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Ants from Mesopotamia and North-West Persia.

(With Plate V.)

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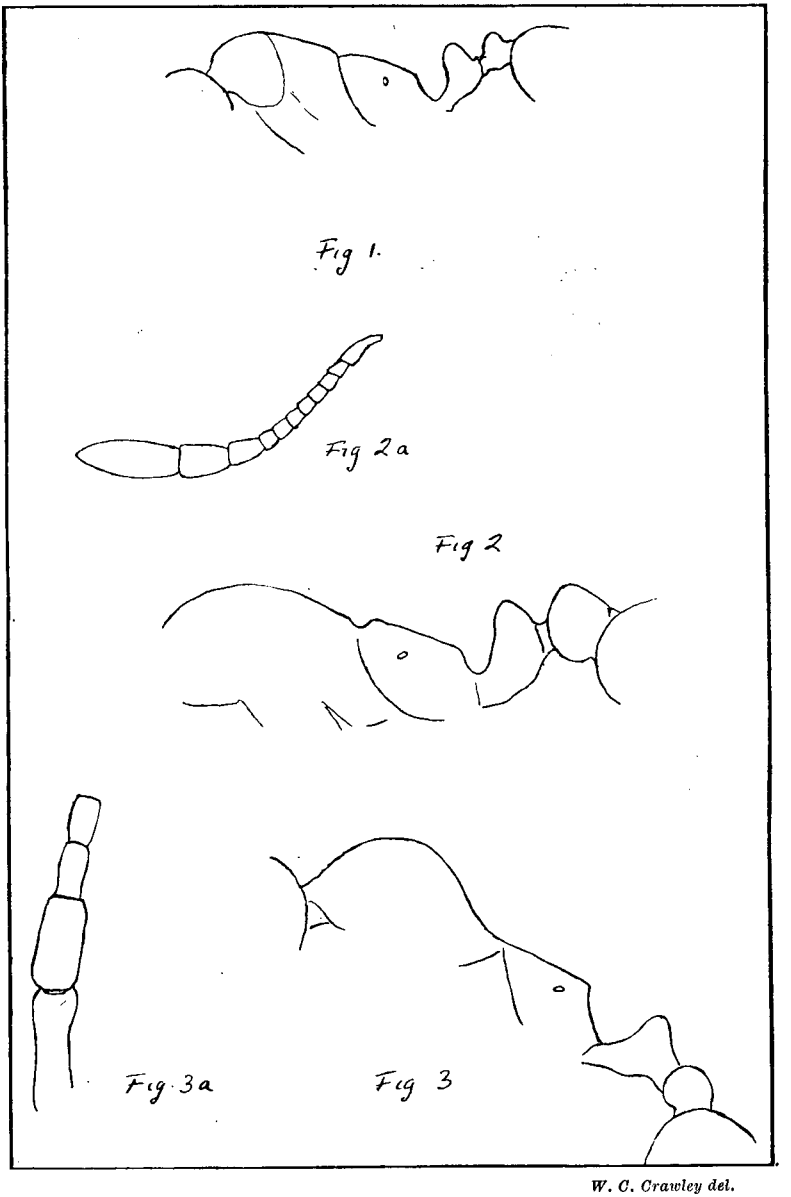

W. C. Crawley del.

Fig. 1. Thorax and pedicel of *Monomorium* (s.str.) *buxtoni*, sp.n.
Fig. 2. ,, ,, ,, ,, ,, *pallidum*, Donisthorpe.
Fig. 2a. Funiculus of antenna of ,, ,, ,, ,,
Fig. 3. Thorax and pedicel of *Messor platyceras*, sp.n.
Fig. 3a. End of scape and first 3 joints of funiculus of same.

~~ERRATA.—Pl. V., figs. 2 and 2a, *mariae*, sp. nov. should read *pallidum*, Donisthorpe.~~

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Ants from Mesopotamia and North-West Persia. (*With plate V.*)

By W. C. CRAWLEY, B.A., F.E.S.

The following paper contains a list of some thirty species, subspecies and varieties of *Formicidae* taken in Mesopotamia and North-west Persia by Mr. P. A. Buxton and Lieut. W. E. Evans, principally during the years 1918 and 1919. Though the number of forms is small, it contains two new species, one new race, and four new varieties, in addition to a new species and a new variety described by Mr. H. Donisthorpe in 1918. I have included in the paper the record of three South African species taken by Mr. Buxton.

It is interesting to note that among Lieut. Evans'. Mesopotamian

ants is a single specimen of *Polyrhachis simplex*, Mayr, a species very common in India, and the only member of this large genus that is found so far west in Asia as Mesopotamia.

My thanks are due to Professor C. Emery for his help and for the loan of examples of several species not represented in my collection.

Sub-family I. PONERINÆ, Lep.

Anochetus ghiliani, Spin. ☿.
Sar-i-Pal, Persia, 1919 (Evans).

Sub-family II. DORYLINÆ, Leach.

Dorylus (*Typhlopone*) *fulvus*, Westw. ♂. Tigris, 1918 (Evans).
☿ Amara, 1918 (Buxton).

Sub-family III. MYRMICINÆ, Mayr.

Myrmica bergi, Ruzsky, var **fortior**, var. nov.

☿ L. 5·0 mm.

Head broader than in *bergi*, and sculpture of head and thorax coarser and more broken, and that of nodes much coarser than in the type. Entire body darker than in *bergi*: in all other respects similar to *bergi*. Enzeli, N.W. Persia, 1919. (Buxton).

Comparison made with an example of *bergi* from the author himself, kindly sent me for the purpose by Prof. Emery. This specimen came from Aral.

Aphaenogaster sp. N.E. of Baghdad, 1918. A single ☿ mounted on a card with specimens of *Monomorium gracillimum*, Sm., with which it was apparently taken.

Messor arenarius, F. ☿ Baghdad, 1918. (Evans).
Messor **platyceras**, sp. nov. Fig. 3 and 3*a*.

☿ Major. L. 7·5mm.

Black; mandibles, apex of scape, the funiculus, joints of legs and the tarsi reddish-brown. Whole body covered with a yellowish pilosity, longest on pronotum, short on antennæ and legs.

Head as broad as long, narrower in front, occipital border feebly concave, eyes situated behind middle of sides. Scapes do not quite reach occipital border. First joint of funiculus longer than 2nd, flattened so as to be twice as long as broad with parallel sides, and much wider than 2nd joint when viewed on its flat side, whereas viewed the other way it is thinner than 2nd joint. From the 2nd to the 6th the joints decrease slightly in length and increase in thickness. The whole antenna and the joints are shorter and thicker proportionately than in the var. *amphigea*, For. of *oertzeni*, For., which has a very similarly shaped first joint. A medium-sized tooth at base of scape. Clypeus flat, the anterior border slightly excised. Promesonotum much arched, shoulders evenly rounded. Base of epinotum nearly twice as long as declivity, their junction forming a sharp angle in profile, but without teeth. Petiole in profile with a rather thin scale, concave in front; postpetiole rounded and lower.

Mandibles entirely coarsely and evenly striate. Whole of head longitudinally striate; there are no curved striæ in the antennal socket; the striæ are broken on the occiput where there are a few long shallow punctures; head shining. Pronotum anteriorly transversely rugose, the rugæ curving round the sides; posteriorly, irregularly longitudinally rugose above; mesonotum irregularly transversely rugose; epinotum evenly transversely striate above; sides of mesonotum and epinotum transversely rugose. Petiole smooth anteriorly, transversely rugose above and behind; postpetiole longitudinally rugose anteriorly, transversely rugose posteriorly. Base of gaster longitudinally striate for a short distance, the rest smooth and shining.

♀ Media. L. 6·5 mm.

Dark reddish brown, gaster black, the rest as in ♀ major. Pilosity as in ♀ major. The scapes just reach the occipital border. Sculpture somewhat finer than in ♀ major, otherwise similar. N.W. Persia. (Evans, No. 50).

This species is characterised by the broad and flat 1st joint of the scape, the only other species, as far as I know, that has a similarly shaped joint being *oertzeni*, For., var. *amphigea*, For., but, apart from the colour, is readily distinguished from *amphigea* by the much shorter antennæ and the sculpture.

Messor platyceras, Crawley, var. **rubella** var. nov.

♀ Major. L. 8·8mm.

Differs from the preceding as follows:—Colour: reddish-brown; mandibles, cheeks and legs paler. Eyes in middle of sides of head; first joint of funiculus similarly formed, but 2nd rather shorter in proportion; pro-mesonotum less highly arched; pronotum smooth and shining in centre. The whole thorax and epinotum less coarsely sculptured; postpetiole irregularly transversely rugose and very matt; gaster entirely smooth and shining. Pilosity similar, but somewhat shorter on the pronotum.

♀ Minor. L. 5·0mm.

Entirely castaneous; gaster somewhat darker. Entire sculpture finer than in ♀ major.

♂. L. 7·6mm.

Black; legs dark brown, joints and tarsi lighter. First joint of funiculus not flattened, equal in length to the 2nd, and slightly thicker (shorter than 2nd in *arenarius*, *barbarus*, *structor*, etc.), and both 1st and 2nd longer than the following joints. Mandibles 7-8 dentate, striate; clypeus irregularly rugose, head irregularly longitudinally rugose. Scutum shining in front, feebly longitudinally rugose in centre and at sides. Scutellum irregularly rugose, shining in centre; epinotum matt, feebly transversely rugose; nodes rugose; gaster shining.

Body covered with a long golden pilosity, most abundant on mesonotum and apex of gaster.

N.W. Persia, at 4,000 feet. 1919 (Buxton).

Messor barbarus race *semirufus*, And. ♀. N.W. Persia, 1919 (Buxton); Baghdad, 1918 (Evans).

Messor barbarus race *semirufus*, E. André, var. **obscurior** var. nov.

♀ Major. L. 7·5-8·0 mm.

Differs from *semirufus* as follows:—Colour dark-brown, in some specimens almost black, the colour being uniform except for the mandibles, tibiæ, tarsi and scapes, which are a dull dark reddish-brown. In other examples the promesonotum and underside of head are a dull dark red, considerably darker than in the darkest examples of the type species.

Sculpture of head, especially on occiput, somewhat coarser than in the type, and on the pronotum, instead of being feebly and irregularly striate transversely, is evenly and regularly striate transversely on neck, and on the rest, coarsely irregularly striate transversely, and the striæ in the centre often run longitudinally. Sculpture of rest of thorax and nodes similar to, but coarser than in *semirufus*. Pilosity similar but darker.

♀ Minor. L. 3·5 mm.

Has the same corresponding differences as the ♀ major. Amara, 1918 (Buxton); Baghdad 1918 (Evans).

M. barbarus race *semirufus*, And., var. *ebenina*, For., N.E. of Baghdad, 1918. A single ♀ on a card with *M. barbarus* race *semirufus* var. *obscurior*.

As far as can be judged from a single ♀ minor, this specimen belongs to Forel's var. *ebenina*.

Pheidole pallidula, Nyl., subsp. *arenarum*, Ruzsky, var. *orientalis*, Em. ♂ ♀. N.W. Persia, 1919 (Buxton); Baghdad, 1918 (Evans).

Donisthorpe (*Ent. Rec.*, xxx., 10, p. 165, 1918) has recorded this form from Mesopotamia as *pallidula* i.sp. Emery, however, (*Rev. Zool. Afr.*, iv., 2, p. 229, 1915), states that *pallidula* i.sp. is not found in Asia, where the form that occurs is a variety, which he there calls *orientalis*.

Crematogaster scutellaris, Oliv., subsp. *schmidti*, Mayr. ☿. Caspian, N.W. Persia, 1919 (Buxton). This subspecies is stated by Emery to differ, apart from its colour, from *scutellaris* i.sp. by its habit of nesting on the ground, and visiting herbaceous plants instead of trees. Taken attending *Aphis punicae*, Pass., on wild pomegranate.

C. scutellaris, Oliv. ? var. ☿. N.E. of Baghdad, 1918 (Evans). I cannot detect any difference in these specimens from the typical *scutellaris*, though the ants were found under clods of earth (whether or not in a nest is not clear), whereas according to Emery true *scutellaris* nests and lives on trees.

Cardiocondyla nuda, Mayr., subsp. *mauritanica*, For. Tigris, 1918. On a card with *Plagiolepis pygmaea* and *Prenolepis* sp.

Tetramorium caespitum, L. ☿. Enzeli, Caspian, March and June, 1919 (Buxton).

Monomorium gracillimum, Sm. ☿. Baghdad, 1917 (Buxton); 1918 (Evans).

M. salomonis, L. ☿. Baghdad, 1918 (Evans).

M. **buxtoni**, sp. nov. Fig. I.

☿. L. 2·5-2·6 mm.

Dirty yellowish-brown; gaster darker. Pilosity as in *abeillei*, Ern. André.

Head longer than wide, sides feebly convex, no broader in front than behind, occipital border slightly concave. Mandibles 4-dentate. Clypeus as in *abeillei*. Eyes in middle of sides of head. Scapes just reach occiput. Thorax incision as in *abeillei*, very slight; base of epinotum almost straight, but not quite so straight as in *abeillei*, forming a more rounded angle with the declivity; upper surface of epinotum feebly impressed (strongly so in *abeillei*). Petiole higher than in *abeillei*. and not so broad proportionately at base.

Head, thorax and pedicel entirely opaque (head, pronotum and pedicel shining in *abeillei*); head entirely matt, the sculpture being densely and deeply reticulate; and scattered punctures very few. Gaster feebly shining, the first segment superficially reticulate.

Though coming near to *Mon. abeillei*, Ern. And., the new species, besides differing as indicated above, is readily distinguished by its colour, André's species being reddish-brown, with gaster nearly black, and by its matt opaque appearance. The head again is not quite so broad proportionately in *buxtoni*, and is no broader in front, whereas in *abeillei* the head is wider in front, finely superficially reticulate with scattered punctures, besides being shining. The comparison was made with an example of *M. abeillei* kindly lent me by Prof. Emery.

Kumait, Mesopotamia, 1918. (Buxton).

M. (*Holcomyrmex*) *dentigerum*, Rog. ☿, ♀ Baghdad, 1918 (Evans).

M. (*H.*) *evansi*, Donisthorpe (*Ent. Rec.*, xxx. 10, p. 165, 1918) ♂, ♀, ☿. Tigris and Amara, 1918 (Buxton); Amara, 1918 (Evans).

Many of the ♂ ♂ and ♀ ♀ were taken *in cop.*

All of the numerous ☿ ☿ I have received from both Mr. Buxton and Lieut. Evans, as well as those received by Mr. Donisthorpe, are of uniform size. The ☿ ☿ of the sub-genus *Holcomyrmex*, as defined by Emery (*Bull. Soc. Ent. Fr.*, p. 189, 1915), are "very dimorphic." It is extremely unlikely that no ☿ major should have been captured among the large series that has been examined, if a ☿ major actually existed; therefore it appears likely that this new member of the sub-genus is an exception to the general rule.

☿. The head is slightly broader than long (without the mandibles), widest at eyes, slightly broader in front than behind, sides feebly convex. Occipital border slightly concave; in centre of occiput is a distinct impressed longitudinal line; a feeble impression also on vertex. The scapes do not reach the occipital border by a little more than their width. Anterior border of clypeus strongly concave between the teeth.

A few striæ on cheeks; the semi-circular striation in antennal socket very feeble.

Thorax strongly constricted at meso-epinotal suture; the latter in profile deeply impressed. Arch of epinotum regularly curved, showing hardly any division between base and declivity. Stalk of petiole shorter than the width of the node at its base. Second node seen from above wider than first, and produced at each side into a sharp angle.

Antennæ and legs with erect hairs.

Sub-family IV. Dolichoderinæ, Forel.

Tapinoma erraticum, Ltr., subsp. *nigerrimum*, Nyl. ☿. S.W. Caspian, 1919; Amara, 1918 (Buxton). N.E. of Baghdad, 1918 (Evans).

The S.W. Caspian specimens were taken by Mr. Buxton attending *Aphis punicae*, Pass., on wild pomegranate.

(*To be concluded.*)