

On a New Rhabdosphere.

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After the publication by Mr. Blackman and myself in the 'Phil. Trans.'* there appeared in the 'Zoologischer Anzeiger'† a tract by Professor Ostenfeld, of Copenhagen, on the Coccospheres and Rhabdospheres. His main idea was to split up the Rhabdospheres (so far as his treatise concerned the Rhabdospheres) into two genera, viz., *Rhabdosphaera* of Sir John Murray and *Discosphaera* of Haeckel.

From the beginning I distrusted Professor Ostenfeld's discrimination as I had distrusted Professor Haeckel's, and it has now been my fortune to discover a new Rhabdosphere which destroys, in my opinion, the idea of breaking up the genus *Rhabdosphaera*.

Of the species of this genus, the most elusive organisms in natural history, there have been but few good specimens. They were derived in the first place, in broken-down fragments, from deep-sea deposits, and conjectures were made as to their origin. The next stage was the description of the Rhabdospheres as surface organisms by Sir John Murray during the "Challenger" Expedition, and still later, more completely as I hope, in the 'Phil. Trans.,‡ by Mr. Blackman and myself. There are only two forms known, and I now propose to add a third. The interest is not only systematic, but may have bearings§ on geological points and also on the study of deep-sea deposits, which is very much the same problem.

I desire to associate the name of my colleague, Mr. V. H. Blackman (my companion in many arduous sea journeys) with this Rhabdosphere, and I propose, therefore, its name shall be *Rhabdosphaera Blackmaniana*, G. Murr.

Its outstanding characteristic is the possession of sharp spinous processes, in contrast to the trumpet-shaped and club-shaped processes of the two known species.

The points of general interest are these, viz., the novelty and extreme rarity of the Rhabdosphere, and the fact of my never having once met with it in the deep-sea deposits or geological specimens so kindly put at the disposal of Mr. Blackman and myself by Professor Judd. The minuteness

* B, vol. 190, 1898.

† Vol. 23, No. 612, April 9, 1900.

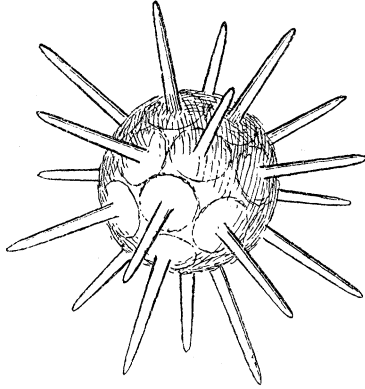
‡ *Loc. cit.*

§ Cf. 'Phil. Trans.,' B, vol. 190, 1898.

and extreme tenuity of the spines probably amply account for its not having been recognised in the deep-sea deposits.

The formal description is as follows :—

Rhabdosphæra Blackmaniana, n. sp. Very minute, 10μ , i.e., about one quarter the size of *R. claviger*, with tapering acute short spinous processes.



Rhabdosphæra Blackmaniana, n. sp.

Lat. obs. $28^{\circ} 25' S.$, long. $23^{\circ} 56' W.$ On the outward voyage to the Cape of the "Discovery."

I add no greater details, since the subject of Rhabdospheres has been dealt with so fully by Mr. Blackman and myself.*

* *Loc. cit.*
