

A VISIT TO DUCK ISLAND.

The glorious sun of a September afternoon shone warmly on a group of club members who recently visited Duck Island, the metropolis in the vicinity of Ottawa of the elusive unionidae, vulgarly called clams. The weather was delightful. The water was very low and unruffled and collecting was consequently easy and rapid. The many sand bars which project from the centre of the island towards Templeton wharf yielded the first fruits in fine specimens of *Unio occidentalis* and *Unio borealis*. A little lower *U. complanatus* was found in abundance. Few however of the specimens were of the very large, rayed form, for which the locality is particularly noted. But certain of the shells procured quite equalled the first found in 1881, which for a quarter of a century have increased in loveliness, and form the chief glories of the writer's cabinet. The heavy, inflated, unrayed form of *complanatus*, not occurring elsewhere than at the island, was very numerous, and some fine shells were selected from the thousands whose circular tracks furrowed the sand in every direction, always however with an ultimate trend to deep water. *U. ellipsis*, of small size was common, but there were few mature shells. This species is known in the Western States as "the nigger toe-nail", and is much used in the pearl button industry. Another shell of economic use, which occurred sparsely, is *U. rectus*, called by pearlers the "black sand-shell."

U. gibbosus was not uncommon, but not one afforded a mate for the fine pearl found six years ago in a shell of this species collected at the foot of the island. Several large *U. gracilis* were noticed, and a few shells of medium size saved. Of our only other winged shell, *U. alatus*, a single fine specimen was obtained. *U. alatus* and *U. rectus* are remarkable among North American unios for their extensive range—Quebec to Manitoba, and southward far into the Mississippi Valley—and for their constancy of form, under the widely differing conditions of their environments. A few specimens of *Anodonta undulata* were found, and a single fine *A. Benedictii*—the third living shell noted in more than twenty years. The others were found at the mouth of Brigham's Creek. Of the Margaritanes but one was noticed—*M. undulata*.