

from a nettle, but more like that caused by the *Physalia* or Portuguese Man-of-war. Little red spots were produced on the tender skin of the arm, which appeared as if they would have formed watery pustules, but did not. M. Quoy mentions this case of the *Millepora*; and I have heard of stinging corals in the West Indies. Many marine animals seem to have this power of stinging: besides the Portuguese Man-of-war, many jelly-fish, and the *Aplysia* or sea-slug of the Cape de Verd Islands, it is stated, in the "Voyage of the *Astrolabe*," that an *Actinia* or sea-anemone, as well as a flexible coralline allied to *Sertularia*, both possess this means of offence or defence. In the East Indian Sea, a stinging seaweed is said to be found.

Two species of fish, of the genus *Scarus*, which are common here, exclusively feed on coral: both are colored of a splendid bluish-green, one living invariably in the lagoon, and the other among the outer breakers. Mr. Liesk assured us that he had repeatedly seen whole shoals grazing with their strong bony jaws on the tops of the coral branches: I opened the intestines of several, and found them distended with yellowish calcareous sandy mud. The slimy, disgusting *Holothuriæ* (allied to our star-fish), which the Chinese gourmands are so fond of, also feed largely, as I am informed by Dr. Allan, on corals; and the bony apparatus within their bodies seems well adapted for this end. These *holothuriæ*, the fish, the numerous burrowing shells, and nereidous worms, which perforate every block of dead coral, must be very efficient agents in producing the fine white mud which lies at the bottom and on the shores of the lagoon. A portion, however, of this mud, which when wet strikingly resembled pounded chalk, was found by Professor Ehrenberg to be partly composed of siliceous-shielded *Infusoria*.

April 12th.—In the morning we stood out of the lagoon on our passage to the Isle of France. I am glad we have visited these islands: such formations surely rank high among the wonderful objects of this world. Captain Fitz Roy found no bottom with a line 7,200 feet in length, at the