

are thickened, knob-like. Both stem and branches are flaccid. The length of the principal stem is 145 mm., of the leading branch 120 mm. The stem is 3 mm. thick at its base, the branches 2 mm. The thickened branch-endings have a diameter from 3 to 6 mm. In the early portions of the stem and branches the cœnenchyma is very thin; the polyps first appear at the upper portions, here they form closely packed spirals, with intervals of about 1 mm.; towards the apices of the branches they are closely crowded, and here the cœnenchyma becomes significantly thickened.

The polyps stand straight out from the cœnenchyma, and are almost cylindrical. The tentacles are completely retractile, so much so that the calyx on a front view seems quite truncated. The calyx is about 2 mm. high, with a basal diameter of 2 mm. The spicules are large spindles, often armed with warty branches and clubs; they are sometimes more or less bent, sometimes with branched prominences, which give rise to "Stachelplatten"; the club-shaped extremities often project from the surface of the polyp bodies. The spicules measure 0.5; 0.08–0.41; 0.08–0.41; 0.15–0.9; 0.2–0.5; 0.07–0.46; 0.1–0.8; 0.12 mm. Besides these large spicules, there are smaller spindles, often with bifurcate endings, and of 0.23 to 0.35 mm. in length. In the tentacles are found feebly bent spicules, rounded at one end, and thick with pointed spines at the other, 0.47 to 0.04 mm. long.

The axis is horny, fibrous, soft, and flaccid. The colour in spirits of the stem is brown, of the cœnenchyma and polyps a greyish-white, but white when dried. This species, from the habit of the polyps and the tendency of the spicules to branch, seems to lead to the following genus.

Habitat.—Station 311, off Port Churruca, Patagonia; depth, 245 fathoms; bottom, blue mud.

Genus 6. *Villogorgia*, Duchassaing and Michelotti (*emend.* Ridley, *ex parte*).

Duchassaing and Michelotti established this genus¹ for a Gorgonid from Guadeloupe, with the following diagnosis:—"Espèces rameuses dont la surface laineuse ressemble à du velours si on l'examine à la loupe. Avec le secours du même instrument, on n'aperçoit dans le cœnenchyme ni squames, ni spicules; les cellules sont saillantes; l'axe n'est point calcaire. L'absence de spicules et de squamules distingue assez bien le genre *Villogorgia* des *Muricea*, *Thesea*, *Acis*, &c." The only species described is *Villogorgia nigrescens*.

From a diagnosis like this, in which the absence of the spicules is so clearly set forth, one would scarcely be led to imagine that a Muriceid was referred to; and still, no doubt, the habit of the species, as represented in the drawing, at once reminds one

¹ *Memoire sur les Coralliaires des Antilles*, p. 32, pl. iv. fig. 2, 1860.