

males and are always larger than that sex. In the Ants however the males are, as far as I correctly know them, invariably smaller and frequently disproportionately so to their partners, consequently this analogy is strongly in favour of the connexion of these genera with the *Mutillidæ*, although three of the preceding speak for their union to the social Ants. I think therefore that this combination and the peculiarity incident to themselves only in the structure of their palpi warrant me in the present state of our knowledge to consider them an osculant tribe intervening between these two, and as such I shall view them.

With respect to their habits of life I have nothing positive to state; I will however hazard the hypothesis that they are parasitical. The Ants and the *Staphylini* have been supposed to represent each other in the tropical and temperate zones. In the temperate zone, and especially in our own country, the *Staphylini* are a dominant group, and the ants a secondary one. The reverse is the case within the tropics, and the lines immediately adjacent within a few degrees north and south. In our own country and throughout Europe we find several species of this northern dominant group parasitical in the nests of Ants; and, *cæteris paribus*, why may there not be, where the Ants themselves are the dominant group, an analogous instance of a genus closely allied to the Ants parasitical upon them? For the genus *Bombus* is another dominant northern group which has a parasite—the genus *Psithyrus*—so like it, that they were not until latterly separated from it, although sufficiently distinct; and in this genus *Psithyrus* the males greatly predominate in number. Now if I can show that the two genera *Dorylus* and *Labidus* are considerably alike, and in many points analogous to the genus *Ponera* among the Ants, which although not exclusively a tropical form, yet chiefly so,—which however strays into Europe and as far north as England, but it is most fully developed in Africa and South America, and another form of it wanders into New Holland\*,—I think it will be admitted that there is some plausibility in the supposition that these extraordinary genera may possibly be parasites upon the Social Ants; and when it is further seen that the female, which I surmise may belong to the genus *Labidus*, is both apterous and blind, it becomes further probable that she may seldom quit the nest where she is a parasite; and this will in a great measure account for specimens of this sex rarely coming to Europe, as it is not to be sup-

\* There are three distinct types in the genus *Ponera*, which ought to form so many sections, and these seem to follow countries, viz. northern, southern and tropical.