

former is fixed, immutable, and to it every possible case of generic or specific synonymy can be referred, and at once and for ever decided. The latter is relative, changeable, differing in various countries and among Entomologists of the same country. That which is convenient to European Lepidopterists is the reverse to American. A collector has a different standard of convenience from a naturalist. To reconcile all these different opinions is impossible; there is no rule which would be acknowledged by all.

Take as an example one of our common Hesperidæ, *Pamphila sabulon*, described by Boisd. & Lec. in 1833, and found in all the European collections under that name. In 1862 the same species was described in Harris, Ins. Mass., as *Hesperia hobomok*, and it is so named in most American collections. By the law of priority the matter would be at once determined in favour of *sabulon*. But which is the most convenient?—*sabulon* evidently to European Entomologists, and *hobomok* to American.

Here is a case in which the convenience of the two parties will always be opposed, and what rule have we to decide which is right? none, unless we accept priority as our guide.

Priority can be applied equally well to genera, but whether it would be advisable to change our families in accordance with it is, perhaps, doubtful, as the family name is not used in designating the insect and is therefore not of so much importance.

By accepting these laws as proposed by Mr. Scudder, we are under no obligation to follow him in his excessively fine generic divisions. It is the array of new names which gives his paper, at first sight, such a formidable appearance. I would be the last one to separate such closely allied species as *massasoit* and *sabulon*, *mystic* and *sassacus*, *polyxenes* and *troilus*, and many others which are placed in new genera.

But the questions which can be raised in regard to the expediency of using large or small genera, and others of like nature, will, in time, settle themselves, if we can establish our nomenclature on a firm foundation which will never be disturbed by subsequent investigation. This we think Mr. Scudder has done, and we hope that his work will be appreciated by American Lepidopterists.

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