

NOTES ON SOME OLD EUROPEAN COLLECTIONS.

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There seems to be little on record in this country about the older European collections of insects. Possibly the facts are more or less common knowledge, but if so, a rather careful search has failed to produce much of value. Yet in these days when types are coming into such prominence as the "court of last resort" in our attempts to finally establish specific identities, the location of these collections, their state of preservation and any facts which may enable workers to find the specimens they desire to examine, should be on record. The following notes are therefore offered in the hope that they may be of some use at least, to those who expect to study abroad.

The collection of Linné as including the first insects to which the binary nomenclature was applied, is of much interest.

This collection appears to be now in part at Upsala and in part at London. The material at Upsala was for many years at the royal castle Drottningholm, but in 1803 what remained was sent to the Academy of Science at Upsala by Gustav Adolph IV, where it was arranged and labelled by Linnaeus' student, Thunberg. This was probably the portion which constituted the collection belonging to the Queen of Sweden, and of which Clerck illustrated the Lepidoptera in his *Icones Insectorum*, and to judge from this, and such statements as are available, consisted only of Lepidoptera.

In the zoological museum of the University of Upsala are two wooden cases of Linnaean Hymenoptera which have recently been examined by Schulz (*Berl. Ent. Zeits.*, LVII, 55, 1912), and reported upon.

Linné's private collection was sold by his wife after the death of her son in 1783, to Dr. James E. Smith, of England, for one thousand guineas. It consisted of his books, correspondence, insects and plants, and reached London in 1784.

In 1788, due largely to the influence of Smith, the Linnaean Society was established, and this material is now in charge of this society which is located at Burlington House, Piccadilly,

London. It is kept in the original case, in which are drawers containing the insects, while others contain the plants and books. Smith long retained the collection and being a collector, received many specimens from friends. These it would seem, he placed in the drawers with the Linnaean specimens, so that as it now stands, the collection contains many specimens not properly belonging with the Linnaean material. This unfortunate condition is liable to cause confusion in any examination, as the Linnaean specimens can only be distinguished by the handwriting on the labels.

The work of Fabricius can be found in a number of collections in Europe. His personal collection is in the Zoological Museum of the University of Kiel, but he made numerous visits to different museums, naming the insects where he went, and many of these are still in existence.

At Kiel his collection is in glass-topped trays, the tops being loose in many cases. The trays are in two large cases, one occupied almost entirely by beetles, while the Hymenoptera and some other orders fill the other.

The two groups named, at least, are in fair condition, and the Hymenoptera are arranged to correspond with the *Systema Piezatorum*. Each genus has a special label, bearing besides the name, the number of the genus, as given in the *Systema*, and each species is preceded by a similar label giving the name and number of the species. In some cases the insect itself is missing though the label is present, and some numbers are also absent, probably because the book enumerated species he had seen and described, but which he himself did not have.

Probably the next largest collection of Fabrician material is now in the British Museum of Natural History in London, and is known as the Banksian Collection. This material was obtained by Mr. (afterwards Sir Joseph) Banks and Dr. Solander, who accompanied the celebrated Captain Cook in his voyage to the South Sea Islands and around the world, from 1768 to 1771. It was studied by Fabricius between 1772 and 1775 and the new species were published by him in 1775 in his *Systema Entomologiæ* and are indicated by the words "*Mus. Bankianum*," or in his later writings by the words "*Mus. Dom. Banks.*" This collection was for years in the hands of the Linnaean Society, but is now in the British Museum

where most fortunately it is preserved as a separate collection bearing the original Fabrician labels, thus giving us Fabricius' ideas of the old species even where they are not his types.

They have been worked over somewhat since, not always fortunately, and some care must be exercised to be sure of all the labels. Thus Frederick Smith in his Catalogue of the Hymenopterous Insects in the British Museum records *Sphex pensylvanicus* L. as being in this collection. An examination of the specimen shows the unquestionable Fabrician label "*pennsylvanica*" and above it a much more recent label, "*Pennsylvania*" written by Smith, to judge from the hand writing. So close to the underside of the body as to be easily overlooked, is a third and very old label reading "Nov. Holl." Now as Captain Cook on the voyage during which these insects were collected, did not touch at any point in North America, it is evident that Fabricius named the insect entirely from its appearance, without reference to the locality where it was captured, and Smith, probably failing to notice the upper label, added a locality label of his own preparation to agree with the name. An interesting feature of the case is that Fabricius wrongly identified the specimen, which is not *pennsylvanica* at all, but *fumipennis* of Smith, described by the latter from other material, in the same book in which he records this insect in the Banksian collection, evidently failing to recognize the identity of the two. An occasional case like this indicates that care in the study of this collection is indispensable.

The National Museum at Paris also contains some specimens named by Fabricius. What remains of the Bosc collection is there, and Fabricius frequently records species from the "Mus. Dom. Bosc." which apparently came into the hands of the National Museum at the death of Bosc in 1828. This material is much scattered, however, and can only be recognized by labels in the hand of Fabricius and the others which read "Museum Paris Coll Bosc 1828" printed on green paper and which were undoubtedly added when the collection became the property of the Museum.

The collection of Klug is in the Zoological Institute of the University of Berlin. It is not kept separate but has been worked into the general collections and can now be recognized only by the labels. These are on green paper and bear the

specific name, beneath which is a capital N and at the bottom the locality, all enclosed by a black line. Frequently the middle of the left side of the label has a slit cut in, so that it might slip around the pin instead of being penetrated by it. In some cases the label has been closely trimmed, but comparison of the writing with that on the entire ones, is sufficient to establish its identity.

Klug seems to have been more liberal with names on museum specimens than with published descriptions of these species, at least in the Hymenoptera. Apparently later workers in some cases found the names Klug had given to the specimens and published them, adopting names which would otherwise have no standing. Erichson seems to have done this in one case at least, and Dahlbom in several.

Though the collection of Dahlbom is at the University of Lund, his work is to some degree in evidence at Berlin where he studied for a time with Klug, and specimens named by him are frequently met with there. His own collection at Lund is kept by itself in the condition in which he left it and for the most part in a good state of preservation.

In the Paris Museum a few specimens which seem to have been labeled by Latreille are still preserved. These labels have double red line borders and the names which are hand-printed are, first the French name, and beneath this the Latin one, the two being bracketed together on the right, beyond which is the abbreviation "Latr." In some cases at least, these names do not appear to have been published and therefore have no standing.

A few boxes of Hymenoptera in this collection are marked "Brullé Collection" on the outside, so that some of Brullé's species at least, are still in existence.

The Lepelletier collection is in much the same condition and some boxes bear the label "Lepelletier Collection." In these the material named by him is probably indicated by names written in red ink between parallel red lines on the labels. Unfortunately many of his species are missing, and in the case of the *Sphecidae* none of his American species can be found. Whether they have been accidentally destroyed, or, most of them being from Serville, were returned and later were lost, cannot now be determined.

Though not one of the old collections, that of Achille Costa may be mentioned. This is now at the University of Naples, where it is kept in a room by itself. There is no entomologist at the University and the collection is in charge of the Professor of Parasitology, but it is in excellent condition and apparently well cared for.

Many other old collections may be found in different parts of Europe, but not having paid particular attention to them they are not touched upon here. It is noticeable nearly everywhere that these collections are for the most part kept in trays so open that in this country a single year would probably see their complete destruction by museum pests. These nuisances do not appear to be very important abroad or the priceless collections of Linne, Fabricius and others would long ago have become mere heaps of dust at the bases of the pins.

DISCUSSION.

Dr. Howard said in discussion that there is so much of value in information of the character of that contained in Dr. Fernald's paper, that he was emboldened to add two statements: First, that the bulk of the collection of A. H. Haliday, the brilliant Irish entomologist, is now carefully preserved by Prof. G. H. Carpenter in the College of Agriculture, in Dublin; Second, that the Ratzeburg types are preserved like religious relics by Dr. Eckstein at the forest school at Eberswalde bei Berlin.



Fernald, H. T. 1914. "Notes on Some Old European Collections." *Annals of the Entomological Society of America* 7, 89–93. <https://doi.org/10.1093/aesa/7.1.89>.

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