

often filled with the nests of blackbirds. I counted six blackbirds' nests in the portion of an osprey's nest within sight; there were three eggs in the hawk's nest, and most of the blackbirds' nests contained young birds just out of the egg. Some ospreys' nests that I took from a nest in a tree were prettily marked with dark purplish or wine-colored markings upon a cream-white ground. I noticed, however, that in four or five different nests upon the ground the eggs were all of a dirty-brown color, harmonizing so perfectly with the dry seaweed lining of the nest as to require a quick eye to detect the egg in the nest when the observer stands only a few feet away.

After making some sketches, collecting some eggs, and catching about sixty pounds of blackfish, our party bade farewell to the island, and were rowed out to a passing steamer, which slowed up and took us aboard. A few hours after we were back in the hot dusty streets of the great metropolis, with only our sun-burnt faces to remind us of the island-home of the American Osprey.

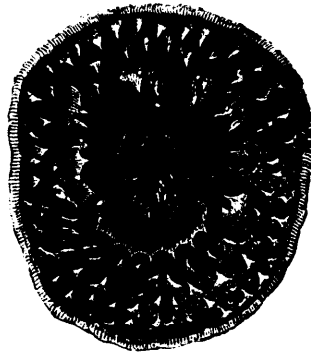
#### THE SEA LAMPREY.

The lampreys form a small group of hardly more than a dozen varieties, and are the most imperfectly developed, and occupy the lowest grade of all fishes, with the exception of the Lancelet. Their skeleton consists entirely of cartilaginous material. They are destitute of ribs, shoulder girdle, real jaws, and scales, and are possessed of only one nostril, and their gills have the form of fixed sacs. In their habit of feeding and attaching themselves to the bodies of other fish, from which they rasp off the flesh and suck the juices, they become very suggestive of the leech.

The body of the sea lamprey is olive-green, mottled with dark brown. Length from two to three feet; numerous rows of mucous ducts on the head and body. The mouth, when not attached to any object, forms a longitudinal fissure; when attached it is circular in form. The teeth are of various kinds, generally disposed in concentric circles. In the throat and partially closing it, is a group of three large teeth. (See illustration.) Lips fleshy, with a distinct and slightly fimbriated membrane, and beneath a deep triangular fossa, having a fold on each side.

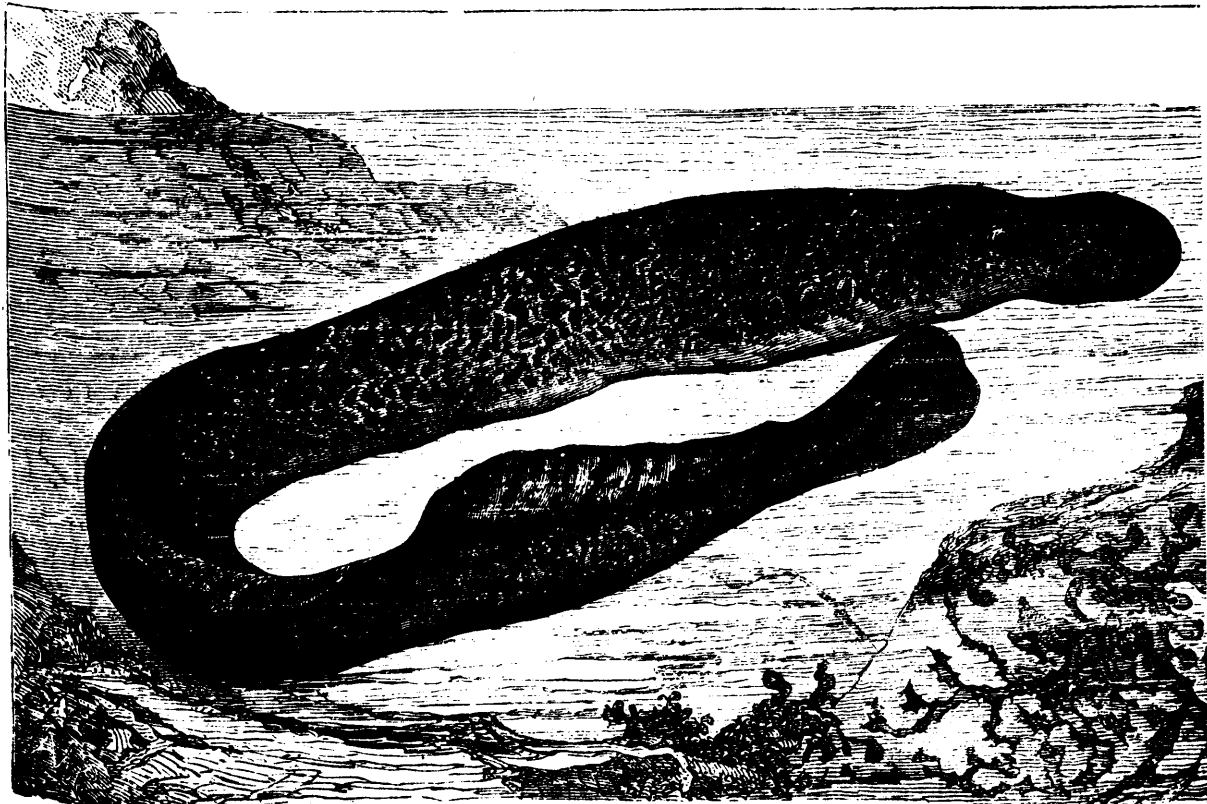
Lampreys are frequently found attached to sturgeon from which they suck the slime and mucus exuded in abundance through the pores of the sturgeon. All the skate family provide favorite food for the lampreys, in whose bodies they rasp out deep wounds which often produce ulcerations. The young pass through several changes before becoming perfect lampreys. At first the young are destitute of teeth and have only rudimentary eyes.

With the Italians and French the lamprey is considered a great delicacy, whereas in England only the poorer classes eat it. In this country it is valued only by a few epicures, and is rarely seen on the fish stands. Sothorn, the actor, considered it a great luxury, and was known to pay very high prices to obtain it, being of the opinion that it contained more brain food than any other fish.



MOUTH AND TEETH OF SEA LAMPREY.

It is related of the Roman emperors that, so great was their valuation of the lamprey, both as a luxury and stimulating food, artificial ponds were constructed in which to fatten the lampreys, the principal food used being well fattened living slaves, on whose bodies the eels would fasten and feed, affording an enjoyable pastime to the noble Roman.



SEA LAMPREY.