

ON A NEW AND PECULIAR FRESHWATER *ISOPOD*  
FROM MOUNT KOSCIUSKO.

By CHAS. CHILTON, M.A., B.Sc.

[With Plates XXIII. - XXVI.]

TOWARDS the end of 1889 I received from the Trustees of the Australian Museum, Sydney, a small collection of Australian Crustacea, containing among others, some terrestrial and fresh-water species collected by Mr. R. Helms while on an expedition to Mount Kosciusko on behalf of the Museum.\* Among these I at once saw that one was quite different from any of the terrestrial and fresh-water crustacea previously described from Australia, and that it belonged to a genus *Phreatoicus* established by myself in 1882, for a peculiar blind subterranean Isopod found in wells in Canterbury, New Zealand. This genus was of special interest both because of the situation in which the original species was found, and because it combined characters belonging to several different families, and was also, to some extent, intermediate between the Isopoda and the Amphipoda. The discovery of a species belonging to the same genus in such a widely remote situation as Mount Kosciusko, and living under such different conditions is therefore of peculiar interest, and will probably have an important bearing on the difficult question of the origin of the blind subterranean forms. In the present paper, however, I do not propose to enter upon this question, as I hope to be able to do that on a future occasion when describing more fully the subterranean forms from New Zealand. For the present I shall content myself with describing the new species as fully as possible and with discussing the position of the genus among the *Isopoda*. It will be well, however, first to give the circumstances under which the species was taken, as they are given by the finder, Mr. R. Helms, a collector of whose zeal and accuracy I had had experience before he left New Zealand.

The specimens were, he says, taken at a place 'locally known as "Piper's Creek," at an elevation of 5,700 feet or perhaps 'rather more, on the track from "Pretty Point" towards the "Ram's Head." The creek (or a least a branch of it) runs here 'through a, in damp weather, boggy flat, and at the time (early 'in March 1889) was slowly trickling along forming puddles here 'and there. In one of these puddles where there was only a little

---

\* A short account of this expedition is given by Mr. Helms in the "Records of the Australian Museum," Vol. I., No. 1, p. 11.