

HAMPSHIRE MOSSES.

Additional Note.

BY THE REV. EVELYN D. HEATHCOTE.

The publication last year (1896) of Mr. H. N. Dixon's excellent "Student's Handbook of British Mosses," has thrown a new light upon a little moss which I recorded for Hampshire under the name of *Rhyncostegium curvisetum* Brid., in a short notice I wrote in the Papers and Proceedings of the Hants Field Club (Vol. I, Part IV, p. 78), I observed on that occasion that the history of this moss was somewhat confusing, that its habitat on roots of trees and bushes in the parish of Sparsholt was at variance with the one usually assigned to it of "stones and rocks near streams," but that Mr. Hobkirk was satisfied, after careful examination of the specimens I sent to him, that they should be referred to *Hypnum rigidulum*, Bruch., which was considered to be the same as *Rhyncostegium curvisetum*, Brid.

Mr. Dixon, however, maintains that it is only a variety of *Eurhynchium tenellum*, Milde, to which he gives the name of *scabrellum*, differing from *tenellum* in the more or less rough seta, and observes that "it is a very remarkable and highly interesting form, demonstrating as it does the slight importance to be placed on the smoothness or otherwise of the seta as a systematic character for separating genera or groups of species." He says that though the leaves are sometimes a little shorter than in *tenellum* they do not differ in any other respect, and are more longly acuminate than in *curvisetum*, with a somewhat larger nerve and distinctly longer cells, and that the seta varies very considerably in the amount of roughness, in some cases being practically smooth. He describes the habitat as I have done, though he says the moss is occasionally found on stones, and observes that it fruits with *tenellum* in spring and not with *curvisetum* in winter.

All this I had observed and can fully endorse, though when I wrote the notice I had not found it, as I afterwards did, growing on stones, but supposing, according to the apparent belief of most bryologists, that the roughness of the seta was a character of more importance than now appears to be the case, I accepted Mr. Hobkirk's view, which I see from Mr. Dixon's book, was also shared by Dr. Braithwaite, and recorded the moss as *Rhyncostegium curvisetum*.

Mr. Dixon's view on the question of the seta is, I suppose, a new one, as Mr. Mitten, who finds the moss in Sussex, considers it a distinct species, but after carefully comparing it with authentic specimens of *Rhyncostegium curvisetum*, which Mr. Dixon has kindly sent me, I feel bound to assent to his conclusions, and concur with him when he remarks, "the fact that the seta is sometimes nearly smooth, and at others, I believe, entirely so, appears to me to point strongly towards the varietal nature of the condition, and I can find no other constant character to separate it."

Rhyncostegium curvisetum must then, as far as my present information extends, be withdrawn from the list of Hampshire Mosses, and *Eurhynchium tenellum*, Milde, Var., B. *scabrellum*, Dixon n., var., be substituted for it.
