On the Use of the Generic Name Brachycercus in Plectoptera and Orthoptera. By Herbert Campion.

Two recently-published generic names owe their origin to forgetfulness in the one case and long-continued neglect in the other of a genus established as long ago as 1834. The first of the two modern names to be considered is *Euryceus*, employed by Dr. S. Bengtsson for a new genus of Mayflies, containing a single species removed by him from the genus *Caenis* (Ent. Tidskr. xxxviii. p. 186; 1917). That species
was the "two wing'd Ephemeron" which had flown "within
side" his window, figured and described by Moses Harris in
1776, although no name was suggested for it at that time.
It was stated to expand about half an inch, and the figures
show it as a female sub-imago (Exposit. Eng. Ins. p. 24,
pl. vi. figs. 1 & 3). In 1834 John Curtis established the
genus Brachycercus for the reception of Harris's species,
which he named Harrisella, and two other British Mayflies,
chironomiformis, Curt., and minima, Curt. (Lond. & Edinb.
Phil. Mag. ser. 3, vol. iv. p. 122). The insects to which these
names were applied are all females, and consequently have
very short setae. The fact that the corresponding males
have very long setae did not become known until many years
later.

In 1836 J. F. Stephens brought forward his genus Caenis,
which he divided into two sections, the first, which he like-
wise called Caenis, including two "species" "with the
filaments several times longer than the body" (that is, male
specimens), and the second, Brachycercus, Curtis, consisting
of five "species" "with the filaments scarcely longer than
the body, or shorter, stout at the base" (females). The
species described in the section Caenis were macrura, Steph.,
and dimidiata, Steph., while those referred to Brachycercus
were brevicauda, "Fabr.," harrisella, Curt., pennata, Steph.,

In the second edition of his 'Guide to an Arrangement
of British Insects,' column 164 (1837), Curtis enumerates,
under the same sectional headings, the same seven species
given by Stephens, but substituting his own name minima
for dimidiata, Steph. At the same time, he treats Caenis as
a synonym of Brachycercus. The first species cited under
Brachycercus is again harrisellus, or, as he now writes the
name, Harrisii, and that this fact has the effect of fixing
the genotype is evident from the following words, quoted
from the preface:—"It may often happen that all the
species following such generic names would not be con-
sidered by the Author who proposed the name as belonging
to his group, but the one immediately following is always a
typical species." According to the same authority, macrura,
 Steph., is the type of the section Caenis.

Another attempt to supplant Curtis's genus was made by
Burmeister, who erected his own genus Oxyeypha, with
Brachycercus, Curt., as a synonym, for the three new species
O. lactea (=Caenis dimidiata, Steph.), O. luctuosa (=Caenis
harrisella, Curt.), and O. discolor (=Tricorythus discolor,
Burm.) (Handb. Ent. ii. p. 796; 1839).
the Generic Name Brachycercus.

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In 'An Introduction to the Modern Classification of Insects' (ii. Synop. p. 47; 1840) J. O. Westwood gave full generic rank to each of Stephens's unisexual groups Brachycercus (with five species) and Canis (with two species), designating as the respective typical species the one first named by Stephens in each, that is to say, making Ephemer a brevicauda, Fabr., the genotype of Brachycercus and Canis macrura, Steph., the genotype of Canis.

At last, F.-J. Pictet pointed out that the groups Canis and Brachycercus were separated only by a sexual character, the males, with long setæ, being referred to Canis, and the corresponding females, with short setæ, forming the genus Brachycercus. He went on to say:—"Lorsque ensuite on a reconnu que cette brièveté des soies est spéciale aux femelles, et que les mâles au contraire en ont d'énormes, il devint nécessaire de modifier le nom et les caractères de ce genre [Brachycercus], et M. Stephens leur donna le nom de Canis" (Hist. Nat. Ins. Névropt.; Fam. Éphém. p. 274; 1845). Pictet was, of course, mistaken as to the supposed necessity for changing Curtis's generic name when the characters of his genus were amplified.

Dr. H. A. Hagen again treated Brachycercus, Curt., like Oxyctypa, Burm., as a synonym of Canis, Steph. (Ent. Ann. 1863, pp. 8–10).

Following Pictet, the Rev. A. E. Eaton, in his 'Revisional Monograph of Recent Ephemeredae or Mayflies,' rejected the name Brachycercus, on the ground that "this name was suitable for the female insect only," and employed for the genus the name proposed for it by Stephens (Trans. Linn. Soc. Lond. 2 ser., Zool. iii. p. 18; 1883).

In 1909 Prof. Fr. Klapálek used the name Canis for the genus in question, and the name Cænidae for the family which contains it (Brauer's Süssw. Deutschl., Ephemeredida, p. 14).

Up to this point in the history of the question the Stephensian name Canis had been wrongly allowed to usurp the prior claims of Curtis's name Brachycercus. As already related, a change was introduced into the situation in 1917, when Bengtsson separated out the species harriselli and made it the type of a new genus, Eurycanis; as that genus has the same genotype, however, it is a simple synonym of Brachycercus. Eurycanis is included, without comment, in Dr. Georg Ulmer's "Übersicht über die Gattungen der Ephemeropteren" (Stett. Ent. Zeitg. lxxxi. pp. 120–122; 1920).

Before the year 1917, therefore, the generic name Brachycercus rightly appertained to all those species which had
been hitherto referred to Cænis. In that year the name was restricted by Bengtsson’s action to the single species harriellus, and the other species formerly associated with it in the same genus were left without a name, Cænis having been invalid from the beginning. I propose to call the genus in question Ordella, nom. nov. (a feminine proper name), the genotype being Cænis macrura, Steph., as re-described by Bengtsson (loc. cit. p. 183).

The preference so long accorded to the name Cænis over the older name Brachycercus, on the ground of its greater suitability, is, of course, overruled by Article 32 of the International Rules of Zoological Nomenclature, which expressly declares that “a generic or a specific name, once published, cannot be rejected, even by its author, because of inappropriateness.”

Finally, turning to the Order Orthoptera, we find that the preoccupied name Brachycercus has been applied by Dr. C. Willems to a new genus of short-horned Grasshoppers from New Guinea, belonging to the subfamily Cyrtacanthacrinæ (Zool. Meded. Leiden, vi. p. 7; 1921: Nova Guinea, xiii., Zool. p. 718; 1922). This Orthopterous genus must be re-named, and I propose for it the name Megra, nom. nov., the genotype, Brachycercus flavum (sic), Willems, becoming known as Megra flava, Willems.