

CONCERNING THE NOTONECTIDÆ AND SOME RECENT WRITERS ON HEMIPTEROLOGY.

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These notes are called forth specifically by a paper in "La Feuille des Jeunes Naturalistes" (Rennes)¹ by A. Delcourt, entitled "De la Nécessité d'une Revision des Notonectes de France," but they lead naturally to some considerations on recent work.

M. Delcourt claims that a revision of French Notonectids is necessary, and not being familiar with his region, we will not dispute it, but when he develops his argument it becomes necessary to differ from him. He falls at once into the error which has lead astray more than one Hemipterist, namely: that colour alone is a sufficient character for the differentiation of species in water-bugs, when in all recent work² it is more often than not neglected. My own careful studies of the common and abundant North American *Notonecta undulata*, Say, have made this plain to me, because here we have an insect covering a great range, and which is apt to differ greatly in series from one and the same pond, varying from a pure white to nearly black. *But they are one and the same species.* These colour variations in *N. glauca* appear to trouble M. Delcourt very much. This, no doubt, is due to his unfamiliarity with any work later than Dr. Puton's very meritorious "Synopsis des Hémiptères Hétéroptères de France." It is naturally not to be expected that a French author should be posted on what is done on this side of the water. But why ignore Kirkaldy's "Revision of the Notonectidæ"?³ In this the entire question of the synonymy of *Notonecta glauca* is gone into, and he indicates the different varieties into which the species may be differentiated, all this after a careful examination of the types, so this work may be considered nearly definite. And, further, the same author published recently "*Über Notonectiden*,"⁴ in which wherever corrections in his previous work were necessary he made them, thereby bringing to date his earlier "Revision." Had the French reviser been familiar with these two articles he would not have deemed it necessary to propose the work he contemplates, even going to the extent of promising a revision of Palæarctic forms!

As for the remainder of M. Belcourt's paper, once he departs from the speculative and arrives at the concrete, it is not entirely valueless.

1. No. 442, Aug. 1, 1907, pp. 198-207.

2. Cf. Montandon, Kirkaldy, Horvath, etc.

3. Trans. Ent. Soc. Lond., 1894.

4. Wien. Ent. Zeit.