empty their contents, and following the stomach is a coiled intestine opening by an anus situated posteriorly above the gills. The so called liver really secretes the digestive juice; and the Oyster has an amazingly good digestion, for its rate of growth is astonishing. At the end of the first year of its life it is about an inch in length, at the close of the second year it has reached between two and three inches, whilst in five years it may attain a length of five to six inches.

The organs by means of which the Oyster creates the current which brings it its food are, as already mentioned, the gills and the palps. The first-named are familiary known as the "beard" of the Oyster, they each consist of a long axis fringed on each side with a number of filaments hanging down parallel to one another, and all thickly clothed with cilia. The ends of these filaments are turned up and fastened to the mantel-lobes in the case of the outer ones, and to the corresponding filaments of the other gill in the case of the inner ones. In most Lamellibranchiata the filaments of one row are welded together so as to form a coherent plate or lamelle, from which circumstance indeed the term "lamelle-brandicate" is derived, but in the Oyster the filaments of the same row cohere only by means of the entanglement of their cilia, so that a touch is all that is necessary to disengage them and hence the comparison of the gill to a frill of hairs or beard. The palps are two pairs of triangular folds situated one pair above and the other below the mouth; they are furrowed by a large number of parallel grooves lined with cilia. It used to be supposed that their purpose was to direct the current of water into the mouth, but it is now known that their chief purpose is to remove the surplus food that the Oyster cannot swallow. Even the appetite of the Oyster it would seem has its limits.

Situated in front of the adductor muscle is a cavity covered on each side with a thin membrane, which is generally torn in carelessly opening the Oyster. This cavity is the body-cavity or *pericardium* of the animal, and contains the heart. This organ consists of a single pear-shaped *ventricle* above, from which arises an