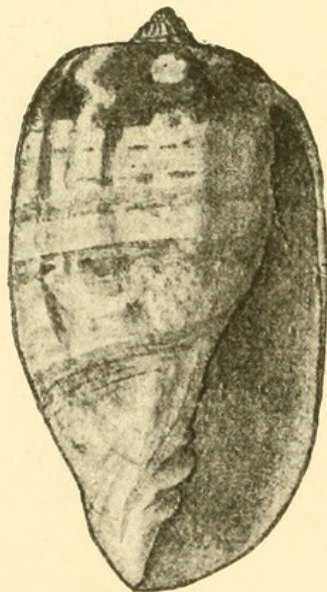


NOTE ON *VOLUTA BRAZIERI*, COX.

By EDGAR A. SMITH, I.S.O.

Read 10th June, 1904.

THE British Museum has recently acquired the unique type of this species which hitherto formed part of the collection of Dr. J. Cox, of Sydney. On comparing it with the figure and description (*Proc. Zool. Soc.*, 1873, p. 568, pl. xlviii, fig. 8), it was found that the former was almost a caricature, giving but a slight idea of the form of the shell, and ridiculous as regards coloration. On the plate it is stated that the figures were partly drawn by Helena Forde and lithographed by the late Mr. Sowerby. I have little doubt, therefore, but that a badly coloured drawing of the type was sent from Australia for reproduction. Of one thing, however, I feel quite certain, that Mr. Sowerby was not responsible for such a miserable production. Knowing the accuracy of his drawing and his characteristic colouring, it is quite certain that he could not have produced



such a misleading figure. I am afraid, therefore, that the above-mentioned lady must be held responsible. The copies of this figure by Tryon in the *Manual of Conchology* and by Sowerby in the *Thesaurus Conchyliorum* are even more grotesque. Dr. Cox thus described the colour of this shell: "Indistinctly banded about the centre with dark chestnut, ornamented with irregular buff-coloured markings." I should rather describe the shell as of a light-brown colour, mottled irregularly with white, exhibiting upon the

body-whorl three bands of a darker brown, two being near the middle and one just below the shoulder. Some dark-brown streaks, starting from the suture, extend more or less over the shell. A close scrutiny also reveals the presence of transverse thread-like reddish lines, which are most conspicuous behind the edge of the labrum. The apex is pale purplish rose, and the aperture purple also. The apex is described by Dr. Cox as "granular." The specimen, in its present condition, has lost the extreme protoconch, and the spire consists of five whorls, which are distinctly longitudinally costate, especially the three uppermost ones.

Both Cox and Tryon have placed this species in the section *Callipara*, probably on account of the general resemblance in form to *V. bullata*, Swainson, from South Africa, and Tyron even ventured the opinion that perhaps it might be "only a color-variety of that species." An examination of the apices at once shows the absolute distinctness of these two forms. In *V. bullata* it is enormous for the size of the shell and globose, whereas in the present species it is minute. In this respect it agrees with some of the forms of *Lyria*, as well as in the character of the columellar folds, which in the typical forms (*V. nucleus*, etc.) consist of two or three small plications anteriorly. Another feature common to this species and nearly all the forms of *Lyria* is the presence of transverse hair-like colour-lines.

This interesting specimen evidently is not adult, and has an abnormal aspect; indeed, I am of opinion that it is merely a monstrous growth of *V. deliciosa*, Montrouzier. The plication and rosy colour of the spire, the smooth body-whorl, and its style of coloration are the same, the columellar folds are exactly similar, and the very fine liræ above the three basal plicæ are also faintly indicated, and finally, the localities, New South Wales and New Caledonia, do not present any difficulty in respect of this proposition.



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