

Britain, were the most noteworthy collectors, and I was able to add a few species to their lists in after years. The relationship of these clays, in which are *Ledas*, *Buccinums* and other species indicating deeper water than those noted in the Saanich formation, has not, to my mind, been satisfactorily determined.

THE SNOW-FLEA.

BY CHARLES MACNAMARA, ARNPRIOR, ONTARIO.

In this part of Canada the coming of winter practically marks the seasonable close of visible insect life, and with the first snow most collectors put up their nets, forceps and bottles. But to this general rule there are exceptions, and occasionally one finds on the snow a torpid fly or spider that the winter winds have blown out of some crevice, or sometimes on a mild day a woolly-bear caterpillar is seen hurrying along as if late for an appointment. These, however, are merely accidental apparitions, and the only insect that can be said to occur regularly during the winter months is the springtail.

These tiny insects belong to the order Thysanura, and form the sub-order Collembola. They are the most widely distributed hexapods in the world, having a range from the Arctic to the Antarctic and are found high up on mountains and down in the deepest caves. Excluding parasites on penguins and seals, which may be regarded as importations, the only indigenous insect in the Antarctic continent is said to be a springtail. Only in view of their absolutely wingless condition, the wide distribution of these small and delicate insects points to the great antiquity of the order, and they are thought to represent a very early offshoot of the ancestral stock of Hexapoda. All the species are very small, ranging from one-half a millimeter to five millimeters in length, but those of the latter size are the giants of the race; most of them are from one to two millimeters long. They frequent dark damp places, as under moss and rotten wood, and owing to their minute size are difficult to discover.