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WILLIAM H. EDWARDS.

Our readers will all, we are sure, be glad to receive with the first number of a new volume of the CANADIAN ENTOMOLOGIST the accompanying excellent portrait of the well-known and now venerable Entomologist, Mr. W. H. EDWARDS, of Coalburgh, West Virginia. His life-long work has been the study of Diurnal Lepidoptera, and the results of that work are splendidly set forth in the beautifully illustrated volumes of his "Butterflies of North America." In April, 1868, the first part was issued, and at once commended itself to entomologists everywhere by the exquisite beauty and finish of the plates and their faithfulness to nature. In July, 1872, the first Series, forming a large quarto volume with fifty plates, was completed. The second Series, containing fifty-one plates, was begun in May, 1874, but not finished until November, 1884, the less frequent issue of the parts being more than compensated for by the increased value of both plates and letterpress. When the work was begun, as Mr. Edwards stated in his preface, little or nothing was known of the eggs, larvæ or chrysalids of any except the commonest butterflies, and accordingly his first volume illustrated only the perfect state. In 1870 he made the notable discovery that eggs could be satisfactorily obtained by confining the female butterfly of any species with the growing food-plant of its larva, and at once began the study of the life-histories of a number of species previously known only in the imago state. The results of these studies are admirably set forth in the letterpress as well as in the plates of the second and third Series; on these are accurately depicted eggs and larvæ in their different stages, as well as chrysalids and imagoes. Many wonderful discoveries have been made during these investigations, among the first being that of the seasonal trimorphism of *Papilio Ajax*, and the dimorphism of *Grapta Interrogationis*, and of *G. Comma*. The process of breeding was soon taken up by Mr. Edwards's friends and correspondents all over North America, and, aided by the general extension of railways over the Continent, he was able to get eggs of butterflies from widely distant localities,

and to follow them successfully through all their stages. Thanks to his efforts, the reproach of ignorance of the preparatory states of our butterflies has been removed, and though much remains to be learnt, vast progress has already been made. The first part of the third Series was issued in December, 1886, and in October last we had the pleasure of welcoming the sixteenth. Far from showing any decline from the Author's high standard of excellence, this last issue may justly be regarded as the climax of good work, both on the part of the writer and the artist. All through Mr. Edwards has been fortunate in having his wishes so ably carried out by his artist-assistants, Mrs. Mary Peart, of Philadelphia, who has drawn most accurately nearly all the plates, and, in order to do so satisfactorily, has reared most of the caterpillars, and Mrs. Lydia Bowen, who has so exquisitely performed the work of colouring.

In addition to the great work that we have just referred to, Mr. Edwards has contributed largely to the periodical literature of science, especially to the Proceedings and Transactions of the American Entomological Society and the CANADIAN ENTOMOLOGIST. His first contribution to our pages was published in the third number of our first volume, in 1868, and he has continued to favour us with articles of great value ever since; his last paper, in the September number of Volume XXVII., being the one hundred and sixty-eighth which he has written for our journal.

Mr. Edwards was born on the 15th of March, 1822, and will soon complete his seventy-fourth year. That he may long be spared in health and prosperity to carry on his excellent work is the cordial wish of the writer and all his friends.

C. J. S. B.

THE "BOMBYCES": WHAT ARE THEY?

BY HARRISON G. DYAR, PH. D., NEW YORK.

It might be better to say "what were they?" in an article addressed to readers of to-day, since the name in its old sense will not be found in the most recent writings of Packard, Comstock, Chapman, Grote, and other authors. However, the group is adopted in our latest check-list (Nos. 877-1459), although without its name, Prof. Smith stating that he could not limit the group to his satisfaction. Also, as recently as 1893, Dr. Packard published an "Attempt at a new classification of the Bombyces," including in the group all the families formerly included, but altering their sequence. Following the arrangement of suborders pro-