

north of it. Hermit crabs and very many others of the crab family, bivalves and univalves, star-shaped egg-urchins (*Echinometra lucunter*), crustaceans, sponges, and coral-fish, with many scores of others, can be found by exploring the coast and rocky pools.

By means of a boat on a clear day, a visit to the coral reefs may be made, though the best coral is at some distance from Suez. Dark brown and yellowish green coral in loose and brittle bits is based here on massive rocks of black mesh coral (*Porites*), and more rarely there may be found the cherry-red cup-star variety (*Pocillopora*)—not to be confounded with the ordinary red coral, which is not found here.

The strange and wonderful fishes can be best seen by going to the market, no less than five hundred and twenty kinds which haunt the coral slopes being known. One often offered for sale is the ball-fish (*Tetradon*), which has the power of blowing itself up like a balloon and floating on the water on its back; this, like the urchin-fish (*Diodon*), is protected like a hedgehog on land by spiny prickles, beside a beak something like a parrot's. They can bite well with their beaks, but are not poisonous. Small sharks are occasionally heard of, leaping and flying-fish, and the gay parrot and rainbow fishes are also known.