

for his species, the genera *Lithomia*, *Calocampa*, *Lithophane*, *Hadena*, *Xylena*, *Actinotia*, *Dipterygia*, *Chariclea*, *Calophasia*, *Asteroscopus*, *Scotochrosta*, and yet others are now used. Unfortunately the generic title, becoming altered in spelling to *Xylina*, has been retained for the Lithophanoid forms, instead of the Hadenoid form, for which it was intended and to which it properly belongs. This mistake I set right in 1876: I show that *Xylophasia* is a synonym of *Xylena*, and that for the genus *Xylina* of authors the name *Lithophane* (1816) must be used. Only through such researches can we arrive at the certain titles of our genera, and if we would one day reach a stable nomenclature, if our aim is fixity and not laxity, the result of such studies must be adopted and held fast.

The type of each genus in the *Noctuidæ* should clearly be first positively ascertained, and the structural features of such type fully exposed. By comparison we can then group around such types the other species. We can ascertain the reasonable limits of the genera, weigh the characters of outlying forms which obscure these limits, and, through comparative studies in all stages, arrive at that condition of affairs in classification where a certain generic term covers a certain total structure, and its use calls up a picture of the greatest number of ascertained facts. The time will then come when the present personal, opinionative use of generic terms will give way to the scientific, impersonal one, when authority will no longer usurp the place of reason and research.

Acting again unfavourably upon the attainment of such a state of affairs in literature and conversation, is the tendency to make a difference, where in reality none exists, between authors as to the validity of their names arising from the alleged want of technical completion of publication. I am here concerned only with generic titles. I hope to show elsewhere that specific titles owe their recognition to a correspondence between the object and the published description, and that, where the supposed "type" of the original describer contradicts at all essentially the original text, the "type" must be considered spurious, since the reason for the name is to be found in literature, not in a labelled specimen. In generic titles we are, however, solely concerned with literature, because generic titles deal almost exclusively with already described species as a matter of fact. New genera, based only on new species, depend also largely upon the proper identification of the species, but these instances do not affect the older generic titles and play no part in our present investigations.