

Radiolarien (*Plagiacantha abietina*). Upon these two species the latter founded his family Plagiacanthida, a term which was afterwards employed by Bütschli and others, for the whole group of Plectoidea. Many new forms are contained in the collection of the Challenger, so that we may describe here nine genera and thirty-four species.

The family Plagonida may be divided into four different subfamilies, according to the numbers of the radial spines which compose the skeleton: Triplagida with three, Tetraplagida with four, Hexaplagida with six, and Polyplagida with numerous (seven to nine or more) radial spines. These are united commonly in one common central point, upon which rests the basal pole of the central capsule, with the porochora. More rarely (in the genera *Plagonidium*, *Plagiocarpa*, and *Plagonium*) the spines arise in two opposite groups (each with two or three spines) from the two poles of a common central rod; in this case the basal pole of the central capsule with the porochora rests upon the horizontal common rod, which corresponds probably to the basal part of the sagittal ring of the Stephoidea and Cyrtellaria.

The different forms which the skeleton of the Plagonida assumes in the different genera of this family, and the important relations which these exhibit on the one hand to the spicula of the Beloidea, and on the other hand to the shell of some Stephoidea (*Cortina*, *Cortiniscus*, &c.) and Cyrtoida (*Pteroscenium*, *Clathrocorys*, &c.), have been already pointed out in the preceding description of the suborder Plectoidea. There it is also demonstrated, that all these different forms may be derived from the simplest triradial forms, *Triplagia* and *Plagiacantha* (compare above, pp. 900–904).

Whilst the genera of the Plagonida are characterised by the number of the radial spines and the peculiar mode of junction in a common central point or at the two poles of a common central rod, the different species of this family may be defined by the peculiar form of the spines and their branches. These morphological characters have also been already described above. We repeat here only that the radial spines in the majority of species are three-sided prismatic and verticillate, each verticil commonly with three branches. The distal ends of these branches remain constantly free, and are never united, as is always the case in the following family.

*The Central Capsule* of the Plagonida exhibits the general characters of all MONOPYLEA (compare above, p. 890). It is commonly ovate or ellipsoidal, with vertical main axis; on the lower pole of the latter is the porochora (or the "area porosa," from which all pseudopodia radiate). This is in immediate connection with the central point or central rod of the skeleton, in which its radial spines are united. The topographical relation of the supporting skeleton to the central capsule seems to exhibit in the different genera of the Plagonida remarkable differences, as already demonstrated above (p. 905).