

PREFACE.

THE impulse to write on North American Diptera was given to me by Baron Osten-Sacken, who, first by sending me rich collections of such Diptera and finally by intrusting me with the greatest part of his own Diptera collected in North America, has enabled me to undertake this task, and, I hope, with some success. If my observations had been written in German, and published in any of our German Transactions, I should have had good reason to fear that the results would not become sufficiently known in North America, and would at all events be longer in obtaining access there. I resolved, therefore, to give them in English, and the Smithsonian Institution in Washington has added to the many proofs it has already given of an energetic furtherance of any studies relative to the natural history of North America, the liberal resolution to print my paper on North American Diptera at its own expense. If these papers, according to my intention, contribute to the increase of the study of this interesting order of insects, the principal thanks are due to the Institution and to Baron Osten-Sacken. As for the English text, I use, it is true, the assistance and advice of a friend who is well acquainted with the English language; should, nevertheless, some roughness occur, I beg that it may be attributed to some supplementary alterations of my own, which circumstances prevented me from submitting to him. I hope that shortcomings of this kind will be kindly overlooked, provided my descriptions be not deficient in precision and clearness. As I do not wish to remain the sole describer of N. A. Diptera, but hope soon to have many fellow-laborers, I take the liberty of pointing out briefly what, in my opinion, should be chiefly borne in mind in making and publishing such descriptions. Without any disposition to find fault with others, I believe I may be permitted some remarks, since for the last twenty