

The Canadian Entomologist.

VOL. XIX.

LONDON, OCTOBER, 1887.

No. 10

THE NORTH AMERICAN CALLIMORPHAS.

BY H. H. LYMAN, M. A., MONTREAL.

The North American species of the genus *Callimorpha* are exceedingly interesting both from their beauty and from the extreme variations to which some of the species are subject, and which has given rise not only to the creation of numerous synonyms, but also to distinct species being regarded as merely varieties of other forms.

A very slight study of the literature of this subject is sufficient to show that these forms have been very badly treated by the "authorities," whether "lumpers" or "splitters," who have in this instance been but blind leaders of the blind; and some of those who during the last two years have endeavored to clear up matters a little, have not succeeded in making confusion less confounded. This confusion is also largely owing to the inaccessibility of the figure of Boisduval's species, and to the description by subsequent writers of new forms without any illustrations, which is particularly objectionable in the case of a group subject to great variation.

My attention was first seriously directed to this genus about six or seven years ago, by a paper read before the Montreal Branch of the Entomological Society of Ontario, by Mr. F. B. Caulfield, who advanced the opinion that several distinct species were confused under the all-embracing name of *Lecontei*.

At that time the only white and black form which I had seen was the true *Lecontei*, of which I had an excellent series showing most extraordinary variations, and I was disposed to listen very incredulously to Mr. Caulfield's theories; but an examination of his specimens convinced me that he had some grounds for his views, and I therefore turned my attention to the group, and have studied it as I have had time and opportunity since.