

at incomplete animal, we cannot better explain their office, than by considering them analogous to the larvæ of the *Cercaria*, that is, as nurses.*

345. The development of the *Medusæ* is not less instructive. According to the observations of Sars, a Norwegian naturalist, the *Medusa* brings forth living young, which, after having burst the covering of the egg, swim about freely for some time in the body of the mother. When born, these animals have no resemblance whatever to the perfect *Medusa*. They are little cylindrical bodies, (Fig. 142, *a*,) much resembling infusoria, and, like them, covered with minute cilia, by means of which they swim with much activity.

346. After swimming about freely in the water for some days, the little animal fixes itself by one extremity, (Fig. 142, *e*.) At the opposite extremity a depression is gradu-

* There is a certain analogy between the larvæ of the plant-louse (*Aphis*) and the neuters or working ants and bees. This analogy has given rise to various speculations, and, among others, to the following theory, which is not without interest. The end and aim of all alternate generation, it is said, is to favor the development of the species in its progress towards the perfect state. Among the plant-lice, as among all the nurses, this end is accomplished by means of the body of the nurse. Now, a similar end is accomplished by the working ants and bees, only, instead of being performed as an organic function, it is turned into an outward activity, which makes them instinctively watch over the new generation, nurse and take care of it. It is no longer the body of the nurse, but its own instincts, which become the instrument of the development. This seems to receive confirmation from the fact that the working bees, like the plant-lice, are barren females. The attributes of their sex, in both, seem to consist only in their solicitude for the welfare of the new generation, of which they are the natural guardians, but not the parents. The task of bringing forth young is confided to other individuals, to the queen among the bees, and to the female of the last generation among the plant-lice. Thus the barrenness of the working bees, which seems an anomaly as long as we consider them complete animals, receives a very natural explanation so soon as we look upon them merely as nurses.