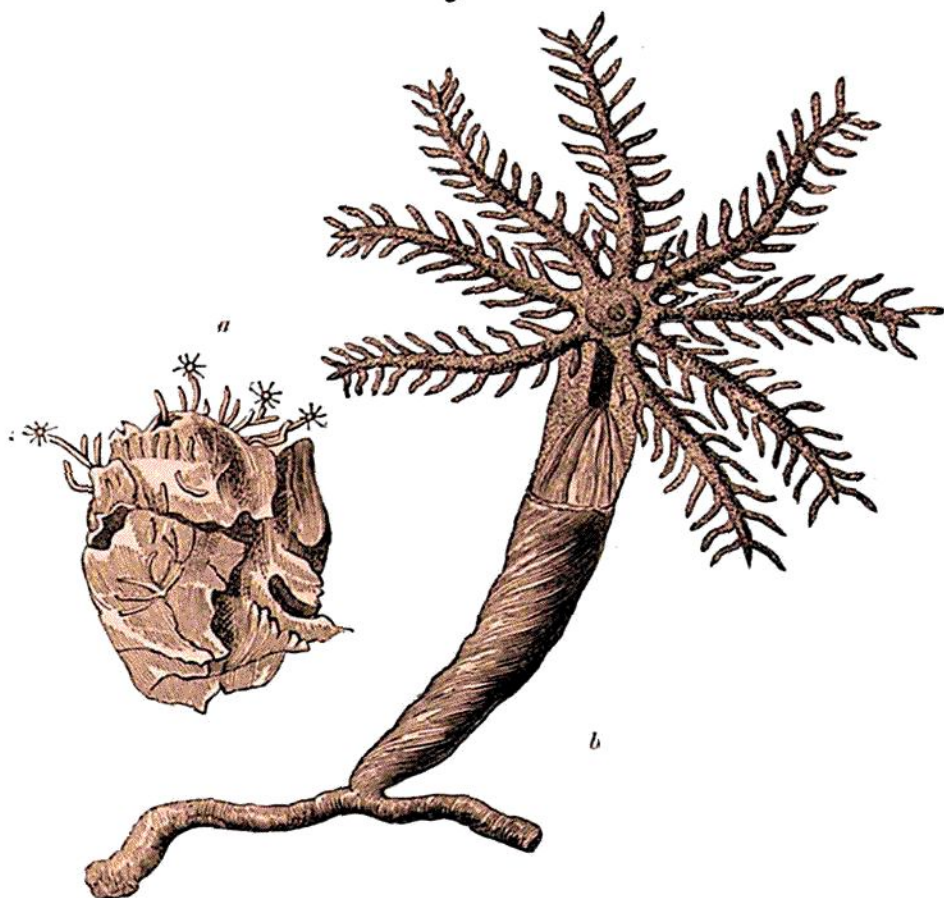


Fig. 27.



FAMILY VI. ALCYONIDÆ.

14. ALCYONIUM,* Linnæus.

CHARACTER.—*Polype-mass lobed or incrusting, spongioid, the*

* From *Alcyon*—the King's-fisher: the word itself signifies "sea-foam" of which the Halcyons were supposed to make their nests. See *Lib. Entert. Knowl.* "The Architecture of Birds;" p. 45, &c.

" And every thing dispos'd it to my rest,
" As on the seas when th' Halcyon builds her nest.
" When those rough waves, which late with fury rush'd,
" Slide smoothly on, and suddenly are hush'd:
" Nor Neptune lets his surges out so long,
" As nature is in bringing forth her young."

Drayton's Heroical Epistles.

To the reasons adduced by Milne-Edwards for retaining the name *Alcyonium* to this group, I would add that *Lobularia* is inadmissible, having been preoccupied by the botanists. The *Alcyonium* of Lamarck is composed of certain sponges, of which the true character remains unknown.