

berry-like bladders on special small side branches (see Fig. 243).

One cannot help being struck by the fact that the drifting Sargasso weeds are destitute of the ordinary organs of reproduction. This seems to be invariably the case with attached algæ that have been torn loose from their support. They continue to grow vegetatively, but are deprived of all power of forming new reproduction organs, until they can attach themselves afresh. The same holds good, too, with those strange



FIG. 243.—BRANCH OF *SARGASSUM BACCIFERUM*.  
(From Kerner.)

broken-off masses of algæ that one finds drifting about along the bottom in bays, the constant movement of the water-masses preventing them from attaching themselves to the soft mud or sand.

The Sargasso weed continues to grow as it drifts, but the gas-bladders are not formed in the same proportion as on the ordinary branches, the result being that one finds newly detached patches close up to the surface, whereas the older patches with a greater specific

weight have sunk lower down. These last have, moreover, thinner branches and a lighter olive-brown colour. Finally, the power of floating ceases altogether, and the patches sink into deep water and perish. Their disappearance is, however, quite imperceptible, since fresh patches of weed are constantly arriving from the coast.

It is quite usual to find smaller algæ fastened to the Sargasso weed, and there is, besides, a characteristic animal-life amidst its branches, but none of these organisms properly belong to the ocean, notwithstanding their being found there so invariably.