

to the naturalist a spectacle of such singular curiosity and beauty as perhaps can meet its superior or rival in no other creature. I am unwilling to borrow, from the memoirs of the foreign authors, any additions to Sir J. G. Dalyell's short history, for I am aware of the confusion to which such a practice has occasionally led, but no harm can arise from the mention of some particulars which are evidently general. I may state then, that the tentacula are ciliated like those of other ascidians; the intestine has an oral and anal aperture, the latter with a medial position; and there is no trace of any organ like what, in some other families of the order, has been reckoned an ovary. The egg, according to M. Turpin, forms a small flattened sphere with a papillous surface slightly incrustated with calcareous matter. The centre is of a dark reddish-brown or vinous colour, the margin more transparent and yellowish, proving that the egg is vesicular,—the exterior circle marking out the thickness of the cocoon or shell, and the more opaque disk the part occupied with the embryotic fluid. About 16 rough spines radiate stiffly from the circumference: they are tubular, yellow, terminated with from two to four crotchets, and apparently vary in length, for they arise alternately from the edge and from the surface a little behind this.* The egg is filled with an albuminous granular fluid analogous to the vitellus or yolk, for in it the foetus is perfected after a period which probably depends, in a great measure, on the temperature of the season in which they are laid. The time of birth having arrived, the shell opens in two gaping halves, as an oyster opens its valves, to permit the escape of the young polypus, which enters on its existence complete in all respects, either a single individual, or with one or two others, less mature, pullulating from the sides.

One of the most interesting facts ascertained by M. Turpin is that the eggs before exclusion, and immediately after, are oval or lenticular, and *entirely free of the spines* which roughen them at a later stage. Hence an easy solution of a question touching the manner of escape from the mother, which, before this discovery, seemed incapable of being effected without a painful laceration from their bristling armature. This alteration in the structure of the egg is very remarkable, although not singular, for the eggs of several mites

* According to M. P. Gervais this is not the case,—the spines originate solely from the line of junction between the marginal band and the disc;—"du point de contact de cet anneau et du corps disciforme partaient sur l'une des faces les crochets dont j'ai parlé. Je reconnus depuis que l'autre face présentait aussi les appendices en crochets, mais qu'ils y étaient moins allongés."