

mium L non aperiatur, adeoque aër in statu compressionis maneat, aperto tunc C et E, ventus per E prorumpet, celeritate, qua 78 pedes in minuto secundo conficeret. Hinc ros, congelationi proximus, in grandinem, et ad superficiem pilei, in glaciem, compingitur: non differt vero grando à glacie, nisi figura rotundiore, frequenti collisione acquisita, et interdum nive intermixta.

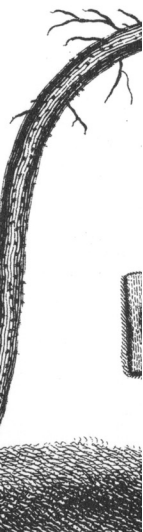
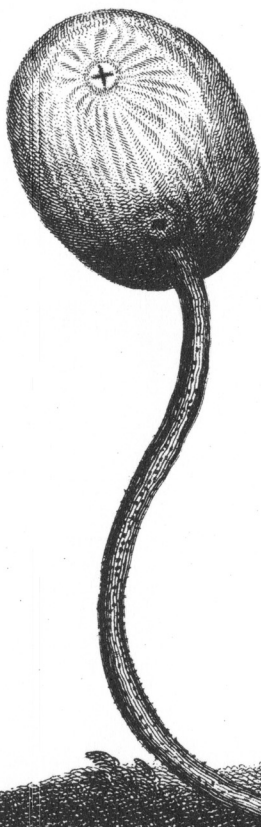
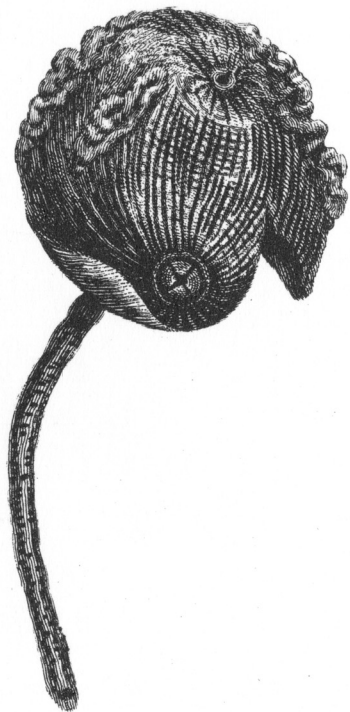
Hæc perantiqua congelationis theoria mihi quidem abunde sufficere videtur omnibus phænomenis explicandis, ut electricitate vel alia quadam novitate non indigeat.

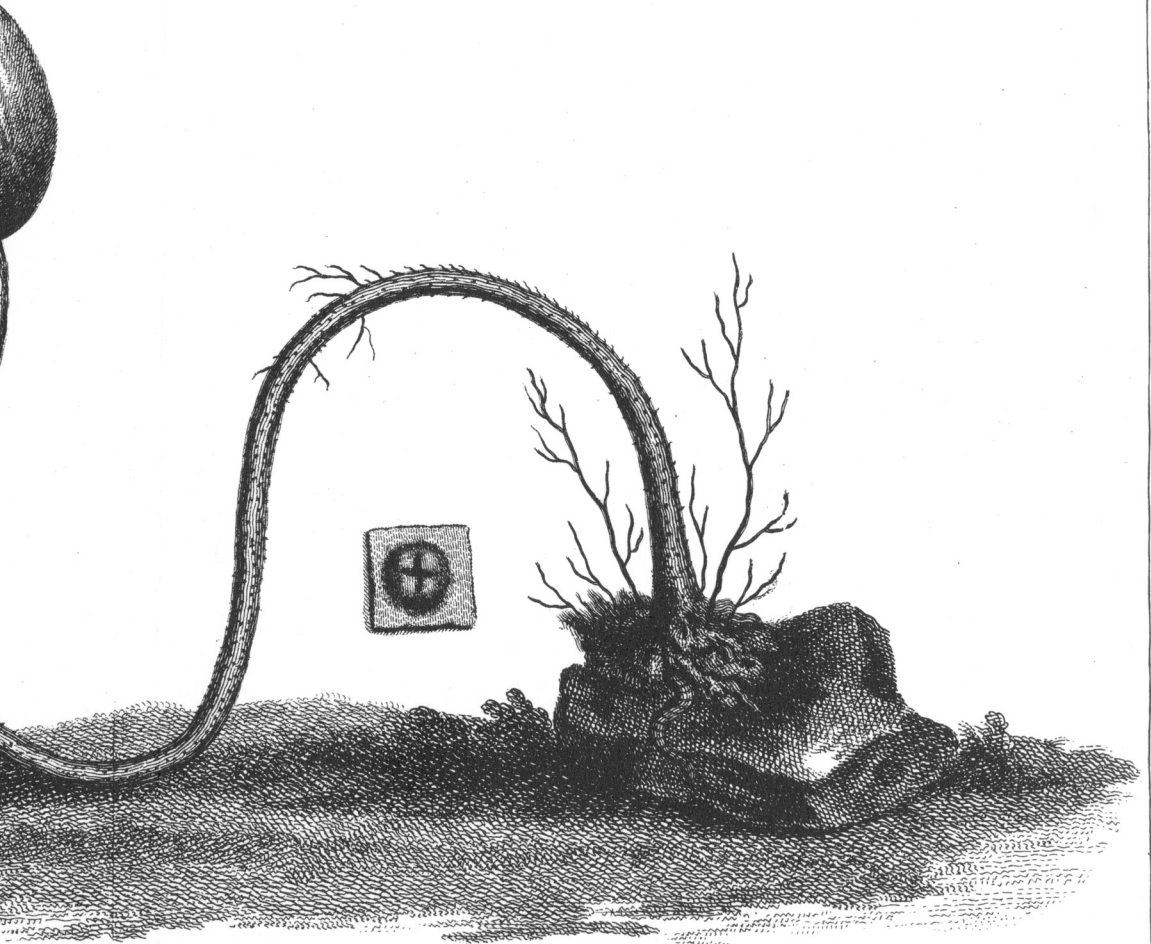
XCII. *An Account of a remarkable Marine Production: In a Letter to the Reverend Thomas Birch, D. D. Secretary to the Royal Society, from Alexander Ruffell, M. D. Physician to St. Thomas's Hospital, and F. R. S.*

S I R,

Read June 24,
1762.

MY ingenious friend Dr. James Nasmyth, having been so kind as to send me a marine production, which appears to be singular, I thought some account of it would not be unacceptable to the Royal Society. I have therefore troubled you with the inclosed papers, containing an extract of Dr. Nasmyth's letter; a description of the body, as it appeared upon the joint examination of Dr. Solander, Messieurs Peter Collinson, John Ellis, and





and myself, several months after I received it; together with two drawings by Mr. Edwards; [*Vide Tab. VII.*] one of which represents it entire, nearly of its natural size and colour; the other after it was opene.

I am,

S I R,

Your most obedient

humble servant,

W. brook,
June 9, 1762.

Alexander Ruffell.

Extract from Dr. Nafmyth's Letter.

AT my return from North America, in November 1759, I sent you two or three articles picked up in that country. One of these, from its singular appearance, and from its being a perfect stranger to every body (both French and English) that saw it, I must now recommend to your attention.

The desire of keeping it entire, and as it was found, prevented any other investigation, than that of viewing it particularly, when I first got it, and at times afterwards, to be assured of its safety, as well as to observe the changes it might undergo, while it continued in spirits. From you, Sir, at your leisure, I shall be extremely glad to receive farther information. In the mean time, I shall give you the circumstances attending its acquisition.

In

In the month of June 1759, the squadron ordered against Quebec, arrived in the river St. Lawrence, when, being in the latitude 49. 50. north, and about ten leagues to the eastward of Anticosti, (an island in the mouth of the river) we sounded, and struck ground in 42 fathoms; the soundings white sand and black specks. Having, at the same time, thrown overboard a fishing-line, the hook was found singly attached at the bottom; and, after some toils, brought up a piece of rock into the surface of which was inserted a strong tendinous substance, of a light brown colour, in length about seven inches; it was round, and nearly of the thickness of a common goose-quill; the other end formed a sack, or bag, of the size and shape of a pigeon's egg.

The whole of this substance was elastic; and, upon pressing the bag, I plainly discovered a contained substance, and imagined, that it was attended with notion.

These, Sir, are all the particulars I have to offer upon this unknown subject: whether animal, zoophyte, or submarine plant, I leave to your determination.

[Thus far Dr. Nafmyth.]

Upon our examination, it appeared to us to come nearest to what has been, by naturalists, called *Præpus*; give us leave, therefore, to name it *Priapus pendunculo filiformi corpore ovato*. The body was oval, and in size between a pigeon and pullet's egg, smooth, membranous, and of a silver ash colour. What appeared to be the mouth, was situated a little below the apex, and was quadrivalvular, in the form
of

of a (✱) cross. The anus was on the same side, a little above the base, or insertion of the stalk, and also quadrivalvular. Towards the aperture of the mouth and anus, the body felt more callous. From this body issued a peduncle, or stalk, of ten inches in length, the extreme end of which was fixed to a piece of rock. This stalk was of a light brown colour, about the thickness of a large hen's quill, round, hollow, rough, and of a membranous, leather-like substance.

When the body was opened, the internal coat appeared to be composed of reticular fibres. The interior orifice of the mouth was surrounded by a radiated substance, about the size of a silver penny, thicker and more callous than the coats of any other part. The internal aperture of the anus was composed of fibres interwoven with one another. From the apex to the base, on each side, descended obliquely, and winding, a smooth solid body, in width about one fifth part of an inch, part of which separated in the examining; so that it is but imperfectly represented in the drawing. We cannot give a clearer idea of this body, than by saying, that it had greatly the appearance (excepting in size) of one of the small intestines, and was attached to the interior surface of the main body, much in the way as they are to the mesentery.

