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On the habits of the Volutes

Dr. R.O. Cunningham

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in the monograph before us, fully elucidated the animal as well as the shell of the species he describes; and, carrying still further the system of classification inaugurated by the Norwegian naturalist, he presents us with a history of one hundred and forty-one species, distributed in twenty-eight genera—certainly an extraordinary advance upon the forty species and five genera which represented the state of our knowledge of this order at the time of the publication of ‘The Natural History of the British Entomostraca.’

The work before us shows evidence of the greatest care in preparation and in execution. The descriptions of both shells and animals (the latter given in a large number of instances) are systematically and well drawn up, while the beauty of the plates leaves nothing to desire. They represent the carapace of each species in its various positions, and fully illustrate the anatomy of the genera. Both zoologists and geologists may thank the Linnean Society for the publication of this extensive and important monograph.

MISCELLANEOUS.

On the Habits of the Volutes. By Dr. R. O. CUNNINGHAM.

Valparaiso, Oct. 9, 1868.

MY DEAR SIR,—In the April number of the ‘Annals and Magazine of Natural History,’ which I received not long since, I find at p. 310 a note by you on the habits of Volutes, in which you remark that they are rarely collected with their animals, except when they are accidentally thrown ashore after a storm, and that this is owing to their sand-burrowing propensities. This I have found to be the case as regards the species of the genus inhabiting the Strait of Magellan. During the first season I spent in that region, I only succeeded in procuring two live specimens of *Voluta magellanica*, till the occurrence of a violent easterly gale caused numbers to be thrown on the beach in the neighbourhood of the Chilian settlement at Punta Arena. That they only existed in comparatively shallow water I considered sufficiently proved by the fact that I never succeeded in dredging any, though they were evidently far from rare, judging from the numbers of dead shells to be picked up in most localities in the eastern part of the Strait. I obtained a second species of Volute, of which there are no specimens in the collection of Magellanic shells in the Museum at Santiago, at low water at Cape Possession in January 1867. I found it burrowing in considerable numbers in the fine sand of the beach; and a few occurred upon clusters of live *Mytili* attached to stones, and, I believe, were feeding on them after the fashion of our *Purpura lapillus*, though I could not be certain of the fact. The body of the animal in

this species, which was of a most beautiful purple colour, was always very much extruded from the shell, and the foot was of enormous size. The animal of *Voluta magellanica* is also purple, but of a much paler tint than that of the other Volute. I regret I was unable to make drawings of the animals while alive; but numerous specimens of both species were included in the collection of marine animals in spirit which I sent to the British Museum last year.

Believe me,

My dear Sir,

Very truly yours,

ROBERT O. CUNNINGHAM.

Dr. J. E. Gray, F.R.S.

A mature Shell of Cypræa fusco-dentata, Gray.

By F. P. MARRAT.

Mr. R. Keen, of Edge Lane, Liverpool, has recently procured a very interesting series of this shell, numbering nine or ten varieties; they fully exhibit the different stages of growth, from the earlier states to the finely coloured adult individual. The question formerly advanced of this being a ribbed species resembling *Cypræa capensis*, Gray, is now completely and definitely settled. All the specimens hitherto obtained of this rare shell have been either young or decorticated; and it would appear that the species is extremely rare in a perfect state. This series includes the first and only example known to be so.

The shell is a very fine one, measuring $1\frac{6}{10}$ inch, with the teeth fully developed. The colour is dirty drab, similar to the shells usually figured; but the back is covered with rufous-brown close spots like those on *Cyp. errones*, Linn., and nearly as glossy, but has them larger, more confluent, and more suffused. The slightly raised ribs usually seen in young examples are not entirely obliterated by having the extra coat of enamel deposited over them.

100 Edge Lane, Liverpool.

Baleine des Indes.

Under the above name there are manufactured and sold in Germany (and these have been offered for sale in London) longitudinal slips of the horn of the Long-horned Buffalo of India, called the *Arnee*. The slips are cut of different thickness and width to serve the purposes of the stay- and dressmakers, the longest as yet made being only 15 inches. I fear that the slips must be much more brittle than good whalebone, as they are destitute of the longitudinal fibres that give strength to the true whalebone. If they do answer, I do not see why the slips might not be made of any length, the horns being artificially united together into a mass, as the ox-horns are in Paris, to make sticks and other articles.—J. E. GRAY.