

to the *Sternothærina* of Bell. As the name of that group is derived from the genus *Terrapene*, *Mer.*, which at that time was restricted by Gray to the common *Cistudo* of the United States, it applies as little to the family of *Cinosternoidæ* as that of Bell. Major LeConte, in his late attempt to classify the *Testudinata*,<sup>1</sup> has also perceived the impropriety of leaving the genera *Staurotypus* and *Cinosternum* among the true *Emydoidæ*, and placed them in his second family with *Chelydra*. Were not the *Trionychidæ* also embraced by him in that family, this change would have constituted, in my opinion, one of the most important improvements recently introduced in the classification of the *Testudinata*, for *Cinosternum* and *Staurotypus* are as remote from the true *Emydoidæ* as *Chelydra* itself, and more closely allied to *Chelydra* than to any other family among the *Amydæ*, though they constitute also a distinct family, the characters of which now follow.

The body is long and narrow. The flattened part of the lower surface upon which it rests is much larger than in the *Chelydroidæ*, occupying at least one half of the width across the middle, and continuing broad forward, between the shoulders, to its front end, and backward, under the pelvis and hip joints, to its hind end, so that the space between it and the projecting outer edge of the body above is much less in this family. The outer edge of the body is not nearly as high at the front end as in the *Chelydroidæ*, yet it descends steeply to about midway, but keeps upon nearly the same level around the hind end. The upper surface rises along its middle line, from the front end to the middle of the body and beyond, to near the seventh dorsal vertebra, from whence it falls steeply to the hind end; consequently the body is highest far back of a transverse section through the middle of the body; and as the hind end is as broad, or broader, than the front, the bulk of the body is also thrown backward. These peculiarities will always clearly distinguish the carapace of this family from the shed-roof of the *Chelydroidæ*, or the more regularly arched cuirass of the *Emydoidæ*. As the outer edge falls from the front end backward, while the middle line rises, the upper surface, in order to reach the margin, has to descend far down on either side, except about the front end, and, as the body is never wide, it must descend steeply. The outer edge of the carapace is raised, all round, considerably above the lower flattened surface of the body. It meets the plastron, and is sutured to it along the two marginal plates which correspond to the third and fourth ribs, and is there slightly turned inward and downward; but from this suture, either way about the ends of the body, it projects free, a little distance beyond the attached surface, and flares outward.

The free edges of the plastron, that is, the outer edges, where not joined to

<sup>1</sup> Proc. Acad. Nat. Sc. of Philadelphia, 1854.