

appeared. In the specimen which I describe here, it is reduced to a short rudiment. Evidently it is of use only whilst the young fish leads a free and pelagic life, and disappears when the *Fierasfer* assumes the habits of a commensal.

There cannot be much doubt as to our specimen representing a more advanced stage of the young of *Fierasfer acus*, the resemblance of its head and of the proportions of its body to young *Fierasfer acus* from the Mediterranean being very great. However, it should be remembered that that species has hitherto not been found so far northwards as the British Channel, whilst another species of the genus, *Fierasfer dentatus*, is known, though from two specimens only, to occur on the Irish coast.¹ We possess two representations of the young of this species, a very rude one by Putnam,² and an excellent one by Emery,³ both of which agree in showing that the young of *Fierasfer dentatus* is a much more slender form than that of *Fierasfer acus*. The latter species therefore has to be added to the British fauna.

The specimen is 104 mm. long, the head measuring $5\frac{1}{2}$ mm., and the distance of the snout from the beginning of the anal fin 11 mm. Head and tail are much compressed, the latter terminating in an extremely fine filament into which the vertebral elements do not enter. The eye is of moderate size, rather shorter than the snout, which is obtuse, with the jaws equal in front. The maxillary extends beyond the centre of the eye and the few teeth which can be observed are minute. The abdomen projects much, the vent being behind and not in front of the projection. The dorsal fin commences very little in advance of the anal; of the long ray which is so remarkable a feature in very young specimens, only a short rudiment remains. The fin behind the ray is at first only a low ridge which becomes higher towards the middle of the length of the tail, and decreases in height again behind. In its entire course it is conspicuously lower than the anal fin, which, about the middle of its length, is nearly as high as the body above.

The specimen was obtained on August 9, 1882, in the Farøe Channel, close to the surface, during the cruise of H.M.S. "Triton."

Of the two figures on Plate IV. the upper represents the specimen of the natural size, the lower the anterior part of the body enlarged.

PLEURONECTIDÆ.

Eight young specimens were obtained in the Mid Atlantic swimming at the surface at night, on August 16, 1873, and on April 18, 1876. They are 1 inch long, perfectly symmetrical, and agree entirely with the "pelagic Plagusiæ" of the same size described and figured by Steenstrup. They do not throw further light on their origin, which is still obscure.

On April 11, 1876, when sailing off the coast of Sierra Leone in lat. $7^{\circ} 33' N.$, and

¹ Collett has described another specimen from Norway, *Christian. Vidensk. Forhandl.*, 1882, No. 19, c. tab.

² *Proc. Boston Soc. Nat. Hist.*, 1874, vol. xvi. p. 347 (*Encheliophis tenuis*).

³ *Atti R. Accad. d. Lincei*, 1879-80, vol. vii. tav. 1, a.