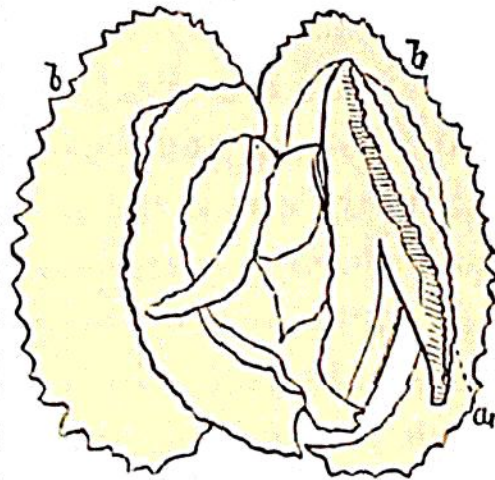


the water, and dive. D'Argenville relates, that when they are on shore, they regain the water by opening the valves of their shells as wide as they can and then shutting them briskly, by which they acquire sufficient elasticity to rise three or four inches, and thus proceed till they accomplish their object. Most probably the foot assists in producing these leaps. Their progression in the water is described as very different; when they rise to the surface—but the means by which they do this has not been clearly explained—they support themselves half under water. They next open their shells, to which they communicate such a vibration, that they acquire a very brisk movement from right to left, which enables them, as it were, to run upon the water.

The tulip-shell,* when it walks, if I may so speak, opens and shuts its valves, and at the same time lengthens and shortens its foot, which seems to indicate a connection, or action, between the former and the latter organs similar to what has been observed to take place in insects, and perhaps points out some analogy between the valves of the shell and the upper wings, or elytra of insects, and the mantle and their under wings.

Bosc states that the animals of the genus *Venus*, in calm weather, may be seen sailing on the surface of the waters, using one of their valves as a boat and the other as a sail. As these are usually rather heavy shells, they must be furnished with some means of rendering themselves lighter than the water. Pliny, of old, mentions shells dedi-

Fig. 38.



Trigonia margaritacea.
a. Foot. b. b. Valves.

* *Tellina*.