short time since also, among a number of pieces of amber (not copal), he found some containing insects, in which distinct spiders' webs could be seen (thus fossil spiders' webs!!); in some, the webs and also the insects hanging in them were evident.—*Leonhard and Bronn's Jahrbuch für Geologie.*

COUNTY OF DOWN FOSSIL INFUSORIA.

To the Editors of the Annals of Natural History.

Belfast, August 9, 1845.

GENTLEMEN,—As Dr. Mantell, in a communication published in the last Number of the 'Annals,' p. 86, briefly notices some *Fossil Infusoria* from the county of Down, without any allusion to their having been previously described, it is perhaps desirable for the information of persons interested in the subject to state, that a paper on the subject of these same Infusoria, accompanied by some figures, appeared in 1839 in Charlesworth's 'Magazine of Natural History,' vol. iii.

WM. THOMPSON.

CAPTURE OF ACIPENSER HUSO.

Cork, July 31, 1845.

A fine specimen of the Isinglass Sturgeon (*Acipenser Huso*), 8 feet 4 inches long, and weighing $1\frac{1}{2}$ cwt., was taken within a mile of this city on Tuesday July 1st.

I examined it carefully, and compared it with the plate of *A. Huso* in Shaw's 'Zoology,' with which it exactly agreed.

As this is, I believe, the first instance of that fish having been captured on the coast of this county, or, as far as I am aware, on any part of the coast of Ireland, I feel a pleasure in sending information on the subject to the 'Annals of Natural History.' The common sturgeon (*A. Sturio*) has been taken more than once in the river Lee, near Cork.

JOHN HUMPHREYS, *Librarian R. C. Institution.*

ON THE CYSTIDÆ. BY VON BUCH.

In a letter to Prof. Bronn, M. Buch states that his monograph of the *Cystidæ* is now printing. Troschel's drawings to it are very beautiful, and he hopes that the copper-plates will turn out well. A lucky incident has rendered this work more perfect than he had anticipated. The *Echino-encrinus* (a barbarous term, and one founded upon an entirely erroneous analogy!), described by Meyer and Schlotheim,—this extinct form has been collected and brought here in several pieces, by the industry of M. Krantz. Hence he had an opportunity of studying all its peculiarities, its affinity, the points in which it differs from other *Cystidæ*, and the laws of its development. He clearly saw that M. Vollborth in his first paper (Bullet. de Pétersb. 10. no. 19. pl. 1 and 2) had figured it well and accurately, with a commentary which did not seek for laws but curiosities! In Bullet. 1844, 3. 2 b, he imagines that this form possesses two rows

of arms, and consequently refers it to the *Crinoidea*. M. Vollborth saw these tentacula once only; no one else has seen them. They are placed on the lip of the mouth; the arms of the *Crinoidea* however are really never placed there; the apertures which our specimen exhibits on the lip, moreover, are so small, that they could only have allowed the passage of very small tentacles. And worse than all, what a huge ovarian aperture! No crinoid ever had such. M. Vollborth continually calls it the anus of the animal, not considering that in all such animals the anus is situated very near the mouth, never in the deeper-seated parts; in fact, in *Pentremites* it is in the mouth itself. But in *Sphæronites* and *Cryptocrinites* this is still more striking; in both, at the point of the five valves which close the ovarian aperture, there are five openings, just as in the minute ovarian plates of the *Cidarites* and other Echinodermata. Who will hereafter seek in them for cloacal excretions?

The *Cystideæ* are essentially distinguished from the *Crinoidea* by these ovarian apertures; this M. Von Buch states that he shall always maintain, and to have explained it is certainly of some service. —Leonhard and Bronn's *Jahrbuch für Geologie, &c.*

ON THE ORIGIN OF INFUSORIA AND MUCOR.

In the 'Ann. des Sci. Nat.' 1845, Zool. p. 182, Dr. M. F. Pineau describes the first origin of infusoria and of mould, which resemble one another so much on their first appearance, that it is impossible to determine what will become an infusorium, what a mould. We shall here merely communicate one of the cases relating to the manner in which *Penicillium glaucum* is formed; as in the other cases enumerated, the observer could not follow the originating mould to its perfect development, and was consequently unable to determine it.

An infusion of bread exhibited up to the sixth day at a temperature of 10° to 12° R. the appearance of a considerable production of *Bacterium Termo*, *Vibrio lineola* and *Monas lens*. Soon after this period acid fermentation commenced, when all these animals died, and the liquid became covered with a uniform granular pellicle. The surface of the piece of bread was also covered with granulations, and numerous particles, more or less in the granular state, were seen floating about in the water. On the following day traces of a separation in the form of a network with polyangular meshes 0.003 millimeters broad were noticed in the granular mass covering the surface. A similar formation of small globules also took place in the granular substance on the bread. After twelve hours these globules possessed well-defined outlines and began to assume an oval form. Small isolated patches consisting of considerably larger oval globules, difficult to separate from one another, likewise floated about. A few hours afterwards the liquid contained a number of micodermic globules which had evidently originated from the above patches; these globules now expanded into filaments and formed the *Penicillium glaucum*. In the same manner this *Penicillium* likewise formed on milk; but the author could not observe what Turpin has said re-

1845. "On the Cystideæ by von Buch." *The Annals and magazine of natural history; zoology, botany, and geology* 16(104), 213–214.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/037454809495935>.

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