

377. Analogous transformations take place in the *Ctenactis*.



Fig. 150.

ula. In early life (Fig. 150) it is fixed to the ground by a stem, but becomes detached at a certain epoch, and then floats freely in the sea, (Fig. 151.) On the other hand, the Polypi seem to follow a reverse course, many of them becoming fixed to the ground after having been previously free.

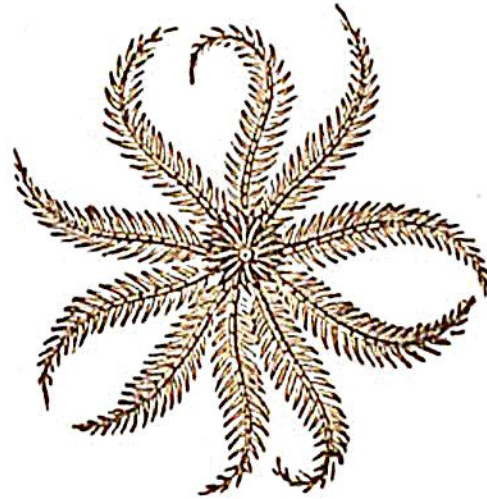


Fig. 151.

378. The metamorphoses of mollusks, though less striking, are not less worthy of notice. Thus, the oyster, with which we are familiar in its adhering shell, is free when young, like the clam (*Mya*) and most other shell-fishes. Others, which are at first attached or suspended to the gills of the mother, afterwards become free, as the *Unio*. Some naked Gasteropods, the *Acteon* or the *Eolis*, for example, are born with a shell, which they part with shortly after leaving the egg.

379. The study of metamorphoses is, therefore, of the utmost importance for understanding the real affinities of animals very different in appearance, as is readily shown by the following instances. The butterfly and the earth-worm seem, at the first glance, to have no relation whatever. They differ in their organization, no less than in their outward appearance. But, on comparing the caterpillar and the worm, these two animals closely resemble each other. The analogy, however, is only transient; it lasts only during the larva state of the caterpillar, and is effaced as it