

width to admit of the entrance of prey of considerable size, as appears from the circumstance that fishes of some inches in length are occasionally found entire in the stomachs of those medusæ which have a single mouth. The central cavity, which is the stomach of the animal, does not appear to possess any proper coats, but to be simply scooped out of the soft structure of the body. Its form varies in different species; having generally, however, more or less of a star-like shape, composed of four curved rays, which might almost be considered as constituting four stomachs, joined at a common centre. Such, indeed, is the actual structure in the *Medusa aurita*, in which Gaede found the stomach to consist of four spherical sacs, completely separated by partitions. These arched cavities, or sacs, taper as they radiate towards the circumference, and are continued into a canal, from which a great number of other canals proceed; generally, at first, by successive bifurcations of the larger trunks, but afterwards branching off more irregularly, and again uniting by lateral communications so as to compose a complicated net-work of vessels. These ramifications at length unite to form an annular vessel, which encircles the margin of the disk. It appears, also, from the observations of Gaede, that a farther communication is established between this latter vessel, and others which permeate the slender filaments, or tentacula, that hang like a fringe all round the edge of the disk, and which, in the living animal, are in perpetual motion. It is supposed that the elongations and contractions of these filaments are effected by the injection or recession of the fluids contained in those vessels.\* Here, then, we see not only a more complex stomach, but also the commencement of a vascular system, taking its rise from that cavity, and calculated to distribute the nutritious juices to every part of the organization.

There are other species of Medusæ, composing the genus *Rhizostoma* of Cuvier, which, instead of having only

\* Journal de Physique, lxxxix. 146.