

trines were everywhere received with doubts and suspicion, and beyond the immediate sphere of the Parisian academy, excited apparently so little interest, that no one was induced to enter into a practical examination of them. Donati indeed shortly after gave a minute and accurate description of the coral and its polypes, and a somewhat less detailed one of the madrepores, but his phraseology being botanical and his opinions unformed,* his researches were of little immediate service to the cause of the zoologists, and perhaps rather tended to support the erroneous hypothesis which they were combating.†

Peyssonnel was still living, and it was impossible that this discussion should not interest him. Accordingly we find that in 1751, he transmitted to the Royal Society of London a manuscript treatise on coral and other marine productions, ‡ of which Dr Watson has given a review in the 47th volume of its Transactions, published in 1753. The treatise was sent to the English society, because “that in France some lovers of natural history do attribute and even appropriate to themselves his labours and his discoveries, of which they have had the communication;”—a charge probably directed against Reaumur, but which the conduct of that illustrious man, so far as appears, did not warrant. The treatise contains upwards of 400 quarto pages, and is the

* Shortly after this, however, he made other observations which convinced him of the animality of coral. He says—“I am now of opinion, that coral is nothing else than a real animal, which has a very great number of heads. I consider the polypes of coral as the heads of the animal. This animal has a bone ramified in the shape of a shrub. This bone is covered with a kind of flesh, which is the flesh of the animal. My observations have discovered to me several analogies between the animals of kinds approaching to this. There are, for instance, Keratophyta, which do not differ from coral, except in the bone, or part that forms the prop of the animal. In the coral it is testaceous, and in the Keratophyta it is horny.”—Phil. Trans. (1757) abridg. xi. p. 83.

† New Discoveries relating to the History of Coral, by Dr Vitaliano Donati. Translated from the French, by Tho. Stack, M. D. F. R. S. (Feb. 7, 1750.)—Phil. Trans. Vol. xlvii. p. 95. Haller characterizes the original as “nobile opus, ex proprio labore natum.”—Bib. Bot. ii. 400.

‡ *Traité du corail, contenant les nouvelles decouvertes, qu'on a fait sur le corail, les pores, madrepores, scharras, litophitons, éponges, et autres corps et productions, que la mer fournit, pour servir à l'histoire naturelle de la mer.* By the Sieur de Peyssonnel, M. D. Correspondent of the Royal Academy of Sciences of Paris, of that of Montpellier, and of that of Belles Lettres at Marseilles. This treatise was never published.