

the surface of the ground, ever re-entered a tree, and he expected that these underwent their transformations in the earth.

Mr. Janson, on behalf of Mr. A. G. Latham, exhibited two specimens of the nest or cocoon of a sociable larva from Port Natal: a large outer cocoon, three or four inches in diameter, was made up of numerous coats of brown silky matter, the whole forming a covering of considerable toughness, attached to and transpierced by a small branch of a tree: on cutting this open it was found to contain a number of smaller cocoons, each of which was tenanted by a pupa. It seemed as if a score larvæ associated themselves together to construct and build themselves into the outer family cocoon, upon the completion of which each larva proceeded to spin its own individual cocoon.

Mr. Trimen had found the same kind of cocoon in Natal: it was that of *Anaphe reticulata* (Walker, Brit. Mus. Cat. Lep. Het. part iv. p. 856), one of the family Liparidæ.

Mr. Janson, on behalf of Mr. Latham, also exhibited half-a-dozen larva-cases or cocoons of another Lepidopterous insect, probably a *Psyche*, or allied thereto. These, too, were from Natal, and were attached to and hung pendulous from the branch of a tree, resembling a cluster of large beech-nuts.

Mr. Trimen said that these cases were common in Natal on the *Mimosa*, or thorny acacia; he had collected many of them, but had never been able to breed a single moth of either sex.

Mr. Pascoe exhibited a beetle from New Zealand (probably from Otago), which he regarded as the type of a new genus of Cucujidæ, and which he proposed to describe under the name of *Dryocora Howittii*. He remarked that members of some of the clavicorn families were well known to have tarsi with varying numbers of joints; or, when the normal number were present, the basal joint was very small or almost obsolete, as in many Cucujidæ, or the penultimate was very small or almost obsolete, as in the Nitidulidæ. In *Cucujus* the tarsi were heteromerous in the male and pentamerous in the female; but in *Dryocora*, which in other respects was allied to *Cucujus*, the tarsi were tetramerous in both sexes, the basal joint being suppressed. Organic modifications of this kind, and the exaggerations of form of some one organ which in certain groups was found to be subject to unusual modification,—as the antennæ in Paussidæ, the eyes of Hippopsinæ, the pronota of Membracidæ, &c.,—seemed to Mr. Pascoe “to point to a law of aberration only to be explained on the hypothesis of the derivative origin of species.”

The President mentioned that Mr. Darwin was engaged in elaborating the subject of secondary sexual differences and sexual selection, and would be obliged by the communication of detailed observations on the numerical proportion of the sexes of insects in nature. He had numerous cases of well-authenticated numerical excess of the male over the female, and was desirous to ascertain whether in other cases a corresponding excess of the female over the male had been noticed.

Mr. M'Lachlan mentioned *Apatania muliebris*, of which he had captured hundreds, but the male had never been seen; and *Boreus hiemalis*, of which only three or four males had been known to occur in this country. Mr. Janson mentioned *Tomicus villosus*, the female of which was almost a plague, whilst the male was hardly known. Mr. F. Smith cited *Tenthredo cingulatus*, the male of which was rare, whilst the female abounded, and *Hemichroa alni*, of which the male was quite unknown. Of