

Article XVII.—NOTICE OF A REMARKABLE CASE OF
COMBINATION BETWEEN TWO DIFFERENT
GENERA OF LIVING CORALS.

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PLATES XXXI AND XXXII.

While examining living corals around Nassau, N. P., in March of this year (1901), I noticed a very pretty specimen of *Meandrina labyrinthica* in about three fathoms of water, off Green Key, twelve miles east of the city, which appeared to have a peculiar blemish on the top of the dome. On bringing the coral up to the surface, it was found that the centre of the dome inclosed a specimen of an entirely different coral. In cleaning the specimen it was found that the central part consisted of a small individual of a species of *Ctenophyllia* and that the *Meandrina* was very intimately blended with it; so intimately, indeed, that three of the ridges of the *Meandrina* passed directly into and united with the adjoining ones of the *Ctenophyllia*. When collected, both species were alive, and in a very healthy and perfect condition.

Meandrina labyrinthica when alive is of a yellowish olive color, both at Nassau and around the Bermudas. The *Ctenophyllia* around Nassau, at least all the species which I have observed, have been of an ash gray or drab color, though some of them have the curtain which covers the channel and the polyp centres within it of a bright emerald green color; but in the case of this specimen both species presented the yellowish olive color peculiar to the *Meandrina*.

When the coral was first taken from the water, and before it was cleaned, I thought it probable that the imbedded specimen was a specimen of *Manicina areolata*, as given by Dana in the Zoöphytes of the U. S. Expl. Exped.; but as soon as the water was expelled by the shrinkage of the polyps, this view was discarded.

The specimen of *Ctenophyllia* does not correspond closely with any of the species elsewhere found around Nassau, or with any of those described or figured by Dana, well enough to be specifically identified with them. It is perhaps nearest to *Ctenophyllia*

quadrata Dana, but the channels are narrower, and the lamellæ finer and more closely arranged, scarcely grooved at the summit, and their edges similarly denticulate. The spongy matter of the polyp cells in the channels partakes, on the side next to the *Meandrina* side of the ridge, of the characters of the *Meandrina*, but where the cells join with the lamellæ of the *Ctenophyllia* they are more like those further within the area of the inclosed *Ctenophyllia*.

The figures given to illustrate this peculiar specimen, which is preserved in the collection of the American Museum of Natural History, are from photographs direct from the specimen.

The fact is so remarkable that it has been thought worthy of special notice, as something so entirely unusual in nature. It seems even more so because the individual was not living on a reef crowded with many other forms, where individuals are liable through accident to become displaced and dropped upon other and distinct forms, but was out in a clear space on a sand-and-rock bottom, entirely isolated from surrounding material.

EXPLANATION OF PLATE XXXI.

The figure shows the specimen of *Meandrina labyrinthica* with the example of *Ctenophyllia* in the centre, one half natural size. Facing page 222.

EXPLANATION OF PLATE XXXII.

The figure shows the *Meandrina* inclosing the *Ctenophyllia*, natural size. The ridges of the *Meandrina* can be seen blending into those of the *Ctenophyllia*, one at the lower right side and two others on the upper left side. The figures are from photographs.