

that these bodies hold an intermediate place; that they are, in fact, the true *Zoophytes*, or animal-plants. In some forms, as the green *Spongilla* of our lakes, the vegetable nature prevails; while in others, as the keratose (*horny*) sponges, filled with mucilaginous slime, and the fleshy *Tethya*, whose oscula, or pores, exhibit signs of irritability, the animal character predominates. We shall therefore consider the fossil Sponges as the mineralized remains of the lowest grades of animal organization.

Sponge consists of a living mass, covered with numerous pores of various sizes, connected internally by anastomosing channels, and coated with a gelatinous slimy film. The skeleton, or framework, in some kinds, is a fibrous, horny, flexible, or rigid tissue, which in many species is strengthened by calcareous or siliceous spicula (*spines*); while in others the entire substance is calcareous, or siliceous, constituting a web of transparent rock crystal, or flint, resembling spun glass.* The gelatinous matter lines all the cavities, and forms the margins of the openings. Currents of water constantly enter the pores, traverse the inosculating canals, and issue

* I particularly allude to a siliceous Sponge from Barbadoes named, by Mr. Stutchbury, of the Bristol Institution, *Dictyochalix pumicea*. This specimen is of a fungiform shape, and appears to the naked eye as if formed of pumice stone, but under the microscope is literally a tissue of transparent silex.