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On the existence of tetraspores in a genus of Algæ, belonging to the Zygnemata

M. Montagne

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Hab. Open plains, Darling Downs, New South Wales.

Fur very soft, and both on the upper and under parts of the body of a slate-grey colour next the skin; general hue of the upper parts of the body ashy grey, much pencilled with black; on the sides of the body there is but little of the black pencilling, and hence the general hue is paler; and on these parts, as well as on the sides of the head, is a faint yellow tint; under parts of the body white, very indistinctly suffused with yellow on the mesial portion of the abdomen; between the white of the under parts and the greyish hue of the sides of the body is a narrowish space of an almost uniform pale yellow hue, and the same tint is observable on the outer side of the legs; feet white, obscurely tinted with pale yellow; on the upper surface of the head is a mark, narrow on the muzzle, but becoming expanded behind, which is almost entirely black, and immediately around the eyes the hairs are also black; ears of moderate size, their posterior margin nearly straight, clothed internally with small pale yellowish, and externally with black hairs, excepting on the hinder part, where they are pale; tail very thick at the base (about $3\frac{1}{2}$ lines in diameter), becoming gradually slender to the apex, and clothed throughout with very minute hairs, between which the scaly skin is visible; those on its upper part and sides partly black and partly yellow, and on the under surface dirty white. The specimen described is a male.

MISCELLANEOUS.

On the Existence of Tetraspores in a genus of Algæ, belonging to the Zygnemata. By M. MONTAGNE.

“REPRODUCTIVE bodies of two kinds have for a long time been observed in those Algæ which are denominated *Florideæ*. Those which constitute the spores are inclosed in variable but distinct conceptacula, which are especially remarkable from the place which they occupy in different individuals. The others, nestling in the cortical stratum, or placed in rows in the transformed branches, are at first entire, globose or ellipsoidal, but at maturity separate into four spores, either crucially or horizontally.

“Messrs. Cronan of Brest, during the course of the last year only, observed in the spores of certain *Fucaceæ*, and amongst other species *Fucus nodosus*, where they had never been before ascertained to be otherwise than simple, that they also at maturity separated into four distinct spores. Dr. J. D. Hooker and Dr. Dickie in Great Britain, and Messrs. Decaisne and Thuret in France, not only confirmed this fact by their own observations, but studied it in some other species. We have then the two first families of the great class of Algæ provided with spores divided quaternally.

“Amongst the hydrophytes of Algiers there is one of great interest gathered by M. Durieu in the marsh of Ali-Labrack near La Calle. It belongs to the little tribe of *Zygnemata* distinguished by the copulation of the threads. At first it does not seem to differ from other species, but examined under the microscope it exhibits the

spores, which in other individuals of the family are simple, divided crucially into four distinct spores, precisely as in *Floridææ*. The family then of *Zoospermeæ*, like the two others, exhibits this peculiarity."

The Alga of course belongs to a new genus, and Dr. Montagne has in consequence dedicated it to Mr. G. H. K. Thwaites, who has facilitated the study of Algæ so much by his admirable mode of preparing specimens. M. J. B.—*From a Letter presented to the French Academy*, October 20, 1845.

HASSALL'S 'FRESHWATER ALGÆ.'

To the Editors of the Annals of Natural History.

GENTLEMEN,—I beg to call your attention to an omission in the preface of the 'History of the British Freshwater Algæ,' of which I was not conscious until the work was placed in my hands ready bound, and which I much regret.

In making my acknowledgments to those gentlemen who kindly afforded me assistance in the preparation of the work, I have, most unfortunately and unaccountably, omitted all reference to the respected name of Mr. Dillwyn, one of the earliest and most successful cultivators of a knowledge of the Algæ.

In a future issue of the book I will take care that this error be rectified, and in the meantime I should feel obliged by your insertion of these few lines in explanation of what might seem a strange omission to many, and to Mr. Dillwyn a slight, the commission of which never entered into my thoughts.

I remain, Gentlemen, your very obedient servant,

ARTHUR H. HASSALL.

Norland Villa, Addison Road North, Sept. 10, 1845.

NATURAL HISTORY IN IRELAND.

Among the signs of good times for natural history, one of the most promising is the encouragement given to that science in the University of Dublin, and which contrasts favourably with the apathy, and even opposition shown towards it by Oxford and Cambridge, and the indifference displayed by the senators of the University of London, a body too fondly attached to the traditions of the older universities. In a printed notice of the present state of the natural-history collections in Trinity College, Dublin, now under the charge of one of the first among British zoologists, Mr. Robert Ball, we find that the university professors give courses of lectures, free to the public, on comparative anatomy, botany, mineralogy and geology, besides demonstrations in their respective departments by the keepers of the botanical and zoological collections. When we read the name of Harrison in connexion with comparative anatomy, of Allman and Harvey with botany, of Ball with zoology, and of Apjohn and Oldham with mineralogy and geology, it is very evident that Dublin possesses the only university in the British empire which can boast of a complete school of natural history, conducted by competent professors and *freely open* to all who wish to learn. Honour, then, to the Provost, Fellows and Professors of Trinity College! Their museums, too, are thrown open