

according to the weather, and towards the end of the spring, if we can speak of a spring in this climate, the young Ephyræ are set free, and soon afterwards appear near the surface as small Aureliæ, which the approaching summer soon brings to their adult state.

SECTION VII.

NOMENCLATURE OF AURELIA.

The type of Discophoræ, to which the genus Aurelia belongs, constitutes a natural family, the species of which are very similar among themselves, and distributed in all the seas. Some of them have been described over and over again, in different stages of growth, and in different states of preservation, and erroneously considered as distinct species, and even as distinct genera. In consequence of these mistakes, the synonymy of these animals is very complicated, and the more difficult to decipher, as most descriptions of these Medusæ are very imperfect. Leaving out of consideration the genera Scyphostoma, Strobila, and Ephyra, which are now known to have been founded upon various stages of development of different species, belonging even to different genera, we find, in different authors, Medusæ of this family described under the generic names of Medusa, Aurelia, Claustra, Oeyrœ, Biblis, Macrostoma, Evagora, Orythia, Cyanea, Monocraspedon, and Diplocraspedon. Some of them have even been referred to the genus Rhizostoma. Notwithstanding the apparent diversity which might be supposed to exist among them, if we look only upon this array of names, I am unable to distinguish more than one genus among them all, unless the difference mentioned by Brandt, upon which he has distinguished the genus Diplocraspedon, really indicates a different genus. That Scyphostoma is only the earliest stage of the Hydra of different Discophoræ has already been shown, while the great similarity of the Scyphostoma of our Aurelia and that of our Cyanea is at once apparent, upon comparing the figures of Plates X. and X^a. Vol. III. The Strobila state of Aurelia and of Cyanea are equally similar, and we shall see presently that the Ephyræ of Pelagia resemble, to the same extent, those of Aurelia.

It is a great misfortune that Eschscholtz and DeBlainville published their works upon Acalephs at the same time, and still more, that when DeBlainville reprinted separately his article "Zoophytes," of the "Dictionnaire des Sciences Naturelles, Vol. 60," under the title of "Manuel d'Actinologie," he did not harmonize his nomenclature with that of Eschscholtz. The consequence was, that in France, the tradition of Péron and LeSueur was kept up through DeBlainville, and, afterwards,