posterior whitish bands. Second segment with a small dorso-lateral rufo-fulvous spot reaching posterior margin. Venter black, the whitish bands more distinct. Feet black Wings dark fuliginous, fading at apex, hinder margin and root. First posterior cell widely open.

A paratype, slightly damaged, is a little larger and lacks the spots on second segment.

Taken in May, at West Palm Beach, Florida, by Dr. H. E. Wright, after whom the species is named.

JEAN-HENRI FABRE.

It is hard to believe as I write that Fabre is dead, for the great age to which he lived and the extraordinary character of the man had, as it were, dulled one's senses to the inexorable facts of life. The photograph before me of "that inimitable observer," as Darwin called him more than half a century ago, showing that keen old face wrinkled with years of the most intense and penetrating observation still intent on the movements of an insect, had instilled into one an idea of permanence. But on October 11th, at Orange, he finished a life of ninety-two years of hard and strenuous toil.

Born of humble parentage at Saint Léons, a little village in the Haute Rouergue, on December 22nd, 1823, he was destined to a life of poverty, through which he struggled with an indomitable perseverance, which was the outstanding characteristic of his entire life and the main cause of the imperishable fame that will be his. His early years were a perpetual struggle for education. Undeterred by disappointment, he laboured on as a teacher, now as a professor of mathematics and physics at Ajaccio in Corsica, where an acquaintance with that brilliant naturalist Moquin-Tandon was responsible for his determination to forswear mathematics for the study of living things, and later at Avignon, always careless of degrees and dignities. The chance discovery in 1854 of a volume of that famous entomologist, Léon Dufour, on the habits of a wasp, *Cerceris*, directed his steps into that path of patient entomological study from which, during the succeeding sixty years of incessant

labour, he never turned. In the following year there appeared in the *Annales des sciences naturelles* his memoir on *Cerceris*, which signalises the beginning of his entomological career. While at Avignon he met John Stuart Mill, whose love for botany furnished the basis of their remarkable friendship; incidentally he took his doctor's degree in Natural Sciences at Paris, and his discovery by Victor Drury, the Minister of Public Instruction, was responsible for his distinction as a Chevalier of the Legion of Honour. Little did these honours avail him, for during the twenty years during which he stayed at the University of Avignon his salary never changed from £64 per annum. Disappointed, but clinging more tenaciously than ever to his life's pursuit, he settled down near Orange, in the lower Rhone, and subsequently, "after forty years of desperate struggles," he found his Eden at Sérignan, a little village in Provence.

Here for the rest of his life he dwelt; his laboratory was a small tract of wild land "L'Harmas," a "living laboratory," where he studied "non l'insecte mort, macéré dans le trois-six, mais l'insecte vivant; un laboratoire ayant pour objet l'instinct, les moeurs, la manière de vivre, les travaux, les luttes, la propagation de ce petit monde, avec lequel l'agriculture et la philosophie doivent très serieusement compter."

The central feature of Fabre's work was that he studied the living insect and its behaviour, and in this fact lies the chief value of his contribution to entomological knowledge. Never since Réaumur has so wide a range of insects been studied so intensively as we find in the *Souvenirs entomologiques;* but while Réaumur described with the greatest precision the objects of his patient study, he did not enter into the lives of his insects and their instinctive behaviour to the extent that Fabre has accustomed us. And how different their respective lives: Fabre carrying on a perpetual struggle to raise a family in the face of poverty and Réaumur in ease and comfort. It is safe to say that no entomologist in the past has accomplished a work of so unique a character as that of Fabre, and it is unlikely that the future will hold another man who will equal his achievement. In 1878 he was able to assemble the results of about twenty-five years' labour in the form of the

first volume of the *Souvenirs*, and the ten volumes he has left us constitute his great contribution to our knowledge.

In an appreciation of this character it is impossible to refer individually to the two hundred and nineteen memoirs, as his chapters really are, in the *Souvenirs*, much less to select from the thousand and one inimitable word pictures he gives us, greatly as one is tempted to do so. As the years passed by, his literary style developed until it reached a beauty of description that cannot be excelled in any language, and to appreciate it fully one must go to the original memoirs, although the translations of the selected essays, which are gradually being published, will serve to bring his work to the attention of a wider audience than it has previously enjoyed.

Undoubtedly the outstanding feature of Fabre's work was his contribution to our knowledge of insect behaviour, as I have already stated. He was not content with mere observation, with anatomical or physiological studies, but searched deeply for the principles underlying the behaviour of the creatures with whom he lived hour by hour and day by day: endeavouring to obtain, as it were, the insect's point of view. He was constantly comparing insects with men, and this anthropocentric attitude, no doubt, was a source of danger. Nevertheless, the evidence he afforded as a result of his painstaking work of the "pervasive mentality and purposiveness," to use the words of a recent writer, is his main contribution to the interpretation of animal behaviour. His belief in instinct as a dominant and underivable factor fundamentally different from intelligence, his strong vitalistic conception of the organism, and his firm opposition to the ideas set forth by Darwin, with whom he corresponded and for whom he conceived a real affection, are leading characteristics of his work. Although he assailed the "vast and luminous balloon" of evolution, as he called it, his criticism lacked the constructive arguments one would have desired from a close observer, and his intense conviction of the fallacy of a mechanistic interpretation appears to have blinded him to the possibility of an alternative interpretation of facts consistent with the idea of evolution.

C. GORDON HEWITT.