

to suppose they had been prepared by the same hand. I will mention two remarkable cases as illustrations. A well-known barrier-reef extends some hundreds of miles along the north-east coast of Australia; its southern limit is near Moreton Bay; and a reference to Maury's Chart shows this to be the precise point at which a cold current from the South Pole meets the warm equatorial current from the east. Again, it appears somewhat remarkable that along the whole western coast of North and South America no vestige of coral has been found. Mr. H. Cuming informs me that he has dredged in vain for specimens of these characteristic tropical productions in the Bay of Panama and at the Galapagos; but the chart shows that cold currents from the north and south sweep the whole western coasts of America, meeting at the Equator, and then turning away into the Pacific, where, under a vertical sun, the water soon becomes warm enough for the growth of the various coral-reefs scattered about in that ocean. Fresh water and sediment of any kind being present act as fatal barriers to the growth of coral; and to these causes may generally be traced gaps in reefs, and waste places of limited extent in those seas which especially abound in corals. Dana has recognized the effect of warm and cold currents in the general distribution of corals throughout the warmer seas; and the fact of the same influences being at work, and easily recognized, in the waters surrounding the British Islands appears sufficiently interesting to justify me in bringing the subject before this Society.

#### 6. NOTE ON THE SIZE OF A SEAL AT THE TIME OF BIRTH.

By DR. J. E. GRAY.

We have received from the Zoological Gardens the body of a Ringed Seal (*Callocephalus foetidus*), that had died soon after its birth. It was entirely covered with closely set, well-developed fur of a silver-grey colour, being rather browner on the upper surface. It is 2 feet 8 inches long, from the tip of the nose to the end of tail; the fore paws are 6, and the hinder 8 inches long, and the latter are 7 inches wide when expanded. The webs of the feet are covered with hair, and the claws are well developed and black. The whiskers are white, well developed, and slightly waved.

#### 7. DESCRIPTIONS OF NEW SHELLS. By DR. H. DOHRN.

##### 1. CATAULUS BLANFORDI.

*Testa subperforata, ovato-fusiformis, solida, confertim striata, parum nitens, rufa; spira convexo-turrita, apice obtusiusculo; anfr. 9, convexiusculi, ultimus attenuatus, antice subascendens; carina umbilicalis compressa, valida, antice vix dilatata; periomphalum angustum, costulato-striatum; apertura subcircularis; peristomium aurantiaco-fuscum, incrassatum, valde expansum, reflexum, ad anfractum penultimum angustatum, mar-*