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I. Wissenschaftliche Mittheilungen.

1. The Discovery of the true Nature of the so-called family Teichonidae.

By Arthur Dendy, D.Sc. F.L.S.

eingeg. 27. April 1892.

In a somewhat elaborate memoir entitled »On the Anatomy of *Grantia labyrinthica*, Carter, and the so-called family Teichonidae«, published in the Quarterly Journal of Microscopical Science for January 1891, I gave the first detailed account of the anatomy of Carter's *Teichonella* (*Grantia*) *labyrinthica*, and shewed (as indeed Mr. Carter had already stated) that the sponge in question was an undoubted Sycon. I examined also Carter's *Teichonella prolifera* and, after carefully sifting the evidence, arrived at the following conclusions concerning the supposed family Teichonidae: — »As a matter of fact the family ought to be abandoned altogether, and the three species which have been at various times placed in it distributed as follows:

Teichonella prolifera Leuconidae.

Eilhardia Schulzei Leuconidae.

Grantia labyrinthica Syconidae.

It would not have been necessary to deal with this question so carefully had not Poléjaeff's emended family Teichonidae met with such general and unquestioning acceptance. Thus Vosmaer adopts it in his most important work, and Lendenfeld gives it a place in his system and in the inevitable genealogical tree. Hæckel also accepts the family in his latest work on sponges.«

Mr. Carter's brief statement as to the true nature of *Grantia labyrinthica* was published so far back as 1886, but until the publication of my paper it attracted not the slightest notice; even had it done so, since *Teichonella prolifera* was the type of the supposed family, the Teichonidae would not necessarily have fallen with the discovery of the true nature of *Grantia labyrinthica*. As a matter of fact the family was maintained by writers on the Calcarea, including Poléjaff, Vosmaer, Lendenfeld and Hæckel, until the publication of my memoir on the subject; and, moreover, *Grantia labyrinthica* was not removed from the family. Even so late as 1890 Lendenfeld still retained the family in his »System der Spongien«, although he said that he inclined to Marshall's view that the Teichonidae are »Leuconiden vom reinsten Wasser«. With this view of Marshall's I was not previously acquainted, but, as will be seen by reference to my own memoir, it only expresses a portion of the truth. In a still more recent work, however, published in December 1891 and dated April of the same year, entitled »Die Spongien der Adria. I. Die Kalkschwämme«, Dr. von Lendenfeld observes »von diesen Familien sind die Syconidae (Hæckel) naturgemäß und beizubehalten; die Leuconidae in zwei Familien zu spalten für Formen mit kugeligen oder ovalen, und für Formen mit gestreckt sackförmigen Kammern, und endlich die Teichonidae aufzulösen, denn die letzteren sind nichts Anderes als Syconen und Leuconen mit becherförmig erweitertem Oscularrohr«. He also in the same work places *Eilhardia* amongst the Leucons, giving it as a Synonym for *Leucandra*.

Although the statement as to the nature of the oscular tube is quite incorrect as regards the type of the so-called family, still I ought, perhaps, to feel flattered that so eminent a spongologist has been so speedily converted to my views as to the relationships of the Teichonidae. I must confess, however, to a slight feeling of disappointment at not finding my work on the subject even so much as referred to by Dr. von Lendenfeld, although he gives a lengthy »Litteratur« at the commencement of his memoir. In fact, incredible as it may seem, the results of my investigations are, apparently, simply taken possession of without the slightest acknowledgment. The facts that up till 1890 Dr. von Lendenfeld was in the habit of accepting the family Teichonidae; that my paper shewing that this family must be abandoned appeared in January 1891, and that later on in the same year Dr. von Lendenfeld adopts my conclusions, speak for themselves.

Melbourne, March 1892.

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