

## CORRESPONDENCE.

## ON INSECTS FEIGNING DEATH.

*Dear Sir :* I notice in Dr. Hamilton's paper, page 6, the remark that a statement made by me in your pages, namely, "that insects can have no knowledge of death," as such of course and purposely feigning it, is "unsupported" and "dogmatic." I wish to correct these two adjectives, otherwise, as a matter of opinion, I have no further interest with the subject. I cited in my paper the reason for my belief that insects merely kept still and did not move on the approach of danger. I showed that hard bodied insects, as beetles, suffered themselves to drop, while soft bodied caterpillars, equally assuming attitudes of repose and quiet, assisted by their colors and mimicry, clung tenaciously. There is no doubt in my mind that the "keeping still" is the main point, and that the insects have not sufficient mental powers to feign death. Whether insects can have any knowledge of death, as such, may be a matter of opinion, I should as soon credit them with a knowledge of history. Beetles allow themselves to fall by folding in the legs, knowing, from acquired or hereditary experience, that a fall will not hurt them, while in the grass where they tumble they have a place of concealment where they can stop "feigning" and scamper away. While I do not believe that insects can reach the "feigning" process, I know that Dr. Hamilton can, when he says of my paper, which we have all at least glanced over in the pages of the CANADIAN ENTOMOLOGIST, that he "lately saw it in print somewhere." Such carelessness is probably feigned, and whether it is protective may be doubted. It is, however, the privilege of man to keep still, without the danger of being credited with feigning death, a privilege it seems denied to insects. It is well so, since a silent man might run the risk of being buried on suspicion. A. R. GROTE.

## NOTES ON COLEOPTERA.

*Dear Sir :* In my paper in the April No. of the ENTOMOLOGIST, page 66, last line, *Apion herculanum* is printed in error *herculaneum*. On same page I wrote "*prolongata* [Dicerca] breeds so far as known in conifers." This statement admits of a doubt, when the proof is sifted thoroughly. Mr. F. C. Bowditch writes that he collected it on the Colorado mountains on aspen and willow, but never on conifers. It is probably polyphagous, like some other species of this family.

JOHN HAMILTON.