

zoophytes which are composed of an internal axis or skeleton of a tough horny consistence, and of an external envelope or rind, which entirely invests the former. The gorgoniæ present great diversity of form and appearance. This specimen from the West Indies, (Pl. V. fig. 1,) is remarkable for its richness of colour, being a bright yellow, spotted with red; this species, (Pl. V. fig. 5,) from the Mediterranean, has its pendant branches very elegantly disposed, and is of a purplish-lake colour; in both these examples the axis is black, and of the consistence of tough horn. Another beautiful species from the Mediterranean, the *gorgonia patula* of Ellis, is of a bright red, and has the openings for the polypi disposed in two rows; a portion, highly magnified, is here represented, (Pl. V. fig. 1,) and exhibits several polypi in different states of protrusion.

These flexible polyparia are attached to the rocks by an extended base, whose surface is usually deprived of the fleshy substance by which the other parts are invested. The stem which springs from the base, although in a few species simple, generally divides into branches, which are exceedingly various in their size and distributions; double, single, anastomosed, pinnated, straight, and pensive; and the stems are either compressed, flat, angular, or cylindrical; but in all these modifications the same structure prevails—an axis, and an external crust or rind. The former is either horny,