighted upon the supper table. It was well known to the house-owner, who remarked that it was not to be touched, for it would "sting like the ze dev." The speaker was quite inclined to accept this statement and did not experiment. The *Xylocopa* he found flying abundantly about the flowering trees in the plaza of the city of Guaymas, where, during the dry season of early April, it was almost the only insect to be seen. At the rancho at which he stayed, at San Jose de Guaymas, this insect was busily engaged making its nests in the large reeds with which the porch was thatched. It was present there in great numbers, and the air was filled with its loud humming. It is a large and conspicuous blue-black species, with very dark wings, originally described from Cuba but also found by Mr. Fox in the collections made by Dr. Eisen, in Baja California.

Some discussion ensued on the biting powers of bugs of the Piratine group and allied Heteroptera, participated in by Messrs. Johnson, Ashmead, Gill, Marlatt, and Motter. It was shown that while there is no specific poison gland in these insects, there is an effect from their bite which is more severe than it would be if the puncture were purely mechanical. This effect is attributed to the moisture of the mouth-parts produced by the salivary glands.

—Mr. Howard further presented some notes upon the occurrence of *Dichelonycha fulgida* swarming about the rear end of a train over the Southern Pacific Railroad near Banning, Cal., the train traveling at the rate of 20 miles an hour, and the beetles flying in a continuous swarm about the green flag on the end of the rear car.

—He also spoke of the percentage of parasitism of *Lecanium armeniacum*, at San José, Cal., by *Comys fusca*, nearly all of the specimens of this scale in a large prune orchard being destroyed by this Chalcidid parasite. Specimens of both the scale and the parasite were shown.

—The final paper of the evening was read by Mr. Ashmead, and was entitled "Some Important Characters in the Classification of the Bees."* He called special attention to the mouth-parts and the wide structural difference to be found in them. He also pointed out the morphological significance of some slight differences in venation. He also spoke of the absence or presence of the tibial spurs and their shape, as well as the difference in the development of the labrum—characters he considered to be of great importance in classification. Figures showing several characteristic types of mouth-parts, as well as the front wings of many representative bee genera, such as *Apis*, *Mellipona*, *Bombus*, *Xylocopa*, *Podalarius*, *Megachile*, and *Andrena*, were exhibited. The differences to which he drew especial attention he considered of great taxonomic value, and he has made these, correlated with other characters, the basis for separating the bees into twelve distinct families.

OCTOBER 20, 1898.

The 137th regular meeting was held at the residence of Mr. Wm. H. Ashmead, 1821 Q street N.W. Vice-President Gill occupied the chair, and Messrs. Schwarz, Patten, Ashmead, Webber, Cook, Marlatt, Kenyon, Dyar, Pratt, Motter, Benton, Pollard, Howard, Busck, Johnson, active members; Messrs. Casey and Cooley, corresponding members, and C. O. Townsend, F. E. Chapin, Rene Bache, and Dwight Sanderson, visitors, also present. Mr. F. Matthes, Washington, D. C., was elected an active member, and Mr. R. A. Cooley, Amherst, Mass., a corresponding member.

—Under the head of "Short Notes and Exhibition of Specimens," Mr. Pratt exhibited a specimen of *Phyciodes tharos* which had been taken at electric light at night.

—Mr. Schwarz showed a dry flower stem of the Arizona bear-grass (*Nolina* sp.), showing the work of the Buprestid beetle *Thrincopyge ambiens* Lec., the single stem indicating the entire life-history of the beetle, which works in the center and does not

* To be published elsewhere.