

EDITORIAL NOTE.

DURING the voyage of the Challenger, species of Siphonophoræ were continually under observation in the living condition, both on the surface of the ocean and in tanks on board the vessel; none of the naturalists, however, made any special study of this interesting and complicated group of animals; the specimens collected were merely preserved with as much care and skill as was possible in the circumstances.

Probably no class of marine organisms presents, in general, greater difficulties in the way of examination than the Siphonophoræ, and these difficulties are increased many fold when the naturalist has to deal with collections preserved in alcohol and other media, which contract and distort the specimens. Indeed it was essential that any naturalist who would undertake a successful examination and interpretation of these varied forms should himself have investigated these organisms during many years in the living state.

Professor Haeckel, through his long-continued and elaborate investigations of living Siphonophoræ and Medusæ in the Mediterranean, Indian, and Atlantic Oceans, was in a very special manner fitted to undertake such a task, and it must be regarded as fortunate that he should have been willing to undertake the work on condition that some of his own unpublished observations should be incorporated.

This important and masterly Report has thus become a Monograph of the whole class, more complete than any hitherto published; the classifi-