

INTRODUCTION.

THE Tribe Longicornia, which occupies nearly the whole of the present volume *, is equivalent to the family Cerambycidæ of most modern entomologists, and is one of the largest of the seventy-two groups into which MM. Lacordaire and Chapuis divided the Coleoptera, in their great work on the order brought to a completion in 1876. Compared with the Tribe Geodephaga, it is beyond doubt far more numerously represented in tropical than in extra-tropical lands, and its species and genera are naturally multiplied to the highest degree in tropical forests, where woody vegetable growths, to which the Longicornia are almost exclusively attached in their larval states, are most numerous and varied. Although their beauty of form and colours has led to their having been industriously collected, it is evident, from the number of new species continually arriving from countries supposed to be fairly well explored, that we are yet far from possessing even an approximately complete knowledge of the whole product of Nature in this department. This is partly due to the recondite and, to a great extent, nocturnal habits of a vast proportion of the species, and the difficulty of the search for them in dense primæval forests where few clearings offer the necessary openings.

The total number of species described down to 1883, the date of M. Lameere's Supplement to the Munich Catalogue, amounted to 8968. In the following pages 1273 species are enumerated or described from the region embraced in the present work, a number which is probably not more than a third of the total inhabiting Tropical America, even allowing for the generally-distributed species, which form but a small proportion of the Longicorn fauna in any one extensive section of the area. It is probable that an equal number exists in Tropical Asia and in Tropical Africa. In the Malay Archipelago, Mr. Wallace collected 1046 species, a number which has since been considerably increased by subsequent explorers. In the Amazons valley I

* The general remarks on the Tribe Bruchides, which occupy the remainder of the volume, are given by Dr. Sharp at p. 437.