

are twice as long as the thorax, with the seventh stria fainter than the others, and abbreviated one-fifth before the base; while in *T. Leconteus*, the seventh stria attains the base, and the elytra have not quite 5 : 3 of the length of the thorax.

I have ventured to name this species in honour of the distinguished entomologist, J. L. Leconte; and I have used the trivial word *Leconteus*, in preference to *Lecontei*, a word of which the pronunciation is at least ambiguous.

Thornhill, Dumfries :

January 8th, 1875.

On the synonymy of Pleocoma staff, Schaufuss.—In the paper above alluded to (or rather immediately following it), will be found a notice by Dr. Leconte on the species of the remarkable genus *Pleocoma*, and also a description of the larva of one of the species by Baron R. Osten Sacken.

Leconte describes one of the species of the genus under the name of *Pleocoma Edwardsii*, and adds to his description the following observations:—

“This species is recognizably described, though not properly named, by Mr. Schaufuss (*Nunquam Otiosus*, vol. ii). The name suggested for it by Mr. Crotch (Check list, p. 58) is likewise inadmissible, not only because he gives no reason for its adoption, and because that kind of list is an improper place for changes in nomenclature, but for the still stronger reason, that it tends to perpetuate in science the memory of the political venom which inspired the name given by Mr. Schaufuss. I cannot express myself too strongly on the necessity of keeping our scientific nomenclature free from all personal, political, or religious prejudices or expressions of opinion. Such use of scientific publication, for intruding upon students of natural history irrelevant views respecting subjects which are not comprised within the domain of their researches, must be discountenanced.”

So says the renowned American entomologist; and I fully agree with his strong expressions of opinion on the contemptible nature of motives which prompt the giving of a scientific name under such circumstances as those to which he alludes. But I cannot agree with him in thinking we are justified in changing a name so given in order to mark our displeasure. The name, after it was once given, is disjoined from the motives that prompted it; and we may be sure these will be speedily forgotten, or, if remembered, it will be only to call up a smile at the childish impetuosity of the namer.

The facts of the case are briefly as follows: Schaufuss described in “*Nunquam Otiosus*” three species of *Pleocoma*, to one of which he gave the name “*P. staff*,” intending some allusion to the “Prussian general staff.” Crotch, in his Check list of N. American *Coleoptera*, cites this species in due place as No. 3365, but gives it a new name, viz., “*Pleocoma adjurans*, Cr.” and indicates in an unmistakeable manner the species he intends the name for, by adding “*staff*, Schauf.” as a synonym. Leconte afterwards proposes a third name for the same species.

Such are the facts; and the question arises, which of the three names is to be the name of the species? Is it to be called *Pleocoma staff*, *P. adjurans*, or *P. Edwardsii*?

To me, it is clear that the name given by Schaufuss, being the oldest (and it is not disputed but that the description by which it is accompanied is a sufficient one), is the correct name for the species. It is quite plain to me that we have no right to reject a name on account of the motives expressed, or unexpressed, of the giver: this, indeed, seems so clear that I think it will be generally admitted, and I will therefore say no more about it. But it may still be objected that the name *P. staff* ought to be set aside, because it is neither Latin or classical. To this I answer that the use of words other than Latin and classical ones, for trivial names, is now generally recognized as legitimate, and is expressly advocated by the late Prof. Agassiz (see note on the subject, in his "Journey to Brazil"), and by myself. Those who insist on a Latin termination can easily give this to Schaufuss' name by writing it "*P. staffa*."

I think, then, there is no question that Schaufuss' name should be adopted; but if it be not, then certainly the name *P. adjurans*, Cr., should be used. I must admit I have read with astonishment Leconte's reasons (above quoted) for setting this on one side. They appear to be three in number: first, that Crotch "gives no reason for its adoption;" under the circumstances it was clear that any reason was uncalled for. Second, "that kind of list is an improper place for changes in nomenclature;" to this I answer, that I consider it one of the *best* places to make such changes when they are necessary. Leconte's third reason is but a diluted repetition of the "motive" one I have already commented on, and need not notice further.

I hope the preceding remarks will not be considered superfluous. The principal difficulty in establishing a system of Zoological Nomenclature consists in the constant introduction of new reasons for changing names. The innovations implied by Dr. Leconte's remarks above quoted are so considerable, and his reputation is so great, that the observations I have made will not, I trust, be considered intrusive.—D. SHARP, Thornhill, Dumfries: January 12th, 1875.

Note on a species of Amara new to Britain.—I have no doubt that many others, like myself, have often found a difficulty in satisfactorily separating their exponents of *Amara lunicollis* and *communis*, which, to me, at least, always seemed to be connected by an intermediate form. Thomson, Opusc. Ent. v (1873), p. 529, has solved the enigma by describing a third species, *A. continua*, occurring rarely in the south-west parts of Sweden, in sandy districts (but which, as far as my small collection goes, is more abundant here than *communis*, to which it is allied).

A. lunicollis has only the *two* basal joints of the antennæ reddish, or pitchy, often quite dark on the upper side; the thoracic basal foveæ distinctly impressed, but the whole base obsoletely punctured; the middle tibiæ of the ♂ distinctly curved, &c.

In *A. continua* and *communis*, the *three* basal joints of the antennæ are testaceous-red, and the tibiæ are often ferruginous; the thoracic basal foveæ are more obsoletely impressed, but the base itself is more decidedly punctured, and the anterior angles are more produced. *A. continua* is the larger of the two, having the build of *lunicollis* (viz.: broader than *communis*, less parallel, with the elytra wider behind);



Sharp, David. 1875. "On the synonymy of *Pleocoma* staff Schaufuss." *The Entomologist's monthly magazine* 11, 206–207.

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