

**L.M.B.C. MEMOIRS ON
TYPICAL BRITISH MARINE
PLANTS AND ANIMALS; V.
ALCYONIUM**

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L.M.B.C. Memoirs on typical British marine plants and animals; V. Alcyonium by Sydney J. Hickson

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SYDNEY J. HICKSON

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v.

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Liverpool Marine Biology Committee.

L.M.B.C. MEMOIRS

ON TYPICAL BRITISH MARINE PLANTS & ANIMALS

EDITED BY W. A. HERDMAN, D.Sc., F.R.S.

V.

ALCYONIUM

BY

SYDNEY J. HICKSON, M.A., D.Sc., F.R.S.,

Leyer Professor of Zoology in the Owens College, Manchester

(With 3 Plates)

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EDITOR'S PREFACE.

THE Liverpool Marine Biology Committee was constituted in 1886, with the object of investigating the Fauna and Flora of the Irish Sea.

The dredging, trawling, and other collecting expeditions organised by the Committee have been carried on intermittently since that time, and a considerable amount of material, both published and unpublished, has been accumulated. Fourteen Annual Reports of the Committee and five volumes dealing with the "Fauna and Flora" have been issued. At an early stage of the investigations it became evident that a Biological Station or Laboratory on the sea-shore nearer the usual collecting grounds than Liverpool would be a material assistance in the work. Consequently the Committee, in 1887, established the Puffin Island Biological Station on the North Coast of Anglesey, and later on, in 1892, moved to the more commodious and convenient Station at Port Erin in the centre of the rich collecting grounds of the south end of the Isle of Man.

In these thirteen years' experience of a Biological Station (five years at Puffin Island and eight at Port Erin), where College students and young amateurs formed a large proportion of the workers, the want has been constantly felt of a series of detailed descriptions of the structure of certain common typical animals and plants, chosen as representatives of their groups, and dealt with by specialists. The same want has probably been felt in other similar institutions and in many College laboratories.

The objects of the Committee and of the workers at the Biological Station have hitherto been chiefly faunistic and speciographic. The work must necessarily be so at first

when opening up a new district. Some of the workers have published papers on morphological points, or on embryology and observations on life-histories and habits; but the majority of the papers in the volumes on the "Fauna and Flora of Liverpool Bay" have been, as was intended from the first, occupied with the names and characteristics and distribution of the many different kinds of marine plants and animals in our district. And this faunistic work will still go on. It is far from finished, and the Committee hope in the future to add greatly to the records of the Fauna and Flora. But the papers in the present series are quite distinct from these previous publications in name, in treatment, and in purpose. They will be called the "L.M.B.C. Memoirs," each will treat of one type, and they will be issued separately as they are ready, and will be obtainable Memoir by Memoir as they appear, or later bound up in convenient volumes. It is hoped that such a series of special studies, written by those who are thoroughly familiar with the forms of which they treat, will be found of value by students of Biology in laboratories and in Marine Stations, and will be welcomed by many others working privately at Marine Natural History.

It is proposed that the forms selected should, as far as possible, be common L.M.B.C. (Irish Sea) animals and plants of which no adequate account already exists in the text-books. Probably most of the specialists who have taken part in the L.M.B.C. work in the past, will prepare accounts of one or more representatives of their groups. The following have already promised their services, and in many cases the Memoir is already far advanced. The first Memoir appeared in October and the second in December, 1899, the third in February, and the fourth in April, 1900, this fifth one will be issued about the end of

1900, and the sixth will be ready early in 1901 : others will follow, it is hoped, in rapid succession.

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