

Wales and Van Diemen's Land;' at all events it is not figured in Reeve's monograph of the genus. It is larger than *C. eximia*. I am not perfectly clear that it will prove to be the same; if so, it will corroborate an opinion which I have some time held, that the *C. eximia* was not a fossil, but carried inland by the aborigines, and fell from near the surface to the position in which it was said to be found.— *Vide* pp. 296, 297."

ON *CYPRÆA UMBILICATA* AND *C. EXIMIA* OF SOWERBY. BY
J. E. GRAY, ESQ.

[*Proc. Zool. Soc. Lond.*, 13th November, 1849.]

Cypræa umbilicata was described from a single specimen which was formerly in the Tankerville Collection, and is now in the British Museum. From its external resemblance to some specimens of *Cypræa Pantherina*, some peculiarities in its formation, and especially from certain apparent irregularities in its teeth, it has been thought that it might be a monstrosity, or irregular growth of that species.

The discovery of the habitat by Mr. Gunn, who has kindly sent two specimens of the species to Europe, has removed this impression, and shown that it is a distinct species; and that what was regarded as the irregularities in the plaits of the front of the pillar, is in fact the normal form of the species.

Such being the case shows that the species should be removed from the genus *Cypræa*, as restricted in my monograph in the Zoological Journal, and placed in the genus *Cyprovula*, first described in that work.

The shell, instead of having the single large plait in front of the inner lip separated from other plaits by a wide space, has the front of the inner lip covered with several oblique plaits, nearly up to the front edge of the notch.

It also agrees with *Cyprovula* in the spire being concave or sunken, forming a deep umbilicus.

Cypræa eximia, figured in Strzelecki's 'New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land,' is a very nearly allied species, and equally a *Cyprovula (eximia)*. It differs in the body being more globular and the canal longer. Both these species are to be distinguished from the other *Cyprovula* by the canal at each end of the mouths being more developed and produced: they also both have a somewhat angular depression across the upper part of the anterior canal, at the anterior extremity of the dorsal line, evidently formed by the junction of the two expansions of the mantle in this part.

The elongation of the canals, and the depression above referred to, are more developed in *Cyprovula eximia* than in *Cyprovula umbilicata*. They are, especially the latter, the giants of the genus. The original specimen of *C. eximia* is in the cabinet of Mr. John Morris of Kensington.

To give some idea of the extraordinary price which is now some-

times required for shells, I may state that the second specimen of this Cowry, sent home by Mr. Gunn to a London collector, was offered by him to Miss Saul for £30, and eventually realized that price.

DESCRIPTION OF A NEW SPECIES OF GORGONIA FROM AUSTRALIA.
By J. E. GRAY, Esq., F.R.S.

[*Proc. Zool. Soc. Lond.*, 13th November, 1849.]

PRIMNOA AUSTRALASIÆ. (Radiata, Pl. II. f. 8. 9, nat. size).

Coral elongate, unbranched, rather tapering; cells numerous, regular, placed in close regular circles round the stem, each formed of two series of imbricate calcareous scales.

Inhab. Australasian seas, on oyster-shell and stones.

Several specimens of this very interesting coral were sent to the British Museum by the Royal Society of Van Diemen's Land.

This coral is often covered with various species of smaller *Coralines* and *Algæ*. It varies from two to three feet in height. The axis is known from the unbranched species of *Gorgonia* by being more calcareous, and of a pale greyish colour.

Joseph Milligan, Esq., F.L.S., the Secretary of the Royal Society of Van Diemen's Land, has kindly sent me the following particulars of this coral:—

“It was fished up from a depth of some fathoms in D'Entrecasteaux Channel, between the mainland of Tasmania and Bruné Island. It is found, as you will see, affixed to rocks and stones, and to dead, broken, and half-decayed oyster and scallop-shells, &c. It usually exists in groups, groves or families, varying from three to four to a great many. The long delicate stem, which is horny-looking and highly elastic when dry, varies from the thickness of a knitting-wire to that of a crow-quill, and from its mineralized and root-like attachment, tapers gradually and gracefully to a beautiful acicular point, attaining not unfrequently a length of two or three feet, and having its entire surface covered with a calcareous coat of a cream-yellow colour, delicately annulated, so as much to resemble the fine string of wooden beads worn as a necklace by the poorer natives of Bengal, but with this difference,—that in the coralline the beads form a connected or rather continuous chain, independently of the delicate elastic centre upon which the mineral structure is deposited. I am informed that in one or two instances, when these corallines were procured, they were enveloped throughout with a mucilaginous or jelly-like substance, which when they become dry is exsiccated and shrivelled to such a degree as to be scarcely if at all traceable. You will be able to say whether you consider it likely that there exists, in the recent and living state of the zoophyte, such an external and soft organization.”

This jelly-like substance was doubtless the polypes.



Gray, John Edward. 1852. "On Cypraea umbilicata and C. eximia." *Papers and proceedings of the Royal Society of Van Diemen's Land* 2(1), 197–198.

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