

*Antipathella? gracilis* (Gray) (Pl. XI. fig. 8).

*Antipathes gracilis*, Gray, Ann. and Mag. Nat. Hist., ser. 3, vol. vi., 1860, p. 311; (non *Antipathes* (*Cirripathes*) *gracilis*, Gray).

Gray's description is as follows :—

“Coral rather fan-like, expanded, very slender, repeatedly forked. Branches very slender, elongate, subsimple, tapering; stem and branches covered with very close rather elongate spinules. Hab. Madeira.

“The coral is six inches high, rather fan-like, in a single plane; stem slender, about as thick as a thick bristle, subalternately branched, with the rows of branches on the outer side, giving them the appearance of being forked; the branches and branchlets elongate, very slender and subsimple and gradually tapering till they are quite hair-like.”

I am at a loss to understand Gray's description, as the only specimen in the British Museum Collection which I could find, bearing the name *Antipathes gracilis* in his own handwriting is 56 cm. high, and labelled from the West Indies. This specimen is evidently related to other flabellate forms now included in the genus *Antipathella*. The base consists of several stems fused together, which give rise to a series of branches not all in the same plane, but presenting frequent fusions between neighbouring branches. The upper portion is more spreading, but the larger branches are still strong and frequently fuse with one another. In some portions nearly all the branches come off from one side and are placed at irregular intervals. Nearly all the secondary branches are very slender. Medium branches bear branchlets irregularly, varying in length from 1·5 to 10 cm., usually longer on one side than the other. The smaller branchlets are simple and filiform; the larger ones are again branched irregularly, the ultimate pinnules being very slender, and rarely attaining a length of 1·2 cm. without becoming branched. The spines are similar in size and shape to those of *Antipathella atlantica* (Gray), but are arranged in dextrorse spirals, which are not nearly so steep as those of that species. Five longitudinal rows are visible from one aspect of a pinnule, the members of a row being two to three lengths apart (Pl. XI. fig. 8). It seems doubtful whether this specimen can be considered to agree with Gray's definition of the species. There appears, however, no doubt that he regarded it as belonging to his *Antipathes gracilis*, and in the absence of the Madeira specimen, it must be regarded as the type. There is apparently no specimen of this species from Madeira in the British Museum.

*Habitat*.—West Indies (Scrivener), Brit. Mus.; ? Madeira (Gray).