

## A Note on Typification

BY

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The limits to be accorded to the genera of *Caryophyllaceae* will no doubt be the subject of further debate and modification by taxonomists before a generally accepted settlement is reached. Whether the British Campions are to be placed in *Lychnis* or *Melandrium* does not concern us now. However, the question whether the Red Champion is to be known in the genus *Melandrium* as *M. dioicum* (L.) Coss. & Germ. or *M. rubrum* (Weigel) Garcke involves a point of nomenclature which it seems desirable to state in general terms.

It is, of course, fundamental to the type method of nomenclature that the type of a new combination is the type of the name on which it is based (Art. 18, 65).<sup>\*</sup> What needs clear statement is that this principle extends to a combination whose basynym originally covered plants now considered referable to two or more taxa. In such instances the type of the combination is necessarily the lectotype of its basynym, it being immaterial whether or not the lectotype was actually mentioned by the authors of the combination. Should the actual use of the combination have been restricted to the excluded (non-typical) part of the compound taxon, then it is regarded as a botanical misidentification. Nevertheless, it stands in nomenclature as a new combination based on the lectotype (cf. Art. 65). It will, of course, be necessary in each particular instance to make certain that the basing of the new combination on the "excluded" element of the compound taxon was not in effect a revised, and more justifiable, choice of lectotype. For if that were so the lectotype chosen earlier could be properly abandoned (Art. 19 and Appendix 1).

The position in the problem of the Red Champion may be summarized as follows. Linnaeus (Sp. Pl. 437: 1753) included both Red and White Campions under *Lychnis dioica* L. Miller (Gard. Dict. ed. 8: 1768) was the first to recognize the two species as being distinct, and he retained *L. dioica* for the Red Champion and named the White Champion *L. alba* Mill. There is no doubt that Miller's choice of the Red Champion as true *L. dioica* was correct on the weight of the evidence in Linnaeus's citations, for Linnaeus clearly adopted the epithet *dioica* because of Gesner's observations on the separation of the sexes in the Red Champion, and he regarded the White Champion as a variety of it. In the genus *Lychnis* *L. dioica* L. (sens. Mill.) and *L. alba* Mill. are the correct names for the Red and White Champion respectively.

But these Campions are now usually placed in the genus *Melandrium*, and the authors who first transferred *L. dioica* to that genus (Cosson & Germain, Fl. Env. Paris, 28: 1845) used the name *M. dioicum* for the White Champion! Hylander (Nomenkl. & Syst.. Stud. Nord. Gefässpfl. 159: 1945) has argued that the existence of *M. dioicum* (L.) Coss. & Germ. "(quod=*M. album*)"

<sup>\*</sup> References to numbered Articles are to the International Code of Botanical Nomenclature, Utrecht 1952.

presents a barrier, under the homonym rule, to the use of *M. dioicum* (L.—sensu Mill.)\* for the Red Campion. This position is, I believe, untenable. As there can only be one correct use of the name *Lychnis dioica* L., so there can only be one *Melandrium dioicum* (L.) based upon it. In stating that *M. dioicum* (L.) Coss. & Germ. is *M. album* (Mill.) Garcke, Hylander is mixing botany and nomenclature. Under the International Code (Art. 56) the insertion of words such as "sensu Mill." is merely optional, to be used when the change of concept has been considerable. To quote the wording of this Article accepted at Stockholm in 1950: "An alteration of the diagnostic characters or the circumscription of a taxon does not warrant the citation of an author other than the one who first published the name." The option to include such words as "emend." "pro parte," etc., is now relegated to a Recommendation (56A).

The name *Melandrium dioicum* Coss. & Germ. can certainly not be regarded as anything other than a new combination based on *Lychnis dioica* L.—that is, on the Red Campion. For Cosson & Germain to apply the name to the White Campion was, we now consider, wrong, but their creation of the combination *Melandrium dioicum* (L.) Coss. & Germ. is not affected by their misapplication of it. The position is clearly comparable to instances of new combinations based on misidentifications, which are covered by the second paragraph of Article 65 of the International Code.

It is submitted, therefore, that the correct name for the Red Campion in the genus *Melandrium* is simply *M. dioicum* (L.) Coss. & Germ. If there is a body of opinion in favour of dropping the epithet *dioicum* on the ground that it is ambiguous (Art. 75), that is an entirely different matter on which no view need now be expressed.

It may have been noted that wherever I have cited *L. dioica* L. with the optional reference to Miller, to indicate his typification of the composite species, I have written "sensu Miller" and not "emend. Miller," as is frequently done. The meaning of "emend." is, of course, subject to personal interpretation, but it now seems to me to be far too strong a word to use, and to be a relic of the days when names were interpreted by their circumscriptions. Under the type method of nomenclature "emendation" of a taxon is, strictly speaking, impossible; all that a later author can do is to establish the typical element of a composite taxon. Article 56 clearly recognises that it is impossible to make such drastic emendation as would render the citation of the later author *essential*. I therefore suggest that the use of "emend." be discontinued, and that the name of the author who has designated a lectotype for a group will be more satisfactorily introduced by the word "sensu". In particular I would emphasise that *Lychnis dioica* L. and *L. dioica* L. sensu Mill. are nomenclaturally one and the same and cannot give rise to two distinct combinations when transferred to another genus.

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\* Hylander attributes this combination to Simonkai (Enum. Fl. Transsylv. 129: 1886), the first author to use this name for the Red Campion.