

MR. GROTE'S CRITICISMS.

BY HENRY H. LYMAN, MONTREAL.

As Mr. Grote has done me the honour to make certain criticisms on some of my recent papers, I would ask space for a brief reply.

In regard to *Gortyna Arata*, I have no doubt that it has an alternative food-plant, but possibly it may never be discovered. Mr. Bird has made the same point, that as burdock is an introduced species it could not be the original preferred food-plant of any American species. But, while I admit that an introduced species could not be the original food-plant of an American insect, I see no reason why it should not be the preferred food since its introduction, just as *Doryphora Decemlineata* prefers the potato to its original food-plant.

If the difference between *Nitela* and *Arata* was not made sufficiently apparent in my description, it was because I never thought of the two being confused, as the difference in colour is so marked, while Dr. Dyar had, as stated, expressed the opinion that my specimen was only a variety of *Necopina*, and Mr. Bird, to whom I also showed it, never suggested any close relationship to *Nitela*, but said that if the larva proved to be distinct from that of *Necopina* I would be warranted in describing it as a new species, and I am quite sure that had I not bred the species no one would have believed that a flown specimen of it was anything but an example of *Necopina*.

In regard to the names *Nitela* and *Nebris*, I must confess that I was a little amused at being chided as too strict a stickler for the rigid enforcement of the law of priority, especially in view of the fact that I have already expressed the opinion that the law of priority should not be maintained in favour of the variety as against the prevailing form of the species*, but if I am going to extremes in carrying this law back two inches, and that is all the priority I claim for the name *Nebris*, what should be thought of Mr. Grote in carrying it back to primeval times, long before there was any entomologist to criticise his fellows, to say nothing of studying these creatures.

If, as conjectured by Mr. Grote, the form *Nitela* was the primitive form, and the form *Nebris* is a more specialized form which has been evolved from it, it would seem probable that in course of time the latter would become the dominant one, in spite of the varietal name which Mr.

*CAN. ENT., XXIX., 256.