# IX. NOTES ON FRESHWATER SPONGES.

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## XIV.—THE GENERIC POSITION OF "*Spongilla ultima.*"

In describing the species which I called *Spongilla ultima* I was struck by its resemblance in general structure to those which I assigned to the genus *Corvospongilla* (see *Faun. Brit. Ind., Freshwater Sponges*, etc., pp. 105, 122, figs. 19, 26), but as I failed to find in the parenchyma of the original specimens a single birotulate flesh-spicule, the species was inevitably assigned to *Spongilla*. During a recent visit to Tanjore in the Trichinopoly district of the Madras Presidency I obtained a sponge which agreed closely in most characters with "*Spongilla*" *ultima* but contained many such flesh-spicules. A fresh examination of the type specimen was therefore made and, after much hunting, a birotulate spicule was found, closely resembling those of *Corvospongilla lapidosa*. Moreover, specimens of *C. ultima* sent me from Travancore still more recently contain many birotulate flesh-spicules. It is evident, therefore, that these sponges are specifically identical and should be assigned to *Corvospongilla*. The birotulate spicules of this genus are often so few in number that great difficulty is experienced in finding them, and it is by no means improbable that other freshwater sponges of hard consistency and with gemmules in which the spicules are arranged horizontally may ultimately, on a critical examination of fresh material, have to be assigned to *Corvospongilla*. The Tanjore specimens of *C. ultima* were growing on the edge of a concrete basin which formed the outflow of an irrigation-channel full of very muddy water. They were almost black in colour and grew out from their support in flattened leaf-like expansions, some of which were divided horizontally into two thin layers by a chitinous membrane. The gemmule-spicules were not quite so irregular or heterogeneous as those of the original specimens, which were from Cape Comorin, but very few gemmules were found and it is probable that at the season at which the specimens were taken (October) the outer layer of spicules was not fully formed. The newly acquired Travancore specimens were taken in July and have well formed gemmules.

I take this opportunity to correct another error in my volume in the "Fauna." On pp. 54 and 121 it is stated or implied that the megascleres of the Bornean sponge *Tubella vesparium* are spiny. They are perfectly smooth and are distinguished from those of the Burmese *T vesparioides* by their stouter form.