

On the Occurrence of *Squilla desmaresti* in the North Sea.

By

F. Jeffrey Bell, M.A.

So far as I have been able to discover, there is no record of the presence of this or any other *Squilla* in the North Sea; to make sure I inquired of Dr. Hoek, whose experience is unrivalled, and he assures me that the only record is that of an *Erichtheus* stage, discovered on the Dogger Bank during the cruise of the *Pommerania* (1872). Early in May (1901) I received through the Director of the Natural History Museum a specimen of *Squilla*, as to the rarity of which in the Channel he called my attention. It was accompanied by letter A, the writer of which was Lieutenant and Commander G. S. Carr, R.N., C.M.G. I thought the circumstances warranted my writing as I did in letter B, the answer to which (C) is, if I may be allowed to say so, the very pattern of what an answer should be, and another example of the admirable training of our seamen.

I think it may quite safely be said that *Squilla desmaresti* has been dredged in the North Sea; in this, if not in previous centuries—*auspicium melioris aevi!*

(A) H.M.S. "CIRCE," HARWICH, 30th April, 1901.

DEAR SIR,—By this post I am sending you a specimen for classification. It was trawled up by *May Queen* (R. 32) on 29th about three miles east of the Kentish Knock. I am quite unable to identify it, and should be much obliged if you will give me its name, etc. During two years now in charge of the North Sea Fisheries it is the first specimen I have seen.

(B) NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM, 3rd May, 1901.

SIR,—The specimen sent by you is the Stomatopod Crustacean *Squilla*. I cannot find the Kentish Knock (if I have read it correctly) in our atlases, but if it is in the North Sea I should like to have your assurance that your

collector is trustworthy, for Squilla is very rare even off Cornwall, and its appearance in the cold sea of April off Harwich is, I believe, unrecorded, to say the least.

(C)

H.M.S. "CIRCE," 4th May, 1901.

SIR,—With reference to your letter of yesterday the Squilla was actually taken out of the trawl of the boat R. 32 on the date mentioned. One of my officers saw it when he was boarding her, and the skipper sent it to me, as he said that in all his experience of forty years' trawling he had never seen one like it. The Kentish Knock is a shoal off the Thames Estuary in lat. 51.39 N., long. 1.41 E. The water the Squilla was dredged up in was about twenty-four fathoms. The surface temperature was 52° Fahrenheit at the time.