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Editorial – Ragged Right.

We hope you will like our new layout. We have been giving serious consideration for some time now to adopting the “ragged right”, with two objectives in view: to offset rising costs and to minimize errors. Since quite early on in the history of printing, the tidiness of a uniform line length and the resulting uniform or “justified” right hand margin have attracted printers. This tidiness has been achieved by differential spacing between words, letters, or both, or by filling up short lines with decorative material. The untidiness is thus distributed more uniformly and is less obtrusive.

The advent of photo-offset printing from a typewritten original raised the problem of achieving differential spacing of letters and words with a typewriter. Most solutions to this problem required two stages of typing, though the second may be partially automatic. While this allows two opportunities for correcting errors it may also provide an additional opportunity for making them. These procedures require more proof-reading, take more time, and consequently cost more.

While the advantages of being able to read faster are certainly debatable for some kinds of subject matter, they have become much sought after and have led to the current popularity of the two column and three column pages, on which each column is justified. The shorter return track of the reader’s eye, from the end of one line to the beginning of the next, allows faster reading. I believe it has also been shown that by running the words in the opposite direction to have taken on. Spelling the words backwards, however, yields no further gains, presumably because words are recognized as entities. (←) (→)

One of the commonest kinds of major error in both typewriting and typesetting, which may even get through into final proof, and one of the most expensive to correct, is that of dropped lines. These result, as often as not, from the appearance of the same word or phrase at the beginning or the end of two adjacent or nearly adjacent lines. Such an error can also be made, of course, by the reader of final copy, whose progress is substantially delayed by the necessity of checking back, if he notices it, or who may have a permanent misconception if he doesn’t. A ragged right layout, by giving an individuality to at least the ending of each line reduces the probability of dropped lines from this cause to about a half - a significant contribution to accuracy. This led us to ask whether the cost, in time and equipment, of justifying the right hand margin is really justified and to answer this question in the negative

in this and succeeding issues of *Quaestiones entomologicae*.

We take time to explain this step because it means money to you: reviewing our financial situation we had just about come to the conclusion that we would have to increase subscription rates with this issue. Our circulation, in part because of reduced periodical budgets in libraries, has not increased, at the rate we could have hoped; costs have increased and despite generous subsidy by the University of Alberta we have difficulty making ends meet. By going to the ragged right layout, we can at least hold the line on subscription rates until the end of volume ten - perhaps longer if every subscriber can find us a new subscriber! It is worth mentioning that there is an entomological journal (we refrain from naming it) of similar age, circulation, size and frequency of publication to *Quaestiones entomologicae* for which the subscription rate is ten times ours. We do not believe that its contents are ten times as good as ours nor that nine-tenths of the subscription winds up in the pockets of entomologists. It is appropriate at this point to thank our many distinguished reviewers, referees, proof-readers, and translators for their continuing voluntary and anonymous contributions. We depend on them for the quality of our contents.

In starting our tenth volume it is perhaps also appropriate to review our original intentions, our progress, and our policies. Our original intention was to publish about 250 pages (each of about 500 words or equivalent) each year. Our subscription rate was based on this intention. Our first nine volumes have the following numbers of pages in them: 250, 322, 291, 258, 372, 364, 446, 466, 480 and since volume VI we have been getting about 600 words per page. In saddle-stitched issues we must have a multiple of 4 pages. We are always short of appropriate material to fill blanks. Manuscripts of the short notes type, book reviews, notices of appropriate meetings or other events, suitable news items, will be considered at any time if they are less than 2400 words and can usually be published promptly if less than 600 words. We don't like empty pages in *Quaest. ent.*; if you don't either, please send us material. We have in mind a few minor improvements which can be made economically at the end of volume X; if you have constructive suggestions to offer, may we hear from you in time for us to add them to our list? We shall be working on this in July.

Brian Hocking
San Salvador, Bahamas 7/1/74