

CTENOPHORÆ.

CHAPTER FIRST.

CTENOPHORÆ IN GENERAL.

SECTION I.

STRUCTURAL FEATURES OF THE CTENOPHORÆ IN GENERAL.

I NEED not repeat here what I have stated in the first part of this volume respecting the affinities of the Ctenophoræ. They are unquestionably Radiates belonging to the class of Acalephs, in which they form a natural order. This being admitted, it remains now for me to present a sketch of their structural peculiarities, in conformity with their general and special homologies, and an outline of their mode of life founded upon a knowledge of their special structure.¹

¹ We are indebted to Gegenbaur for the latest and most comprehensive summary of what is now known about Ctenophoræ. It is therefore proper, that whatever critical remarks I may have to present upon the views entertained by other naturalists, respecting this group of animals, should be made with special reference to his paper, "Studien über Organisation und Systematik der Ctenophoren," in "Archiv für Naturgeschichte, 1856," 1 vol. p. 163. Gegenbaur, with Leuckart, considers them as constituting one harmonious primary group with the Medusæ, Hydroids, and Anthozoa, called Cœ-

lenterata by the latter. I have already presented my objections to the separation of the Cœlenterata and Echinodermata as two distinct primary divisions of the animal kingdom, upon the broad ground that these divisions do not differ in *the plan of their structure*, but simply in *the mode of execution of that plan* (pp. 64-72); and it only remains for me to show that the structure of all these animals is strictly homological, and to remind those naturalists who may feel inclined to regard the distinction between a plan of structure and its mode of execution as of secondary importance, or as an inno-