

series parallel with the furrow; spinelets on the outer part of the plate usually granuliform. Actinostome widely expanded; large fleshy lip. Enormous compound madreporiform body. Numerous pedicellariæ, subvalvuliform, on abactinal surface and actinal interradial areas.

"A very remarkable and abnormal Asterid, the morphological structure of which would appear to justify its inclusion in the family Pterasteridæ, notwithstanding its very different habit, was found at Station 323, in 1900 fathoms. *Pythonaster* (fig. 203) is characterised by very elongate, flexible, subcarinate rays, which are slender and tapering outwardly, but considerably swollen or inflated at the base; this inflation being further emphasized by a well-defined constriction which extends along the interradial line up to the dorsocentral aperture. This aperture is closed by five triangular fan-like valves, as in *Hymenaster* and its allies. The rays and corresponding radial areas of the disk are covered with small regularly placed fasciculi of short spinelets; each fasciculus is enclosed in a membranous sac, and the whole arranged in regular obliquely transverse lines on either side of the median dorsal line, which pass along the side of the ray up to the adambulacral plates. The armature of the adambulacral plates forms transverse series, the spines being united by membrane into fan-like structures comparable to those in *Pteraster*.

"*Brisinga* occurs both in the North and South Atlantic, and was dredged from a depth of 2400 fathoms at Station 89, where it was accompanied by the genera *Lonchotaster* and *Thoracaster*. The former is an Archasterid with some affinities to *Dytaster*. The rays however, are but slightly longer than the diameter of the disk, and are remarkably tapering, pointed, and subcylindrical, and, in the specimens preserved in spirit, are in every instance turned back over the abactinal area. The marginal plates are short and numerous, recalling those of *Leptopychaster*, excepting that the superior series are well developed. The adambulacral plates have a compact and powerful armature; pedicellariæ are large and numerous, especially on the actinal interradial areas; and the madreporiform body is immense. *Thoracaster* is an aberrant member of the Porcellanasteridæ, having a large pentagonal disk and



FIG. 203.—*Pythonaster murrayi*, Sladen. Abactinal aspect. Three fourths the natural size.