

words:—"Sponge body, vase- or sack-like, of large dimensions, expanding superiorly, often upwards of two feet in height; composed of interlacing fasciculi of long filiform fibres or spicula. Individual filiform spicula smooth, finely canaliculate, varying in diameter from $\frac{1}{6000}$ th to $\frac{1}{500}$ th of an inch, occasionally possessing a central or excentral inflation, as at plate lxiv. fig. 4. Hexradiate spicula of two types, the one large, with smooth alternate radii, the other of smaller but more varying size, with obtuse extremities and entirely erectly spinous surfaces. Scattered through this sponge there also occasionally occur simple alternate spicula, clavate and erectly spined at either extremity (see plate lxiv. fig. 5). Average diameter of the minute multiradiate spicule $\frac{1}{300}$ th of an inch." From the fact that the base was absent in all the specimens, Saville Kent was led to conclude that the lower portion of the cavity, where the sponge is fixed by its base to the sea-bottom, was filled with mud, and that it must thus have been constantly torn off during the process of fishing up the sponge.

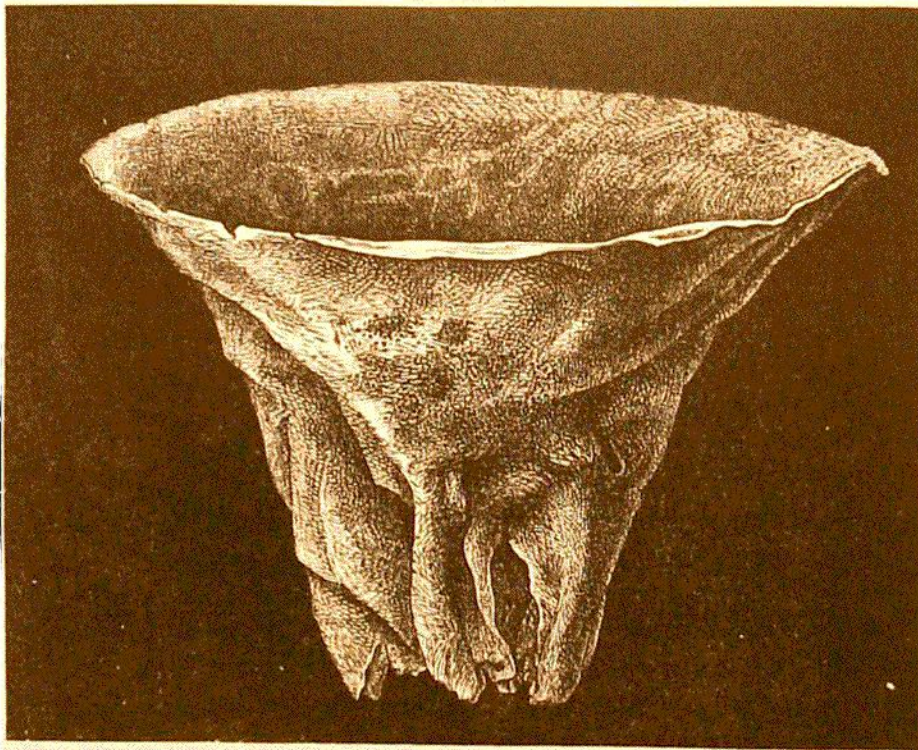


FIG. 3.—*Asconema setubalense*, Sav. Kent, one-eighth the natural size, from Wyville Thomson's *Depths of the Sea*, p. 429.

A giant specimen of this species, with a diameter of 3 feet, was dredged by Gwyn Jeffreys¹ off Cape St. Vincent on the coast of Portugal, on rocky ground and from a depth of 374 fathoms.

In his *Classification of Sponges*,² Gray forms Kent's genus *Asconema* into a special family, the *Asconematidæ*, with characters essentially similar to those noted by Kent in regard to the genus and the single known species. A large and comparatively well-

¹ *Proc. Roy. Inst.*, No. 54, p. 258, 1871.

² *Ann. and Mag. Nat. Hist.*, ser. 4, vol. ix. p. 458, 1872.