

the northern border of California far upward to the north, the shells of the *Dentalium* represented, until within the latest time, the wampum of the Atlantic region, being used, like the latter, both as ornament and money. These shells, which abound in certain places of the Pacific coast, may be likened to small, tapering, and somewhat curved tubes. Being open at both ends, they can be strung without further preparation. As my essay relates only to that portion of North America which lies east of the Rocky Mountains, I probably would not have mentioned the use of *Dentalium*-shells, were it not for the fact that they have been found in the interior of the country, far from the Pacific coast, as personal ornament of existing tribes, and even in the ancient mounds of Ohio.* The latter fact, indeed, is of great interest in its bearing on the extent of former aboriginal trade-relations, the distance from the Pacific to the State of Ohio being almost equal to the whole breadth of the North American continent.†

PEARLS.

Perforated pearls, destined to serve as beads, often form a part of the contents of ancient North American mounds. Squier and Davis found them on the hearths of five distinct groups of mounds in Ohio, and sometimes in such abundance that they could be gathered by the hundred. Most of them had greatly suffered by the action of fire, being in many cases so calcined that they crumbled when handled; yet, several hundred were found sufficiently well preserved to permit of their being strung. The pearls in question are generally of irregular form, mostly pear-shaped, though perfectly round ones are also among them. The smaller specimens measure about one-fourth of an inch in diameter, but the largest has a diameter of no less than three-fourths of an inch.‡ According to Squier and Davis, pearl-bearing shells occur in the rivers of the region whose antiquities they describe, but not in such abundance that they could have furnished the amount discovered in the tumuli; and the pearls of these fluviatile shells, moreover, are said to be far inferior in size to those recovered from the altars. The latter, they think, were derived from the Atlantic coast and from that of the Mexican Gulf. It is a fact that the Indians, who inhabited the present Southern States of the Union, made an extensive use of pearls for ornamental purposes. This is attested by the earliest accounts, and more especially by the chroniclers of De Soto's expedition (the anonymous Portuguese gentleman and Garcilasso de la Vega), who speak of almost fabulous quantities of pearls, which that daring leader and his followers

* Stevens, *Flint Chips*, p. 468.

† Since writing the above, I learned, by consulting Woodward's work on conchology, that the *Dentalium* is also found in the West Indies. If it should likewise occur on the southern coasts of the United States, there is at least a possibility that the specimens found in Ohio may have been obtained from the last-named region.

‡ *Ancient Monuments*, p. 232