

A REPLY TO SOME RECENT COMMENTS ON SOME SPECIES OF THE FAM. FULGORIDÆ

by **W.-L. Distant.**

In the ANN. SOC. ENT. BELG., 1907, pp. 120-127, M. Kirkaldy has done me the honour to criticise some recent identifications I have published in my « Indian Rhynchota ». I thank the writer for his desire to correct, but unfortunately he is inexact, and a reply is necessary.

1. — **Dictyophora pallida** Don. — In my enumeration and description of this species (FAUN. BR. I., RHYNCH., III, p. 243), I quoted a report from the « Indian Mus. Notes » that this species was destructive to Sugar cane in South India. Kirkaldy disputes the identification of the original writer of that report, referring to the unsatisfactory figure and criticising my having quoted it. He writes « il cite la planche ci-dessus mentionnée ». This is an inexact statement as I carefully refrained from doing so, referring to the text only. He further observes « mais il faut croire qu'il n'a pu consulter l'ouvrage et n'a fait que reproduire la citation ». This again is not the fact. Without valuing the figure I accepted the determination, 1° because the late M. Atkinson to whom I referred, stated (1886) that « the Indian Museum possesses specimens » of the species, and 2° I had received from that Museum specimens of *D. pallida* correctly labelled. Kirkaldy goes still farther, and quotes that figure as representing *Pyrilla aberrans* Kirby, despite the clear evidence that it portrays a mesonotum with five longitudinal carination whilst the mesonotum in *Pyrilla* is tricarinate.

The synonymy of *Pyrilla aberrans* given by Kirkaldy (Ann. Soc. Ent. Belg. 1907, p. 123) is therefore quite unwarranted, though I however thank him for pointing out that *Pyrilla* Stål (1859) = *Zamila* Walk. 1862. I had inexcusably neglected Stål's note to that effect in his « Hemiptera Africana ».

If the figure in the « Indian Museum Notes » given as *Dictyophara pallida*, which I did not quote, is to be ascribed to *Pyrilla* than despite the five carinations to the mesonotum it is the *P. perpusilla* Walk., and not the *P. aberrans* as so confidently stated by Kirkaldy. That confusion does exist in India regarding the *D. pallida* Don., despite the accurate determination of Atkinson, is I am aware the case. I have received a series of specimens from M. Lefroy collected in the Plains of India where it is destructive to Sugar cane, and these represent the *P. lycoides* Walk.

2. — Genus **Phenice**.

Phenice Westw. Tr. Linn. Soc. Lond., XIX, p. 10 (1845).

Assamia Buckt. Ind. Mus. Notes, IV, p. 1 (1896).

Proutista Kirk. Entomologist, 1904, p. 279.

Sardis Kirk. Rep. Exp. Stat. Haw. Plant. Assoc., Pt. IX, p. 433 (1906).

In 1845 Westwood founded his genus *Phenice* with type *P. frittilaris*, a West African species. In 1851 he described an allied species from India, *P. moesta*, the type or cotype of which labelled by Westwood himself is in the British Museum, a figure faithfully representing which is given in my Indian Rhynchota (vol. III, p. 297, f. 142). In 1896 Buckton redescribed the species and genus under the name of *Assamia dentata*, for which, the name *Assamia* being preoccupied, Kirkaldy invented the new name *Proutista* and now refers to the genus as « *Proutista* Kirkaldy ». It has been recognised, even by Kirkaldy himself that *dentata* Buckt. = *moesta* Westw., and it appears undeniable that if the species are the same the genus must also be identical. This Kirkaldy disputes and writes : « Je ne puis accepter l'opinion de Distant, quand il fait *Assamia* synonyme de *Phenice* ». This is hardly fair to Dr Melichar who stated the case in the previous year (1) to that in which Kirkaldy invented his new name, though without deferring to him. However Kirkaldy's confusion is explainable by his apparent unfamiliarity with Westwood's genus, he having quite recently redescribed it under the name *Sardis*.

The following synonymy may be given :

PHENICE AUSTRALIS.

Phenice australis Dist. Ann. Mag. Nat. Hist. (7), XIX, p. 397 (1907).

Sardis maculosa Kirk. (nec Krüger) Rep. Exp. Stat. Haw. Plant. Assoc., Pt. IX, p. 433, t. XXVIII, ff. 4-6 (1906).

Proutista Lumholtzi Kirk., Ann. Soc. Ent. Belg., 1907, p. 126.

3. — **Peregrinus maidis** Ashm. — Kirkaldy states that this species = *D. psylloides* Leth. = *P. simplicia* Dist. and that I had failed to recognise Lethierry's description. He does not however make any reference to Dr Melichar who (Hom. Faun. Ceylon, p. 101, t. II, f. 22) gave a long description of the *D. psylloides* Leth. and placed it in the genus *Liburnia*. I followed Melichar and copied his des-

(1) Hom. Faun. Ceylon, p. 54 (1903).

cription, which resulted, if Kirkaldy is correct, and probably he is, in my redescribing the species. Kirkaldy gives a wide geographical distribution for this species, somewhat similar to that which I recorded for *Pamera vincta* Say, and for which (Ann. Soc. Ent. Belg., 1907, p. 121) he gives a warning applicable to his identification of *P. maidis*. « Il est possible qu'il en soit ainsi, mais les *Delphacids* sont très nombreux en espèces et difficiles à étudier, de sorte qu'il est plus que probable que cet auteur a manqué de séparer quelques espèces très rapprochées. »
