

artery which divides into anterior and posterior branches, and supplies the whole body with blood. The blood enters the ventricle from below through a pair of auricles (partly communicating with each other) which receives it from the gills. The blood is colourless, and there are no regular veins, the arteries opening into irregular spaces amongst the organs.

Beneath the body cavity on each side is situated the kidney. This organ has the appearance of a membranous sack—difficult to see except when a perfectly fresh Oyster is examined under water, when one can distinguish it by the yellowish green colour of its contents. It is then seen that it sends out a number of branches radiating out over the surface of the liver. The kidney has two openings, one leads into the body-cavity, the other to the exterior underneath the adductor.

Radiating out over the surface of the liver and intermingling to a certain extent with the branches of the kidney are another series of tubes which, gradually uniting with one another, form a duct which opens by the same aperture as the kidney. These tubes are the organs of sex, and at the period of sexual maturity they assume a milky white colour owing to the colour of their contents. In the European Oysters the same tube produces in succession milt and spawn, and the animals are therefore hermaphrodite; but in the Oyster that inhabits the Canadian and American coasts, the sexes are separate, although it is almost impossible to detect them by the naked eye. There is no difference in colour, but there is a slight difference in the amount of branching of the reproductive tubes, and after some practice it becomes possible to be pretty certain about the sex of an individual even before the test of the microscope is applied.

There is another most important difference between the Canadian and the European Oysters. In the latter the milt alone is discharged into the sea; the eggs are retained within the folds of the gills of the parent and there fertilized. The young Oyster undergoes the first stages of its development there, and when cast forth