

phenomena of the distribution of temperature are most acceptable.

At the Birmingham Meeting of the British Association in 1839 an important committee was appointed "for researches with the dredge, with a view to the investigation of the marine zoology of Great Britain, the illustration of the geographical distribution of marine animals, and the more accurate determination of the fossils of the pliocene period: under the superintendence of Mr. Gray, Mr. Forbes, Mr. Goodsir, Mr. Patterson, Mr. Thompson of Belfast, Mr. Ball of Dublin, Dr. George Johnston, Mr. Smith of Jordan Hill, and Mr. A. Strickland." The appointment of this committee may be regarded as the initiation of the systematic employment of this method of research. Edward Forbes was the ruling spirit, and under the genial influence of his contagious enthusiasm great progress was made during the next decade in the knowledge of the fauna of the British seas, and many wonderfully pleasant days were spent by the original committee and by many others who, from year to year, were 'added to their number.' Every annual report of the British Association contained communications from the English, the Scottish, or the Irish branches of the committee, and in 1850 Edward Forbes submitted its first general report on British marine zoology. This report, as might have been anticipated from the eminent qualifications of the reporter, was of the highest value; and taken along with his remarkable memoirs previously published, "on the distribution of the Mollusca and Radiata of the *Ægean Sea*," and "on the geological relations