

*Oscula* small but very evident, in groups on the tops of the lobes; diameter of each about 1.5 mm.

*Skeleton*.—There is no dermal skeleton present. The main skeleton is composed of large oxeote spicules which, for the most part, form very stout but very loose *Axinella*-like fibres. The fibres all run more or less vertically upwards, but radiate somewhat from the centre of the base. Numerous spicules also occur irregularly scattered between the fibres, so that the whole skeleton becomes confused.

*Spicules*.—*Megasclera*; of one kind only; viz., large, smooth oxea, almost always gradually and finely pointed at both ends, and slightly curved; size about 0.87 by 0.022 mm.

The systematic position of this sponge is very difficult to determine. The form of the spicules would seem to indicate that it belongs to the Renierinæ, but the arrangement of the skeleton places it amongst the Axinellidæ. Probably it belongs rather to the latter group than to the former, and has simply lost the styli which form the most important part of the skeleton in most Axinellids (cf. *Axinella* (?) *lunæcharta*, p. 186).

The peculiar gelatinous or india-rubber-like ectosome marks it off from most hitherto known species of either group, though it is more nearly paralleled in the Axinellidæ than in the Renierinæ (cf. *Axinella*, *Acanthella*). This unusual condition is due to an enormous development of gelatinous mesodermal tissues, containing large stellate cells.

*Locality*.—Inaccessible Island; depth, 90 fathoms. One specimen.

### Genus *Raspailia*, Nardo (Pls. XXXIX., XL.).

1833. *Raspelia*, Nardo, Isis, p. 522.

1847. *Raspailia*, Nardo, Prospetto della fauna marina volgare del veneto estuario, Venice, p. 3.

Sponge long and slender, with a dense central axis of spiculo-fibre containing much spongin, from which loose tufts of spicules radiate to the surface. Megasclera stylote or subtylostylote, sometimes strongylote. Spined echinating styli sometimes present. No microsclera.

The most characteristic feature of this genus is the external form, taken in connection with the absence of microsclera; like *Axinella*, it is a difficult genus to diagnose, and the two genera, as we have already indicated, come very near to one another.

*Raspailia tenuis*, Ridley and Dendy (Pl. XXXIX. figs. 2, 2a; Pl. XL. figs. 8, 8a, 8b).

1886. *Raspailia tenuis*, Ridley and Dendy, Ann. and Mag. Nat. Hist., ser. 5. vol. xviii. p. 482.

Sponge (Pl. XXXIX. fig. 2) of more or less erect growth (probably the branches floated in the water), consisting of a very long, slender stem,<sup>1</sup> giving off at first

<sup>1</sup> This description is taken from the larger of the two specimens, the smaller bears only a single branch.