

*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 *Eurycænis*, employed by Dr. S. Bengtsson for a new genus of Mayflies, containing a single species removed by him from the genus *Cænis* (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 setæ. The fact that the corresponding males have very long setæ did not become known until many years later.

In 1836 J. F. Stephens brought forward his genus *Cænis*, which he divided into two sections, the first, which he likewise called *Cænis*, 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 *Cænis* were *macrura*, Steph., and *dimidiata*, Steph., while those referred to *Brachycercus* were *brevicauda*, "Fabr.," *harrisella*, Curt., *pennata*, Steph., *chironomiformis*, Curt., and *interrupta*, Steph. (Ill. Brit. Ent. Mand. vi. pp. 60-62).

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 *Cænis* 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 considered 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 *Cænis*.

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

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 *Cænis* (with two species), designating as the respective typical species the one first named by Stephens in each, that is to say, making *Ephemerella brevicauda*, Fabr., the genotype of *Brachycercus* and *Cænis macrura*, Steph., the genotype of *Cænis*.

At last, F.-J. Pictet pointed out that the groups *Cænis* and *Brachycercus* were separated only by a sexual character, the males, with long setæ, being referred to *Cænis*, 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 *Cænis*" (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 *Oxycypha*, Burm., as a synonym of *Cænis*, Steph. (Ent. Ann. 1863, pp. 8-10).

Following Pictet, the Rev. A. E. Eaton, in his 'Revisional Monograph of Recent Ephemeridæ 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 *Cænis* for the genus in question, and the name *Cænidæ* for the family which contains it (Brauer's Süsswf. Deutschl., Ephemerida, p. 14).

Up to this point in the history of the question the Stephensian name *Cænis* 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 *harrisellus* and made it the type of a new genus, *Eurycænis*; as that genus has the same genotype, however, it is a simple synonym of *Brachycercus*. *Eurycænis* is included, without comment, in Dr. Georg Ulmer's "Übersicht über die Gattungen der Ephemeropteren" (Stett. Ent. Zeitg. lxxxii. 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 *harrisellus*, 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. Willemse 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), Willemse, becoming known as *Megra flava*, Willemse.