

surpass anything of this kind previously published in our own country. Grube took the Annelids¹ in hand, and in less than half a hundred pages and four fine steel plates carefully described them and figured the most interesting. In this department, therefore, the comparison with the Annelidan results of the Challenger is noteworthy, since both ships traversed similar seas.

Stimulated by such examples as the foregoing, as well as by the activity of the Scandinavians and Americans, and more than all by the influence of the late Sir Wyville Thomson and Dr. Gwyn Jeffreys, in conjunction with Dr. Carpenter, our own government fitted out the "Lightning" and "Porcupine," and in both ships, notably in the final expedition of the latter (1870), very considerable additions were made to our knowledge of the Annelids, especially by the labours of Prof. Ehlers of Göttingen, who, after the death of Edward Claparède, examined those frequenting deeper water than 500 fathoms in the "Lightning" and "Porcupine" expeditions of 1868 and 1869. Subsequent voyages have further extended our information in the Annelidan department, as for instance the cruise of Dr. Gwyn Jeffreys in the "Valorous" to Davis Strait, the last North Polar Expedition under Sir George Nares, the Transit of Venus Expedition to Kerguelen, the dredgings of Captain St. John in the China Sea, and those of Dr. John Murray in the "Knight Errant" and "Triton" in the North Atlantic.

The recent advances made in our knowledge of the Annelids by the expeditions of other nations have been numerous; indeed, no well-organised exploration of the ocean now returns without representatives of the group. Amongst others that occur to me are the American expeditions in the "Blake," the Annelids of which are now in the skilled hands of Prof. Ehlers; the collection made by the German exploring ship "Gazelle," a preliminary account of which was published by the late veteran zoologist, Prof. Grube, in 1877, and which is frequently referred to in the following pages; the Annelids of the Swedish North Polar Expedition under Prof. Nordenskiöld, as described and figured by Théel; and those of the Norwegian North Atlantic Expedition by Hansen. In the Challenger a large number of the Annelids were procured in the trawl, and this is consonant with our own experience in British waters. The extensive surface afforded by the trawl, and the readiness with which Annelids, Nemertean, and even such forms as *Corymorpha* cling to the meshes is remarkable, while perhaps it is occasionally vain to search for them with a dredge.

GENERAL CONDITION OF THE PREPARATIONS.

In reviewing the condition of the preparations forwarded for examination, it has to be stated that many, as might have been expected, are injured or have to be described from mere fragments. A few had been dried. The great depth from which others were obtained probably caused laceration or softening before they reached the surface, and in

¹ Annel. Novara-Exp., Zool. Theil., Bd. ii. Abth. 3, 1868.