

from the decomposed chloride of iron; he believes that in this gold region the gold is brought up with the iron, both in the state of chloride, from which the precious metal and the specular iron are afterward separated by decomposition.

A memorial was presented by Mr. W. E. Baker, describing a plan for the accommodation of the principal associations of science and art in the city, in a large building, and asking its consideration by a committee of the Society. The plan and the subject in general were referred to a committee, consisting of the following gentlemen, viz:—Dr. S. Cabot, Jr., Prof. W. B. Rogers, and Messrs. Barnard, Bouvé, and Whittemore.

Dr. H. R. Storer, having resigned the Curatorship of Crustacea, it was voted that he be requested to serve until the Annual Meeting.

Messrs. John Cummings and C. W. Tuttle were elected Resident Members.

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*February 2, 1859.*

Dr. C. T. Jackson, Vice-President, in the Chair.

Prof. Agassiz made a communication on some new Actinoid Polyps of the coast of the United States.

He remarked that Prof. J. D. Dana made the first step toward a natural classification of polyps, when he divided the order of actinoids into the sub-orders *actinaria* and *alcyonaria*, the former including those actinoids with many simple tentacles, the latter those with eight compound tentacles.

The first specimen described was a new species, with twelve thick and blunt tentacles; the number of tentacles is few com-

pared with those of actiniæ generally; it is of a brown color, and exists as a parasite on the common large brown medusa, *Cyanea arctica*; he named it *Bicidium parasiticum*.

Another was found at low-water mark in Nantucket harbor, a foot or more deep in the sand, sometimes attached to small stones; the shape is elongated and cylindrical, never hemispherical; the tentacles are twenty in number, ending in knobs; the color milk-white, the ends of the tentacles brown; he named it *Corynactis albida*—the *Actinia clavata* of Rathke, from the coast of Norway, probably belongs to this genus. It builds a tube of sand, which is readily disintegrated.

In Charleston, S. C., in 1852, Mr. H. J. Clark obtained several specimens of a polyp, two feet long when expanded, which burrows in the mud-flats, and builds an elastic case of mud and mucosities. It has two sets of tentacles, one around the mouth and the other around the margin of the upper disk of the body; the form is elongated and tapering—in the vertical lamellæ the upper part of each has female organs, and the lower part male organs, instead of alternating on different lamellæ as is usual; it belongs to the genus *Cerianthus*. It differs from other actiniæ in the form and arrangement of the tentacles, in the shape of the body, and in having an anus at the lower extremity. Taking form as determined by internal structure as the characteristic of families, it must be considered as belonging to a distinct family; *Corynactis*, for similar reasons, belongs to a separate family.

We should have in this case three groups belonging to the Actinoids, namely, *Actinidæ*, *Corynactidæ*, and *Cerianthidæ*, groups higher than families and lower than orders, and accordingly properly called sub-orders.

Dr. C. T. Jackson presented specimens of the red bug (*Reduvius*), a beetle which does much injury to the sea-island cotton by causing a red stain; he had not succeeded in obtaining any coloring matter from them by chemical means.

He presented also some pyrophyllite, or radiated talc, from Lincoln Co., Georgia; this is a trisilicate of alumina, containing a little water, and exfoliates in a very remarkable manner under the action of heat. It is found