

hardened mud had been washed away from the calcareous nuclei ; and I was not a little surprised to find, that the seeming concretions were massive corals, apparently all of one species, and evidently of the family Astreidæ. The masses in this unique bed, each a corallum, are of irregular form, but usually flat and oblong, and vary in size, from nine or ten inches in length by six or eight in breadth, to from three to four inches in length by from two or three in breadth ; while in thickness they vary from about two-and-a-half inches to less than an inch. They are thickly covered on all sides by shallow polygonal calices, irregular both in size and form, for they vary from nearly half an inch to little more than a line and a-half in breadth, and present from four to six sides. The dividing walls are thin, and not prominent, and each calice is traversed by from thirty to sixty septa of unequal size. A coral of the Inferior Oolite, *Isastrea tenuistriata*, resembles this *Isastrea* of the Lias more closely than any other fossil species yet figured ; but in the Oolitic *Isastrea* the calices seem to be more equal in size, and more regular in form ; and, from the smallness and fragmentary character of the specimen given in the monograph, I was unable to determine whether it possessed what seemed to be the most marked characteristic of the Skye coral. In all the other species of *Isastrea* I have yet seen, each corallum has a determinate base, from which the coralites radiate ; whereas in the Liassic species they seem congregated together on all sides of the corallum (which appears to have had no base), like the cells in a honeycomb, and even cover wen-like protuberances on the general surface, in a way that precludes the possibility of their having radiated from any common axis or centre.

The history of this coral bed of Skye, so unique in the Lias, seems to be simply as follows : In what is now the Inner Hebrides, as in other parts of the British islands, the Liassic