A Freshwater Isopod from Calcutta.

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(Plate 6.)

[Read 17th January, 1907.]

The interest of the specimens about to be described lies more in the novelty of their habitat than in any striking features of specific distinction. Dr. Annandale, writing on the 24th October, 1906, says:—"The species is evidently rare, as the three specimens are the only ones I have been able to find in a very large number of sponges examined. The two smaller ones were found last week in the same pond, while the larger one came from a different pond last month. I am working at the freshwater sponges of this district and their inquilines, so that I am very anxious to have the different species found associated with the sponges identified."

It may be noticed that the true limits of the family Corallanidae, to which these specimens belong, have only recently become susceptible of definition through the researches of Mr. Stanley Gardiner in the Maldive and Laccadive Archipelagoes and those of Dr. Willey at Ceylon. The scarcity of a species often disappears when the attention of naturalists has been directed to it, but for the moment we have the singularity of an apparently rare species of an uncommon family presenting itself under conditions which are not very usual for the order of isopods in general.

Family CORALLANIDÆ.


In her monograph on the isopods of North America, referred to above, Miss Richardson has incorporated in this family a new genus Tridentella, and the genus Nalidora published by H. E. Moore in 1902. Both of these genera have seven-jointed maxillipeds, the palp being distinctly five-jointed.

Genus TACHLÆA, Schiöölte & Meinert.


In the species here described the maxillipeds are decidedly only six-jointed, but the terminal joint is longer than any one of the three joints immediately
preceding it, an unusual relation which supports the opinion that in this
genus the diminished number of joints is due to a coalescence of the sixth
and seventh.

**Tachæa spongillicola**, sp. n. (Plate 6.)

Front of head bisinuate, with small median process. First segment of
peræon with anterior margin not bisinuate; this segment centrally not much
longer than any but the seventh. Peræon considerably longer than pleon,
of which the first five segments are together shorter than the telsonic
segment. This last is as broad as long, apically very broadly rounded in
female, partially truncate in male; margins serrate, four setæ and eight spines.
Eyes small, dark, widely separated.

First antennæ having a much dilated first joint, slightly longer than broad,
the second (or probably true third) joint being shorter and much narrower;
the flagellum of seven short joints overlapping base of fifth joint in the
second antenna. In these the first three joints are short, the fourth a little
shorter but stouter than the fifth; the flagellum sixteen-jointed, rather longer
than the peduncle.

The mandibles end in a sharp tooth, with another inconspicuous one a little
to the rear. The broadest part of the trunk follows the insertion of the palp
which is very near the base, the first joint being the broadest, the third the
shortest but with the largest number of spines. The surface of the trunk
shows fish-scale markings under high magnification.

The first maxillæ have a rounded apex to the inner plate; beyond this the
outer plate tapers to its strong single apical tooth. The second maxillæ have
an undivided apical plate, as broad as long, broadly rounded distally.

The maxillipeds of the ovigerous female have the vibratory lamæ of the
first and second joints largely developed, with strong muscles. The lamæ
of the second joint is distally fringed with long plumose setæ, and is
prolonged nearly to the end of the four-jointed palp. The first three joints
of the palp are each broader than long, only the terminal joint being rather
longer than broad; this, as above suggested, probably representing a union
of two joints. One maxilliped in our specimen has a small mite with its
mouth placed on the first joint of the palp and its body reaching half across
the anterior vibratory plate. The maxillipeds of the male by the absence of
the vibratory lamæ have a very different appearance from those of the
female. The palps, however, differ only slightly. In the female the palp’s
third joint is rather longer than the second; in the male the reverse is true;
in both, the terminal joint is the largest in the palp.

The first gnathopods and two succeeding pairs of limbs are closely alike,
with the fourth joint short and the fifth still shorter, the sixth robust, more
so in the female than in the male, the trunk of the finger considerably longer
than its well-defined unguis. The four following pairs of legs are successively
TACHAEA Spongillicola, n. sp.

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