

position, namely, the lowermost sands and clays of the London basin. Wherever the strata around London are perforated to a sufficient depth, this oyster-bed is reached. Very recently an Artesian well was bored at Hanwell, in Middlesex, and at the depth of two hundred and eighty feet this stratum of sand with oyster-shells, was found. At Headley, near Reigate, in Surrey, there is a similar deposit. These oysters very closely resemble the edible species.

The white Chalk contains several species of *Ostrea*, but I believe no beds of these shells have been found ; on the contrary, the shells are diffused promiscuously through the strata. I have collected a few groups of from thirty to forty shells, evidently the young or fry of the species (*O. semiplana*) figured *Lign.* 85. This specimen is an interesting example of the petrifactive process which the mollusca have occasionally undergone ; the soft parts of the oyster are transmuted into flint, and the shell is changed into carbonate of lime, having a crystalline structure. Both valves were perfect when discovered, but I chiselled off the greater part of one shell to expose the silicified body of the animal.

A small oyster, called *Ostrea vesicularis*, is a characteristic shell of the chalk ; one valve is convex, the other flat ; it is abundant in the Chalk of Norfolk, and also in the Firestone of some localities : it is figured *Ly.* I. p. 389. Another small species, having the margin plicated (*O. plicata*), is also fre-