

derfully numerous; and we frequently dredge sponges and corals actually covered with them in the attitudes in which they lived, nestling among their fibres and in the angles of their branches. I have counted seventy-three examples of *Amphiura abyssicola*, small and large, sticking to one *Holtenia*.

Both on account of their beauty and extreme rarity, and of the important part they have borne in the fauna of some of the past periods of the earth's history, the first order of the Echinoderms, the Crinoidea, has always had a special interest to naturalists; and, on the watch as we were for missing links which might connect the present with the past, we eagerly welcomed any indication of their presence. Crinoids were very abundant in the seas of the Silurian period; deep beds of carboniferous limestone are often formed by the accumulation of little else than their skeletons, the stem joints and cups cemented together by limy sediment; and dozens of the perfect crowns of the elegant lily-encrinite are often scattered over the surface of slabs of the muschelkalk. But during the lapse of ages the whole order seems to have been worsted in the 'struggle for life.' They become scarce in the newer mezozoic beds, still scarcer in the tertiaries, and up to within the last few years only two living stalked crinoids were known in the seas of the present period, and these appeared to be confined to deep water in the seas of the Antilles, whence fishermen from time to time bring up mutilated specimens on their lines. Their existence has been known for more than a century; but although many eyes have been watching for them, until very