

of, it is sometimes sold by itself. Some persons consider it poor food, but its great use in the United States proves beyond question that it must be on the whole an exceedingly good food-mollusc.

This species has an interest for us also, from the fact that the purple part of its shell furnished the material for the purple wampum of the eastern Indians. White wampum, as has been mentioned (p. 12), was made chiefly from the columellæ or central columns of the two species of *Busycon* (also known as *Fulgur* and *Sycotypus*, and sometimes *Pyrula*). The purple was worth twice as much as the white, and both were made in the form of tube-shaped beads, perforated and polished; their value depended upon their polish and general perfection. It was a real currency among the Indians, true money, and, as one old writer says,—“their mammon.” It was the chief medium of trade between the whites and Indians along the southern New England coast. The former, however, took to manufacturing it themselves, and this naturally led to depreciation of value and many abuses. Laws were passed regulating its use in trade, and it continued to be manufactured until within about fifty years, for use in the west. A very full and interesting discussion of this whole subject may be found in the first of the works mentioned below.

Among the Canadian Indians it was very extensively used. Early explorers (including Cartier) refer to it, and Kalm, the Swedish botanist and traveller, saw it in the middle of the last century among the Hurons and below Quebec. Charlevoix, in his letters (London, 1763), refers to “Wampum from the Venus shell,” (p. 132) and gives a most interesting description of it. It was very highly valued by the Indians of Acadia, as Lescarbot tells us,\* but was used by them for ornament rather than for money. It was also used by the Acadian Indians as well as by those of the south and west, as a sort of record of events, treaties, etc. Gesner tells that the Mic-macs had wampum records, and Charles Leland, in his “Algonquin Legends,” mentions that the Passamaquoddys have wampum records at Pleasant Point, Maine, which

\* See introductory part of this paper, p. 13.