MISCELLANEOUS.

Note on Hyalonema boreale, *Lovén.*

By Dr. J. E. Gray, F.R.S. &c.

Dr. Lovén, in the 'Öfversigt' of the Swedish Academy for 1868, p. 105, describes and figures in detail a small sponge under the name of *Hyalonema boreale*. I hope shortly to receive a translation of this paper from the author, for insertion in the 'Annals;' and I have no doubt it will contain many interesting observations.

Believing that facts were accumulating that would prove the *Hyalonema* to be a coral, as I first described it, I was rather dismayed when I heard from my friend that he was describing a northern species of the genus that would prove it to be a sponge. On seeing the paper, my difficulty was to understand why so accurate and philosophical a zoologist as Dr. Lovén could have referred it to my genus *Hyalonema*.

Hyalonema boreale, Lovén, is a typical siliceous sponge belonging to my family Halichondriadæ, of a pear-shape, with a single subcentral terminal oscule, with a long cylindrical pedicel, and fibrous roots. In general form and structure and in form of spicules it agrees so well with *Halichondria ficus* of Johnston, which is the type of my genus *Ficulina* (see Proc. Zool. Soc. 1867, p. 523), that I am inclined to refer it to that genus. But perhaps it may be necessary to form it into a separate genus, characterized by the length and structure of the pedicel and the absence of the pin-shaped spicule; but at present I should call it *Ficulina borealis*. I cannot find that it presents a single character of the genus *Hyalonema*. In that genus the elongated spicules that form the coil, which induced me to call the genus *Hyalonema* (that is, glass rope), arise out of the centre of a sponge with a flat expanded base, by which it is attached to some marine bodies; and the sponge is furnished with numerous superficial oscules. In *H. boreale*, on the contrary, the sponge is clavate, with a pear-shaped body on a long slender cylindrical pedicel having a fibrous root. This pedicel is a true part of the sponge, and cannot in any way be compared with the coil of siliceous fibres that arises out of the upper part of the sponge in *Hyalonema*.

Dr. Lovén observes:—"You will see that, if I am not very wrong, all who have treated of the *Hyalonema* have inverted it, turned it upside down, and that the twisted rope, instead of rising out of the sponge, in reality is nothing but the remaining part of the stalk."

I fear Dr. Lovén has only had very imperfect specimens of the Japan *Hyalonema* to examine, or he could not have adopted such a theory.

Dr. Wyville Thompson has informed me that he dredged a specimen of Dr. Lovén's *Hyalonema boreale* a couple of years ago, in Oban Bay.