

# **MIMICRY IN BUTTERFLIES**

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Mimicry in butterflies by Reginald Crundall Punnett

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BY

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## PREFACE

**T**HIS little book has been written in the hope that it may appeal to several classes of readers.

Not infrequently I have been asked by friends of different callings in life to recommend them some book on mimicry which shall be reasonably short, well illustrated without being very costly, and not too hard to understand. I have always been obliged to tell them that I know of nothing in our language answering to this description, and it is largely as an attempt to remedy this deficiency that the present little volume has been written.

I hope also that it will be found of interest to those who live in or visit tropical lands, and are attracted by the beauty of the butterfly life around them. There are few such countries without some of these cases of close resemblance between butterflies belonging to different families and groups, and it is to those who have the opportunity to be among them that we must look for fuller light upon one of the most fascinating of all nature's problems. If this little book serves to



smooth the path of some who would become acquainted with that problem, and desire to use their opportunities of observation, the work that has gone to its making will have been well repaid.

To those who cultivate biological thought from the more philosophical point of view, I venture to hope that what I have written may not be without appeal. At such a time as the present, big with impending changes in the social fabric, few things are more vital than a clear conception of the scope and workings of natural selection. Little enough is our certain knowledge of these things, and small though the butterfly's contribution may be I trust that it will not pass altogether unregarded.

In conclusion I wish to offer my sincere thanks to those who have helped me in different ways. More especially are they due to my friends Dr Karl Jordan for the loan of some valuable specimens, and to Mr T. H. Riehes for his kindly criticism on reading over the proof-sheets.

R. C. P.

*February, 1915*

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"The process by which a mimetic analogy is brought about in nature is a problem which involves that of the origin of all species and all adaptations."

H. W. BATES, 1861.

"With mimesis, above all, it is wise, when the law says that a thing is black, first to inquire whether it does not happen to be white."

HENRI FABRE.