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ON THE NOMENCLATURE OF THE MALE GENITALIA IN LEPIDOPTERA.

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The genitalia in Lepidoptera have, within the last ten years, become one of the most important factors in systematic work, and no revision of any group can be considered complete which does not deal with the subject of the sexual armature, serving as it does in many cases to separate species otherwise difficult to distinguish. This being the case, it is all the more to be regretted that already at this comparatively early date in the history of the subject the terminology has become so involved. The female armature, owing to its comparative simplicity, and possibly to the fact that it has not been so carefully studied as that of the male, has suffered little in this respect, but in reviewing the literature on the male genitalia we are at once met by a hopeless jumble of terms, which to say the least of it neither tends to elucidate an already difficult subject, nor to awaken a growing interest in the average collector for this particular branch of his hobby. As a case in point, and one that gave the prime motive power for this present paper, we might cite the following: Prof. J. B. Smith, in his various publications on North American Noctuidæ, uses the term "*harpe*" for the two outermost lateral valve-like appendages of the male, applying the term "*clasper*" to a portion of the inner armature of this same harpe, usually in the form of a curved hook or rod arising from the mid-ventral surface. In this he has been followed by various American authors, and also by Pierce, who in the introduction to his valuable work on the Genitalia of British Noctuids, has attempted to define the various parts. If, on the other hand, we turn to Rothschild and Jordan's Monograph of the Sphingidæ, we find these same terms used in exactly an inverse sense; the outermost appendages are termed "*claspers*," whilst for the inner armature the term "*harpe*" is employed. Obviously only one of the learned authors can be correct in his use of the above terms, and prompted partly by curiosity, partly by a thirst for knowledge, we have delved somewhat deeply into the bibliography of the subject. In the following paper we have endeavoured to fix and apply the correct names