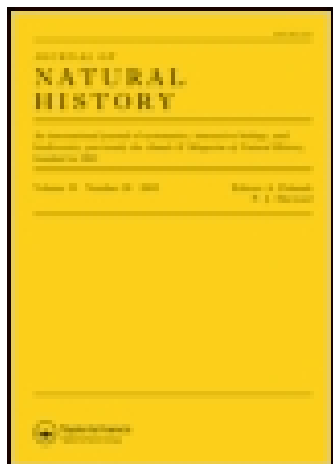


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Thouarella antarctica, from the Falkland Islands.

By Dr. J. E. GRAY, F.R.S. &c.

This species was first described by M. Valenciennes in the 'Voyage of the Vénus,' t. ii. f. 2, from a specimen found by Admiral Dupetit Thouars in the Falkland Islands. The British Museum has lately received, by the kindness of Capt. Henry Toinbee, of the Meteorological Office, a very fine specimen of this species (which shows that the one figured by Valenciennes must have been in a very imperfect state), which was obtained by Capt. James Clark, R.N.R. (now Captain of the 'Western Empire'), when dredging, on a calm day, off Burwood Bank, lat. 54° 27' S., long. 59° 40' W., in 45 fathoms, on the 1st of January 1872.

The corals were brought up in great abundance. The specimen sent by Capt. Clark to the Museum consists of five similar branches of very unequal length, the longest being 18 inches long, and of an elongate cylindrical shape, each being surrounded by very numerous club-shaped branchlets ending in a polyp. The branches are of unequal length, and make it like a cylindrical bottle-brush, but attenuated towards the tip; they are all of a bright yellow colour.

Mr. Carter has kindly examined the cells under the microscope, and observes that they are formed of oval imbricated scales, lacerated on the edge, with radiating lines and scattered circular dots of a calcareous secretion.

Capt. Clark obtained at the same time, and sent to the British Museum, a fine specimen of a *Porella* like *Porella cervicornis*, of a bright crimson colour, with pale compressed forked tips; it may be called *P. antarctica*.

*Prize Question proposed by the Danish Royal Society of Sciences
for the Year 1872.*

It is now a hundred years since the celebrated observations of O. F. Müller upon the agamic reproduction (gemmiparity) of the *Naiides* were published; and although there is no reason to doubt their perfect exactitude in all essential points, it would be very desirable that they should be taken up again from the present scientific point of view, and with the means which science has now-a-days at her disposal. Schultze, Leuckart, and Minor have furnished valuable contributions to the history of this mode of reproduction in the *Naiides* proper, as have Claus and Lankester for *Chaetogaster*; nevertheless more is wanted to place science in possession of sufficient materials for the comprehension of all the points which it is necessary to take into account. We do not know exactly what is the first origin of the buds or new individuals; and consequently the relations between the scissiparous and gemmiparous modes of reproduction need to be better elucidated. The complete evolution, from the moment when a Naid escapes from the ovum until, among the generations issuing from this Naid, sexual ones again occur, has not been investigated in all its phases; and we may still inquire whether the same individuals (zooids) are gemmiparous and sexual, or whe-