

that their corruption exhaled the odour; their chemical analysis discovered the constituent principles of animal matters; and that the stony part of them exhibited no trace of vegetable organization: and opinions deduced from such data, abstracting his analogical reasoning of no value and little applicability, might have been sufficient to have attracted at least some attention had his opponent been less influential, or his own reputation and rank somewhat greater. *

The name and doctrine of Peyssonel lay in this manner unknown and neglected, until the remarkable experiments of Abraham Trembley, in 1741, on the reproductive powers of the fresh-water polypes, † and more especially his discovery of the *Plumatella*, itself a plant-like animal production, while they exerted the wonder and admiration of every one engaged in the study of natural science, were the means of recalling to the recollection of Reaumur the views of Peyssonel; and he now became forward in promoting such inquiries as seemed likely to confirm and extend them. He himself appears to have repeated the experiments of Trembley, and had an opportunity of observing the habits of the *Plumatella*; and, as he remarks, since the number of species of animals which are covered by the waters of the sea is much greater than that of the fresh waters, so it seemed natural to presume that not only would polypes be found in the ocean, but in greater numbers and variety than in ponds, rivers or rivulets. To ascertain the validity of this conjecture, and to settle if possible the discrepancy between the observations of Marsigli and Peyssonel, his friends Bernard

* Peyssonel is remembered solely by this discovery. “M. Peyssonel, disposed from his youth to the study of natural history, after having qualified himself for the practice of medicine, applied himself with great diligence to that science, to which his inclination so strongly prompted him, and being a native of, and residing at Marseilles, he had the opportunity of examining the curiosities of the sea, which the fishermen, more especially those who search for coral, furnished him with.”—*Phil. Trans.* He was subsequently appointed *Physician-Botanist* to “His Most Christian Majesty” in the island of Guadalupe, and had an opportunity of prosecuting his researches on the coast of Barbary. He is the author of two or three communications in the *Phil. Trans.*, of which the most interesting is “An account of a visitation of the Leprous persons, in the isle of Guadalupe” in the volume for the year 1757.

† In the *Phil. Trans.* for 1742, the reader will find a full account of this discovery.