

the wide differences which separate it as a member of the Hydrozoa from the Actinozoa. In a dredging off the mouth of the Rio de la Plata in 600 fathoms, six genera of the family Stylasteridæ, which, together with the Milleporidæ, form the group Hydrocorallinæ, were brought up at once in good condition, and all but one with fully developed generative organs. An examination of this material soon showed that the Stylasteridæ, which had until then been placed amongst the Oculinidæ, are, like the Milleporidæ, Hydroids. In all of them there is an elaborate system of division of labour amongst the members composing the colonies. Some devoid of stomach catch the food and hand it to

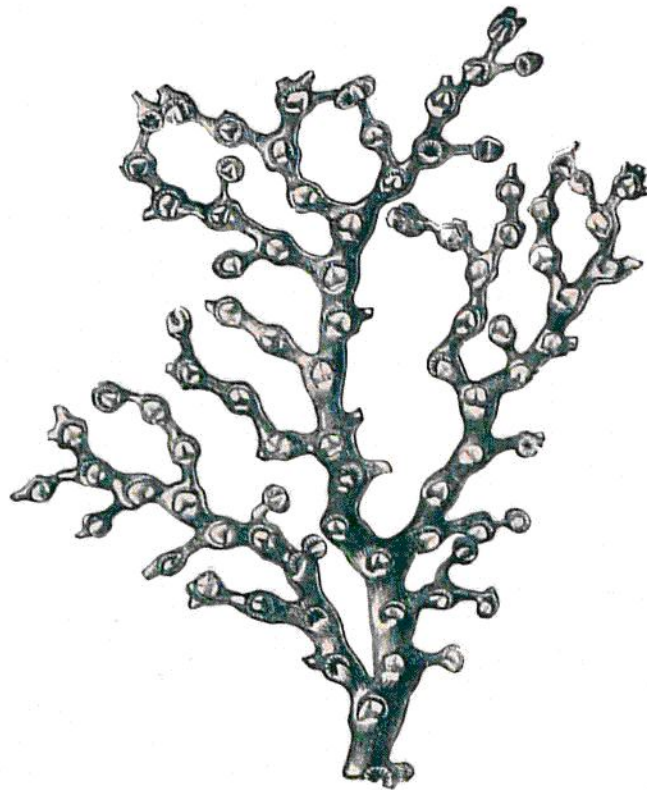


FIG. 276.—*Cryptohelia pulica*, M.-Edw. and Haime; twice the natural size.

others, the sole function of which is digestion for the general good, others again are generative zooids. The accompanying figure shows a stem of one these corals, *Cryptohelia pulica*, so called because, as will be seen in the drawing (fig. 276), it has a shield or lid in front of each of the cups in which the polyps live concealed. The mouths of the cups are all turned to one face of the stock. Each of the small cups is notched all round its margin, and in each notch is a grasping zooid (dactylozooid), whilst in the centre of each ring of dactylozooids is a stomachzooid or gastrozooid which digests the food and distributes the products all over the colony by means of an elaborate system of canals. The generative or nursezooids lie embedded in the walls of the cups. In some Stylasteridæ the division of labour is even more complex than here.