

THE
VOYAGE OF H.M.S. CHALLENGER.

ZOOLOGY.

REPORT on the SCAPHOPODA and GASTEROPODA collected by H.M.S. CHALLENGER during the Years 1873-76. By the Reverend ROBERT BOOG WATSON, B.A., F.R.S.E., F.L.S., F.G.S., &c., Ehrenmitglied des naturwissenschaftlichen Vereins, Lüneburg; Minister of the Free Church of Scotland, Cardross.

INTRODUCTION.

THE Scaphopods and Gasteropods of the Challenger Expedition form a fairly compact group, including about 1300 recognisable species, new and old, with some 400 indistinguishable forms. In many cases the specimens are few and poor. At twenty-eight places not reckoned as dredging stations, but where gatherings were made on the shore, in harbour, or in quite shallow water outside, 79 old species, 7 new, and 5 indistinguishable forms were found, or 91 in all—on an average 3 from each. At seventy-five stations, with depths varying from 0 to 400 fathoms, 604 old species, 405 new species, and 341 indistinguishable forms were found, or 1350 in all, giving an average of 18 forms from each. At forty-one stations, whose depths range from 400 fathoms down to 2650 (Station 325—South Atlantic—the greatest depth at which any specimens of the group were obtained), there were found 89 old species, 135 new, and 46 indistinguishable forms, or in all 270, being less than 7 forms from each.

All persons interested in the Mollusca must feel some disappointment that these groups are not, both in individuals and in species, better represented. The increasing rarity of specimens in proportion to the depth of the station has been accepted as the foundation of generalisations regarding the poverty of animal life in the great depths, regarding the existence of zones of deadness, and regarding even the origination of Molluscan life in shallow rather than in deep water, opinions which may indeed be true,