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Projectile power of the capsules of *Hamamelis* *virginica*

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coarse lines of growth, and about six or eight nodulous revolving ridges, more or less strongly elevated in different specimens, the three middle ones being the most prominent, and faint revolving lines being also traceable occasionally between the ridges; aperture very oblique, smooth, white or purplish within; outer lip sharp; columella broad, straight, generally with a chink behind it; anterior margin a little produced. Long. .41 in., lat. .53 in., of an average specimen. Animal and operculum precisely as in *L. sitkana*, which was abundant on the same rocks.

Hab. Living at Gull rocks, Akutan Pass, Aleutian Islands, abundantly (*W. H. Dall*).

This is a very remarkable and distinct species, resembling no other on the west American coast.

NOTES.—*Buccinum Kennicottii*, Dall, proves, on obtaining specimens containing the soft parts and the operculum, to be a *Chrysodomus*. It was originally described as a *Buccinum*, in deference to the opinion of the late Dr. William Stimpson, who had recently monographed the northern species of that group. Its distribution is from the Shumagins eastward, not, as was originally reported, from Unalashka.

Buccinum Baeri, Midd., proves to be a very marked race of *B. cyaneum*. *B. Fischerianum*, Dall, which was suspected at the time it was described to be similarly related to *B. cyaneum*, proves to be distinct.

Haliotis, which has long been tabulated as an inhabitant of the Aleutian chain, does not exist in that part of the archipelago east of Unalashka, and probably not in these islands at all.—*Proceedings of the California Academy of Sciences*, Oct. 8, 1872.

Projectile Power of the Capsules of Hamamelis virginica.

By Mr. T. MEEHAN.

The Author said that while travelling through a wood recently he was struck in the face by some seeds of *Hamamelis virginica*, the common Witch-Hazel, with as much force as if these were spent shot from a gun. Not aware before that these capsules possessed any projecting-power, he gathered a quantity in order to ascertain the cause of the projecting force, and the measure of its power. Laying the capsules on the floor, he found the seeds were thrown generally four or six feet, and in one instance as much as twelve feet away. The cause of this immense projecting-power he found to be simply the contraction of the horny albumen which surrounded the seed. The seeds were oval, and in a smooth bony envelope; and when the albumen had burst and expanded enough to get just beyond the middle (where the seed narrowed again), the contraction of the albumen caused the seed to slip out with force, just as we should squeeze out a smooth tapering stone between the finger and thumb.—*Proc. Acad. Nat. Sci. Phil.* part iii. p. 235 (1872).