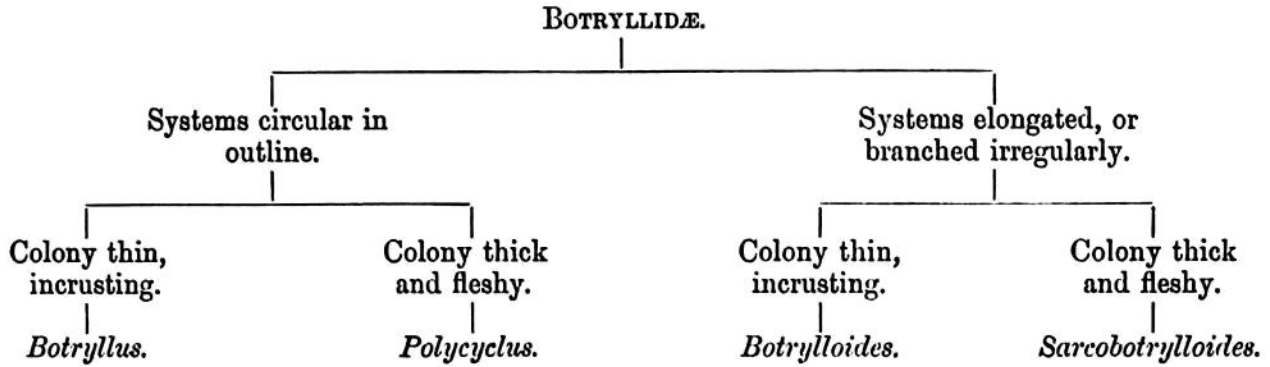
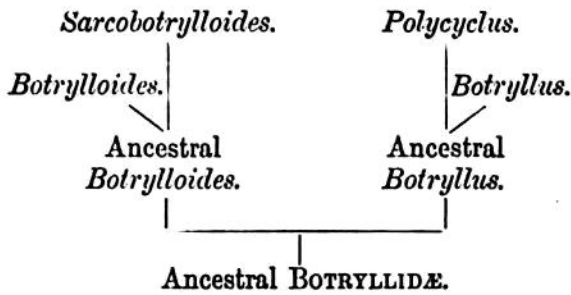


whole the Botryllidæ are feebly represented in the collections compared with most of the other groups and compared with the part they play in the British Ascidian fauna.

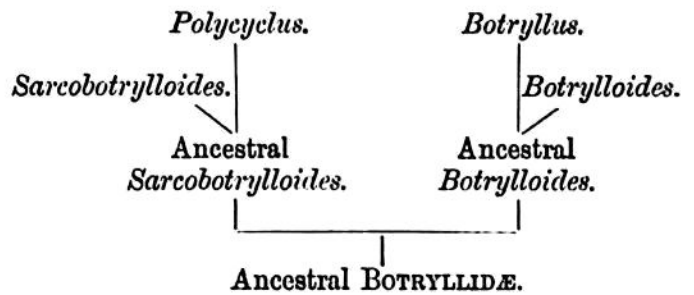
The four genera may be distinguished by the following characters :—



It is a difficult question to determine whether, in the ancestral history of the group, the modification of the systems or of the colony took place first, whether, in fact, Scheme A or Scheme B most nearly represents the phylogeny of the family.



Scheme A.



Scheme B.

It must also be left doubtful whether in Scheme A the thin (*Botryllus*) or the thick (*Polycyclus*) condition of the colony was the more primitive ; and whether, in Scheme B, the irregular (*Botrylloides*) or the regular (*Botryllus*) condition of the system was the more primitive. Probably both in the case of the colony and of the system the extreme forms which we see at the present day diverged from intermediate forms ; and the ancestral *Botryllus* of Scheme A formed a moderately thick colony, which might become reduced into a *Botryllus* or increased to form a *Polycyclus*, while the ancestral *Botrylloides* of Scheme B had an irregular arrangement of Ascidiozooids, which became modified on the one hand into regular circular systems as in *Botryllus*, and on the other hand into long branching lines as in *Botrylloides* (see Fig. 8, D and E, p. 39).