

*Antipathella? atlantica* (Gray), mihi. (Pl. XII. fig. 5).

*Antipathes atlantica*, Gray, Proc. Zool. Soc. Lond., 1857, p. 291.

*Antipathes reticulata*, Gray (*non* Esper), Proc. Zool. Soc. Lond., 1857, p. 291.

"Coral shrub-like, branched; branches fan-like, irregularly pinnate; branchlets elongate, with distant subulate pinnæ, the larger ones sometimes pinnated, the branches and branchlets often anastomosing" (Gray, *loc. cit.*).

I find no specimen in the British Museum Collection which bears the name *Antipathes atlantica*, but there are a number of West Indian specimens which should include the type of this species. All bear the locality and register number in Gray's handwriting; one bears the name *Antipathes reticulata*, also in his handwriting, the others are either unnamed or have been since queried by S. O. Ridley. There appears nothing in Gray's definition of the two species to enable one to distinguish one from the other, excepting that *Antipathes reticulata* is described as more slender.

The specimen, labelled *Antipathes reticulata* by Gray, is small (30 by 25 cm.) and very delicate throughout. The base of the main stem is about 2 mm. in diameter. It, however, bears no resemblance to Esper's figure of *Antipathes reticulata* (Pall.), and lacks the definite reticulum, the short setose pinnules, and has not nearly such strong spines. A much stronger specimen which I at first thought to be distinct, and probably Gray's type of *Antipathes atlantica*, proves to be merely a larger specimen of the same species having stouter branches; the fusions are not so numerous amongst the apical branches, which thus become more free and arranged in fan-like groups. The spines have precisely the same arrangement as in Gray's type of *Antipathes reticulata*, but are more numerous on account of the greater strength of the axis. As this species differs from the true *Antipathella reticulata* (Esper), and as it is possible that Gray, like myself, may have been misled by a cursory examination of the larger specimen, I propose to retain the specific name *atlantica* for the species now described. It is synonymous with *Antipathes reticulata* (Gray), and may probably also be the species which Gray intended as his *Antipathes atlantica*.

This species has a similar habit to Gray's *Antipathes gracilis*, but is much more delicate. One specimen is 24 cm. high and 34 cm. broad, another 36 cm. high and only 28 cm. broad; all have a dilated base for attachment. The stem is slender, from 2 to 3 mm. in diameter, and the basal branches are fused together by transverse bridges. The secondary branches are arranged at irregular intervals and are nearly always very slender; they are subalternate, and from 6 to 12 cm. long. The smaller branches bear lateral, distant, pinnate, bipinnate or, in some cases, tripinnate branchlets, usually more numerous on one side of the branch than on the other, and all extending almost in one plane. Branchlets (pinnules) up to 1 or 1.5 cm. in length usually remain simple, the others being all more or less subdivided. Fusions are frequent throughout a colony, but

are more numerous in some specimens than in others. No regular reticulum is formed, and the distal portion of each paniculate branch at the apex of the corallum is free from its neighbour. This is the most delicate species which has come under my notice, and differs from the similarly delicate *Antipathella? tristis* (Duch.) both in the shape and arrangement of the spines. The whole corallum is usually flat, but in one specimen a axly-branched portion extends in a plane behind the main-mass, and almost parallel with it. In some of the specimens, although dry, the polyps are shown as very small head-like elevations on the branchlets; there are usually 9 or 10 to a centimetre. The spines are short and conical with a slender apex (Pl. XII. fig. 5). They are arranged in steep sinistrorse spirals, which are rather far apart. Five longitudinal rows may be counted from one aspect of a branchlet, the members of a row being from four to five lengths apart.

*Habitat.*—West Indies (Scrivener), Brit. Mus.