

polyvary is lamelliferous, or having the star-shaped oscula, or mouth, from which the polype exerts its tentacles, lamellated or divided into various channels, separated from each other by elevated processes, resembling the gills of a mushroom: these, with several others related to them, Linné regarded as belonging to *one* genus which he denominated

Fig. 10.



Madrepora muricata.

Madrepora, but which Lamarck has divided into *eighteen!* It is amongst the species of this genus, even as circumscribed by the author just mentioned, that we are to look for the polype, which is instructed by its Creator, not only to erect rocky reefs of vast extent and wonderful solidity — which often arrest and perplex the course of the navigator, and greatly increase the perils of navigation — and submarine mountains that keep gradually diminishing the mass

of waters, but also islands, which, emerging from the ocean, in process of time are covered with vegetation, and fitted to receive and maintain an animal population with man at their head. The species principally engaged in this great work is the coral, called by Linné the *muricated Madrepora*,* and generally known by the name of *white coral*; but Lamarck seems not to have been satisfied as to this species, since it is excluded from his list of madrepores, though he refers to four, if not five, varieties of it as distinct species. Its polype, though so celebrated for its wonderful works, seems to be

* *Madrepora muricata*.