

MYSTICONCHA, A NEW GENERIC NAME FOR CALEDONIELLA BASEDOW, NON SOUVERBIE.

By

JOYCE ALLAN,

Assistant Conchologist, The Australian Museum.

(Plates xxv-xxvi and Figure 1.)

The presentation recently to the Australian Museum collection of a mollusc trawled off Cape Everard, Victoria, by Captain K. Moller, a keen collector who has given much valuable material to the museum, has disclosed some interesting facts concerning the generic and specific name of a similar species from Backstairs Passage, St. Vincent Gulf, South Australia.

Basedow¹ gives the new specific name *contusiformis* (Pl. xxvi, figs. 6-9) and colour variety names *testudinis*, *pulchra*, and *labyrinthina* to a large naked mollusc dredged in South Australia, and places it in the genus *Caledoniella* Souverbie², a genus made for a small, snail-like, parasitic mollusc from New Caledonia, described as fragile, with fine radiating striæ, and covered with a fine yellow epidermis. Later, from a further note³, we learn that two examples of this mollusc were sent from New Caledonia by Montrouzier, with a simple note attached to the first that it was found living parasitic between the thoracic legs of a *Gonodactylus* ("Trouvée vivante entre les pattes thoraciques d'un *Gonodactyle*"), a marine crustacean. The most important characters of this species were that it was a parasitic form, it possessed an epidermis, was depressed oval-orbiculate in shape, and was only 5-7 mm. in diameter and 4 mm. high, with an aperture $4\frac{1}{4}$ mm. wide and $3\frac{1}{4}$ mm. high. In order that this interesting species should have a place in nomenclature, Souverbie gave to it the name *Caledoniella montrouzieri* (Pl. xxvi, fig. 3), but the disposition of it in a family he left to later authors. Tryon⁴ placed it in the family Naticidae, but Fischer⁵ had previously placed it in the family Lamellariidae, where it still remains.

It is apparent from the description of this shell and its parasitic habit that Basedow very erroneously placed his species in the genus *Caledoniella*. It can only be surmised that he could not have seen the later note on it or the figures, otherwise he would have realised how very dissimilar the two molluscs are. The most outstanding external character is that Basedow's species is a naked mollusc, a large, soft animal, and only on dissecting it along the dorsal surface is a thin large shell found, completely enclosed by the dorsal skin or mantle of the animal. The species *Caledoniella montrouzieri*, on the other hand, is founded on a shell which is definitely external. The animal, which must have been known to Montrouzier, since the specimens were found in their live state, was disregarded in both descriptions of the shell. A mollusc possessing a completely internal shell cannot be the same genus as one having a wholly external shell which envelops a small animal. Basedow's own excellent drawings of his species and its internal shell, apart from his good description, quickly show their dissimilarity.

¹Basedow, Trans. R. Soc. S. Austr., xxix, 1905, p. 181-5, pls. xxviii-xxix.

²Souverbie, Journ. de Conch., xvii, 1869, p. 421.

³Souverbie and Montrouzier, Journ. de Conch., xviii, 1870, p. 71-2, pl. ix, fig. 4.

⁴Tryon, Man. of Conch., viii, 1886, p. 12.

⁵Fischer, Man. de Conch., 1885, p. 764.