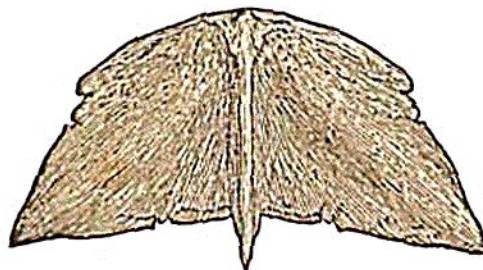


Fig. 36.



HYOID PLATE.

(One ninth nat. size, linear.)

as one of the most characteristic bones of the *Aserclepis*, belonged. In the *Osteolepis*, the space corresponding to that occupied by this hyoid plate was filled, as shown in fig. 14, by five plates of not inelegant form; and the divisions of the arch resembled those of a small Gothic window, in which the single central mullion parts into two branches atop. In the *Holoptychius* and *Glyptolepis* there were but two plates; for the central mullion, *i. e.* line of division, did not branch atop; and in the *Asterolepis*, where there was no line of division, the strong nail-like bone occupied the place of the central mullion. The hyoidal armature of the latter fish was strongest in the line in which the others were weakest. Each of the five hyoid plates of the *Osteolepis*, or of the two plates of the *Glyptolepis* or *Holoptychius*, had its own centre of ossification; and in the single plate of *Asterolepis*, the centre of ossification, as shown by the radiations of the fibre, was the *nail-head*. This head, placed in immediate contact with the strong boxes of bone which composed the under jaw, just where their central joining occurred, seems to have lent them a considerable degree of support, which at such a juncture may have been not unnecessary. In some of the nail-heads, belonging, it is probable, to a different species of *Asterolepis* from that in which the nail figured in page 7