METHODS AND TECHNIQUE FOR THE COLLECTOR.

Points for Mounting Small Insects.—Most directions for making points for mounting small insects are very elaborate. Nearly all call for an assortment of punches for the most fancy shaped points; and in assorted sizes, too. Also, the material is carefully specified—bristol-board, celluloid, mica, isinglass. In general, the easiest way of doing things is generally the simplest and best. The material for points is not so important as whether or not it will stay without curling up or drooping down; and whether or not it is stiff enough to hold up the usually small insects mounted on points. Perhaps the best material is the thickest ledger paper or cold-rolled heavy drawing paper. These are both linen, fibrous and stiff, but easily pinned and fastholding. A sheet of either (about 24 x 36 inches) will cut into thousands of points.

Cutting the points also is simple; all you do is to cut a strip of paper as wide as the length you want your points. With a pair of sharp scissors (and a little practice) it is possible to cut points of any width or pointedness you require. A strip of paper 1/3 inch (about 8 mm.) wide and 4 inches (100 mm.) long will yield about 150 points in a few minutes.—J. R. T.-B.

Glue for Mounting on Points.—In my work I use a glue made out of the best granulated cooking gelatine dissolved in *glacial acetic acid,* to be purchased for a few cents at any drug store. Put about one ounce of this in a wide-mouthed glass jar (small, about 2-ounce size) with a bell cap—not a stopper; this can be secured from any dealer in entomological supplies. Add about half as much quantity of the gelatine (to be bought at any grocer's), stirring it about for a while until it is well mixed. It will be full of air bubbles and undissolved grains of gelatine, but pay no attention to this. Let it stand in a warm place overnight; and the next day it will be quite clear and free from bubbles. If it is too thick, add a few drops of acetic acid and let it stand again; if too thin, put in a little more gelatine—but not much. Stir it after adding the one or the other and let it stand again. Bear in mind that glue of the right thickness in winter will be too liquid in summer, and *vice versa.*

To put the glue on a point, use a glass rod drawn to a point and short enough to fit into the jar when the lid is on. A glass pen, to be bought at any stationery store, is excellent for this purpose.

Glacial acetic acid absorbs water from the atmosphere, which tends to thin the glue; and it also evaporates, according to conditions. To prevent this, grease the bottom of the bell cover with petroleum jelly (vaseline) and it will form a tight seal where the edge of the cover sits on the shoulder of the jar.

This glue sets quickly, but it does not glaze over nor soften in time, as shellac does. It will hold such things as slippery water-beetles.—J. R. T.-B.

Locality Labels.

The smaller the locality label, the better—so long as it is legible and has enough room on it to write in clearly the date or any other data needed. Of course, where labels are prepared for any specified catch, it is possible to print all data on them at one time. But where labels are for a given locality, to be used over long periods of time, this cannot be done. One point without which the modern locality label is incomplete is the collector's name, which should always appear as an integral part of the data.

Printed labels are always the best and neatest. When they could be brought at 25 cents per 1000 it was possible to get them for a small lot of insects at a nominal cost; but now that they sell at $1 per thousand, that makes quite a difference. Hence, labels for small lots are either hand-printed with a fine pen, or else typed and photographed. For large lots, a zinc plate is good, especially for repeat orders. In connection with photographing labels and making plates of them for future use, it should be stressed that the typing must be done with clean type and a good black permanent ribbon on good white paper, backed by a sheet of carbon with the black side to the back of the sheet being typed. This gives depth and clearness to the typing and ensures a good, distinct reproduction.

The size of type about best for labels is that known as 4-point. All labels should be set solid and printed on heavy linen paper, in strips in such form that one cut of the scissors will separate one label from another. All data written in should be in waterproof India ink, with a Gillott crowquill pen—preferably in print characters.

Dates are best indicated on a label by means of figures: *e.g.*—July 4, 1933, may be written vii. 4. 33; or, in the English fashion, 4. vii. 33.

J. R. de la Torre-Bueno.

Send in Your Short Notes for this Page.