

portion of zoophytes hitherto considered legitimate subjects of their order to the mollusca, which, about the year 1815,* had received a considerable accession to its numbers from the same source; but so far from acknowledging the propriety of the proposed translation, I incline to agree with Lamarck†, that it would be better to separate again the colonized zoophytes from the mollusca, and form with them, and with such zoophytes as have an analogous organization, a distinct class, to occupy the wide interval between the molluscan and radiated types, allied to the former by the non-symmetrical figure of the body, and to the latter by the circularity of the oral members. It is, however, unnecessary to enter here upon this discussion, for my intention is to describe what are usually reckoned zoophytes, without having regard to the naturalness of the group considered as a whole, and with this view I adopt the class as it was long ago established by Solander and Ellis, excepting only the corallines and sponges, which will form the subject of separate monographs. The following definition may serve to characterize the class :

Animals avertibrate, inarticulate, soft, irritable and contractile, without a vascular or separate respiratory or nervous system : mouth superior, central, circular, edentulous, surrounded by tubular or more commonly by filiform tentacula : alimentary canal variable,—where there is an intestine the anus opens near the mouth : asexual ; gemmiparous : aquatic.—The individuals (Polypes) of a few families are separate and perfect in themselves, but the greater number of zoophytes are compound beings, viz. each zoophyte consists of an indefinite number of individuals or polypes organically connected and placed in a calcareous, horny or membranous case or cells, forming, by their aggregation, corals or plant-like Polypidoms.

In this definition there are two parts which require our particular attention—the *Polype* whose presence is essential, and the *Polypidom*,‡ which is the house or support of the polype,

* Savigny's Memoires sur les Animaux sans Vertebres. Seconde Partie. Paris, 1816, 8vo.

† Hist. Nat. des Anim. s. Vert. iii. 82—87.

‡ I borrow this term from the translator of Lamouroux's work on Corallines. The Rev. Mr Kirby, in his Bridgewater Treatise, uses the word *Polypary* to express the same thing. Both of them are translations of *Polypier*, a word invented by Reaumur, and now in general use among the French naturalists.