

THE
VOYAGE OF H.M.S. CHALLENGER.

ZOOLOGY.

REPORT on the NUDIBRANCHIATA dredged by H.M.S. Challenger during the years 1873-1876. By Dr. RUDOLPH BERGH, Physician to the General Hospital of Copenhagen.

JUDGING from the number and variety of the species of Nudibranchiata that have been hitherto described from the shores of the tropical seas, it is probable that this part of the world will ultimately prove to be the headquarters of the group. Although up to the present the tropical Nudibranchiata have been but slightly examined in comparison with the northern species, nearly every exploring expedition that has visited the tropics has discovered new and interesting forms of these animals. The Families of the *Æolidiadæ* by far the greatest number of species inhabit the northern seas, and only a few species have been described by van Hasselt, Kelaart, Alder and Hancock, Collingwood, Semper, and others, as occurring in the tropical seas.¹ On the other hand, the large and important Family *Dorididæ* is more abundantly represented both generically and specifically in the tropics.

Since the main object of the Challenger Expedition was the investigation of the deep sea, the number of dredgings made in shallow water was comparatively few; accordingly, as might have been expected, the number of Nudibranchiata collected during the voyage

¹ Van Hasselt only discovered three species, Elliot four or five, Kelaart nine, and Semper four.

Collingwood (Observations on the distribution of some species of Nudibranchiate Mollusca in the China seas. *Ann. and Mag. Nat. Hist.*, ser. 4, vol. i., 1868, pp. 90-94) calls attention to the scarcity of Nudibranchiata on the shores of China, Formosa, Labuan, and Singapore, with respect both to the number of species and of individuals, and contrasts with this the comparative abundance of the group on the English shores. Among the Nudibranchiata collected by Collingwood there was not a single representative of the Family *Æolidiadæ*.