

observed in a very small space. The second day they appear at the same time, and in a similar manner, but in such countless myriads that the surface of the ocean is covered with them for a considerable extent. Each day, after sporting for an hour or two, they disappear until the next season, and none are observed in the interval. Mr. Stair was of opinion that they came from the coral-reefs, and added that the natives caught them in small baskets, beautifully made, tied them up in leaves, and baked them. Great quantities, moreover, were eaten undressed. They are esteemed a great delicacy by the natives, and the moment the fishing parties reach the shore messengers are despatched with them to those parts of the island unvisited by the *Palolo*.

Dr. J. D. Macdonald was the next author who reported on the *Palolo*,¹ while surveying in H.M.S. "Herald" in the South-western Pacific. He examined considerable numbers in the Fiji group and at Samoa, and fortunately found a head, though at first he experienced the same difficulty as Dr. Gray. He points out that the Fijian name for the animal is "Mbalolo," and that the great antiquity of the latter is evident from the fact that the parts of the year nearly corresponding with October and November are respectively termed "Mbalolo lailai" (little) and "Mbalolo levu" (large). The latter is distinguished by the appearance of multitudes of the *Palolo*, which is often forwarded by certain chiefs to others whose small dominions do not happen to be visited by the Annelid. Dr. Macdonald thought that the frequent rupture of the body was connected with the reproduction of the species.

One of the most important points in the interesting paper of this author is the description (and figure) of the head, which shows a bilobed snout somewhat as in *Lysidice*, a median longer and two adjoining shorter lateral tentacles. On each side is a comparatively large eye. The armature of the buccal region is also carefully described and figured, and still more clearly demonstrates its relationship with the Eunicidæ, not with the Nereidæ as Dr. Macdonald supposed. Fair representations of the hooks and bristles as well as the structure of the feet are given, and also the condition of the posterior end.

In the Catalogue of the Fauna of St. Andrews (early in 1875) I mentioned under the general remarks on the Annelida² that if the *Palolo* has similar habits to the *Lysidice* of our southern coasts (that is, dwells in fissures and crevices of the rocks at and near low water), it probably leaves its retreats for the purpose of depositing ova.

The Rev. S. J. Whitmee of Samoa had previously forwarded specimens of the *Palolo* to Dr. Sclater along with a number of very interesting observations with regard to its habits and dates of appearance.³ He found a specimen in a dead coral block removed from the sea, near a spot frequented by the *Palolo*; and he observed vast numbers at the

¹ *Trans. Linn. Soc. Lond.*, vol. xxii. p. 237, pl. xli., 1858.

² Page 102 (and previously in the *Ann. and Mag. Nat. Hist.* for August 1874).

³ *Proc. Zool. Soc. Lond.*, 1875, p. 496.