

DESCRIPTION OF A NEW SPECIES OF APANTELES FROM CEYLON.

By P. CAMERON.

Apanteles acherontiae, sp. nov.

BLACK, the coxæ, apex of hind tibiæ somewhat broadly, the apex of the basal joint of the first antennal joint narrowly, of the others more broadly, black, the rest of the legs reddish yellow, except that the trochanters are infuscated. Wings clear hyaline, the costa, radius, and stigma black, the other nervures white. Female and male. Length 2.5 mm. Peradeniya, Ceylon. Bred by Mr. E. Ernest Green from larva of *Acherontia lachesis*.

Smooth, shining, the mesonotum finely, minutely punctured. Basal segment of abdomen as long as it is wide, slightly gradually widened, its sides furrowed, the furrows oblique; it is separated from the second segment by a distinct transverse furrow.

In the centre of the second segment is a raised pyriform area (the narrowed end at the base); from the base of this a curved, distinct furrow runs to the outer edge of the apex. Ovipositor short; very slightly projecting.

The fourth abdominal segment is longer than the second or third, the latter being of equal length. Metanotum not keeled. Scutellum raised, separated from the mesonotum by a shallow smooth furrow; on either side of the latter is a wider, more distinct, weakly crenulated furrow.

The larvæ of this species, like many others of the genus, spin in common a large egg-shaped cocoon of white cotton-like substance of the length of 47 mm. and a breadth of 27 mm., having a peduncle by means of which it is attached to a twig of about the same length but very much thinner, the peduncle being about 2 mm. broad at the top and about 10 at its junction with the common cocoon. The larval cocoons are about 2 mm. in length and, like the outer covering, are white. They are enveloped in the cottony mass, which is much thicker and denser on the outer side than in the inner where the cocoons are. It is not uncommon for the larvæ of *Apanteles* to spin their cocoons in company around the caterpillar upon which they have preyed, but I have never seen a pedunculated common cocoon before. Being conspicuous objects, it is not surprising to find that the larvæ of *Apanteles* are preyed upon by other Ichneumons, particularly *Hemiteles* and *Mesochorus*, as well as by small *Chalcididæ*. As *Apanteles* and its ally *Microgaster* are among the commonest enemies of Lepidopterous larvæ, and are

consequently beneficial to the farmer and gardener, *Hemiteles*, &c., must be looked upon as injurious insects, unlike the majority of Ichneumons.

Apanteles taprobanæ, Cam. (Manchester Mem., 1897, p. 38), was reared by Col. Yerbury from an unknown Lepidopterous larva; *A. pratapæ*, Ashm., by Mr. E. E. Green from the larva of *Pratapa deva*, as well as *A. tivacholæ*,* Ashm., from the larva of *Tiracola plagiata*, Walk. (cf. Ashmead, Proc. U. S. Nat. Mus., XVIII., p. 647).

* I have not seen the original description of this species, but if this name is correctly transcribed, it must have been based upon a misreading of the name of the host.—E. E. G.



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