

BIOLOGIA CENTRALI-AMERICANA.

ZOOLOGIA.

Class INSECTA.

Order RHYNCHOTA.

Suborder HEMIPTERA-HOMOPTERA (continued).

Fam. MEMBRACIDÆ*.

Membracides, Germar, Mag. der Ent. iv. p. 7 (1821).

Membracida, Curtis, Brit. Ent. xii. Gen. p. 14 (1840).

Jassida (ex parte), Stål, Hem. Afr. iv. p. 82 (1866).

The members of this family are chiefly distinguished by the great development of the pronotum, which in many cases completely covers the whole body and occasionally the tegmina as well, and in most of the genera is much enlarged and conceals the scutellum. In the Centrotinæ, however, the extension of the pronotum does not conceal the scutellum, which is left more or less exposed, and in some genera the posterior process is diminished to a mere elongated point, while in a few the posterior process is entirely wanting; these may, as a rule, be known by having the metopidium †, or front part of the pronotum, strongly and more or less perpendicularly declivous; in the genus *Æthalion*, however, there is no posterior process of the pronotum, nor is the metopidium strongly declivous, but the position of this genus is very doubtful.

Stål regards his "Membracida" as merely a subfamily of the Jassidæ, yet, in spite of this, he classes *Æthalion* and other doubtful genera among the Centrotidæ; in any case, however, the wisdom of this arrangement appears to be doubtful, for the Membracidæ, as a whole, form one of the most distinct and unmistakable groups of all insects.

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† I have used this term throughout to express the declivous part of the pronotum reaching from the base of the head to the front of the dorsum.