

## A VALUABLE EDIBLE MOLLUSK OF THE WEST COAST.

By JOHN A. RYDER.

The following extract from a list of shells sent with some specimens to Mr. George W. Tryon, jr., the Conservator of the Conchological Section of the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia, by Mr. Henry Hemphill, appears to me to be of importance as a contribution to economical science, and with Mr. Tryon's permission I am allowed to make use of it for publication.

"*Glycimeris generosa*. Olympia, Washington Territory.

"I send you a fine large specimen of this species. Its flesh is, I think, the most delicious of any bivalve I have ever eaten, not excepting the best oysters.

"When first dug and laid upon its back, it resembles a fat plump duck. The edges of the shell do not meet, but are separated by a breast of flesh [the greatly thickened mantle] about three inches wide, one inch thick, and about a foot long, including about half of its siphon. This portion is cut into thin slices, rolled in meal, and fried. It is exceedingly tender, juicy and sweet, and about the consistency of scrambled eggs, which it resembles very much in taste. The boys at Olympia call them "Geoducks"; they dig them on a certain sand bar at extreme low tide, and sell them to a merchant who ships them to Portland, Oreg., where they readily sell at fair prices. The boys inform me that the Indians on the Sound call them Quenux, and dry them for food with the other clams."

To give the reader some idea of the animal, let him suppose that he has before him a huge soft-shelled clam, with a very thick mantle, and a very stout siphon projecting from between the valves. From the habit of the animal it is clear that its propagation is effected in very much the same way as our own clam, and that the fry burrows into the sand and keeps the open end of the siphon projecting just above the surface.

The same methods of propagation would apply to both species. Artificial impregnation, which has been accomplished by the writer in the case of the clam, could no doubt be effected in this case. Then, with the proper incubator or hatching-box, provided with a bibulous membrane interposed before the outlet, the water could flow through and out, without losing the eggs; shallow pans of sand could also be provided at the bottom of the box for the young to bury themselves in, just as has already been proposed in the case of the clam. This is a subject which merits the attention of all interested in keeping up the productiveness and richness of our American shell fisheries.