

eaten, however, at all seasons, but during the winter months only. At other times (April to October) they are reputed to be poisonous, and more than once have proved fatal to those eating them. The Indians attribute this to a worm which they say during the summer season inhabits the cavity of the shell. The Tshimsians and other northern tribes also abstain from shell-fish during the summer for the same reason, while those of the southern part of Vancouver Island appear to eat them at all seasons.

Chitons, both the large red species (*Cryptochiton Stelleri*) which sometimes attains a length of eight inches, and the smaller black variety (*Katherina tunicata*), very common everywhere near low-water mark, are favourite articles of diet.

Sea eggs.

Sea-urchins, the large purple-spined (*Loxechinus purpuratus*) and the smaller green species (*Euryechinus chlorocentrotus*), are often brought ashore in large quantities, and it is surprising to observe how many of these rather watery creatures an Indian—squatting perhaps on his haunches on the beach—will devour in making a light lunch. A gentle knock on a stone serves to open the shell, when the finger run round the smooth interior brings out the edible parts, consisting chiefly of the more or less mature ova.

A large brown tuberculated holothurian is also eaten, though some of the younger people now profess to eschew these rather unpleasant looking animals.

Oolachen grease.

Oolachen grease, called *tow* is an important and much relished constituent of many of the Haida dishes. The oolachen or candle-fish, (*Thaleichthys pacificus*) from which it is derived, does not occur in the waters surrounding the Queen Charlotte Islands. It is found in some of the inlets on the west coast of Vancouver Island, but is especially abundant at the spawning season, in early spring, in the estuaries of the larger rivers of the mainland, and of these pre-eminently in the Fraser and the Nasse. Like its eastern representative and zoologically, the capelin, it swarms in the shallow water along shore, and is easily caught in immense numbers. For the extraction of the oil the fish is generally allowed to partially putrefy, and is then boiled in a mass in wooden boxes, with hot stones. The oil or grease is semi-solid when cold, with a foetid and rancid smell and taste. From the Nasse fisheries the oil is obtained by barter by the inland tribes of the northern part of British Columbia and by the Haidas. For a box containing somewhat over one hundred pounds of this grease from six to ten 'blankets,' or say from \$12 to \$20, is paid.

With dried fish, dried or fresh berries, and in fact with food of any description, no condiment is so grateful to the Haida palate as this oolachen grease; and in the absence of farinaceous substances, it doubt-