

vade every part of the frame, are named, from their being finer than hairs, *capillary vessels*.

After the blood, thus transmitted to the different parts of the body by the arteries, has supplied them with the nourishment they require, it is conveyed back to the heart by the veins, which, commencing from the extreme ramifications of the arteries, bend back again in a course directed towards the heart. The smaller branches join in succession to form larger and larger trunks, till they are at length all united into one or two main pipes, called the *Venæ cavæ*, (c,) which pour their accumulated torrent of blood into the general reservoir, the heart; entering first into the auricle (v,) and thence being carried forward into the ventricle (ε,) which again propels it through the Aorta. The veins are larger and more numerous than the arteries, and may be compared to rivers, which, collecting all the water that is not imbibed by the soil, and reconveying it into its general receptacle, the ocean, perform an analogous office in the economy of the earth.

The communications of the capillary arteries with the veins are beautifully seen, under the microscope, in the transparent membranes of frogs or fishes. The splendid spectacle, thus brought within the cognizance of our senses, of unceasing activity in the minutest filaments of the animal frame, and of the rapid transit of streams of fluid, bearing along with them minute particles, which appear to be pressing forwards, like the passengers in the streets of a crowded city, through multitudes of narrow and winding passages, can never fail, when first beheld, to fill the mind with astonishment;* a feeling which must be exalted to the highest admiration on reflecting that what we there behold is at all times going on

* Lewenhoeck, speaking of the delight he experienced on viewing the circulation of the blood in tadpoles, uses the following expressions: "This pleasure has oftentimes been so recreating to me, that I do not believe that all the pleasures of fountains, or water-works, either natural or made by art, could have pleased my sight so well, as the view of these creatures has given me."—Phil. Trans. xxii. 453.