

those who may have to use this work, adopted a number of groups of convenient size, and sufficiently natural, for our fauna at any rate, to enable any one who has become acquainted with a few species of each group to recognize, on a first inspection, with tolerable certainty, to which group any other species should be referred. I cannot, however, disguise my knowledge of the fact that the determination from the description alone of the numerous species I have characterized will be a difficult task, and that a certain amount of reference to some of the types described will be almost indispensable.

The species previously described from our region are not numerous, and are due chiefly to Schönherr, Say, and Motschoulsky. The species intended by this latter author will, I think, in the majority of cases, never be recognized, owing to the peculiar method he adopted in dealing with them. This consisted in characterizing in two or three lines in a most insufficient manner certain groups, and then dividing and subdividing these groups analytically. I have not been able to recognize any of the species he dealt with in this way; but in the same paper he described some species in a more ordinary manner, and about most of these I have been able to form an opinion.

It has of late been proposed to abandon, on the ground of priority, the generic name of *Bruchus*, replacing it by that of *Mylabris*, which for about one hundred years has been in use for a totally different genus of Coleoptera. The confusion introduced into entomological literature by this proceeding is enormous, and as the proposed change has no advantage other than its conformity with a theory of priority of generic names, and as no inconvenience has been found to result from the nomenclature that has been in use for a hundred years, I have not been able to adopt the change proposed. Owing to the constant shifting and division of genera that naturalists require to make, no absolute test of priority can be applied with advantage to long-established generic names; and it appears to me inadvisable to render this part of our Zoological literature a mass of confusion because Des Gozis thinks Fabricius ought one hundred years ago to have used Geoffroy's name of *Mylabris* for this aggregate of species instead of the Linnæan name *Bruchus*. The name *Andromisus*, proposed by Des Gozis to replace *Pachymerus*, is at present superfluous, as the group is incapable of definition in the actual condition of our knowledge.

§ 1. *Thorax conic, its sides concavely arcuate; hind femora largely dilated, armed with teeth that in many species are numerous; antennæ various in structure.*
(PACHYMERUS, Latr.)

Schönherr included in his Grex "Pachymeri" a "Stirps II." (possessing, however, only a single species) for an insect with elongate and serrate antennæ. I have thought it better to place two analogous species in my group § 3. Even as I have limited it the Group still remains a heterogeneous one, comprising a number of forms having little relationship *inter se*. In our fauna the concavely-arcuate sides of the thorax is a tolerably satisfactory character for the diagnosis of this group.