

hibit. This is the more to be regretted as the specimen was about five feet in length, and much larger than any known to have been before taken in the Dominion. Old fishermen near Point Edward on the Lambton county shore vaguely refer to other specimens of *Polyodon* occurring in Lake Huron; but on the other side of the watershed which bounds the southern margin of our western great lake system, that is, in the basin of the Mississippi River, and in the lakes of the central plateau of the United States, the Paddle-nosed Sturgeon is said to be common. Curiously enough it inhabits the Yang-tse-Kiang and certain Chinese waters; but elsewhere this remarkable fish is unknown. What is the meaning of this sparse distribution in such widely separated localities? Again, why is it so rare in our own lakes, and common in the great river basin to the south? The naturalist's answer is obvious. It is a fish that was once probably widespread in both the old and new worlds. It is indeed a Ganoid, a group of fishes which preceded our existing kinds, and formerly predominated on our planet. Their fossilized remains are familiar to the geologist in the Palæozoic strata. In the ancient world, especially in the Devonian Age, the Ganoid fishes abounded. At the present time the existing species are few, not more than twenty or thirty in all, as compared with 12,000 species of living Teleosteans. Their distribution is erratic and very local. Excepting the common Sturgeons (the family Acipenseridae) the surviving species of Ganoids are amongst the rarest of fishes, and *Polyodon* amongst t' em, is the rarest of all, and in Canada apparently almost extinct. One would expect to find in the case of any tribe of animals which are dying out, that they would survive here and there in isolated areas, and in some such localities would become more and more scarce. These features in the occurrence of an animal are the surest signs of its approaching extinction, and such signs appear in the most marked manner in the case of *Polyodon*. The exceeding rarity of specimens in our waters has called forth the suggestion that those, which are at long intervals captured in our great lakes, are not survivors or descendants of Spatularoids indigenous to Canada; but wanderers that still find means of migrating across the watershed of the Mississippi. It is more probable, however, that a few pairs still