

called *Antedon* by de Fréminville, and *Alecto* by Leach; but Lamarck's authority as a zoologist, together with his description of six new species, was sufficient to make his genus more widely known than either de Fréminville's *Antedon* or Leach's *Alecto*. The very appropriate name *Comatula* was afterwards used by Miller, Goldfuss, de Blainville, Agassiz, and Müller; while d'Orbigny¹ gave it an increased importance by founding the family Comatulidæ. He referred to this family, however, not merely the various forms of Feather-star, both recent and fossil, in which the base of the calyx is closed below by the cirrus-bearing centro-dorsal piece, but also the remarkable genus *Marsupites*, which, in the adult condition at any rate, was totally devoid both of stem and of cirri. Further research has shown, however, that *Marsupites* represents a form of Crinoid which is altogether different from that of the Feather-stars; and it is now generally considered as the type of another family altogether, the Marsupitidæ.

The limits of d'Orbigny's family Comatulidæ have varied considerably at different times. *Eugeniocrinus* and its allies were referred to it by Dujardin and Hupé,² whose classification has not been adopted by their successors; whilst a variety of generic names have been proposed for the numerous fragments of fossil Comatulæ which occur in considerable abundance at certain horizons in the Jurassic and Cretaceous formations, viz., *Glenotremites*, *Solanocrinus*, *Decacnemos*, *Decameros*, *Comaster*, *Hertha*, and *Geocoma*. All of these, with one or two possible exceptions, find their place within de Fréminville's genus *Antedon*, as has been explained elsewhere.³ Some twenty-five years ago this name was revived by Mr. Norman⁴ in a more restricted sense than that in which it was proposed by de Fréminville; and this step has been generally followed, with the great advantage of simplifying the nomenclature considerably.

In Müller's earlier writings upon the subject of the Feather-stars, the names *Alecto* and *Comatula* seem to have been employed indifferently and as equivalent to one another; but he was subsequently led to distinguish two different types of Feather-star, one with five ambulacral grooves converging upon a generally central mouth, as in *Pentacrinus*, and the other with an excentric mouth and fewer than five disk-ambulacra. He therefore considered these as subgenera of Lamarck's original genus *Comatula*, and while distinguishing the first one by Leach's name *Alecto*, proposed to call the second type by the new designation *Actinometra*.⁵ Neither of these two subgenera were ever formally defined, and Müller only described three species of *Actinometra*. A fourth was

¹ Cours élémentaire de Paléontologie et de Géologie stratigraphique, Paris, 1852, vol. ii. fasc. 1, p. 138.

² Histoire Naturelle des Zoophytes, Échinodermes, Paris, 1862, p. 186.

³ See P. H. Carpenter, On the Genus *Actinometra*, Müller, with a Morphological Account of a new species (*Actinometra polymorpha*) from the Philippine Islands, *Trans. Linn. Soc. Lond. (Zool.)*, 1879, ser. 2, vol. ii. pp. 13, 14; and also On the Genus *Solanocrinus*, Goldfuss, and its relations to recent Comatulæ, *Journ. Linn. Soc. Lond. (Zool.)*, 1880, vol. xv. pp. 196-201.

⁴ On the Genera and Species of the British Echinodermata, pt. i., *Ann. and Mag. Nat. Hist.*, 1865, ser. 3, vol. xv. p. 98.

⁵ Ueber die Gattung *Comatula*, Lam., und ihre Arten, *Abhandl. d. k. Akad. d. Wiss. Berlin*, 1849, p. 246.