

Niopolm
University

Aberdeen -

Jan. 15th/86

Dear Mr William Dawson,

I am greatly
obliged to you for your note, as
also for the bit of Stromatopora
which you sent me. It belongs
to a type of which Spencer had
already sent me specimens
namely his "Cerastroma" reti-
forchense. It shows the rad-
iating arborescent canals very
well; but not so well as many

Other types, such as Stomatopora
discordea, Lousd., Stomatopora
typica, Rosen, S. Beuthii, Bay,
Stomatoporella euphensis, Mich.
22. It also shows, as you re-
mark, the peculiar granular-
poreous structure of the skeleton-
fibres, which is so characteristic
of thin sections of the skeleton-fibres
of the genera Stomatopora, Gold.
(properly so called), Stomatoporella,
Idiothoma, Wanch. In some species
of Stomatoporella 2 in Parallelo-
pura, Bay., this porous structure
is so highly developed as to give

me to a minute tubulation of the skeleton-plate. An essentially similar structure (quite distinct from the radiating retrohozial tubes) can be easily made out in thin sections of such living Hydrocorallines as Ditichospora & Alcyonaria.

As for the antrohozial radiating tubes (which in many forms are tubulate) I have found a similar canal-system to exist in the coenostemum of the recent Mulleporal, as shown in this section. They occur also in Hydractinia pliocæna, & I think Carter is undoubtedly

right in comparing them with the
radiating evenotarsal grooves
of Hydractiniae generally. As
these articular canals occur in
the great majority of genera of
Stomatopoda, they have no gen-
eric value, & I can not accept
Wrenchell's genus Coenostoma as
a valid group.

The first part of my Monograph
(dealing with the structure & clas-
sification of the whole group) has
been long through press, & will be
issued in a few days. I hope to
send you a copy before the end
of the month, if I get my extra

copies from the Palaeontological Society by them. I am in hopes, when you have looked into it, that you will be able to concur in my conclusion that the Stromatopora are a group of Hydras, allied to the Hydracarina on the one hand & the Hydractinia on the other hand. Having been able to demonstrate in many genera the existence of numerous tabulate zooidal tubes, precisely similar to the tabulate tubes of the recent Milleporae & Distichopora,

I have felt myself compelled
to abandon my former view of
the Rhizopodial affinities of
the Stomatopods, & to place
them among the Coelenterata.
Indeed, there is no structural
feature of any of the normal groups
of Stomatopods which is not
to be paralleled with what is
found among either the Hydrot-
iniae or the Hydrosorallines.

I should have much liked to
have looked over your collection.
In American specimens you
doubtless much surpass me.
I should be disposed to doubt

however, if you know the enormous wealth of Stromatopora fossils, of the most varied types, comprised in the Devonian & Silurian Rocks of Britain, Germany, Russia, & Sweden. I know, — I certainly had no conceptions of this when I undertook the Palaeontographical Society's Monograph. My own collection has been formed on the spot in all the great European regions for these fossils, & comprises almost all the recorded species (which I have myself collected at the localities originally given for

each by their authors). I have personally examined the original specimens of almost all the species which have been described by European authors (such as Linsdale, Von Rosen, N'Obigny, Baizatky, &c). When I add that I have with my own hands prepared about fifteen hundred thin sections to illustrate my collection, I think you will pardon my being somewhat proud of my material. Before long I hope to publish figures & descriptions of some of the many new species I have. I shall, of course, be very pleased to have any material you can spare for me. Excuse this rambling letter, & believe me, with kindest regards,
yours very truly H. Allyn Nicholas