XIX. *Descriptions of new species of* Cryptoceridæ, *belonging to the genera* Cryptocerus, Meranoplus, *and* Cataulacus.

By Frederick Smith.

[Read 4th October, 1876.]

Having published three papers on this remarkable group of insects in the Transactions of the Society, I offer a fourth, in which twelve new species are described, of one of which I fortunately have obtained all the sexes, figures of which are given in the plate that illustrates the paper.

In previous publications I have altogether described thirty-six species, those described in the present paper making the total number forty-eight.

In a former paper I gave some account of the habits of these insects. For that information I was partly indebted to the account published by Professor Lund, who describes the manner in which they capture their prey; this, he tells us, is similar to that of Hunting Spiders,—by springing upon it. For the more interesting details, however, I was indebted to Mr. H. W. Bates, who, when resident in Brazil, observed these insects with great attention. He informed me that *Cryptocerus* constructed its burrows in decaying trees, its colonies not being numerous; consisting, in the nests examined, of about a dozen females, a few males, and the workers, numbering about the same as the females.

Of the habits of the genera *Meranoplus* and *Cataulacus* no information had at that time been obtained. I have now the satisfaction of giving some account of the habit of a species of *Meranoplus*, *M. intrudens*, observed by Mr. John Monkhouse Hutchinson, resident in the Weenen district of Natal, South Africa. This species makes use of the thorns of a species of acacia, in which it constructs its formicarium; the thorns are from four to five inches in length, and, at the distance of about half an inch from the pointed end, a small round hole is made by the ants, which serves as ingress and egress to and from the nest. The thorns contain a kind of spongy pith, in which the channels and chambers of the nest are constructed. A remarkable fact in connexion with this insect is, that