

destined to find their nourishment by spreading their nets and moving their bodies through a limited space, from a fixed position at the bottom of the sea; or by employing the same instruments, either when floating singly through the water, or attached, like the modern *Pentelasmis anatifera*, to floating pieces of wood.

Although the representatives of Crinoïdeans in our modern seas are of rare occurrence, this family was of vast numerical importance among the earliest inhabitants of the ancient deep.\* The extensive range which it formerly occupied among the earliest inhabitants of our Planet, may be estimated from the fact, that the Crinoïdeans already discovered have been arranged in four divisions, comprising nine genera, most of them containing several species, and each individual exhibiting, in every one of its many thousand component little bones,† a mechanism which shows them all to have formed parts of a well-contrived and delicate mechanical instrument; every part acting in due connection with

\* The monograph of Mr. Miller, exhibiting the minute details of every variation in the structure of each component part in the several Genera of the family of Crinoïdea, affords an admirable exemplification of the regularity, with which the same fundamental type is rigidly maintained through all the varied modifications that constitute its numerous extinct genera and species.

† These so-called Ossicula are not true bones, but partake of the nature of the shelly Plates of Echini, and the calcareous joints of Star-fishes.