

*PREFACE TO THE ENGLISH EDITION.*

these flower-like animals, and are able to enjoy science when well set forth by a genial author.

Justice to France requires that these allusions to the science of polyps in Great Britain should be followed by a mention of the eminent names of MILNE EDWARDS and JULES HAIME, of Paris, chief among the makers of the science of polyp-corals; and by a reference also to the fact that France, through PEYSSONNEL, was ahead in establishing by investigation the animal nature of corals; this observer proving his point at Marseilles, in 1723, on specimens of the very species that had just before been declared to be flowering plants by MARSIGLI, and afterward confirming his results by thirty years of study among the reef-corals of Guadaloupe. It should be added, also, that the rest of Europe has made large contributions to the science, through PALLAS, ESPER, EHRENBERG, and other later investigators. If France, in past times, has taken the lead, she has had the advantage of a sea-coast of more than a thousand miles on the ocean, and of a long line also on the warmer and more prolific Mediterranean.

The discovery of deep-sea corals by recent dredging expeditions has opened up a new field for coral investigations, no less important to Geology than to Zoölogy. But while so much attention has been absorbed in this direction, it should be remembered that the interest of the old coral-fields is far from exhausted, and that one great and most important subject, the rate of growth of corals, and of the increase of reefs, waits for investigators.

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