

Genus 5. *Sclerothamnus*, Marshall (Pl. XCVIII.).

1875. Marshall, Zeitschr. f. wiss. Zool., Bd. xxv., Suppl., p. 171.

1876. J. Murie, Trans. Linn. Soc. Lond. (Zool.), ser. 2, vol. i.

1876. Carter, *Ibid.*, Appendix.

*History.*—The term *Sclerothamnus clausii* was applied by Marshall<sup>1</sup> to a bushy-branched Hexactinellid obtained from an unknown source. It measured 50 cm. in height, while the cylindrical branches, which were repeatedly forked, had a diameter of 3.5 cm. towards the extremities, and of 13 cm. at the basal ends. In the tolerably uniform framework of siliceous beams, which consists of fused hexradiate spicules with tubercled external surfaces, Marshall thought he perceived a continuous connection between the axial canals, which exactly met one another in the fusion of adjacent hexradiate spicules, and thus remained in open communication. The broad (5 mm. in diameter) and narrow (1 mm. in diameter) canals, which traverse the branches of the sponge, often anastomose with each other, and open outwards by orifices of variable size. Many of these excurrent passages, moreover, possess a fringe in the form of a freely projecting cuff, but on the whole the canal system seems to be indistinctly and irregularly developed in the dense tissue.

Among free spicules Marshall found (1) large-knobbed hexradiate forms, which fuse to form the continuous framework; (2) very small fine regular hexradiate spicules; (3) broom-forks with five clubs, beset with delicate warts on each of the expanded portions, while their stalk, which is covered with similar warts down to a slight swelling, terminates in a short point; (4) longer broom-forks (Besengabeln) with four long clubs, in which the stalk, like the spicular shaft, is beset with fine recurved hooklets.

In the following year, 1876, there appeared in the Transactions of the Linnæan Society (Zoology), ser. 2, vol. i., a detailed paper illustrated by numerous good figures, On Steere's Sponge, a New Genus of the Hexactinellid Group of the Spongidæ, by James Murie. This bushy branched Hexactinellid was procured by natives from a depth varying from 80 to 100 fathoms in the neighbourhood of the Philippines, "between the strip-like and parallel islands of Negros and Cebu." In its dried state it measured about 80 cm. in height, and exhibited branches as thick as one's finger. The form is accurately described under the name of *Dendrospongia steerei*. Professor Steere had bought this beautiful specimen during his stay in the Philippines from fishermen "on the opposite eastern side of the island of Cebu, where no sponges are said hitherto to have been got from the sound or channel above-mentioned." Murie reports<sup>2</sup>—"One day, while in the forest, Professor Steere was suddenly apprised of the arrival of the Challenger Expedition by a note from Professor Wyville Thomson, who had heard of him and his whereabouts. He hastened on board, passing, as he assures me, a most agreeable day in the

<sup>1</sup> *Zeitschr. f. wiss. Zool.*, Bd. xxv., Suppl., p. 171, 1875.<sup>2</sup> *Loc. cit.*, p. 221.