as a perfectly distinct order of Mammalia, only distantly connected with any other form, but having most affinities with the Ungulates and Proboscidians. As to their distribution, the two existing genera are confined to the shores of the tropical and subtropical seas—Manatus to the Atlantic, and Halicore to the Indian Ocean and parts of the Pacific—while Rhytina was till lately a native of the icy waters of Behring Straits.

Fam. I. MANATIDÆ.

1. MANATUS.


The genus Manatus may be at once distinguished from its nearest ally, Halicore, by its rounded tail-fin, and by the presence of rudimentary nails on its flippers, as well as by many important features of its internal organization. Thus, the whole shape of the skull is very different, there are no incisors in the permanent dentition, and only six cervical vertebrae are present, forming one of the few known exceptions to the usual number in the Mammalian class. The anatomy of the American Manatee has been studied by various eminent zoologists †, and may now be considered to be as well known as that of most tropical Mammals.

Several species of Manatee have been described from time to time; but further investigation has disposed of the claims of all save two—the Manatus australis (or americanus) of the western, and the M. senegalensis of the eastern coasts of the tropical Atlantic. Nor is the specific distinctness of these two forms at all clearly demonstrated; for most of the osteological differences pointed out by Cuvier and his followers were found to disappear when sufficient series of specimens were compared by Professors Schlegel;‡ and Brandt;§ and Drs. Krauss || and Gray.¶. The last-named writer fell back on a single character, which he himself acknowledged not to be absolutely constant, namely the state of the rudimentary nasals, which are usually sufficiently developed in M. australis to make a pit or hollow in the anterior edge of the frontals, whereas in M. senegalensis they are either absent or so small as not to leave any impression on the other bones. But the fine Cuban skeleton in the Museum of the

* Manatus of Storr appears to have included the "Manati" of Steller (Rhytina), and, by implication, the present genus, the Dugong being separated as Trichechus. Illiger was the first writer who characterized the genera of Sirenia in a scientific manner; and his names have been so generally adopted that much inconvenience would be caused by any change. The transference of the Linnaean name Trichechus from the Walrus to the Manatee has been recently proposed, but on what appears to me to be totally inadequate grounds.


§ Mém. Ac. Pétresb. 7me sér. xii. p. 241.
