THE TERMINOLOGY OF HOMOTYPES OF INSECTS

To museums generally, and to those who have not the advantages of a large state museum, in particular, the value of having representative collections of insects (in fact of all groups) comprising specimens known to agree in every detail with the types of the species they represent (homotypes) is a *desideratum* which can not be too strongly emphasized; and the present note has been written in the hope that it will enlist the cooperation of specialists in making such collections a possibility. My object has not been to provide a contribution to the terminology of "types," but mainly to recapitulate the terms which may be applied to typical specimens of a species. The phrases "agrees with type," or "compared with type" are not very satisfactory, as such specimens differ in value according to their locality, and if they are compared by the original describer of the species or not, in addition to which a uniform system of labelling is essential in a large collection. I, therefore, propose the adoption of the following terms by entomologists, which, with a few additions, are essentially the same as those used by Schuchert and Buckman[1] and recognized by Banks and Caudell.[2]

Topotype: t.t.: A specimen from the same locality as the original type of the species, with which it has been compared by a specialist other than the original describer, and found to agree in every particular.

Metatype: m.t.: A topotype, but compared by the original describer of the species.

Homeotype: h.t.: A specimen compared with the type by a specialist, and found to agree exactly, but not from the type locality.

Idiotype: i.t.: A homeotype, but compared by the original describer of the species.

Neotype: n.t.: A specimen from the same geographical region, preferably from the type-locality, chosen by a specialist or by the original describer, to replace a holotype which is destroyed or lost, or useless for comparison.

The selection of neotypes would to some extent be eradicated if typical specimens were properly labelled, as would be the necessity for regarding some species in the future as "unrecognizable;" and a proper appreciation of the fragility of insect types should in itself be an incentive to the adoption of the above terms. I would also propose that specimens which have been identified only from a description or figure should bear a label indicative of this fact. The letters "i.d." (="identified from description") written on a corner of the determination label would serve the purpose. To facilitate recognition in the cabinet typical specimens should bear a distinctive label as shown in the circlets after the terms, and it is also necessary that the authority for the identification should be made evident in the accompanying specimen label.

Homeotype.
Sphecodes
gibbus Linn.
det. R. Jones, 24

Homeotype.

A word on the necessity for the uniform designation of the primary types may not be out of place here. It is now more or less universally accepted that only one specimen of a species can represent its "type" (*Holotype*), the other specimens before the author at the time of describing being known as *paratypes,* and the type of the opposite sex to the holotype as the *Allotype.* An allotype which is described after the publication of the original description should be known by Mr. J. H. Durrant's term *Neallotype.* Many authors, however, still follow the practice of calling one specimen the type and the other examples at the time of describing cotypes, while others name all original specimens "types." This leads to much confusion, and it is desirable that a uniform system should be established and rigorously followed. The series of specimens called "types" by some authors are really cotypes, and the selection of a *lectotype* from among such series merits more universal attention. It need hardly be mentioned that lectotypes should be selected with great care. After a lectotype has been selected the remaining "types" which agree with it are known as *paralectotypes.*

The mere creation of terms for various kinds of "types," "morphs," etc., will serve no useful purpose unless the authors themselves consistently employ them. The terms of entomological nomenclature are in need of a severe revision and if this note directs attention to this need and the necessity for eliminating all unnecessary terms its aims will have been accomplished.

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[1] *Ann. Mag. Nat. Hist.*, 7, xvi, p. 102, 1905.

[2] "The Entomological Code," pp. 14 and 15: Washington, 1912.

THE COSTS OF MEDICAL JOURNALS

THE enclosed sheet, showing the comparative costs of various journals to subscribers, was prepared by the publisher, J. Springer of Berlin. It was given to me through the kindness of Professor Kurt Koffka of Giessen, who is now acting professor of education in Cornell University. In these days of increased printing cost, this comparison of German, English and American prices may be of interest to scientific men. The figures give the price in cents per sheet of sixteen pages.