

putation as a philosophical inquirer, and is even to this day the principal source of our knowledge in this department of natural history. In several essays presented subsequently to the Royal Society, and published in their Transactions, he continued to illustrate and extend his opinions, and defended them so successfully against his opponents, that they soon came to be very generally adopted.

There was nothing unformed nor mystical in Ellis's opinion. Certain marine productions which, under the names of Lithophyta and Keratophyta, had been arranged among vegetables, and were still very generally believed to be so, he maintained and proved with a most satisfactory fulness of evidence, to be entirely of an animal nature—the tenements and products of animals similar in many respects to the naked fresh-water polype. By examining them, in a living state, through an ordinary microscope, he saw these polypes in the denticles or cells of the zoophyte; he witnessed them display their tentacula for the capture of their prey,—their varied actions and sensibility to external impressions,—and their mode of propagation; he saw further that the little creatures were organically connected with the cells and could not remove from them, and that although each cell was appropriated to a single individual, yet was this united “by a tender thready line to the fleshy part that occupies the middle of the whole coralline,” and in this manner connected with all the individuals of that coralline. The conclusion was irresistible—the presumed plant was the skin or covering of a sort of miniature hydra,—a conclusion which Ellis strengthened by an examination of the covering separately, which, he said, was as much an animal structure as the nails or horns of beasts, or the shell of the tortoise, for it differs from “sea-plants in texture, as well as hardness, and likewise in their chemical productions. For sea-plants, properly so called, such as the Algæ, Fuci, &c. afford in distillation little or no traces of a volatile salt: whereas all the corallines afford a considerable quantity; and in burning yield a smell somewhat resembling that of burnt horn, and other animal substances; which of itself is a proof that this class of bodies, though it has the vegetable form, yet is not entirely of a vegetable nature.”*

* Dr Good is in error when he states that the ammoniacal smell from burnt