

P R E F A C E.

“ *Altum nec spiro, nec spero.* ”

SINCE the publication of Ellis's Essay on Corallines in the year 1755, no separate work has appeared in illustration of our native Zoophytes. In the meantime, and more especially within these few last years, a much more accurate knowledge of their structure has been attained, and many species have been added to the list ; and it has been my object to give here an account of these discoveries, to connect them with what had been previously made known, and to combine the whole under a system more in harmony with the anatomy of the objects than has hitherto been done. If I have succeeded in bringing within a convenient volume, the materials that at present lie scattered through many expensive and miscellaneous ones, some of them too of difficult acquisition, I may, perhaps, claim the merit of having conferred no inconsiderable benefit on the student, even should his future studies convince him that I have not forwarded or enriched this particular branch of natural history by any novelties. Originality indeed has been less my aim than fulness and accuracy of compilation ; but I have endeavoured to qualify myself for this apparently humble task by many personal researches and observations on the species that are found in my own neighbourhood, under the conviction that a compiler will rarely succeed in giving a correct idea or representation of the objects