

THE COMMONWEALTH

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IF YOU ARE A MUSTLER

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THE EDITORS' LEISURE HOURS.

Points and Paragraphs of Things Present, Past and Future.

More than once we have suggested that one of the good results of the free rural mail delivery system, will be the tendency to make the country people more content with their surroundings.

This we have tried to point out, will have the tendency to stop the moving of so many people from the country to the towns and cities.

Congressman John D. Bellamy was in Raleigh a few days ago, and being interviewed by a News and Observer reporter he expressed the following opinion of the rural delivery service:

"I have become an ardent advocate of this service. For the last thirty years there has arisen a disposition in our country people to leave the farms and flock to the towns. Many allege their reason is to get the benefit of daily mails and better school privileges.

Now since the educational awakening has come over our State, we have the schools in the country, and now with rural free delivery we have the daily mails, thus making the country as desirable to live in as the towns.

"I believe we can look for much improvement in the country when the farmer boys and girls become satisfied with their homes, which have all the advantages of town life."

It has been given out that the fire insurance companies have arbitrarily raised the rate on fire insurance in North Carolina 25 per cent. In view of the fact that the insurance companies have made large profits from their business in North Carolina during the past few years, and ought to reduce their rates rather than increase them, there is a strong disposition in the State to foster home companies and thus save the money to our own people.

This would be wise and economical. The News and Observer gives the following interesting figures and comments:

Table with 2 columns: Year, Receipts from Premiums, Paid for Losses. Rows for 1898, 1899, 1900.

This leaves a clear profit (except expenses) for three years to the insurance companies after paying losses for three years of \$1,965,798.78. The losses by fire in North Carolina have been less during 1901 than for any year since the Insurance Department has been established. The ratio of loss went as low as 40, whereas three years ago it was 60.

These figures speak trumpet-tongued against the arbitrary increase of the rates in North Carolina, and they ought to secure a reversal of the order imposing the increase. If in three years the profits on fire insurance business has been \$2,000,000, why should not North Carolina have more home companies? By encouraging home companies the people are building up agencies that will save them from large increases which follow large losses in great Northern cities."

PLEASANT FIELDS OF HOLY WRIT.

Save for my daily range Among the pleasant fields of Holy Writ, I might despair. —Tennyson.

International Sunday-School Lesson.

FIRST QUARTER, LESSON XI, MARCH 16, 1902. ACTS VIII, 29-39.

THE ETHIOPIAN CONVERTED.

Copyright, Davis W. Clark.

We may never know how the dusky proselyte was first converted to the Hebrew faith. The Jews were already scattered far and wide, especially in the capitals and commercial centers of the world. There, as now, they were money-lenders. Perhaps it was in his capacity as treasurer of the Abyssinian Empire he came in contact with some first-century Rothschild, who was intent upon doing good as well as getting a high premium on his money.

Or the motives of the unknown proselyte may have been mixed, or even wholly bad. He may have been one who deserved Jesus' scathing rebuke. But whatever the incentive of the sectarian may have been, the proselyte was a notable and noble accession to the Hebrew Church.

He showed the genuineness of his conversation by the long journey, which he took at his first opportunity to the seat of his newfound faith. It was some three thousand miles to Jerusalem and back. Yet this happy convert, to whom tradition gives the name of Judich, hesitated not at the toil and expense. As his chariot rolled along the banks of the Nile, under the tapering shadow of obelisk and pyramid, and by temple and treasure-city, no doubt he thought, if he did not exclaim: "This is that Egypt where God did those wonders for his people, and for which he delivered them with an outstretched arm!"

Another evidence of the depth and sincerity of his interest was the length of time he tarried in Jerusalem. He had gone up to the Feast of Pentecost, but we find him staying on through the martyrdom of Stephen and the conversation of Samaria—not, however, that he was concerned in these events, even if he was aware of them.

Still a stronger evidence: He purchased a copy of the Hebrew Scriptures; and it cost him a small fortune no doubt. It was to be no center-table ornament in his Nubian palace, either it was for use. Indeed he could not wait until he reached home; but, in his jolting chariot on that rough Judaea road, he was reading, not selfishly to himself either, but out loud, so that his charioteer and whole cavalcade might have the advantage.

There goes the Bible-reading Ethiopian. But now another person breaks in upon the scene. How strange—unreasonable, in fact—the providences of God often appear! The revival in Samaria was at its height. Its genuineness had been confirmed by the apostles in the bestowal of miraculous gifts. It seemed as if no one could shepherd the converts so well as the evangelist who had first brought them to Christ. But the Spirit called Philip away, and that, too, not to another populous city, but to a desert way.

In this incident it is as if the curtain were lifted, and we could see the hand of God shaping events according to his will. The paths of these two men—the devout and inquiring nobleman and the holy evangelist—are made to converge. They come into actual conjunction at the precise moment when the nobleman's eye is on the passage which, more than any other, contains the gist of the gospel. And the Spirit said to Philip: "Go

near and join thyself to this chariot.

The man who, the day before, had given instant obedience to the unaccountable command of the Spirit, and had exchanged the stirring scenes and opportunities of a great awakening for a solitary post on a road through a desert, did not hesitate now, though he could plainly see that the traveler was a prince and a foreigner.

There was a witticism, a play on words, in Philip's address to the Ethiopian, which is lost in the translation. He said: "Do you know what you know?" The wit of Philip was the edge of the wedge that opened the Nubian prince's heart wide to the gospel.

The question anticipated a negative answer, and received it: "How can I, except some man should guide me?" The Ethiopian is a lovely example of the sincere inquirer after truth. No penknife of a destructive critic was in his hand. Nor was he asking with Pilate's cold superciliousness, "What is truth?" He had become a little child—docile, loving, trustful, of whom Jesus said, "Of such is the kingdom."

He bade the chariot stand still. He took up the tramp, covered with the sweat and dust of his long and hasty journey. He seated him upon the gorgeous upholstery of his Egyptian chariot, and, oblivious to the fact that the eyes of all his attendants were upon him, he bent over the old yellow Septuagint manuscript with the unknown and wayfaring man. The place where he was reading was, "He was led as a sheep to the slaughter," and his utter confusion of mind was betrayed by the question, "Of whom speaketh the prophet this—of himself or of some other man?"

Then Philip opened his mouth, taking that very verse as a text, and (literally) "declared to him the glad tidings, Jesus." The Ethiopian saw, believed, was baptized. That chariot was transmuted into a car of salvation. On it rolled, with its load more precious than the ivory and gold of a continent. It rolled a thousand miles up the Nile, and carried the gospel to the heart of Nubia, where, in spite of the unfriendliest environment, it has remained entrenched ever since.

THE TEACHER'S LANTERN

Special providence and missions The historic summer shower and the 'hay-stack prayer-meeting,' in which the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions had its origin. The conversion of the Wyandot Indians under John Stewart. The opening of the zenanas of India "by a woman's needle." (See Pearson's "Crisis of Missions.")

Contrast the probable expensiveness of the Ethiopian's Bible and the cheapness of Bibles to-day. The scarcity of Bibles then; present abundance of them.

The use and limits of wit and humor in the pulpit and in Christian work. Wit a characteristic of the pioneer preachers, and the greatest possible aid to them in their frequent emergencies. The missionary cause of to-day is the perpetuation of Philip's effort. It transmits the chariots of commerce into cars of salvation, freighted with priceless wares of grace, and sends them rolling toward the heart of great continents.

TREATMENT AT HOME.

Dr. Hartman's Free Advice to Women—A Generous Offer to The Afflicted.



Secretary Illinois Woman's Alliance. Miss A. Brady, Corresponding Secretary Illinois Woman's Alliance, writes from 2725 Indiana avenue, Chicago, Ill.: "Last year from continued strain in literary work I became very much exhausted, my nerves seemed to give way, and I had headache, headache and serious indigestion. One of my friends suggested that I try Peruna. It certainly acted like magic on my system. "Within ten days I felt new life and health given me, and by taking an occasional dose off and on when I feel extra tired, I keep my system in perfect order."—Miss A. Brady.

Miss Millie Baker writes from 230 East Ohio street, Chicago, Ill.: "I suffered for years with weakness peculiar to women, severe bearing-down pains, and continual headache. "After using five bottles of Peruna I was as well and strong as ever."—Miss Millie Baker.

Mrs. Nellie Blyler, 670 W. Twentieth street, Chicago, Ill., President of the Ladies of the G. A. R., has the following to say about Peruna: "Gentlemen—'I recommend Peruna especially for women as it promptly cures the weakness of our sex and will always be sure to give satisfaction.'"—MRS. NELLIE BLYLER. Mrs. W. A. Allison, Assist. Matron of Peoples' Hospital, 758 Sheffield avenue, Chicago, Ill., writes: "I have had frequent opportunities to observe the wonderful curative effects of Peruna. It alleviates pain and soreness, increases the appetite and so tones up the entire system that the patient quickly regains strength and health."—Mrs. W. A. Allison. Free Home Advice.

ABOUT 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 IV.

Pearls should not be carried loose in the pocket, or in a paper or tin box. The best way is to fold (not roll) them in a piece of good strong tough paper. If tissue paper can be easily obtained fold fine ones separately in it first, and then in a tougher paper. Tough paper is not necessarily thick, but paper hard to tear. They can then be sent by ordinary registered letter or by express in a good tough envelope to any part of the United States with the utmost safety.

Pearls are a life-study in themselves, and a man must handle many hundreds daily in order to be fully conversant with their value. In pearls, as well as in any other thing in commerce, a man should attempt to reach headquarters as far as possible, and the man who sees pearls every day, from all localities, and who thoroughly understands the market and the fashions, is prepared to do more for you by advice and by price than the man who only handle a pearl occasionally.

Now just a short resume:—Only good shaped pearls which are bright have much value. Those which are of good shape and medium bright have a little value. They are found in the flesh of the mussel or fresh water clam, inside the live shells. They should be carefully wrapped when sent by mail. To get the best value you should send them to a man who makes a specialty of handling pearls. Pearl work can be done at odd times, and it pays about three times as much as any other form of labor, provided that you have the courage to stick at it for a few hours until you get your first good pearl. Remember, perseverance wins. Keep at it; you are sure to be well rewarded. We should feel proud of our beloved

country, when we remember that it produces so liberally those beautiful gems in such great variety and profusion. The most exquisite colored pearls in the world are found in America, and some of our white pearls surpass any other white ones. Prejudice against home product prevents their price equalling oriental pearls.

Pearls are the only gem given us by animal nature, the most beautiful of all. Other gems are the products of mineral nature. As our sore trials bring us good results when rightly borne, so the suffering of the poor mussel yields the shimmering pearl.

Only two books have ever been written on the subject of pearls; only one by an American—Vane Simmonds. Mr. Simmonds is well known as a man who knows how to fish for pearls, and how to write about them. He has issued a beautiful booklet on the subject. It is called "Fresh Water Pearls," and is most interesting to all, and doubly interesting and useful to a pearl fisher. Its price is merely nominal, while the value is great.

It has been my lifelong duty and pleasure to answer freely all letters from pearl men regarding pearls and how to get them. You will receive a prompt and courteous reply to any letter you write me. No charge is ever made for such information. Study over these articles well, and if there is anything that you do not understand, write me frankly. But it would be much wiser to go to the river and give the work a good fair trial and learn what you can, and then send on your first results for an examination and report of their value and of what they indicate is to be expected by longer search.

There are no rules, regulations or laws against fishing for these shells in any manner at any time and place you desire. Two bills were introduced in the United States Congress last winter to put a stop to all pearl fishing. But the pearl fisherman has always found me to be his friend. I at once discovered these bills were introduced by

some men who owned large numbers of pearls and button shells and wanted a law to stop all fishing in order that their stock on hand might rise in value, as no new shells could be lawfully taken had the bill passed. This bill would have benefited me as well as them, by raising the value of my pearls on hand, but it would have hurt the fishermen and so would hurt me in the end. They introduced these bills very quietly, thinking that one poor helpless fisherman was concerned, and that the law would pass at once. I took my time from work and money for the expenses, and went to Washington and fought it tooth and nail. I was the only man who gave the bill an hour of work or cent of money, etc. As I had good solid truth to back me and worked hard and earnestly, I won for the pearl fisherman. You are now as free to fish in any stream at any time and in any manner as you are to breathe the air of heaven.

The pearl is a great distributor of wealth. It drains money from the wealthiest people of the cities and takes it to the farmer, fisherman and laborer along the streams of our country. Then the money is redistributed to where it will do most good. This money, unlike all other products, is as good as found; every cent is pure profit, and it all remains to be spent at home. For pearls require no experience to find, nor tools to cultivate, nor land to grow, nor machinery to produce. They are a pure gift of nature for the lining of the pockets of the people of America who live along its water courses. You will be twice blessed if you see this fact now and act upon it at once.

Remember that I shall be glad to hear from you, one and all. Give the work a trial now. You will always be glad you did. Stick at it a week and you are sure to have fine results in cash. Sincerely your friend, HERMAN MYER.

Headache often from a disordered condition of the stomach and constipation of the bowels. A dose or two of Chamberlain's Stomach and Liver Tablets will correct these disorders and cure the headache. Sold by E. T. Whitehead & Co.

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Pray-Balm Stops the Tickling, and Itches.

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