

elastic, flexible, brittle, or pithy, and of a dark colour; the latter a soft fleshy substance, studded with pores, from whence the polypi issue when the animal is alive; this rind becomes earthy and friable when dried. In the *Isis*, which may be described as a gorgonia with a jointed stem, this structure is well displayed, as you may observe in this branch of *Isis hippuris* (Tab. 102, fig. 3), in which a portion of the cortical part is removed, and the jointed axis exposed. In the water the various species present the most vivid hues of red, green, violet, and yellow. The gorgoniæ inhabit deep water, and are found in every sea, but certain species appear to be restricted to the seas of tropical climates. I believe but few traces of this genus have been found in a fossil state; a very beautiful species, however, occurs in the Maestricht limestone (Tab. 50, fig. 5).

19. THE RED CORAL; *corallium rubrum*. (Pl. V. fig. 7.)—I advance to the examination of the polyparia whose axis is composed of a calcareous stony substance; and one genus of which possesses a skeleton of so beautiful a colour, and susceptible of so high a polish, as to be largely employed for purposes of ornament. The red coral is a branched zoophyte, somewhat resembling in miniature a tree deprived of its leaves and twigs. It seldom exceeds one foot in height, and is attached to the rocks by a broad expansion or base. It consists of a brilliant red, stony axis, invested with a fleshy,