PLATE VIII.

Fig. 1. *Lepralia striatula*, n. sp. 1 a. Oœcium.

Fig. 2. *Mucronella vultur*, n. sp.

Fig. 3. *Mucronella diaphana*, MacGillivray, form *armata*. 3 a. Oœcium.

Fig. 4. *Rhabdozoum Wilsoni*, n. gen. & sp. A shoot, of the natural size. 4 a. The same. Portion of a celliferous stem, magnified, showing the arrangement of the zoœcia, avicularia, and spines. 4 b. Summit of one of the chitinous rods, showing the annulation, the cup-like expansion, and the basal portion of the upper celliferous stems. This figure is less highly magnified than the rest. 4 c. Zoœcia, with oœcia.

Fig. 5. *Mucronella rotundata*, n. sp.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTICES.

The Student's List of British Coleoptera, with Synoptic Tables of the Families and Genera. Compiled by FRANCIS P. PASCOE. Small 8vo. London: Taylor and Francis, 1882.

IN this little volume Mr. Pascoe has gone back to his old love, and, after instructing us all in general zoology, contents himself with the more modest task of cataloguing the British Beetles. But, just as his little treatise on 'Zoological Classification' was one of the most useful manuals that we possess, so the 'Student's List of British Coleoptera' offers its readers a good deal more than is promised in its title. As regards the list itself, indeed, our author makes but little claim to originality. "Lists," he says, "are necessarily compilations; and in this one I have almost entirely depended on the authority of previous compilers;" but there is a certain amount of criticism that must be exercised even in the preparation of a catalogue of the names of British Beetles, hackneyed as the task is, and we know enough of Mr. Pascoe's work to feel sure that this part of his labour has been conscientiously performed.

As to the principles on which he has acted in connexion with vexed questions of priority, Mr. Pascoe has some remarks in his preface which merit attention. He complains, and with much justice, of the confusion introduced by the disturbance of old-established names of species and genera to make room for others of longer standing, the precise significance of which must often be uncertain from the imperfect manner in which species were generally characterized in the early days of descriptive entomology. To a very considerable extent we are prepared to go with him, and to join in any protest that he may make against superseding well-known names upon light grounds, even in cases where it can be demonstrated that the name to be revived undoubtedly applies to the same species that has for years borne another name of later date. But we are not prepared to go the whole length that he seems inclined to do, and to set up a sort of statute of limitations in matters of nomen-

clature. There is one absolute rule that may certainly be adopted, namely that no generic names should be regarded as valid unless proposed by an author who makes use of the binominal method; and this would get rid of many of those changes of old-established names to which Mr. Pascoe so strongly objects; but it seems to us that the law of priority is the only one to which we can appeal in general, and that, while it should be applied with judgment, it must nevertheless be observed as strictly as possible. When Mr. Pascoe speaks of the common practice of the "scamping of descriptions, *pour prendre date*," in terms of reprobation, we cordially agree with him. This sort of thing is a growing vice and a growing evil.

Besides his list of British Beetles, which appears to have been compiled with great care, Mr. Pascoe has furnished the students of his little book with a most important help in the investigation of the native species of this order, in the form of a series of tables of families and genera. Of course, it is always a very difficult matter to make out the genera of any group of insects or other animals from the best-prepared tables alone; there are shades of character that cannot be conveyed by the short phrases necessarily used in a table; but no worker in the present day can overlook the value of such guides through the labyrinth of classification. As the author himself says, the characters selected as most convenient for the purposes of these tables are not always the most important: but we have glanced through many of them and examined some carefully; and, so far as we can see, they are eminently practical, and convey a great amount of useful information in a condensed form. There is one good thing that we may fairly wish to British entomologists; and that is, that Mr. Pascoe may be able to follow up this book with similar manuals of the other orders of the class.

Rhopalocera Malayana: a Description of the Butterflies of the Malay Peninsula. By W. L. DISTANT. Part I. London (West, Newman, & Co., Hatton Garden) & Penang.

LEPIDOPTERISTS, and especially the students of the *Rhopalocera* section, ought to esteem themselves very fortunate in the liberal way in which they are catered for by the authors of Butterfly faunas, a class of books which ought to facilitate very considerably the determination of species, and give more copious information regarding distribution and local variation than can be found elsewhere. The number of works of this description recently finished or in course of publication is quite large; and most of them form handsome volumes in quarto size, richly illustrated with coloured figures. Some of these publications, we regret to observe, seem scarcely calculated to advance the department of biology to which they are devoted, the authors seeming to have no other object than the bare description or enumeration of the species as an aid in the naming of collections; they invite students to a mere Barme-

1882. "The Student's List of British Coleoptera, with Synoptic Tables of the Families and Genera. Compiled by Francis P. Pascoe. Small 8vo. London: Taylor and Francis, 1882." *The Annals and magazine of natural history; zoology, botany, and geology* 10, 170–171. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00222938209459686>.

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