

a massive *Porites* the consequent flattening of the top and the expansion of the lateral dimensions were most excellently shown in pieces convenient for museum purposes.

The corals, which were few in number as regards species, were finer grown towards the outer verge of the reef, as is always the case on shore platforms, and on the outer edge of barrier reefs. In some places were deep holes in the coral platform, reminding one of glacier crevasses on a small scale, evidently arising from the loose nature of the sloping beach on which the coral structure here rests. On the reef lay weathered remains of a more ancient shore platform which were honeycombed and wave-worn. The rock composing them was, however, undoubtedly *in situ*, and proved elevation of the island to the extent of five feet or so. Similar fragments of raised reef were found by Mr. Murray a short distance up the bed of the stream already mentioned. Some specimens of *Porites* were unattached, though living, being in the form of rounded masses entirely covered with living polyps, and probably from time to time rolled over by the waves; an *Alcyonium* occurs on the coasts of England also forming rounded unattached colonies which are rolled about from place to place on the sand. They call to mind the similarly detached rounded masses formed by some Lichens (*Lecanora esculenta*) which are carried about over the land by the winds as are these coral colonies by the waves.

On the reefs were comparatively few free-living animals, but one of the huge *Synapta*, so abundant amongst the East Indian Islands and at the Philippines, was met with. The animal was a yard long and two inches in diameter, and looked like an ugly brown and black snake.

Above the shore the first land plant met with was the ubiquitous tropical littoral plant (*Ipomœa pes-capræ*), which is always the first plant above high water mark on these tropical shores. Above a skirting of this commenced a thick growth of rather large trees, a species of *Barringtonia*, a fig, and the common *Pandanus* of the Pacific Islands, occupies the shore margin. A few paces within the wood it was gloomy, from the thickness of the growth of trees and creepers overhead. The same climbing Aroids grow here as at Fiji, and a *Dracœna* was common, as also a beautiful climbing Asclepiad (*Hoya*) with white waxy flowers, and one or two ferns. The explorers were not permitted to penetrate the wood far enough to get any adequate idea of the nature of the vegetation.

The Api men wore as clothing nothing but a narrow bandage of dirty European fabric of various kinds. They are a small race, few being above five feet in height, and are much darker in colour than the Fijians; their limbs, and especially their legs, are small and badly shaped. Notwithstanding the bad character they have received, they seemed quiet enough. Several amongst those seen were returned labourers, and were at once known by their having fastened to their waist-cloth the key of the chest which every labourer brings back with him, containing the fruits of his toil, so that they thus retain, even in Api, the property for which they have worked. Two men joined the party on