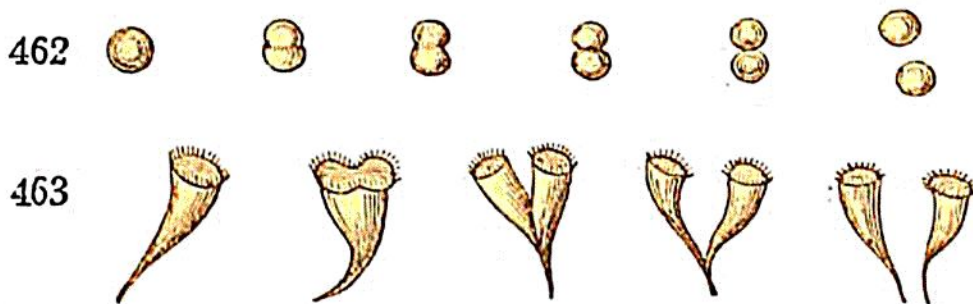


the fluid, as if animated by two different volitions; and, apparently for the purpose of tearing asunder the last connecting fibres, darting through the thickest of the crowd of surrounding animalcules; and the moment this slender ligament is broken, each is seen moving away from the other, and beginning its independent existence. This mode of separation is illustrated by Fig. 462, representing the successive changes of form during this progress. In this animalcule the division is transverse, but in others, for example in the



*Vorticella*, (as shown in Fig. 463,) and in most of the larger species, the line of separation is longitudinal. Each animalcule, thus formed by the subdivision of its predecessor, soon grows to the size which again determines a farther spontaneous subdivision into two other animalcules; these, in course of time, themselves undergo the same process, and so on, to an indefinite extent. The most singular circumstance attending this mode of multiplication is, that it is impossible to pronounce which of the new individuals thus formed out of a single one should be regarded as the parent, and which as the offspring, for they are both of equal size. Unless, therefore, we consider the separation of the parts of the parent animal to constitute the close of its individual existence, we must recognise an unbroken continuity in the vitality of the animal, thus transmitted in perpetuity from the original stem, throughout all succeeding generations. This, however, is one of those metaphysical subtleties for which the subject of reproduction affords abundant scope, but which it would be foreign to the object of this work to discuss.