

The articulations which separate the calcareous pieces of the sclerobase of *Isis*, consist of corneine. The sclerites of *Isis* are 0.18 to 0.20 mill. in length, with a swelling at each extremity; they are of a fine white colour.

The substance of the axis of *Pennatula phosphorea* has been analysed by M. Fremy. It contains a considerable quantity of phosphate of lime with the carbonate of lime. These are the only Radiated animals containing phosphate of lime, and this peculiarity was the less expected as the axis of *Virgularia* and *Pavonaria* contain only carbonate of lime.

XVII.—On the Genus *Assiminia*.

By Dr. J. E. GRAY, F.R.S., V.P.Z.S.

To the Editors of the *Annals of Natural History*.

GENTLEMEN,

IN the preceding Number of the 'Annals' Mr. Clark thinks he has proved that Dr. Leach's genus *Assiminia* is only a species of *Truncatella* of Risso. Mr. Clark's description proves the converse of his position. *Truncatella* should have a subcylindrical shell with a slender tapering tip, which falls off when the shell approaches adult age; hence the name of the genus: *Assiminia* has a broad conic shell with an acute tip which does not fall off; if it is to be a species of the same genus, the name of the latter ought to be changed.

The foot of *Truncatella* is small and peculiarly formed, and the eyes of all the species, according to Mr. Clark's observations, are large with a white iris; now this is not the case with *Assiminia*, and yet Mr. Clark regards it as a *Truncatella*.

Every naturalist has the right to restrict his genera as he pleases. I have only to observe that Mr. Clark's notions on this head are not those usually held by modern zoologists, and this must explain the proposed union; it is not so extraordinary as that of the species which he has combined together under the generic name of *Murex* in his late work, species which are by other authors referred to six distinct families. If we were to extend the views of Mr. Clark as applied to the British Mollusca to the exotic species, that is to say to the Mollusca known, many of our genera would contain from 500 to 700 species, which certainly would not facilitate the study of these animals. But the whole of Mr. Clark's theory is so opposed to sound logic, that I shall not proceed further.

I am, Gentlemen, yours truly,

J. E. GRAY.



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