S. virgula are in immense abundance and very generally distributed (Fig. 26). Some of these species sometimes reach the coast of Britain, but an indraught of northern water which includes the British islands in a fork keeps out these oceanic things from our shores. If the British naturalist, to whom these things are usually unknown in a living state, will only push his towing-net work by a tug-steamer, or his own or a friend's yacht, forty or fifty miles from the west coast of Scotland or Ireland, he will get beyond the arctic water, and will wonder, as I did only lately, at the new animal world in the shape of Pteropoda, Heteropoda, Siphonophora, and, above all, Polycystina and Acanthometrina, in all their wonderful varieties of form and sculpture, which will suddenly burst upon him.

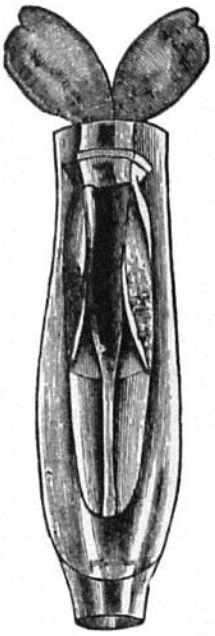

FIG. 26.—*Triptera columella.* Twice the natural size. (No. 4.)

The Pteropoda extend far to the northward; one, *Limacina helicina*, with a delicate but very elegant spiral shell, and another, *Clione borealis*, which belongs to the shell-less subdivision, are frequently seen by arctic voyagers in such numbers that they actually color the surface of the sea in patches of many square miles in extent, and they are said to form a considerable item in the food of the Greenland whale, which strains them out of the water as it passes through his mouth, with his whalebone sieve. I have dwelt on this little group because their history is not very familiar, and because I hope to show that, small as they are, they play by no means an unimportant part in some of the recent geological processes of reconstruction.

On the evening of the 17th of January, we passed Cape Trafalgar of glorious memory, and sighted the light of Tarifa; and when we went on deck at sunrise the next morning, we were close under the Rock of Gibraltar, the endless line of batteries and the sulky iron-clads of the Channel fleet, which happened