"Laud turta" is the appellation by which this chelonian is usually known. Its correct herpetological name is cistudo clausa (Gmelin). Dr. Holbrook describes it under the name of cistudo cristata—Edward.—"North American Herpetology," vol. 1., page 29, and Professor Agassiz, the cistudo clausa, of Grew.—"North American Testudines," 1877, vol. 1., page 480.

Few reptiles vary in color so greatly. I have known individuals of this species which were of a uniform blackish-brown color, entirely spotted; others bright yellow, with black blotches and rays; others black, with yellow spots; and still others, reddish yellow, with brown and black rays, laces, and dashes. It is impossible to find two individuals of this species exactly similar in coloration.

The box tortoise is polyphagous. I have known it to eat berries of many kinds, apples, melons, tomatoes, earth worms, and carrion; and, in captivity, green corn, and meat, both raw and cooked. I believe it might subsist entirely upon "buns and water crackers." I emphasize the "it," for this reason: A tender-haired lady, a member of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, having observed the herpetologist's four Philadelphia Zoological Gardens were fed with living pigeons and rabbits, and suggested "buns and water crackers" be substituted, and thus avoid cruelty to animals. I suppose the old lady thought the very sight of the food named by her would cause the buns to smack their hatches in wild delight, and to cause them to exclaim in the ophidian tongue, "Oh buns! yum—yum—yum!"

The female box tortoise, when young, lays one or two eggs; when older, six or more. The eggs are nearly globular in form, and are of a dirty or yellowish white color. The two London specimens are of about the size of half an egg. They are carefully covered in the immediate vicinity. The testudo is concave, while in the female it is flat. The specimen from which my sketch was made, is an old male, weighing a small fraction less than one pound. The little crustacean in the foreground is common in the ocean about the sandy beach of Atlantic City, N. J.

In the female the shell (plastron) is concave, while in the female it is flat. The specimen from which my sketch was made, is an old male, weighing a small fraction less than one pound. The little crustacean in the foreground is common in the ocean about the sandy beach of Atlantic City, N. J.

Compounds of Silicon with the Platinum Metals.

When platinum is fused in a clay crucible lined with charcoal, it becomes crystalline on cooling and may be readily powdered. Boussingault has shown that when platinum is fused with charcoal that contains siliceous or sand, in a clay crucible lined with charcoal, it takes up 3.2 to 5.9 per cent of silicon. Under the same circumstances the other metals of the platinum group take silicon as follows: Iridium, 3.7 to 7.0 per cent; palladium, 1.4 per cent; ruthenium, 2 per cent. Carbon is not taken up by these metals, and further experiments show that by igniting carbon strongly with silicon acid, the latter is partially reduced; at very high temperatures the reduced silicon volatilizes and is absorbed by a slin of platinum foil held over the ignited mass.

THE BOX TORTOISE.

The South American capybara (hydrochoerus cistudo) is called water hog, on account of a superficial resemblance to this hog. The Japanese mirror is absolutely opaque, and there must be no satisfactory solution of the phenomenon, to account for an appearance so singular. A curious optical effect can be produced by some of these mirrors—probably the best finished. On the reverse, which is also polished, are words and figures in relief. By throwing in a bright sunlight the reflection of the mirror on a screen, these figures are seen to shine through the reflected surface of the mirror.