

forms belong to this group. Especially I may mention here the stately sugar-tangle (*Laminaria*), whose slimy, olive green thallus-body, resembling gigantic leaves of from 10 to 15 feet in length, and from a half to one foot in breadth, are thrown up in great masses on the coasts of the North and Baltic seas.

To this class belongs also the bladder-wrack (*Fucus vesiculosus*) common in our seas, whose fork-shaped, deeply-cut leaves are kept floating on the water by numerous air bladders (as is the case, too, with many other brown Algæ). The freely floating Sargasso Alga (*Sargasso bacciferum*), which forms the meadows or forests of the Sargasso Sea, also belongs to this class.

Although each individual of these large alga-trees is composed of many millions of cells, yet at the beginning of its existence it consists, like all higher plants, of a single cell—a simple egg. This egg—for example, in the case of our common bladder-wrack—is a naked, uncovered cell, and as such is so like the naked egg-cells of lower marine animals—for example, those of the Medusæ—that they might easily be mistaken one for another (Fig. 19).

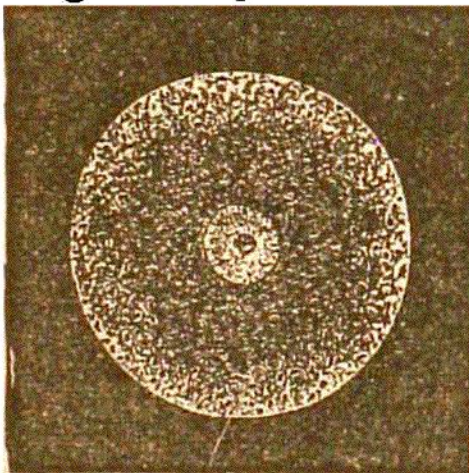


FIG. 19.—The egg of the common bladder-wrack (*Fucus vesiculosus*), a simple naked cell, much enlarged. In the centre of the naked globule of protoplasm the bright kernel is visible.

It was probably the Fucoideæ, or Brown Algæ, which during the primordial period, to a great extent, constituted the characteristic alga-forests of that immense space of time. Their petrified remains, especially those of