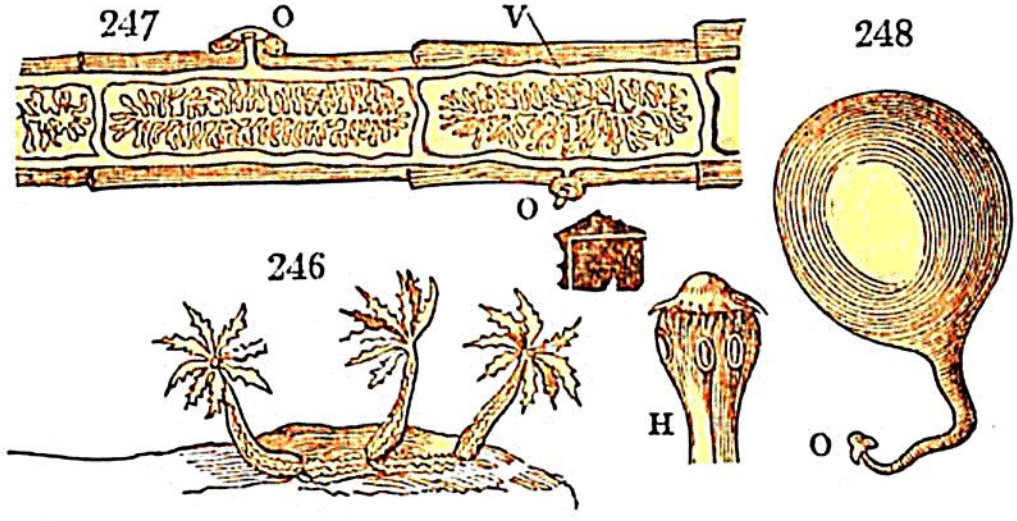
system, as the criterion of the individuality of that system, a view which would lead us to consider the entire polypus, or mass composed of numerous polypes, as a single individual animal; for there is no more inconsistency in supposing that an individual animal may possess any number of mouths, than that it may be provided with a multitude of distinct stomachs, as we shall presently find is actually exemplified in many of the lower animals.

Some of the *Entozoa*, or parasitic worms, exhibit a general diffusion, or circulation of nourishment through numerous channels of communication, into which certain absorbing



vessels convey it from a great number of external orifices, or mouths, as they may be called. This is the case with the *Tænia*, or tape worm, which is composed of a series of flat jointed portions, of which two contiguous segments are seen, highly magnified, in Fig. 247, exhibiting round the margin of each portion, a circle of vessels (v,) which communicate with those of the adjoining segments; each circle being provided with a tube (o,) having external openings for imbibing nourishment from the surrounding fluids. Although each segment is thus provided with a nutritive apparatus, complete within itself, and so far, therefore, independent of the rest, the individuality of the whole animal is sufficiently determined by its having a distinct head at one extremity, provided with instruments for its attachment to the surfaces it inhabits.