

Family, PARACTIDÆ, Hertwig.

Hexactiniæ, with numerous perfect septa, and with very contractile, moderately long tentacles, which can be completely covered; circular muscle very strong, mesodermal.

The Paractidæ form a family parallel to the Tealidæ; they agree with the latter in the nature of the septa and the tentacles, but differ from them in the nature of the circular muscle. The latter is enclosed in the mesoderm, and either lies close under the endoderm or is forcibly separated from the epithelium by the secretion of abundant connective tissue. In this family, as in the Tealidæ, I include not merely the animals with smooth body (genera *Paractis* and *Dysactis*), but also the papillose forms of the genera *Tealidium* and *Antholoba*.

Paractis, Milne-Edwards.

Paractidæ with smooth body surface, without papillæ and without marginal spherules; tentacles nearly equal in length and in strength; numerous longitudinal furrows of the wall.

The genus *Paractis* was founded by Milne-Edwards for Actiniæ, of which the wall has neither papillæ nor marginal spherules, but can be drawn completely over the oral disk and tentacles; the tentacles are said, moreover, to be nearly equal in length.

Two forms of the Challenger material fulfilled these requirements; they differed, however, in one very important point, as the circular muscle was endodermal in the one, mesodermal in the other. The former consequently belongs to the family of the Tealidæ, and for it I have composed the new name *Leiotealia*, whilst for the latter I have retained the name *Paractis*.

Paractis excavata, n. sp. (Pl. I. fig. 6, Pl. XI. figs 13, 14).

Wall with more than fifty longitudinal furrows, corresponding to the septa, oral disk hollowed like a dish, with two rows of tentacles, the outer somewhat larger than the inner; tentacles thick walled, with strong mesodermal muscles, which are present only on the adaxial side at the base, but surround the tentacles on all sides towards the point.

Habitat.—Station 300. December 17, 1875. Lat. 33° 42' S., long 78° 18' W. Depth, 1375 fathoms. One specimen.

Dimensions.—Diameter of the pedal disk, 2.5 cm., of the extended oral disk, 6 cm. Height of the wall in the contracted animal 2.5 cm., from the pedal disk to the margin of the mouth 1 cm.

Paractis excavata, which I describe as a new species, founded by me upon a single specimen, is one of the most characteristic forms of the Challenger material, both as to the shape of the body, and as to its finer structure.