

cases, it is unnecessary to recur to any general cataclysm to explain the passage from one epoch to another. Have we not, almost in our own day, seen certain species of animals die out and disappear, without the least geological revolution? Without speaking of the Beaver, which abounded two centuries ago on the banks of the Rhone, and in the Cevennes, which still lived at Paris in the little river Bièvre in the middle ages, its existence being now unknown in these latitudes, although it is still found in America and other countries, we could cite many examples of animals which have become extinct in times by no means remote from our own. Such are the *Dinornis* and the *Epyornis*, colossal birds of New Zealand and Madagascar, and the *Dodo*, which lived in the Isle of France in 1626. *Ursus spelæus*, *Cervus Megaceros*, *Bos primigenius*, are species

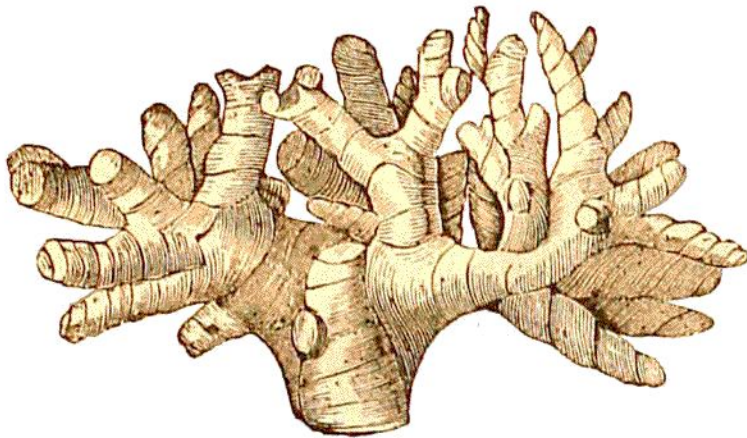


Fig. 80.—*Terebellaria ramosissima*.
(Recent Coral.)

of Bear, Deer, and Ox which were contemporary with man, but have now become extinct. In France we no longer know the gigantic wood-stag, figured by the Romans on their monuments, and which they had brought from England for the fine quality of its flesh. The Erymanthean boar, so widely dispersed during the ancient historical period,

no longer exists among our living races, any more than the *Crocodyles lacunosus* and *laciniatus* found by Geoffroy St.-Hilaire in the catacombs of ancient Egypt. Many races of animals figured in the mosaics of Palestrina, engraved and painted along with species now actually existing, are no longer found living in our days any more than are the Lions with curly manes, which formerly existed in Syria, and perhaps even in Thessaly and the northern parts of Greece. From what happens in our own time, we may infer what has taken place in times antecedent to the appearance of man; and the idea of successive cataclysms of the globe, must be restrained within bounds. Must we imagine a series of geological revolutions to account for the disappearance of animals which have evidently become extinct in a natural way? What has come to pass in our days, it is reasonable to conclude, may have taken place in the times anterior to the appearance of man.