in any way, while it is true that the individuals of one and the same species are more or less polymorphous. The circumstance that naturalists may find it difficult to trace the natural limits of any one particular species, or the mistakes they may make in their attempts to distinguish them, has nothing whatsoever to do with the question of their origin.

There is another feature of the species of Acalephs, which deserves particularly to be noticed. All these animals are periodical in their appearance, and last for a short period in their perfect state of development. In our latitude, most Medusæ make their appearance as Ephyræ early in the spring, and rapidly enlarge to their full size. In September and October, they lay their eggs and disappear; while the young hatched from the eggs move about as Planulæ for a short time, and then become attached as Scyphostomes, and pass the winter in undergoing their Strobila metamorphosis. The Ctenophoræ appear also very early, and lay their eggs in the autumn, passing the winter as young, and growing to their full size towards the beginning of the summer. Among the Hydroids there is more diversity in their periodicity. Hydraria are found all the year round; but the Medusæ buds, the free Medusæ, and the Medusaria make their appearance in different seasons, in different species. Some bring forth Medusæ buds and free Medusæ or Medusaria during winter; others, and in our latitude this is the case with by far the largest number of the Hydroids, produce their Medusæ brood in the spring; while a few breed later, in the summer or in the autumn: so that, notwithstanding the regularity of their periodical return, Acalephs may be studied, in some condition or other, during the whole year.

SECTION VI.

NATURAL LIMITS OF THE CLASS OF ACALEPHS.

The principles upon which the natural limits of this class may be determined have already been discussed (Sect. I. p. 36). They are based upon our knowledge of the structure and embryonic growth of these animals. Upon both points our information is both satisfactory and sufficient. The anatomical researches of the writers quoted from p. 18 to p. 28, and the additional facts I have traced in the preparation of this monograph, cover the ground sufficiently to open a fair view, not only into the general structure of the whole class, but also into the correspondence of the structural features of the different groups of the class, as compared with one another. The same may be said of the embryology of these