

CRINOÏDEANS.

In the deepest abysses of the ocean, it is probable, lurks a tribe of plant-like animals, to judge from its numerous fossil remains, abounding in genera and species that are very rarely seen in a recent state, and which, from a supposed resemblance between the prehensory organs or arms, surrounding the head or mouth of several species belonging to the tribe, when their extremities converge, to the blossom of a liliaceous plant, have been denominated *Encrinites* and *Crinoïdeans*.* It was not my original intention, as little or nothing was known with respect to the habits and station of the few recent ones that have been met with—except that one has been taken in the seas of Europe, and three in the West Indies, namely, near Martinique, Barbados, and Nevis—to have introduced them into the present work, but having subsequently seen fragments of a specimen, taken either in the Atlantic or Pacific, I am not certain which, and upon examining it under the microscope, finding evident traces of suckers on the underside of its fingers, and of the tentacles that form its fringes,† a circumstance I found afterwards mentioned by Ellis; and which throws some light upon their economy, I felt that I ought not to pass them wholly without notice, and finding in the Hunterian Museum a very fine specimen which does not appear to have been figured, for the figure given by Ellis seems to have been taken from Dr. Hunter's specimen, now at Glasgow, and Mr. Miller's from a specimen of Mr. Tobin's, now in the British Museum, by the kind permission of the Curators of the Museum in Lincoln's Inn Fields, I was allowed to have a figure of it taken by my artist, Mr. C. M. Curtis.‡

Lamarck has placed the Crinoïdeans, led probably by their plant-like aspect, in the same Order with his *Floating*

* From κρινον, a lily.

† Fig. 66.

‡ Fig. 65.