

The classification of Lamarck, and the names he gave to the primary subdivisions of the Acalephs, truly express the condition of our science at that period. The natural limits of the class had not yet been found,—nay, the Acalephs were not yet separated from the Echinoderms, as a class, but Medusæ had been observed, a considerable number of them were superficially known, and, next to them, many animals had been noticed, bearing evidently some relation or other to the Medusæ; but what these relations were, was not understood; and so all these species were united into one group by the side of the regular Medusæ, under the name of Anomalous Radiates.

Péron and LeSueur next investigated these groups singly,—LeSueur devoting his attention chiefly to the compound ones, which he at this early period already separated from the compound Tunicata, while, together with Péron, he illustrated the Discophoræ generally.

Cuvier's merits consist mainly in the separation of the Acalephs as a class; but the limits he assigned to it were not altogether true to nature. Schweigger only copied Lamarck and Cuvier as far as classification is concerned.

To Goldfuss, science is indebted for the first discriminating subdivision of the Acalephs. For the first time the Ctenophoræ were brought together by him and separated from the Siphonophoræ, and these again divided into two families, while all Discophoræ remained together. Chamisso and Eysenhardt copied Goldfuss, while, still later, Latreille fell back upon the first outlines of Lamarck.

Eschscholtz, next to Cuvier, may be considered as the founder of the classification of Acalephs, for while Cuvier distinguished the class, Eschscholtz first divided it into three natural orders, one of which he very properly subdivided into two divisions, already pointing in the direction of future progress; for hereafter the Discophoræ cryptocarpæ will appear more clearly allied to the Siphonophoræ than they are to the Discophoræ phanerocarpæ. His subdivision of the orders into natural families was a still greater improvement. DeBlainville did not mark a progress in the study of this class: his suggestions were mere guesses, mostly far out of the right course. Oken simply copied Eschscholtz. Brandt added a few families among the Siphonophoræ, the number of which was still further increased, often without much discrimination or criticism, by Lesson. Forbes, and Lütken also, described some new families; but Forbes made an important addition to the classification of Eschscholtz, by pointing out further differences between the two divisions of the Discophoræ, which he called Steganophthalmata and Gymnophthalmata.

With Sars and Steenstrup a new epoch begins for the history of the Acalephs, though neither of them has attempted to classify these animals; but it is to their investigations that science is indebted for the first facts bearing upon the affinities of the Hydroids to the Discophoræ cryptocarpæ, or the Gymnophthalmata of