

The early stages of the *Ascidia* possess the beginnings of the *spinal marrow* and the *spinal column* (*chorda dorsalis*) lying beneath it, which are the two most essential and most characteristic organs of the vertebrate animal. Accordingly, of all invertebrate animals known to us, the *Tunicates* are without doubt the nearest blood relations of the *Vertebrates*, and must be considered as the nearest relations of those Worms out of which the vertebrate tribe has developed. (Compare Plates XII. and XIII.)

While thus different branches of the Coelomatous group of the Worms furnish us with several genealogical links leading to the four higher tribes of animals, and give us important phylogenetic indications of their origin, the lower group of *Acœlomi*, on the other hand, show close relationships to the *Zoophytes*, and to the *Primæval* animals. The great phylogenetic interest of the Worm tribe rests upon this peculiar intermediate position.