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"I had a very severe sickness that took all my hair. I purchased a bottle of Ayer's Hair Vigor and it brought all my hair back again."
W. D. Quinn, Nilesville, Ill.

Something is certain—Ayer's Hair Vigor makes the hair grow. This is because it is a hair food. It feeds the hair and the hair grows, that's all there is to it. It stops falling out of the hair, and always restores color to the hair.

It is a simple, pure, and safe preparation, and we will express our confidence in it to the world. Address: J. C. Ayer & Co., Lowell, Mass.

TOBACCO SPOON and **5 IN 1** Your Lifeway
of any form of tobacco with the addition of the most powerful and purest of all the medicinal herbs. Many persons who have used it have been cured of their habits. Price 50¢ per box. Address: STERLING, N. Y.

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THE COMMONWEALTH.

E. E. HILLIARD, Editor and Proprietor. "EXCELSIOR" IS OUR MOTTO. SUBSCRIPTION PRICE \$1.00.
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THE EDITOR'S LEISURE HOURS.

Points and Paragraphs of Things Present, Past and Future.

All the literary world will be interested in the following item about the great and gifted writer it mentions:

"Victor Hugo's one hundredth birthday will be celebrated in Paris on the 26th of this month. A monument secured through popular subscription will be dedicated, and there will be elaborate services at the Pantheon, where the author is buried."

Owing to the frequent and disastrous fires throughout the country recently it is well for the towns and cities which feel so disposed to turn attention to the situation in Denver, Col. There seems to be an ordinance in that city against erecting wooden buildings of any kind within the city limits. It is said that you cannot build a dog house there unless you build it of brick, stone, iron or something besides wood.

The meeting in Raleigh last week of prominent educators of the State and representatives from most of the colleges and larger high schools in the State. The object of the meeting was to emphasize the importance of making more thorough the work of the public schools in the State. It looks like the interest in education is genuine and we hope great good will grow out of it.

The Constantinople correspondent of a Paris paper recently gave account of a fight between the captors of Miss Stone, the missionary, and another band of brigands. The special said:

"The captors of Miss Stone and Madame Tsilka have been attacked by another band of brigands, seeking to secure the prisoners in order to get the ransom. Twenty men on both sides were killed during the fight but the special captors of the missionary were victorious. Miss Stone was not hurt."

The Good Roads Congress which was held in Raleigh last week created much commendable enthusiasm. It was well attended, Edgecombe county being credited with the largest delegation of the eastern counties. The addresses of the prominent men who spoke, both North Carolinians and others, were able and well received.

Altogether the subject of good roads received a new impetus which surely must result in good to the State. We need nothing more for the real improvement of North Carolina than good roads, and every influence put to work to improve our roads is much help towards bringing about the best material development of the State.

Ex-Congressman T. G. Skinner made some good hits in his speech at the Good Roads Congress in Raleigh last week. He claimed a good deal for North Carolina, but we do not dare question the accuracy of his claim—indeed it is pleasant to read what he said. One of the striking things that he said was that "North Carolina has settled up the whole country. Boys from this State have charge of New York; everybody in Norfolk is from North Carolina. Take all the western States and all the men of influence and prominence are from North Carolina."

This was a pretty sweeping declaration, but it helps us get a better idea of the worth of our people.

PEARLS

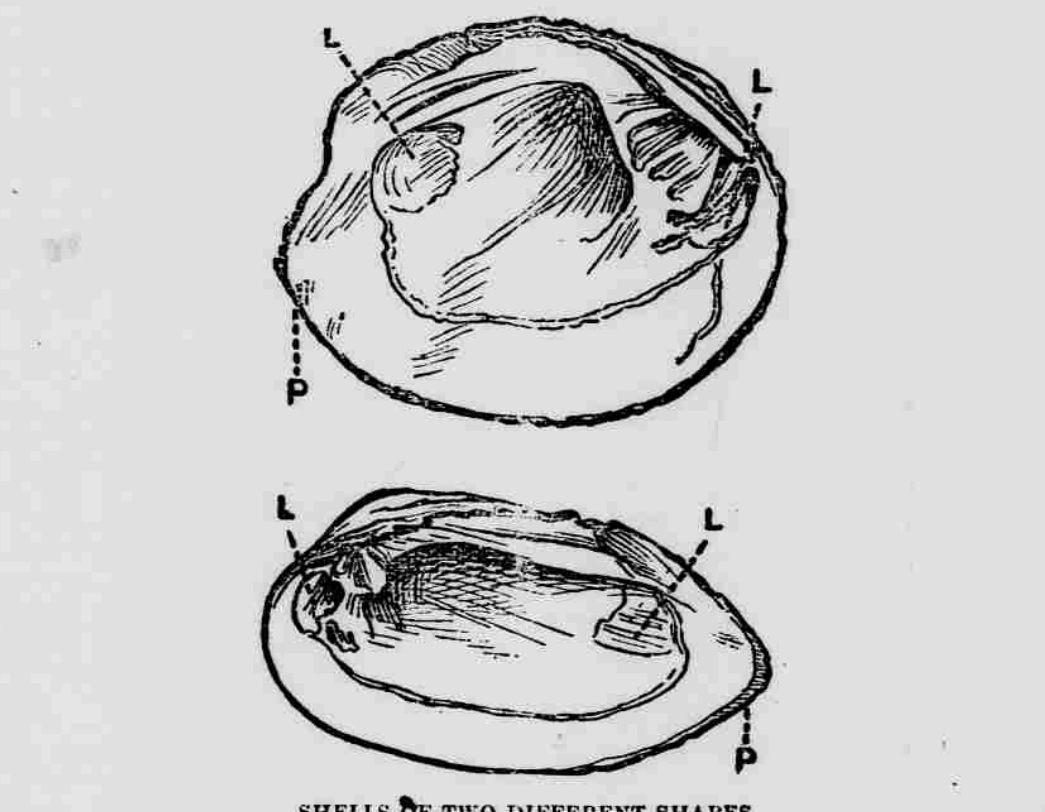
How to Find And How to Value Them.

Copyright 1900, by HERMAN MYER, Pearl Expert of 41 and 43 Maiden Lane, New York City.

SECTION I.

Shell fish called mussels, and in some parts of the United States and Canada, called fresh water clams, are found in almost every river, large or small, and in many creeks, ponds and lakes in the United States, Canada and Mexico. Their shells vary much in size, shape, color and thickness. They have many different local or scientific names. Every variety contains pearls of some sort.

These shell fish are usually found lying half buried in certain shallow parts of a river. If the river is large, they are often very thick and close to each other in beds. Near the source of some smaller streams they are found crawling here and there in the water grass and weeds growing at the edge of the river. In other streams they are found crawling in the mud at the bottom or lying in cracks between large rocks which compose the bed of the stream.



The inside of the half of each shell is shown. L indicates position of the ligament which must be cut before the shell will open. P is the point or part of the shell containing best shaped and brightest pearls. The shell must be opened so as not to touch this part with a knife blade, in order that any pearl it might contain will not be damaged by the knife.

Usually the fishermen, or boys who go in swimming, are most familiar with the places where these shells are to be found in the greatest quantity. They can direct those who are not so much acquainted with the river to the proper places to search for the shells.

In one small portion of one large river in the United States various instruments are used to procure shells in large quantities for button making. These shells are all very extra thick and white with a smooth outside. If such shells are found in great quantities near you and are close to a railroad, where freight is cheap, they may have value. I will examine any package of shells sent me by mail or prepaid express and report free of charge on their value for button making. Be sure that you prepay all charges. The amount is small to you, but when I receive a hundred or two hundred packages a day, it amounts to a large sum to me. I am sure that when I do this work free of charge for which some other people would charge you \$25, you would wish to give me any expense.

In other sections, including your locality, the shells are obtainable simply wading into the shallow water and removing them with your hands or a rake. Then they are thrown upon the bank, if close by, or carried there in a boat if distant.

After the shells are obtained, they are opened with a heavy Barlow or an old table knife. Insert the knife blade between the edges of the halves of shell in such a manner as to cut the two ligaments (marked L in cuts) which bind the two half shells or valves together. You will notice their situation in various forms of shells from the illustrations. As soon as these ligaments are cut, the shell will open itself. You then examine the flesh of the mussel or clam thoroughly with your eye and also by pressing the flesh between the shell and your thumb to feel for any hard substance. This hard substance is a pearl.

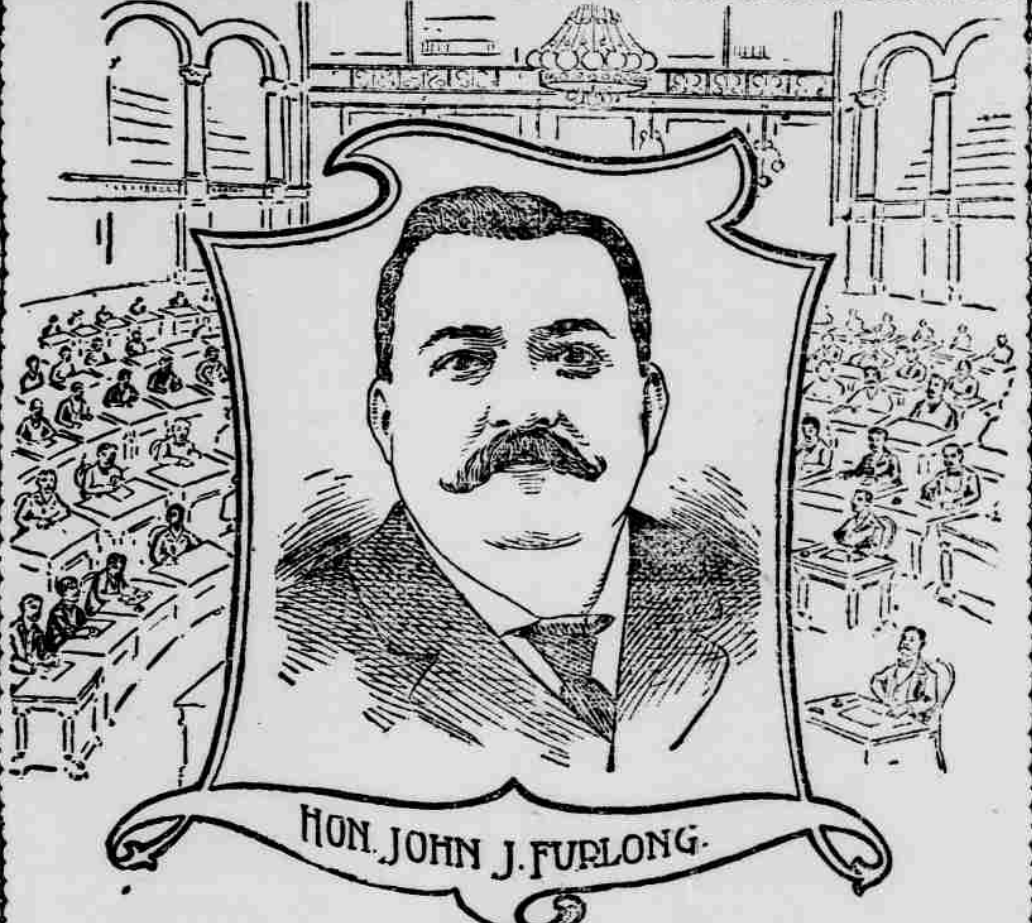
(To be continued.)

Why Tea is Both Black and Green.

Selected. One of the scientists at the Agricultural College of Tokio has been investigating the subject of the difference in the color of tea leaves, and he offers the following explanation: In making green tea the leaves are steamed as soon as they are gathered. In the case of black tea the leaves are allowed to ferment before drying. The result is that the finished black tea contains much less tannin than the green. The original tea leaf possesses an oxidizing enzyme, which is destroyed in the green tea by steaming. In black tea, during fermentation, the enzyme oxidizes the tannin, and gives rise to a brownish product.

E. T. Whitehead & Co., the druggist, will refund you your money if you are not satisfied after using Chamberlain's Stomach and Liver Tablets. They cure disorders of the stomach, biliousness, flatulency and headache. Price 25c.

MEMBER ILLINOIS ASSEMBLY AFFLICTED WITH CATARRH OF THE THROAT AND LUNGS. CURED BY PERUNA.



HON. JOHN J. FURLONG, Member of the Thirty-fifth General Assembly of the State of Illinois, writes of Peruna as follows:
1533 Osgood St., Chicago, Ill.
The Peruna Medicine Co., Columbus, O.
Gentlemen—“I can safely recommend Peruna as a remedy that will cure all catarrhal troubles.”

“It was of great benefit to me as it cured me of catarrh of the throat and lungs permanently and in a very short time. I am glad to add my endorsement to that of others.”—JOHN J. FURLONG.

Cures Made by Peruna are Permanent Cures.

A patient cured by Peruna is no more liable to catarrh than if he had never had it.

Cured of Catarrh of the Entire System. Mr. William Flood, care Fifth Avenue Hotel, Louisville, Ky., says: “Your Peruna has completely cured me of that distressing disease, catarrh, which affected my head, nose, bronchial tubes, and, in fact, my whole system.”

STATE NEWS.

CULLED FROM OUR EXCHANGES.

Happenings Noted During the Week.
COTTON FROM EGYPT.
Gastonia Gazette: More cotton was on the platform at the depot Tuesday than was ever known to be on it before at one time. It had been left by the Southern for transfer to the Narrow Gauge. In all there were 367 bales. Fifty-eight bales came from Egypt. They were shorter than our bales, were about twice as thick, and much heavier, weighing about 700 pounds. The Egyptian staple is longer than the American and looks more like wool. It is spun at Clover and Lenoir. Of the entire lot, 123 bales were billed for Clover, 50 for Yorkville and the balance for Lincolnton and Lenoir.

BIG BEQUEST TO SCHOOL NEAR ENFIELD.

Associated Press: New York.—Mrs. Julia Elma Brewster Brick, who died at the age of 80 at her home in Brooklyn, February 3, bequeathed in her will, which was filed with Surrogate Church today, a great portion of her estate, which is said to be worth nearly \$1,000,000, to charities in which she had been interested for fifty years.

ATTEMPT AT HOUSE BURNING.

Durham Cor. to Charlotte Observer: One of the boldest attempts ever made in Durham county to burn a man's home and family was made last night when Monroe Rogers set fire to the home of Mr. W. B. Whitaker. He was caught in the act, but made his escape after a scuffle with Mr. D. W. Andrews, who grabbed him as he ran out from under the house, and then an exciting chase with blood hounds followed. Mr. Andrews saw a fire under Mr. Whitaker's house and ran over to see what it meant. A negro ran out and he grabbed him. In the scuffle Mr. Andrews was thrown to the ground and the negro ran off. Blood hounds were secured and followed the trail several hours, running the man all of ten miles. Monroe Rogers has been working for the Bull Durham factory, of which Mr. Andrews is superintendent, and in the scuffle he was identified and his hat secured. This is not the first attempt made to burn the home of Mr. Whitaker and it is supposed that the Rogers negro made the other attempt. What the motive for the crime is is not known unless it was revenge. Some time ago Mr. Whitaker ordered Rogers to stay away from his home—previous to that time he had been courting the negro cook at the house. This probably prompted the mean act. Every effort is being made to capture the negro. Had he been caught last night there is a probability that he would never have reached the jail.

McDUFFIE'S WITCH HAZEL FOOT HEALER is one of the finest baby powders known, cures prickly heat and gives instant relief. 25 cents.

IF YOU ARE A HUSTLER
YOU WILL
—ADVERTISE—
YOUR
Business.
SEND YOUR ADVERTISEMENT IN NOW.

THE ISTHMIAN CANAL.

A VITAL QUESTION NOW.
Project Nearly 400 Years Old.

Christian Advocate.
Among the vital questions now crossing the attention of the American people, the Isthmian Canal has a pre-eminence. The question is not only for American people but for the civilized world. A short waterway between the Atlantic and Pacific oceans has a significance which touches the commerce of the world. Our readers will do well to keep themselves informed on the nature and progress of this great enterprise.

The project of a ship canal between the two oceans is nearly four hundred years old. The Spaniards explored a route across the Isthmus in 1529, with a view to effecting the passageway which offers such possibilities to the civilized world. Suffice it to say that at that time the scheme was so impracticable that all efforts in this direction were abandoned for the time. The interest shown by the Spaniards has not been fruitless, as what they did has furnished a foundation for succeeding projectors to build upon.

The Isthmian Canal Commission was appointed in 1899 to determine the most feasible route for a ship canal across Central America. After extensive surveys, only two routes were considered practicable: The Nicaragua and Panama. If our readers will look at a map of Central America, they will plainly see the force of this statement. It will also be seen that much more work is to be done on the Nicaragua than the Panama route. Both routes lie in tropical countries, and the danger to life is greater than in any other great enterprise inaugurated by the civilized world.

The entire distance of the proposed Nicaragua Canal from Greyton on the Caribbean sea to Brito on the Pacific is 183.66 miles. It cuts the continental divide only twelve miles from the coast. Certain attitudes constitute the greatest difficulties to be confronted on this route. Lake Nicaragua is the highest point, and undoubtedly furnishes a great advantage in constituting a part of the waterway. Four locks have been planned in passing up to the lake level from either ocean. An immense dam is necessary at Conchagua on the San Juan river. The total length of the dam would be 1,310 feet, and its cost is estimated at \$4,017,650.

The Panama route is but 49 2/3 miles from ocean to ocean. Colon is the Atlantic terminus; Panama Bay, the Pacific. The summit elevations are about twenty feet less than that for the Nicaragua route. The greatest difficulty in the Panama route is a place for a dam which will not cost an exorbitant sum. The estimates of the Canal Commission are \$180,864,062 for the Nicaragua route, and \$144,233,358 for the Panama. The difference is considerable as can be seen at a glance. The Panama route is about one-fourth the length of that of the Nicaragua. The estimated annual cost of operation of the Panama route is but six-tenths of that required in the Nicaragua route.

Before the Isthmian Canal Commission was appointed, a French corporation, of which Ferdinand de Lesseps was the head, began work on the Panama route in 1853. In 1857, operations were suspended for lack of money. In 1859, the company became bankrupt, and was dissolved. The liquidator succeeded in forming in 1884 a new company known as the new Panama Canal Company. This company agrees to sell its rights and property valued at \$109,141,500, for \$10,000,000. The matter is before Congress, and what the result will be is problem all. It is likely, however, that the Nicaragua route will be chosen. The question is complicated, and the United States has on its hands a problem which is very difficult, but which, we have no doubt, will be solved to the welfare of the civilized world.

Pony-Balm Relieves Night Aways and makes a good end of coughs and colds.