

is evidently common in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, from Bay Chaleur to Cape Breton. It seems strange, however, that it should be reported as being common all around the coast of Nova Scotia, when it is totally unknown upon the Bay of Fundy coast of New Brunswick. It is probably to be found wherever the Oyster lives, and being somewhat more hardy, occurs rather beyond those limits.

**HABITS.** This species is well-known to all oystermen and frequenters of fish-markets. It is a bivalve shell, having two very thick and heavy valves of a dingy white or ash color. Upon these are well



FIG. 17. — *Venus mercenaria*. Natural Size.

marked, very regular, concentric folds, which become quite sharp where not worn by friction. Inside they are chalky white, except at the smaller end, where they are usually of a beautiful purple. The margin is finely crenulated around three-fourths of its circumference. The shell is roughly heart-shaped in outline, about three and one-half inches long when full grown, and two and three-quarter inches high. These characters will distinguish it from any other form found upon our coast. The purple color is wanting in young shells, quite variable in amount in others, and is often covered by a thick white glazing in very old ones, while in certain cases it is wanting altogether.

Of its mode of life, Prof. Verrill says,—"Common on sandy shores, living chiefly on the sandy and muddy flats, just beyond low-water mark, but is often found on the portion laid bare at low water of spring