
THE
FRESH-WATER PEARLS AND PEARL FISHERIES
OF
THE UNITED STATES.

BY
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THE ORIGIN, NATURE, AND VALUE OF PEARLS.

Pearls are lustrous concretions, consisting essentially of carbonate of lime, interstratified with animal membrane, found in the shells of certain mollusks. They are believed to be the result of an abnormal secretory process caused by an irritation of the mantle of the mollusk, consequent on accident, disease, or the intrusion into the shell of some foreign body, as a grain of sand, an egg of the mollusk itself, or perhaps some cercarian parasite. It has also been suggested that an excess of carbonate of lime in the water may cause the development of pearls. Accepting the former theory as the more probable, it is easy to understand how some foreign body, which the mollusk is unable to expel, becomes encysted or covered as by a capsule, and gradually thickens, assuming various forms—round, elongated, mallet-shaped, sometimes as regular as though turned in a lathe. Mr. Charles L. Tiffany, who has given considerable attention to this subject, suggests that the mollusk continually revolves the inclosed particle in its efforts to rid itself of the irritation, or possibly that its formation is due to a natural motion, which is accelerated by the intruding body.

In regard to the formation of pearls, the following general statements may be made: Whatever may be the cause or the process of their production, these interior concretions may occur in almost any molluscan shells, though they are chiefly confined to certain groups, and their color and luster depend upon those of the shell interior adjacent to which they are formed. Thus the pink conch of the West Indies yields the beautiful rose-colored pearls, while those of the common oyster and clam are dead white or dark purple, according to their proximity to the part of the mantle which secretes the white or the dark portion of the shell. The true pearly or nacreous iridescent interior belongs to only a few families of mollusks, and in these alone can pearls proper be formed at all, while in point of fact they are actually obtained only from a very few genera.

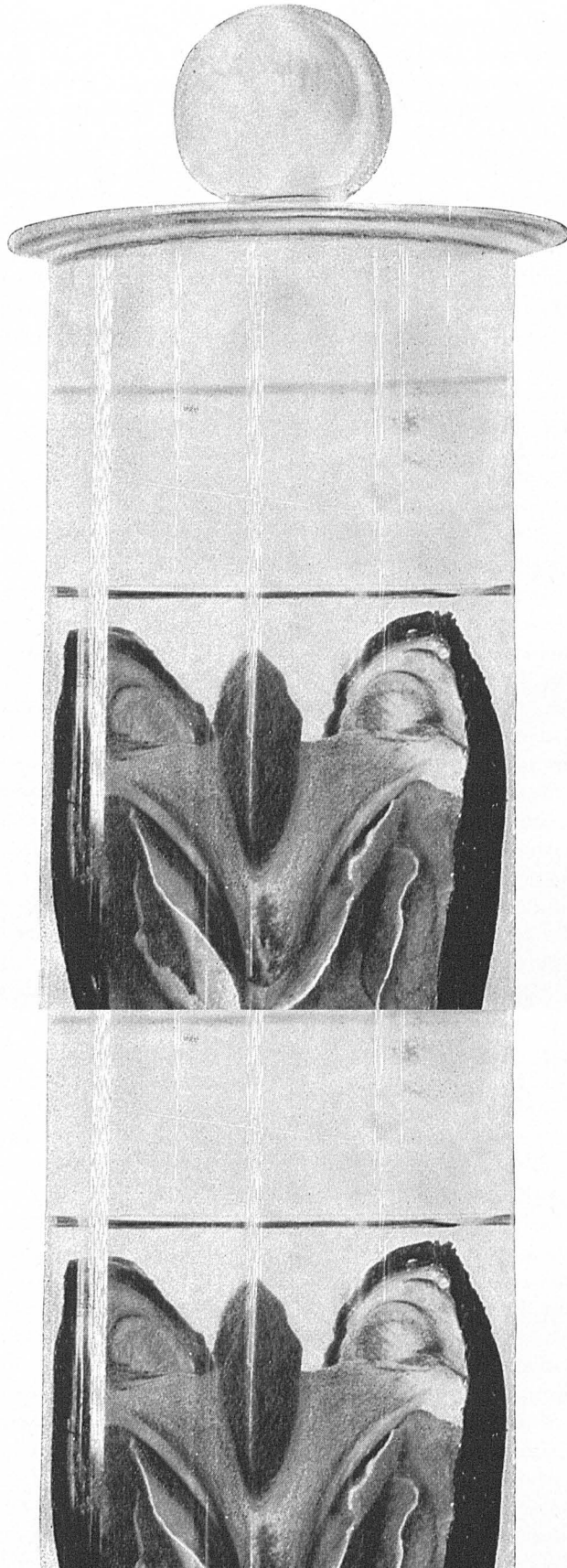
The families with iridescent interior layers are the following: Among cephalopods, the nautilus and the ammonites, the latter wholly fossil. In both these groups the removal of the outer layers of the shell reveals the splendid pearly surface beneath. Modern nautilus shells are often "cleaned" with dilute acid to fit them for use as ornaments; and frequently this is done partially, elaborate patterns being formed by leaving parts of the white middle layers to contrast with the pearly ground. Among the fossil ammonites the same effect is produced very often naturally by decay of the outer layers, and no artificial pearl work can compare with the richness of color—literally "rainbow-hued"—that is presented by many of these fossils from Jurassic

and Cretaceous deposits. Among the gasteropods the pearly groups are the turbos and haliotes or abalones, in both of which, but especially in the latter, there is a frequent occurrence of green iridescence. Shells of both these families are "cleaned" with acids for use as ornaments, and the exquisite green *Haliotis* material is extensively used in the arts under the name of abalone.

The pearls of commerce, however, are almost wholly obtained from bivalve (lamel-libranch) shells, of which the following families have a nacreous lining: *Aviculida*, *Mytilida*, and *Unionida*, the last being a fresh-water group, also known as the *Naiades*. A few genera of other families are also brilliantly pearly, but need not be here discussed. The true pearl oyster (*Meleagrina*) found in the Pacific and Indian oceans belongs to the first of these families, and has from time immemorial yielded the bulk of commercial pearls, while its large and thick shell furnishes the mother-of-pearl for countless ornamental purposes. The *Naiades* are of particular interest in this country, as it is in North America that this group is most abundant. Several hundred species of *Unio*, *Anodon*, etc., have been found in our great rivers and lakes, and the Mississippi basin teems with them, in forms, for the most part, quite distinct from those of the Atlantic watershed and of the Old World. The *Unios*, while all iridescent, vary greatly in tint, exhibiting many delicate shades of pink, brown, purple, etc., as well as white. The rivers of Europe, of Mesopotamia, and of China also yield large numbers of *Unios*, while other allied genera (*Hyria* and *Castalia*) represent the family in the Amazon basin of South America.

In the fresh-water species the two valves are alike in size and shape, while in some of the marine families they differ, as is well seen in the common oyster. Each of the valves consists of two parts, the epidermis and the shell proper, the latter composed of numerous layers. The epidermis, which resembles horn, consists chiefly of a brown or yellow substance called "conchioline," soluble in caustic alkalies; beneath this is the outer portion of the shell proper, the prism stratum, consisting of layers formed of minute prisms arranged vertically to the layers and the shell surface; and, third, the interior nacre layer, composed of finely folded leaves parallel to the shell surface. The last two strata consist chiefly of carbonate of lime. These formations may be seen in transverse cuttings and microscopic sections. The soft internal parts of these mollusks are covered by a thin, delicate membrane called the mantle, from the surface and particularly from the outer edges of which material is excreted to form the inner layers of the shell. Whenever, by accidental injury, disease, or intrusion of foreign substances, local irritation is set up in these tissues, the effect is to produce an increased secretion of the nacreous matter at this point, resulting in the formation of pearls or pearly concretions.

Pearls are of several distinct kinds, differing in shape and perhaps, as elsewhere suggested, in origin. These are (first) what are known as "free" pearls—those that are found loose and separate between the folds or layers of the mantle and gills, or between the latter and the body of the mollusk. These comprise most of the true spherical pearls, as also many that are ovate, pear-shaped, and irregular. Then there are the pearls found between the mantle and the valves of the shell; these, if free at all, are apt to be hemispherical, or in any case flattened on the side toward the shell, while very often they are attached more or less to the valve by a deposit of the pearly secretion. In the region of the hinge these become extremely irregular in shape and often greatly elongated, forming a third kind, known as hinge pearls, baroques, etc.



As many as a hundred small pearls have been found in a single shell, but as a rule these have little or no value. Very curious nacreous groups made of many small pieces are at times found attached to the hinge, but these are generally without sufficient luster to be of value, and are rarely collected. These groups are caused by the conglomeration of many small pearls cemented by a deposit of nacre, and are often half an inch across.

The same causes and operations that result in the production of pearls also produce in a modified way the tuberclose or knob-like protuberances and irregularities of surface that are frequently seen on the pearly inner faces of the valves and projecting therefrom. The flatter or less pronounced form of these nacreous excrescences are often called "blister pearls," because of their resemblance to vesicular eruptions or to water-blisters caused by burns.

When the growth of the pearl is abnormally strong, the pressure which it exerts on the outer wall of this tissue pocket becomes so powerful that the pocket is absorbed on the side toward the shell, bringing the hard pearl directly against the latter. It then becomes impossible for the pearl to grow any more at the point of contact, for there is no tissue to secrete the lime substance; but it grows on the rest of the surface, and the thickening layers, as they are formed, pass directly into the nacre layers on the inside of the shell and thicken the shell itself. Through these overlayers the pearl is connected with the shell as though by different layers of covering cloths. At first it clings to the shell at one point only, afterwards enlarging the area of its adhesion. In this manner twin or united pearls are formed.

All these varied kinds are found in the marine pearl oysters as well; but the fresh-water mollusks have the additional beauty of great variety of tints and of partial transparency in their nacre. In color the *Unio* pearls present an extended series of shades from dead opaque white, having but little value, through various tints of pink, yellow, and salmon, or a faint purple, passing to a bright red so closely resembling a drop of molten copper as almost to deceive the eye. Some are very light green and brown, others rose-color, and still others are pale steel-blue, russet, and purplish-brown. In addition to their color and luster, they are beautifully iridescent. The white and the pink pearls are exceedingly handsome, and the finest, owing to their delicate sheen or layers, are at times more lustrous than even the best oriental pearls. This luster is increased by their greater transparency, and a really fine white, pink, yellow, or iridescent pearl is often quite translucent. They are found also in many odd and remarkable shapes.

Elongated fish-like forms found near the hinge of the shell and called hinge baroque pearls are abundant. Others, with a slight addition of gold and enamel, may be made to represent human and animal heads, bat and bird wings, and similar objects. Mallet-shaped pearls are found with fine color and luster at each end, though generally with opaque sides; also, grouped or bunched masses of the pearly nacre, made up of from one to over one hundred distinct pearls in fanciful shapes, are of occasional occurrence. Feather-like forms with curiously raised points and an odd rounded variety with raised pitted markings are quite abundant. A pearl was mounted in this country that strikingly resembled the bust of Michael Angelo; and a number of unique designs have been made of baroques, similar to those mounted by Dinglinger and exhibited in the Green Vaults at Dresden. Although the pearls used here have not been as large as those shown in Dresden, greater taste has been employed in mounting them. The variety of the *Unio* forms being so great, an artist

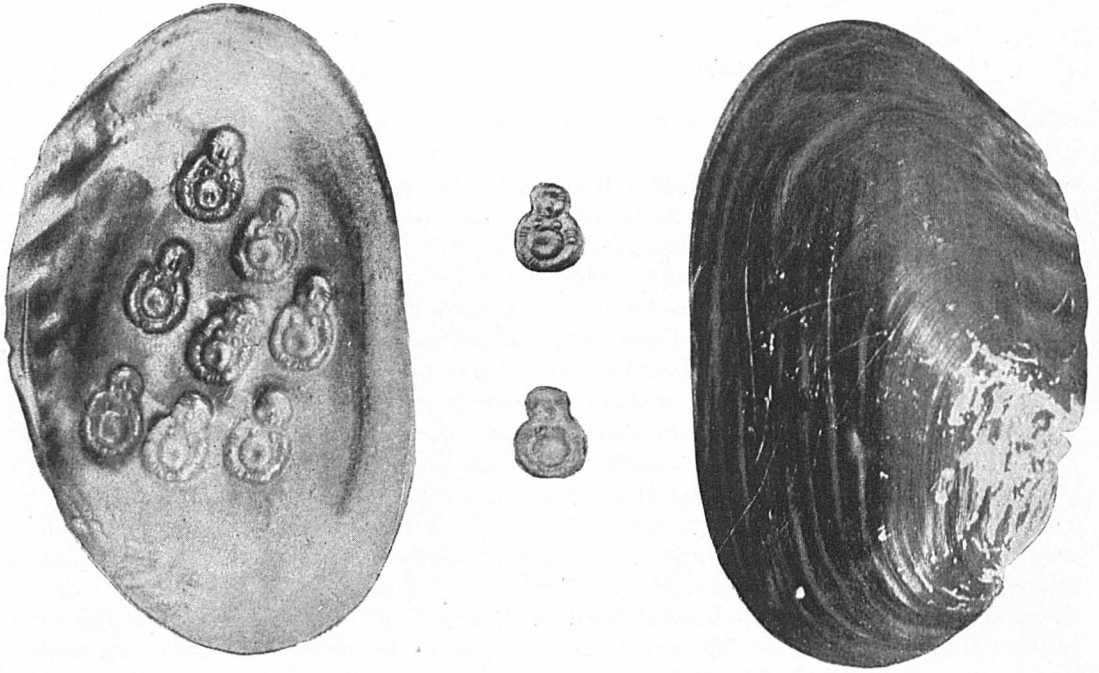
has a wide field for imagination. The pearls, however, have but slight value unless they are beautiful and lustrous.

Frequently pearls have an opaque appearance and seem to be worthless, but on the removal of their outer layer are found to be clear and iridescent. This outer layer may be removed by dipping them in a weak solution of acid, which dissolves the opaque coating, or it may be peeled with a knife, although sometimes the pearl is not of the same material throughout and can not be restored. The story is told of a New York lady who purchased a button-shaped *Unio* pearl that had a black, diseased appearance on one side. It was so set that the imperfection was all below the mounting. When applauding at the opera one evening the pearl was broken, and on examination it was found to consist of a very thin nacreous layer, inside of which was nothing but a hard, white, greasy clay. (See plate x; enlarged 3 diameters.)

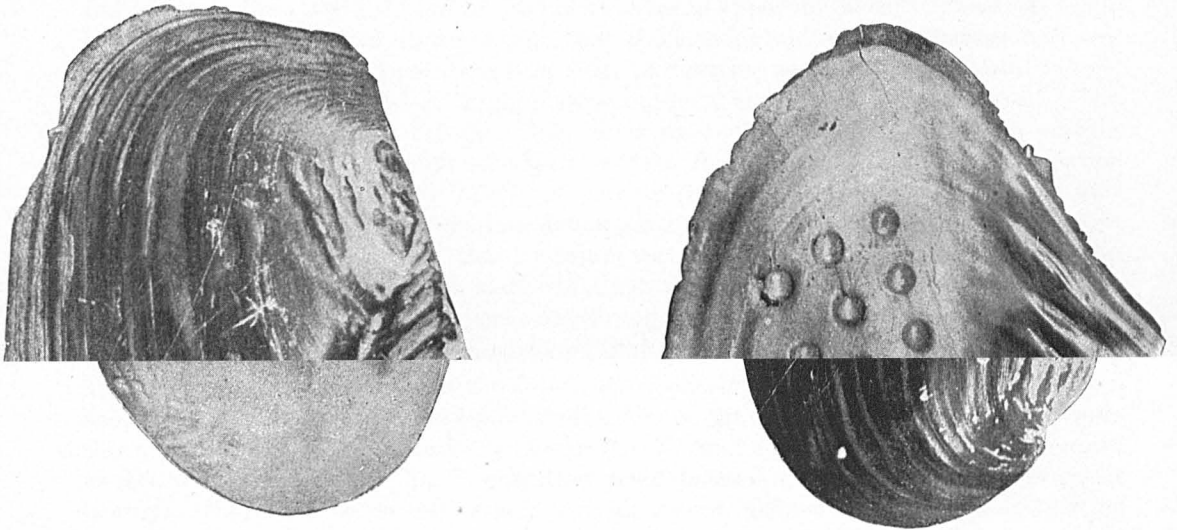
Whatever be the method of their formation, it would seem that pearls are formed at the expense of the shell, for the substance necessary to their growth is drawn from sources which normally secrete the shell. Hence the presence of a pearl can sometimes be detected on the outside of the shell. Normal appearing shells rarely contain pearls, while on the other hand those that are deformed often contain pearls of great beauty. There are three indications on which pearl-fishers to some extent rely for detecting the presence of pearls from the outward aspect of the shell. These are, first, the thread—that is, a recess or elevation extending from the vertex to the edge; second, the kidney shape of the shell—that is, an indentation on the ventral side; and third, the contortion of both valves toward the middle plane of the animal.

The precise manner in which pearls are formed is a matter of some uncertainty, and several views are held, all of which have some apparent basis in observed facts. There are three principal theories, viz, that the special and unusual secretion of the pearly material at certain points is due, first, to disease; second, to accidental injury, and third, to the intrusion of foreign substances of some kind into the shell. The first view is sustained by the fact that pearl production seems to occur in certain streams and at certain periods especially, as though it were a result of some peculiar condition affecting the shells largely at certain times, like an epidemic disease; and it has also a slight analogy in the development of calculi and of gout in higher animals. The second theory, that of injury or accident, is largely based upon the frequent occurrence of pearls in shells that have an aspect of distortion or deformity. This, however, is very far from being universal, and might also be a result of disease rather than of accident. The third view, that pearls are caused by the intrusion of foreign bodies, which the mollusk, if unable to expel, covers over and incloses with the pearly secretion, has the evidence of actual demonstration in many instances and is unquestionably true to a large extent. It may be, however, that the other theories, particularly that of disease, are also true in some degree, and that pearls may be formed in either of several ways.

Still another view is held by some, which lies rather between the first and third of those already mentioned, viz, that the nucleus of a pearl is an egg of the mollusk, which has for some reason failed to be expelled in the usual manner. The ova in the *Unios* are kept for some time in the outer pair of gills prior to being discharged into the water, and it is quite possible that some of them may occasionally be caught in the gill tubes and not be able to escape. In such a case the entangled egg may be coated over with nacreous material and form a "free" pearl. This, of course, would at first be very small and its growth would be due to a continued irritation, producing



DIPSAS PLICATUS, INTERIOR AND EXTERIOR, INTERIOR CONTAINING TINFOIL FIGURES OF BUDDHA.
Four inches long. Pearl-coated figure of Buddha, obverse and reverse, showing concave depression originally filled with tin foil or wax.



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an abnormal secretion of the pearl material in the adjacent tissues. It is evident also that pearls of this kind could be formed only in the female shells, and this point is one that requires further investigation.

The evidence for the intrusion theory may be briefly reviewed as follows: Cases are known among the marine pearl oysters in which small fish entering the open valves of the large shell have worked their way in between the shell and the mantle and been unable to escape. They have then been coated over with the pearl secretion and fastened down thereby to the inner surface of the valve. When subsequently the shell has been gathered and opened by pearl-fishers the form of the little intruder has been found distinctly preserved in pearly relief on the interior of the shell. Other similar instances are also known.

Among many remarkable specimens of pearls and pearl shells exhibited at the World's Fair at Chicago in 1893, and now in the Field Columbian Museum, were several examples of this kind. One of these was a small piece of true mother-of-pearl shell two-fifths of an inch in length, which broke while undergoing the operation of being made into a button, revealing a small inclosed crab immediately below the blister. Among fresh-water shells the same fact has been indicated in a few instances—one where a crayfish has been thus inclosed beneath a pearly covering, and another where a *Unio*, from Long Island, contained an insect entombed in the same way.

There are, however, even more positive proofs. It has long been the habit of the Chinese to produce artificial pearl objects by introducing little flat metallic figures, usually images of Buddha, between the valves and the mantle of a large river-mussel of that country (*Dipsas plicatus*). These little figures, made of tin, are carefully inserted so as not to injure the animal, which is then returned to the water and left for some months or a year. When again dredged up and opened, the figures are found to be entirely coated over with the pearly material and slightly attached thereby to the inner surface of the valve; they may then be easily removed and used for ornaments or charms (plate III). The Chinese also sometimes insert strings of small beads, which become apparently pearls, and carry out this same method by other ingenious devices.

In a shell in the Lea collection of *Unionida*, which has been presented to the United States National Museum, an oval piece of white wax, flat on the lower side and rounded on the upper, which had been inserted in the valve near the hinge, is entirely coated with a beautiful pink nacre. It has been broken out of the shell, the pearly nacre of the lower or flat side remaining in the shell, whereas the dome-shaped piece retains the coating.

At the International Fisheries Exhibition, held in Berlin during 1880, there were shown the results of experiments undertaken in Germany toward the production of artificial pearls from *Unios*, in a manner similar to that practiced by the Chinese. Flat tin figures, usually of fish, were introduced between the mantle and the shell. Similar experiments were conducted in the Royal Saxon pearl fisheries. Either small foreign bodies were introduced into the mantle, in order to form the nucleus for the free pearl formation, or the Chinese method of inserting such bodies between the mantle and the shell was followed. From the second method successful results were shown. The foreign bodies that had been introduced—poor pearls from other mussels, pieces of grain, or china buttons—were entirely covered with nacreous substance. The shape of these objects makes it impossible for the mantle to fit closely around

them, and hence the nacre covers them so irregularly that it is not possible to make any use of them. From specimens exhibited it was shown that German Unios, as well as those of China, could be made to cover a plain relief with nacre.

With the great abundance of Unio shells in North America, and their exquisite variety of tints, it seems as though a careful and judicious system of experiments might develop a form of art industry of great beauty and interest.

One of the most singular circumstances connected with the New Jersey "pearl fever" of 1857 was the discovery of several shells which proved that local savants had experimented on the pearl-bearing Unios by dropping mother-of-pearl buttons inside the shell, hoping that the mussel would cover them with its secretion. The specimens found had evidently been experimented on some thirty years previous, at a time when European scientists were greatly interested in shells received from China, which had been treated as above described.

As further bearing on this point, although not in relation to fresh-water shells, may be noted some facts brought out in the special report on pearl fisheries and pearl supply, in vol. II, No. 191, of the United States consular reports (August, 1896). In this article Mr. W. J. Weatherill, United States consul at Brisbane, Australia, in describing the pearl fisheries in Torres Strait, alludes to the local variation in the abundance of pearls in the pearl oysters, and states that the yield is much less where the bottom is muddy or clayey than where it consists of gravel or sharp sand. He also says that experiments are in progress for the production of pearls by artificial introduction of foreign substances, though as yet there has not been time to determine how far they may be successful.

Mr. A. E. Morland, consul at Belize, British Honduras, speaks of the pink pearls found in the large West India conch shell (*Strombus gigas*), and mentions that these also can be artificially induced, though it is not done at that place. He refers to an instance, however, in which a person did succeed in this process, introducing a foreign nucleus through a hole bored in the shell, and thus obtaining conch pearls; but instead of being rewarded for his ingenuity the pearl manufacturer was brought before a West India magistrate and fined for fraud.

Fresh-water pearls have attracted attention more or less from very ancient times and in many lands. It would seem that pearls from Scotland, and perhaps other parts of northern Europe, must have been early articles of trade and barter with the Romans. Suetonius states that Cæsar undertook his British expedition partly for the sake of finding pearls, and Pliny and Tacitus report his bringing home a buckler made of British pearls, which he dedicated to Venus Genetrix and hung up in her temple. An account of the pearl fisheries in Ireland¹ was published, stating that oysters were found set up in the sands of the river beds, with the open side from the torrent. About one in one hundred would contain a pearl, and one pearl in one hundred would be tolerably clear. Between the years 1761 and 1764 the river Conway in Scotland supplied the London market with pearls to the value of £10,000 and fine Scotch pearls are still sold in London. The rivers of Cumberland, the Conway and the Tay in Scotland have yielded pearls that were noted for their beauty in times past, and they still continue to do so. In the United States consular report upon Pearls and Pearl Supply, vol. II, No. 191 (August, 1896), several references are made to these Scotch and Irish pearls as still in the markets of Europe, though not as being very fine. The Armagh River in County Tyrone and the Slavey River in County

¹ Trans. Royal Phil. Soc., 1693.

Wexford are mentioned as Irish sources. Lakes in Finland are specified as yielding small bluish-white pearls, which are chiefly sold as Scotch pearls, which they resemble in character. At the Columbian Exposition at Chicago reproductions of ancient Irish gold jewelry were shown, in which pearls from rivers in Ireland were employed.

The abundant Unios of Mesopotamia have not been as yet recognized as margaritiferous—a fact which seems rather surprising. It may well be, however, that pearls from that region would not have been distinguished by traders from the marine pearls of the Persian Gulf, into which those rivers discharge. As there has been little scientific observation in the Tigris and Euphrates valleys, the precise sources have been unknown.

That so few American conchologists have paid attention to American pearls is perhaps accounted for by the fact that they are found more frequently in old, distorted, and diseased shells, which are not so desirable for collections as the finer specimens. Collectors who have opened many thousands of Unios have never observed a pearl of value. Pearls are usually found either by farmers, who devote their spare time to this industry and, if no result is obtained, suffer no loss, or by persons in country villages who are without regular occupation, but are ever seeking means for rapid increase of fortune. The general method of collecting shells is for boys and men to wade into the mill-race or into the river to their necks, feeling for the sharp ends of the Unio, which always project. When one is discovered the finder either dives after it or lifts it with his feet. It was the custom formerly to open the shells in the water, and once during the process a pearl the size of a pigeon's egg is said to have been dropped into the water and was never recovered. Multitudes of shells that do not contain pearls are destroyed. Many brooks and rivers have been completely raked and scraped, often in a reckless manner and consequently with little result. This wholesale destruction has no doubt exhausted many varieties of these shells, together with the depredations of hogs—which have exterminated whole shoals of Unios when the brooks were low—and impurities introduced into the water by manufacturing establishments. The more eastern States are so densely populated, and the streams so contaminated with sewage and refuse from factories, that animal life is rapidly disappearing from the water-courses in many localities.

In order to obviate this wholesale destruction, so far as pearl-hunting is concerned, it would be well to introduce into this country instruments like those that have been employed in Saxony and Bavaria. One of these is a thin, flat, iron tool with a bent end which is inserted in the shell. The handle is then turned to 90°, and the shell is opened without injury to the animal. Another implement is a pair of pliers with sharp-pointed jaws and a screw between the arms, which is turned by the hand until the valves of the shell are sufficiently distended to see whether it contains a pearl. If it does not, the animal is returned to its former haunts, perhaps to propagate more valuable progeny.

EARLY HISTORY OF UNIO PEARLS IN NORTH AMERICA.

The history of *Unio* pearls in North America may be reviewed briefly as follows, from the dim, prehistoric past, through the period of discovery and exploration, and finally in recent and present developments:

Examinations of some of the mounds of the Mississippi Valley, especially at certain points in Ohio, have revealed the fact that the forgotten race that erected these remarkable structures gathered and used the fresh-water pearls to an extent that is to us astonishing. On the hearths of some of these mounds in Ohio the pearls have been found, not by hundreds, but by thousands, and even by bushels, now of course, damaged and half-decomposed by centuries of burial and by the heat of sacrificial fires. How such enormous stores of them were obtained is a problem not easy to solve, for all the pearls that have been gathered in the recent years of search and excitement would not approach in number those found in any one of several such mounds.

There would seem to be a strong presumption that these ancient people must have used the *Unios* largely for food, as we know that the later Indian tribes did. They naturally were thus led to the finding of pearls, and accumulated large stores of them in the course of time. The ancient tribes of Brazil have left shell-heaps along rivers tributary to the Amazon, composed of fresh-water shells of that region (*Hyria* and *Castalia*); and though no such stores of pearls have been found, yet the shells themselves have been much employed as ornaments among these people.

Passing on to the period of European discovery and exploration, we find in the early records interesting accounts of the possession of pearls by the Indian tribes of this country, which they had evidently obtained, largely, if not wholly, from the fresh-water shells of our rivers and lakes. The Spanish explorers who accompanied DeSoto in his memorable expedition from Florida to the Mississippi, in 1540, give many remarkable accounts of the pearl treasures seen and procured among the natives with whom they came in contact in their extensive wanderings through the region of the Gulf States, and a hundred years later some of the English colonists made references of a similar kind in their accounts of the more northern tribes.

The whole subject of *Unio* pearls, however, remained almost untouched by the white settlers and colonists until the middle of the present century. In 1857 the first important pearl discovery was made, near Paterson, N. J.; and since then, at intervals of some years, valuable discoveries have been made in other parts of the country, followed in each case by a widespread popular excitement, or "pearl fever," which has resulted in the almost complete destruction of the shells over considerable areas. When the streams have been "cleaned out," and a good many fine pearls procured and sold, and no more are attainable, the excitement subsides, and the shells are again enabled to grow undisturbed, and in some degree replenish the streams. But of late years the pearl-hunting has extended more widely, and the shells are being rapidly reduced; and unless improved methods are adopted for their protection the fresh-water pearls of North America will, ere long, become a thing of the past.

Taking up the several historical aspects more in detail, we may review, first, the evidence as to prehistoric use of North American fresh-water pearls and pearl shells, illustrating it by some references to the habits of modern tribes in other regions.

Many years ago, perforated pearls were found by Dr. Edwin H. Davis¹ on the hearths of five distinct groups of mounds in Ohio, and sometimes in such abundance that they could be gathered by the hundred. They were generally of irregular form, mostly pear-shaped, though perfectly round ones were also found among them. The smaller specimens measured about one fourth of an inch in diameter, but the largest had a diameter of three-fourths of an inch.

According to this same authority, the pearl-bearing shells occurring in the rivers of the region whose antiquities are described are not in such abundance that they could have furnished the amount discovered in the tumuli; and the pearls of these fluviatile shells, moreover, are said to be far inferior in size to those recovered from the altars. It was erroneously thought that the latter were derived from the coast of the Atlantic and of the Gulf of Mexico.

In this connection some curious facts are mentioned by the late Dr. E. G. Squier² regarding the use of pearls by the Ohio Mound-builders for ornamenting articles of carved stone. He describes a number of objects, chiefly pipes, made in the form of heads of animals and birds, carefully and accurately carved from what he terms porphyry, with the eyes represented by small pearls, decomposed or calcined when found, but in some instances retaining their places. Another similar object was a small human head, the face apparently tattooed, also carved out of dark porphyry, with a row of 15 holes, close together, forming a fillet across the top of the forehead. When found, "these holes were filled with small calcined pearls, originally constituting a brilliant circlet, contrasting in a striking manner with the dark stone in which they were inserted." He compares this little object with one described by Humboldt (Researches, vol. i, p. 43) under the title of "Statue of an Aztec Priestess," which bears a similar line of sculptured beads or pearls across the forehead.

Mr. Squier refers to the great abundance of pearls found upon the hearths of some of the Ohio mounds even at that early stage of exploration. He thinks that their number and size are too great to attribute them to the Unios, and dwells upon the marine shells of the Gulf coast, that are found also in the mounds, and beads made therefrom, as likewise alligators' teeth, tertiary fossils of the South, etc., as pointing to extensive traffic and intercourse with the shores of the Mexican Gulf. No doubt there was much of such intercourse, but most of the pearls found in Ohio are probably from the inland waters.

Pearls have subsequently been found in great numbers in the tumuli of the Scioto and Miami valleys, in Ohio, by Prof. F. W. Putnam, of the Peabody Museum, Cambridge, Mass., and Mr. Warren K. Moorehead, of Xenia, Ohio, who made extensive explorations in these mounds, some of the results of which were shown at the Columbian Exposition at Chicago. The former had investigated particularly the Turner group of mounds in the Little Miami Valley, the latter the Hopewell group in Ross County near Chillicothe, on the North Fork of Paint Creek.

In the Anthropological Building at Chicago was shown the great "find" of pearls made by Mr. Moorehead in the Effigy mound of the Hopewell group. Here more than a gallon of pearls was obtained, with two skeletons. They ranged from the size of a small millet seed to a diameter of two-thirds of an inch, or even more. In shape they were usually irregular, though many were round or nearly so; but the absence

¹ Ancient Monuments of the Mississippi Valley, Squier & Davis, Washington, 1848, p. 252.

² Observations on the Aboriginal Monuments of the Mississippi Valley, Trans. of the Amer. Ethnological Society, New York, vol. ii, 1847.

of the elongated and hinge pearls is remarkable. All had been drilled with holes varying from 1 to fully 3 millimeters in diameter, but generally the larger size, made with a heated copper wire in the manner described by early travelers as common among the Indians. This drilling was undoubtedly for the purpose of attaching them to clothing or belts, as shown by the fact that 400 or 500 had been originally sewed upon a rough cloth shirt extending from the waist to the knees of a skeleton. Copper plates on the hips had preserved traces of the cloth, and several dozen beads were found with cloth fiber still extending through the perforation. Pearls were usually placed at the wrists, on the ankles, around the neck, or in the mouth. In the Porter mounds at Frankfort, Ross County, several hundred were on copper plates. Nearly all, however, are found loose, although some are imbedded in a hard, rock-like mass of clay, cemented either by a calcareous solution from the weathering of the pearls or by an iron oxide produced by the decomposition of the meteoric iron ornaments that were found in such quantities in the Hopewell group of mounds. These, like all the pearls found in mounds in the Ohio and adjacent valleys, were undoubtedly from the *Unios*, which were evidently very plentiful at the time. Very few of the pearls retained any of the original orient, although it is possible that by peeling them some good unaltered pearl surfaces could be obtained; but it is more likely that either heat or burial in the ground, where they have undoubtedly lain for centuries, has destroyed them by infiltration of surface waters through the earth in which they were imbedded.

In the explorations which Mr. Moorehead conducted he found over forty bears' teeth in which pearls had been set, lying near skeletons. The settings were in the side or near the base (root) of the tooth. Skeletons accompanied by a large number of pearls always have other relics associated with them, such as native copper articles, mica, obsidian, galena, hematite, ocean shells, bad-land fossils, and other foreign objects. This fact would indicate clearly that the remains thus distinguished must have been those of prominent persons.

At a mound in the Little Miami Valley Professor F. W. Putnam and Dr. Charles L. Metz procured more than 60,000 pearls, nearly two bushels, drilled and undrilled, undoubtedly of *Unio* origin, all of them, however, decayed or much altered and of no commercial value. In 1884 these scientists examined the Marriott mound and found nearly 100 *Unio* shells; among other objects of interest were six canine teeth of bears perforated by a lateral hole near the edge at the point of greatest curvature of the root, and by passing a cord through this the tooth could be fastened to any object or worn as an ornament. Two of the teeth had a hole bored through near the end of the root on the side opposite the lateral perforation, and the hole countersunk in order to receive a large spherical pearl about three-eighths of an inch in diameter. When the teeth were found the pearls were in place, although chalky from decay. Over 250 pearl beads were found, concerning which they say:

The pearl beads found in the several positions mentioned are natural pearls, probably obtained from the several species of *Unios* in the Ohio rivers. In size they vary from one tenth inch to one-half inch in diameter, and many are spherical. They are neatly drilled, and the larger from opposite sides. These pearls are now chalky, and crumble on handling, but when fresh they would have formed brilliant necklaces and pendants.—(18 Rept. Peabody Museum, p. 449, 1886.)

At the Turner group, in the Little Miami Valley, Professor Putnam, exploring for the Peabody Museum, secured half a bushel, nearly every one blackened by heat, some cracked, and all impaired in luster. Mr. Moorehead took from two hearths upward of 100,000 pearls.

In an altar or "hearth" of the Effigy mound were found a number of bears' teeth and several quarts of pearls, many of which had several successive layers flaked off. Some of these pearls measured two-thirds of an inch in diameter. In this remarkable altar were found hundreds of obsidian knives and spears of exquisite workmanship, measuring from a few inches up to 8 inches in length. With these were several hundred earrings made of native copper coated with meteoric iron.

From their manner of occurrence in connection with the skeletons, the archaeologist is led to see that the use of pearls, although so many are found, was confined to a few individuals. A remarkable fact in this connection is that pearls have never been found in isolated mounds nor out of the great mound groups. The hill mounds, the villages of the small streams, and the tumuli of northern Ohio have yielded none. They seem to have been used by the more cultured tribes, and are an evidence of extensive trade and barter.

It is of interest to archaeologists to note, further, that pearls are not found in any quantity outside of the Miami and Scioto valleys, and that they were deposited with the remains of persons held in especial distinction, while the enormous numbers found indicate that the yield of Unio pearls must have been far greater in the remote past than it has been at any time since the whites have occupied the country.

From Taylor's mound, Oregonia, Warren County, Ohio, there were four Unio shells in which a hole two-thirds of an inch in diameter had been drilled, either for the purpose of extracting a piece of the shell to make a bead from, or else to allow the shell to be used as an ornament. From this same mound were shown decorated disks made of Unio shells and a long Unio from which the corner nearest the lip had been ground down or cut off, to adapt it for use as a scraper or a tool of some kind.

The South American exhibits at the Columbian Exposition at Chicago presented many interesting uses of pearly shells, both for inlaying and in various forms of personal adornment. Both these modes of application seem to have been carried very far among some of the native tribes of this continent.

In the Amazon Basin the Unio family is well developed, but is largely represented by two genera not found elsewhere—*Castalia* and *Hyria*. These are characteristic South American types, differing from the Unios and Anodons of North America and the Old World, but equally suitable for ornamental uses from their pearly character. Probably many of the objects here described were made from these shells.

In the Paraguay collection were a number of necklaces made of oblong squares of Unio shell, and connected by means of a fiber drawn through two drilled holes at the upper end, while the lower ends are decorated with three small circular drillings which do not entirely perforate the shell. Another necklace consisted of small joints of hollow reed or bamboo, about an inch in length, between which were blue glass beads, and pendent from each of these a small brilliant Unio shell, pure white, with a slight iridescence, and remarkably beautiful. Still another necklace was made entirely of Unio shells, not very iridescent, with the dark-brown epidermis remaining on the exterior. Internally the drilling was either near one of the ends or toward the center of the shell. These were strung by thin vegetable fiber, so as to hang pendent about 3 inches from the fiber necklace, and were evidently intended to serve for a rattle or noise-producing ornament. In the same exhibit were a number of pendants, consisting of small pieces or large sections of Unio shells, beautifully iridescent, varying from oval to disk shape, and from 1 to 4 inches long. In another necklace Unios were strung indiscriminately with hoofs of some small animal.

The use of shells as ornaments is very pronounced among these people. In addition to those mentioned, bullas and land shells were strung in a similar manner. These were white, gray, yellow, frequently with pink-tinted tips. An interesting necklace consisted of operculums, 2 inches in length, of some large shell, attached by a fiber and decorated with yellow feathers.

From Peru life-size models of the Zaperos and Jiveros Indians, residing on the Montaña of Peru, were shown fully attired with their ornaments. These tribes decorate their head-dresses, shoulder-bands, and breasts with a profusion of circular, diamond-shaped, and pear-shaped pieces of a brilliant Anodon shell. These they arrange to form stars and other patterns by sewing a number of them to the fabric, generally by means of perforations, and they frequently have them swinging as pendants from the dress. They also use small Unio shells, the wing-cases of beetles, white and red dried seeds, teeth of animals, etc.

Passing to the historical accounts of the early explorers of the New World, we find that Columbus himself and all the Spanish discoverers were attracted and impressed by the frequent and abundant possession of pearls among the natives. These pearls among the West Indian peoples and the coast tribes were probably from the marine pearl oyster which occurs to some extent along the shores of the Caribbean Sea. On the mainland of North America, however, it seems clear that the pearls found by DeSoto and his party all through the present Southern States must have come largely from the Unios of the adjacent lakes and streams, like those possessed by the prehistoric Mound-builders before.

Omitting for the present many interesting accounts of pearl treasures observed in the West Indies, and by Balboa and others on or near the Pacific shores of Central America and the Isthmus—which last relate to the true marine pearl oyster—we may pass to the accounts of De Soto's expedition, and the pearls found and seen throughout the whole region from Florida to upper Georgia, Alabama, and Tennessee.

When the king of Spain made Hernando DeSoto governor of Cuba and conqueror of Florida, with the title of Adelantado, his concession provided that one-fifth of all the gold and silver, precious stones, and pearls won in battle, on entering towns, or obtained by barter with the Indians, be reserved to the Crown. It was further stipulated that the gold and silver, gems, pearls, and other treasures which might be found and taken, as well in the graves, sepulchers, ocues, or temples of the Indians as in other places where they were accustomed to offer sacrifices to idols, or in other concealed religious precincts or buried houses, or in any other public place "should be equally divided between the king and the party making the discovery."¹ It is evident that among the valuable trophies of this expedition precious pearls were confidently anticipated; and that the Spaniards were not disappointed in this expectation the early narratives abundantly testify. These establish beyond all controversy that pearls were used as ornaments among the Indians of Florida and the South.

It is related how, near the Bay of Espiritu Santo (now Tampa Bay), in Florida, the followers of DeSoto came upon the town of an Indian chief called Ucita. His house stood near the beach, and at the other end of the town was a temple, on the top of which perched a wooden fowl with gilded eyes. Within these eyes were pearls such as the Indians greatly valued, piercing them for beads and stringing them to wear about their necks and wrists. When the Indian queen welcomed the Spanish adventurer to the hospitalities of the Cutifachiqui she drew from over her head a long string

¹Antiquities of the Southern Indians, by Charles C. Jones (New York, 1873), p. 467.

of pearls, and, throwing it around his neck, exchanged with him gracious words of friendship and courtesy. Observing that the Christians valued these pearls, the cacica told the governor that if he would order the search of some sepulchers in the village he would find many pearls, and if he chose to send to the sepulchers in the uninhabited towns he might load all his horses with them. The Spaniards did examine and rifle of their contents the sepulchers in Cutifachiqui, and upon the authority of the Knight of Elvas obtained from them 350 pounds' weight of pearls, some of which were formed after the similitude of babies and birds (baroques). If the truth were known, or if an Indian had written this account, we should probably find that DeSoto and his companions, in their eager quest for treasures, violated the graves without permission and plundered the receptacles wherein were gathered the most costly possessions of the natives. As a proof that the Indians did not willingly part with these ornaments, but suffered pillage through fear of these strange and wanton men, we are informed that when the cacica, whom DeSoto compelled to accompany him with the intention of taking her to Guaxule, which was the farthest limit of her territory, succeeded in making her escape, she carried back with her a cane box filled with unbored pearls, the most precious of all her jewels.

Luys Hernandez de Biedma says that the governor, while at this town, opened a "mosque" in which were interred the chief personages of that country.

From it we took a quantity of pearls of the weight of as many as $6\frac{1}{2}$ or 7 arrobas, though they were injured from lying in the earth and in the adipose substance of the dead.

In the estimate of the relator, one of the saddest losses encountered by the expedition in the bloody affair at Mauilla was the destruction of the pearls which the Spaniards had been sedulously collecting during their wanderings in this strange land.

The most minute and interesting description of the manner in which the Indians obtained pearls and converted them into beads is furnished by Garcilasso Inca de la Vega. While De Soto was in the town of Ichiaha, which was probably located at or near the confluence of the Etowah and Oostanaula rivers, possibly on the very spot now occupied by the city of Rome, Georgia, the following circumstance occurred:

The cacique came one day to the governor, bringing him a present of a string of pearls 5 feet in length. These pearls were as large as filberts, and had they not been bored by means of fire, which had discolored them, would have been of immense value. De Soto thankfully received them, and in return presented the Indian chief with pieces of velvet and cloth of various colors and other Spanish trifles held in much esteem by the natives. In reply to the demand of De Soto, the cacique stated that the pearls had been obtained in the neighborhood. He further told him that in the sepulcher of his ancestors was amassed a prodigious quantity, of which the Spaniards were welcome to carry away as many as they pleased. The Adelantado thanked him for his good will, but replied that, much as he wished for pearls, he never would insult the sanctuaries of the dead to obtain them, adding that he only accepted the string from the chieftain's hands.

De Soto having expressed a curiosity to see the manner of extracting pearls from the shells, the cacique instantly dispatched 40 canoes to fish for oysters during the night. At an early hour next morning a quantity of wood was gathered and piled upon the river bank, and being set on fire was speedily reduced to glowing embers. As soon as the canoes arrived the oysters were laid upon the hot coals. They quickly opened with the heat, and from some of the first thus opened the Indians obtained 10 or 12 pearls as large as peas, which they brought to the governor and the cacique, who were standing together looking on. They were of a fine quality, but somewhat discolored by the fire and smoke. The Indians were apt also to further injure pearls thus obtained by boring them with a heated copper instrument.

De Soto, having gratified his curiosity, returned to his quarters to partake of his morning meal. While thus engaged a soldier entered with a large pearl in his hand. He had stewed some oysters,

and in eating them felt the pearl between his teeth. Not having been injured by fire or smoke, it retained its beautiful whiteness, and was so large and perfect in its form that several Spaniards, who pretended to be skilled in those matters, declared it would be worth 400 ducats. The soldier would have given it to the governor to present to his wife, Dona Isabel de Bobadilla, but De Soto declined the generous offer, advising him to preserve it until he should arrive at Havana, when he could purchase horses and other necessaries with it; moreover, as a reward for his liberality, De Soto insisted upon paying the fifth of the value due the Crown.¹

During the course of the weary march of the expedition through the mountains of upper Georgia, the following circumstance is related by the same historian:

A foot-soldier, calling to a horseman who was his friend, drew forth from his wallet a linen bag in which were 6 pounds of pearls, probably filched from one of the Indian sepulchers. These he offered as a gift to his comrade, being heartily tired of carrying them on his back, though he had a pair of broad shoulders capable of bearing the burden of a mule. The horseman refused to accept so thoughtless an offer. "Keep them yourself," said he, "you have most need of them. The governor intends shortly to send messengers to Havana, when you can forward these presents and have them sold, and obtain three or four horses with the proceeds, so that you need no longer go on foot." Juan Terron was piqued at having his offer refused. "Well," said he, "if you will not have them, I swear I will not carry them, and they shall remain here." So saying, he untied the bag, and whirling it around as if he were sowing seed, scattered the pearls in all directions among the thickets and herbage. Then putting up his bag in his wallet, as if it was more valuable than the pearls, he marched on, leaving his comrades and other bystanders astonished at his folly. The soldiers made a hasty search for the scattered pearls and recovered thirty of them. When they beheld their great size and beauty, none of them being bored or discolored, they lamented that so many of them had been lost, for the whole would have sold in Spain for more than 6,000 ducats. This egregious folly gave rise to a common proverb in the army, "There are no pearls for Juan Terron." The poor fellow himself became an object of constant jest and ridicule, until at last, made sensible of his absurd conduct, he implored them never to banter him further on the subject.²

Fontaneda states that at the place where Lucas Vasquez went seed pearls were found in certain conchs, and that between Havalachi and Olagale is a river called by the Indians Guasacaesqui, which means, in the Spanish language, Rio de Canas (river of canes), which is an arm of the sea; and along the adjacent coast pearls are procured from certain oysters and conchs. These are carried to all the provinces and villages of Florida, but principally to Tocobaja, the nearest town. The Indians of the town of Abalachi asserted that the Spaniards hanged their cacique because he would not give them a string of large pearls which he wore around his neck, the middle pearl of which was as big as the egg of a turtle dove. Ribault frequently alludes to the possession of pearls by the natives of Florida, and on one occasion saw the goodliest man of a company of Indians with a collar of gold and silver about his neck, from which depended a pearl "as large as an acorn, at the least."³ A present of pearls from the cacique to the conquerors was an earnest token of consideration and the most acceptable pledge of friendship that he could offer.

According to Albert J. Pickett, the oyster alluded to by Garcilasso was identical with the mussel so common in all the rivers of Alabama. He says:

Heaps of mussel shells are now to be seen on our river banks wherever Indians used to live. They were much used by the ancient Indians for some purpose, and old warriors have informed me that their ancestors once used the shells to temper the clay with which they made their vessels. But as thousands of the shells lie banked up, some deep in the ground, we may also suppose that the

¹The foregoing is taken from Theodore Irving's *Conquest of Florida under Hernando DeSoto* (London, 1835), vol. 2, p. 14, and is from Pierre Richelet's translation, made in 1831. De la Vega's entire work, translated from the same source, appears in the *History of Hernando DeSoto and Florida*, by Barnard Shipp (Philadelphia, 1881).

²*Conquest of Florida under Hernando DeSoto*, by Theodore Irving (London, 1835), vol. 2, p. 7.

³*The Whole and True Discovery of Terra Florida*, by Thomas Hackett (London, 1563).

Indians in De Soto's time, everywhere in Alabama, obtained pearls from them. There can be no doubt about the quantity of pearls found in this State and Georgia in 1540, but they were of a coarser and more valueless kind than the Spaniards supposed. The Indians used to perforate them with a heated copper spindle and string them around their necks and arms like beads.

David Ingram, during the "Land Travels" of himself and others in the year 1568-1569, from the Rio de Minas in the Gulf of Mexico to Cape Breton in Acadia, made the following observations:

There is in some of those Countreys great abundance of Pearle, for in every cottage he founde Pearle, in some howse a quarte, in some a pottell, in some a pecke, more or lesse, where he did see some as great as an acorn, and Richard Browne, one of his companions, found one of these great pearls in one of their canoes, or Boates, Wch Pearle he gaue to Mouns Champaine, whoe toke them aboarde his Shippe, and brought them to Newhaven in ffrancee.

The English were quick to note the presence of pearls in America, being already acquainted with those found in the rivers of Scotland and Ireland; and hence we have repeated references to them from early English travelers and colonists.

A member of the expedition of Sir Walter Raleigh collected from the natives of Virginia 5,000 pearls, "of which number he chose so many as made a fayre chaine, which for their likeness and uniformity in roundnesse, orientnesse and pidenesse of many excellent colors, with equalitie in greatness, were very fayre and rare."¹

In the plates illustrative of the "Admiranda Narratio" and the "Brevis Narratio," the natives both of Virginia and Florida are represented in the possession of numerous strings of pearls of large size; and in his description of the "treasure of riches" of the Virginia Indians, Robert Beverly says:

They likewise have some pearls amongst them, and formerly had many more, but where they got them is uncertain, except they found them in the oyster banks which are frequent in this country.²

Wilson asserts that he saw pearls "bigger than Rouncival pease," and perfectly round, taken from oysters found on the Carolina coast.³

Father Louis Hennepin assures us that the Indians along the Mississippi wore bracelets and earrings of fine pearls, which they spoiled, having nothing to bore them with but fire. He adds:

They gave us to understand that they received them in exchange for their calumets from nations inhabiting the coast of the great lake to the southward, which I take to be the Gulph of Florida.

Sufficient historical evidence has been given to show that pearls were in general use among the southern Indians; that the choicest of them were the prized ornaments of the prominent personages of the tribes; that the fluviatile mussels were collected and opened for the purpose of procuring them; that the marine shells of the Atlantic, the Gulf of Mexico, and the Pacific, yielded tribute to the labor, skill, and taste of numerous pearl-divers, and that these pearls were found, not only in the possession of the living, but also in large quantities in the graves of chieftains and the sepulchers of the undistinguished dead.

Doubtless, however, the accounts that have reached us from the historians of these expeditions and voyages are somewhat extravagant with regard to the quality, quantity, and size of the pearls in the possession of the natives. From the interviews between the Europeans and the latter, it appears that the Indians obtained their pearls both from marine shells and from fresh-water mussels. Some of the true oysters of Georgia and Florida are margaritiforous, and many of them contain seed

¹ A Briefe and True Report of the New Found Land of Virginia (Frankfort on the Main, 1590) p. 11.

² Documents connected with the History of South Carolina, edited by Plowden Charles Jennett Weston (London, 1856), p. 8.

³ Transactions of the Philosophic Society for 1693.

pearls. Specimens symmetrical in shape, as large as pepper-corns, and not wanting in beauty, have been observed by Col. Charles C. Jones, who says:

Some were quite big enough to have been perforated in the rude fashion practiced by the Indians. They were, however, of a milky color and opaque. Neither in size nor quality did they answer the description spoken of in the Spanish narratives.¹

The fluviatile mussels contributed more freely than any others to the treasures of these early people. At various points along the southern rivers relic beds are found, composed of the fresh-water shells native to the streams.

Kjoekkenmoeddings on the St. Johns River, Florida, consisting of river shells, were examined and described by Prof. Jeffries Wyman. He saw similar accumulations on the banks of the Concord River in Massachusetts, and was informed by eye-witnesses that they are numerous in California.² The inland lakes of Florida, also, and even some ponds in middle Georgia and Alabama, exhibit along their banks similar ancient refuse piles where lacustrine shells abound. These heaps are common in the South, and several of them on the banks of the Savannah River, above Augusta, are fully described by Charles C. Jones.³ He says:

In these relic beds no two parts of the same shell are, as a general rule, found in juxtaposition. The hinge is broken, and the valves of the shell, after having been artificially torn asunder, seem to have been carelessly cast aside and allowed to accumulate.

In order to ascertain the precise varieties of shells from which the southern Indians obtained their pearls, Mr. Jones invited an expression of opinion from the following scientists, whose pursuits rendered them familiar with the conchology of the United States. They throw considerable light upon this inquiry.

Dr. William Stimpson, of the Chicago Academy of Sciences, considered the statements of the early Spanish historians with regard to the size of the pearls (as large as filberts) exaggerated. He says:

The pearls of the *Avicula*, our only margaritiferous marine genus, are very small, and those of the oyster valueless. The Indians must have obtained their pearls from the fresh-water bivalves (*Unio* and *Anodon*) which abound in the rivers of Georgia, etc. These are usually small, but in very rare instances examples have occurred reaching in diameter one-third of an inch.

Prof. Joseph LeConte writes:

Most of the fresh-water mussels contain small pearls now and then. By far the best and largest number I have seen were taken from the *Anodon gibbosa* (Lea), a large and beautiful shell abundant in the swamps of Liberty County, Ga., at least in Bulltown and Altamaha swamps. Some of the pearls taken from this species are as large as swan shot. Of the salt-water shells, I know not if any produce pearls except the oyster (*Ostrea virginica*). Pearls of small size are sometimes found in them.

Prof. William S. Jones, of the University of Georgia, says that he has seen small pearls in many of the *Unios* found in southern Georgia.

Prof. Jeffries Wyman, after a careful and extensive series of excavations in the shell-heaps of Florida, failed to find a single pearl. He remarks:

It is hardly probable that the Spaniards could have been mistaken as to the fact of the ornaments of the Indians being pearls; but in view of their frequent exaggerations I am almost compelled to the belief that there was some mistake, and possibly they may not have distinguished between the pearls and the shell beads, some of which would correspond with the size and shape of the pearls mentioned by the Spaniards.

¹ Antiquities of the Southern Indians (New York, 1873), p. 481.

² Cf. Fresh-Water Shell Heaps of the St. Johns River, East Florida (Salem, Mass., 1868), p. 6.

³ Antiquities of the Southern Indians (New York, 1873), p. 483; also Monumental Remains of Georgia (Savannah, 1861), p. 14.

Prof. Joseph Jones, whose investigations throw much valuable light upon the contents of the ancient tumuli of Tennessee, says:

I do not remember finding a genuine pearl in the many mounds which I have opened in the valleys of the Tennessee, the Cumberland, the Harpeth, and elsewhere. Many of the pearls described by the Spaniards were probably little else than polished beads cut out of large sea shells and from the thicker portions of fresh-water mussels, and prepared so as to resemble pearls. I have examined thousands, and all present a laminated structure, as if carved out of thick shells and sea conchs.

Charles M. Wheatley was confident that there were "splendid pearls in southern Unios," and instances the *Unio blandingianus* and the large old *Unio buddianus* (*buckleyi*) from Lakes George and Monroe in Florida as pearl-bearing. He says:

In Georgia the large, thick shells of the Chattahoochee, such as the *Unio elliotti*, would be most likely to contain fine ones, but there is no positive rule, as an injured shell of any species will doubtless afford some, irregular in most cases and of no value, but in some instances worth from \$50 to \$100.

He also mentions that he has received from the Tennessee River, in Alabama, fine round pearls, both white and rose-colored.

John G. Anthony writes:

I never have collected in Florida and but little in Georgia, but what I can say about Ohio I presume will hold good in other States, that the *Unios* of various species furnish them tolerably abundantly there. They are not confined to any particular species, but are generally found in the thicker and more ponderous shells, though even the thinner shells often have small ones, especially such as are found in canals, ponds, and places which seem to be not so healthy for the animal on account of stagnant water. I recollect taking over twenty small ones out of the mantle of one specimen of *Unio fragilis*—*U. gracilis* (Barnes)—which I found in the Miami Canal; and almost every old shell there had more or fewer pearls in it. *U. torsus* (Raf.), *U. orbiculatus* (Hildreth), *U. costatus* (Raf.), and *U. undulatus* (Barnes) also produce them in Ohio. I have seen about half a pint of beautiful pearls, regularly formed and pea size, which were taken in one season and in one neighborhood; so you may judge of their frequency, though, as I hinted before, it is probable that a kind of disease caused by impure water may govern their production somewhat. No doubt the Southern waters are given to making pearls, as well as Ohio streams. I have seen protuberances of the pearl character in southern shells, and have no doubt that one collecting them with the animal in them would find pearls. I particularly recollect *Unio globulus* (Say) and *U. murtoni* (Conrad), both Louisiana species, as having these protuberances in their nacreous matter. Georgia *Unios* are generally too thin to produce any excess of pearly matter and form pearls, but the Louisiana shells from Bayou Teche which I have seen have a remarkably pearly nacre, quite thick, reminding one very much of the marine shell *Trigonia* as to nacre. No doubt the bayous, which have in general no current at all, would make first-rate places for pearl breeding.

Dr. Charles Rau¹ writes:

I learned from Dr. Samuel G. Brinton, who was surgeon of the Army of the Cumberland during the civil war, that mussels of the Tennessee River were occasionally eaten "as a change" by the soldiers of that corps, and pronounced no bad article of diet. Shells of the *Unio* are sometimes found in Indian graves, where they had been deposited with the dead to serve as food during the journey to the land of spirits.

Dr. Brinton saw on the Tennessee River and its tributaries numerous shell-heaps consisting almost exclusively of the *U. virginianus* (Lamarck). In every instance he found shell-heaps close to the water-courses on rich alluvial bottom lands. He says:

The mollusks had evidently been opened by placing them on a fire. The Tennessee mussel is margaritiferous, and there is no doubt but that it was from this species that the early tribes obtained the hoards of pearls which the historian of DeSoto's exploration estimated by the bushel, and which were so much prized as ornaments.²

¹Ancient Aboriginal Trade in North America, Report of the Smithsonian Institution for 1872, p. 38 of the author's reprint.

²See Artificial Shell Deposits in the United States, in the Report of the Smithsonian Institution for 1866, p. 357.

A source has recently been pointed out whence small pearls, and perhaps some fine ones, could have been obtained in considerable quantities by the Indians of Florida. In the Unios of some of the fresh-water lakes of that State there have been found large numbers of pearls, most of them small, but many large enough to be perforated and worn as beads. From one Unio there were taken 84 seed pearls; from another 50, from a third 20, and from several 10 or 12 each. The examinations were chiefly confined to Lake Griffin and its vicinity. It is said that on an island in Lake Okechobee are the remains of an old pearl-fishery, and it is proposed to open the shells of this lake, which are large, in hopes of finding pearls of superior size and quality.

The use of pearls as ornaments by the southern Indians, and the quantities of shells opened by them in various localities, make it seem strange that pearls are not more frequently met with in the relic beds and sepulchral tumuli of that region; but after exploring many shell and earth mounds, Col. Charles C. Jones failed, except in a few instances, to find any.¹ A few were obtained in the extensive relic bed before alluded to, on the Savannah River above Augusta, the largest being four-tenths of an inch in diameter, but all of them blackened by fire. Many of the smaller mounds on the coast of Georgia do not contain pearls, because at the period of their construction the custom of burning the dead appears to have prevailed, hence it may be that the pearls were either immediately consumed or so seriously injured as to crumble out of sight. This absence of pearls tends somewhat to confirm the opinion that beads and ornaments made from the thicker portions of shells, that were carved, perforated, and brilliant with their primal covering, were regarded by the imaginative Spaniards as pearls. More minute investigation, however, will doubtless reveal the existence of pearls in localities where the pearl-bearing shells were collected. Perforated pearls have been found in an ancient burying-ground located near the bank of the Ogeechee River, in Bryan County, Ga.; and many years ago, after a heavy freshet on the Oconee River, which laid bare many Indian graves in the neighborhood of the large mounds on Poullain's plantation, fully a hundred pearls of considerable size were gathered.

It seems probable that what were regarded as pearls by the early Spanish voyagers were, to a large extent, really such, although it is well known that shell beads have been found in mounds in connection with pearls. But the numbers found in Ohio mounds by Prof. Frederick W. Putnam, and by others, leave no room for doubt in this matter. That the Indians of the South also had these pearls, both drilled and undrilled, is beyond question. Notwithstanding the intercourse existing between remote Indian tribes, as shown by many authorities, and the fact that Pacific coast shells have been carried to Arizona, and that clam shells have been found in Zuñi cities by Lieut. Frank H. Cushing, it is likely that these pearls came, not from the pearl oysters of the Pacific coast, but from the marine shells of the Atlantic coast and the fresh-water shells of the eastern part of the continent. It is very probable that the Indians opened the shells to secure the animal as an article of food; that the shells of some varieties, such as the common clam and conch, were made into wampum; and that the pearls found in the shells were used as ornaments, whether lusterless pearls from the common oyster or lustrous ones from the Unio.

For a considerable period, however, after the first explorations, the pearl resources of North America seem to have attracted little attention. The Indian race was contending with the whites for the possession of the country; it was a time of uncertainty and strife for both races; and not until the great waterways of the Mississippi Valley

¹ Antiquities of Southern Indians, p. 486.

had been won by the whites, the region occupied, and settled communities established, do we again begin to find any indications of the search for pearls. For some two centuries the Unios lived and multiplied in the rivers and streams, unmolested by either the native tribes that had used them for food or the pioneers of the new race that had not yet learned of their hidden treasures.

Fresh-water pearls are found, as before stated, in various species of the Unios, frequently, according to Dr. Isaac Lea, in the common *Unio complanatus*, but also in the following: *U. blandingianus*, *U. buddianus*, *U. costatus*, *U. elliotti*, *U. fragilis*, *U. globulus*, *U. gracilis*, *U. mortoni*, *U. nodosus*, *U. orbiculatus*, *U. ovatus*, *U. torsus*, *U. undulatus*, and *U. virginianus*, and doubtless to some extent in all the species. Not one pearl in a hundred, however, is of good shape, and probably not more than one in a hundred of these is really fine. Therefore, as the worth of a pearl depends on both luster and form, the greater number obtained are of slight value. Rev. Horace C. Hovey, however, is credited with having found a pearl half an inch across in the shell of a *Unio ovatus*, near Cincinnati, Ohio.

Unio pearls have been sought since the settlement of this country, and the narratives of early voyagers abound with references to them. In an ancient catalogue¹ of the objects of natural history, made in 1749 by John Winthrop, F. R. S., the following items are mentioned:

30. Unripe pearls which in time would have become (31).
31. Bright pearls which are produced in the same shells (30).
32. Some of the larger sea pearl shells which are often found in deeper waters three times as large and bear larger pearls.

N. B.—Almost all the lakes, ponds, and brooks contain a large fresh-water clam which also bears pearls. The Indians say they have no pearls in them at certain seasons, but at the season when they grow milky the pearls are digested in them, which causes their milkiness.

Dr. Samuel P. Hildreth writes:

Some of the fresh-water shells produce very fine pearls. I have one taken in the waters of the Muskingum, from the shell known as the *Unio nodosus* of Barnes. It is a thick, tuberculated shell, with the most rich and pearly nacre of any in the Western rivers. The specimen is perfect in form, being plano-convex on one side and a full hemisphere on the opposite. It is nearly one-half inch in diameter across the plane face, and three-eighths inch through the transverse diameter, and of a very rich pearly luster. Set in a gold watch-key and surrounded by facets of jet it makes a beautiful appearance, and is by far the largest and finest pearl I have ever seen. Several others have been found, but none to be compared to this.²

Within recent years, however, the gathering of Unio pearls has attained to considerable importance, and economic problems have begun to arise that warrant and even demand careful and detailed inquiry. These present aspects will be considered in the following pages.

¹ Am. J. Sci., I, vol. 47, p. 284, Jan. 1845.

² Am. J. Sci., I, vol. 25, p. 257, April 1834. Ten Days in Ohio, from the Diary of a Naturalist.

THE PEARL FISHERIES OF THE UNITED STATES IN RECENT YEARS.

Although the gathering of pearls from the fresh-water shells of North America is a matter of comparatively recent date among the present inhabitants, it really goes back very far, as already indicated, into the unrecorded past. The first European explorers speak frequently of the number and beauty of the pearls in possession of the natives. Full references have been given previously to the striking accounts in connection with the great expedition of DeSoto from Florida through the present Gulf States to the Mississippi in 1540-41 and to the process of gathering the shells and opening them by heat, as shown to DeSoto, at his request, by a friendly chief. In the same way several early English travelers, from New England to Florida, refer to the Indians as having pearls. No particular attention, however, was given to the subject in the United States until about forty years ago. The natives had been dispossessed, and the white race, occupied with other interests and necessities, took little note of the hosts of fresh-water shells inhabiting the streams and lakes, and did not suspect their power of producing pearls.

In 1857 a pearl of fine luster, weighing 93 grains, was found at Notch Brook, near Paterson, N. J. It became known as the "Queen pearl," and was sold by Tiffany & Co. to the Empress Eugenie of France for \$2,500. It is to-day worth four times that amount. The news of this sale created such an excitement that search for pearls was started throughout the country. The Unios at Notch Brook and elsewhere were gathered by the million and destroyed, often with little or no result. A large, round pearl weighing 400 grains, which would doubtless have been the finest pearl of modern times, was ruined by boiling to open the shell. Within one year pearls were sent to the New York market from nearly every State—in 1857 fully \$15,000 worth. In 1858 it fell off to some \$2,000; in 1859 about \$2,000; in 1860 about \$1,500; in 1860-1863 only \$1,500. The excitement thus abated until about 1868, when there was a slight revival of interest, and many fine pearls were obtained from Little Miami River, Ohio.

Some of the finest American pearls that were next found came from near Waynesville, Ohio, \$3,000 worth being collected in that vicinity during the pearl excitement of 1876. At that time Israel H. Harris, of Waynesville, began what has since become one of the finest and best-known collections of Unio pearls in this country, purchasing during many years every specimen of value that he could find in that part of the State. Among his pearls was one button-shaped on the back and weighing 38 grains; also several almost transparent pink ones, and an interesting specimen showing where a pearl had grown almost entirely through the Unio. His collection contained more than 2,000 pearls, weighing over 2,000 grains, and is in all probability the last collection that will be made from that district. It was exhibited in the jewelry department at the World's Fair held in Paris during 1889. Since 1880 pearls have come from comparatively new districts farther west and south, the supply from which is apparently increasing. At first but few were found, or rather few were looked for, west of Ohio, but gradually the line extended, and Kentucky, Tennessee, and Texas became the principal pearl-producing States, and some pearls were sent north from Florida.

A fine round, pink pearl of 30 grains was found in a *Unio* near St. John, New Brunswick, and now belongs to George Reynolds, of Toronto, Canada.

A few years later the interest extended to the Northwestern States. During the summer of 1889 a quantity of magnificently colored pearls were found in the creeks and rivers of Wisconsin, in Beloit, Rock County; Brodhead and Albany, Green County; Gratiot and Darlington, Lafayette County; Boscobel and Potosi, Grant County; Prairie du Chien and Lynxville, Crawford County. Of these pearls more than \$10,000 worth were sent to New York within three months, including one worth more than \$500, and some among them were equal to any ever found for beauty and coloring. The colors were principally purplish-red, copper-red, and dark pink.

These discoveries led to immense activity in pearl-hunting through all the streams of the region, and in three or four seasons the shells were almost exterminated. In 1890 it extended through other portions of Wisconsin, especially Calumet and Manitowoc counties, and appeared also in Illinois, along the Mackinaw River and its tributary creeks, in McLean, Tazewell, and Woodford counties. The pearl fisheries of this State have produced at least \$250,000 worth of pearls since 1889.

At the Columbian Exposition at Chicago in 1893 large and beautiful exhibits of pearls, with a great variety of tints, were a notable feature in the Wisconsin State building and elsewhere, as previously noted.

The Northwestern pearl excitement subsided in a few seasons, as the others had done in turn before, by the exhaustion of the mussel beds and the consequent cessation of product. About every ten years or so a new wave of interest rises in connection with fresh discoveries at some point where the shells have lain long undisturbed; it again absorbs the attention and excites the imagination of the community around, and spreads to other parts of the country; a fresh campaign of ignorant extermination is carried on for several summers, then the yield is exhausted, and there is nothing more but to leave nature to recuperate, if possible, and slowly to restore, in limited amount, the abundant life that has been destroyed.

The year 1897 witnessed a very widespread outbreak of the pearl mania, which extended through large areas previously unaffected by it, reproducing in the most marked form all the manifestations before seen elsewhere—the excitement seizing upon the whole population; the abandonment of the ordinary forms of steady labor; the flocking of thousands to the rivers and streams to gather *Unios*; the wholesale destruction of the mussels until the locality was “cleaned out”; the extravagant ideas of the value of the choice pearls obtained, and the disappointment of multitudes, who imagined that every irregular nacreous concretion that they had found was a valuable treasure.

The chief center of this excitement was Arkansas, which had never known it before. Thence it has extended west into the Indian Territory, and north into Missouri, while Georgia and portions of Tennessee have been largely affected. The press notices of all these, often highly sensational, led to more or less activity in other parts of the country. As the season was well advanced before the subject attracted much attention, it seems probable that the year 1898 will witness an unexampled furore of pearl-hunting and that the shells will be practically exterminated for years to come throughout much of the Mississippi Valley.

The portions of the State where the excitement has been most marked are the following: (1) A region of small “lakes,” i. e., expansions of streams, situated chiefly in the southeastern part of White County, between White River, Cypress Bayou, and

the St. Louis and Iron Mountain Railroad; thence the excitement spread all up and down the valley of White River and its tributaries, passing into (2) the northeast portion of the State, along Black River, Cache River, and the great lake-like expanse of the St. Francis; (3) along the valley of the Arkansas and its tributaries from Little Rock eastward, and especially westward, to and into the Indian Territory, including mountain streams in Crawford County to the north and the valley of the Fourche to the south; (4) in the southern part of the State, along the Ouachita, Saline, and Dorcheat rivers. Without entering into minute details, these may be regarded as the chief pearl districts, but in various other parts operations were carried on to a greater or less degree.

In one respect these Arkansas discoveries were novel and peculiar. A large proportion of the best pearls were found not by opening the shells, but lying in the mud of the shores or at the bottom of shallow waters. Often, indeed, they were found in or upon the soil at some distance from streams or lakes. This peculiar occurrence is partly explained by the wide extension of the waters in flood times over the low regions of the State and by the shifting of streams and isolation of "cut-offs"; but the facts indicate further that under some circumstances, probably of agitation by floods and freshets, the loose pearls are lost or shaken out from the Unios. A local impression prevails that the mussels "shed" them at certain seasons. The fact that the pearls thus found were generally round and well formed; the aggregation in repeated instances of several or many near or together, and the non-occurrence of shells with them at these places—all point to the washing out of loose pearls from the Unios and their distribution by floods and freshets. So marked a feature, moreover, is their occurrence in the mud of the lakes and bayous, that it is even proposed to employ steam dredges to take up the mud and pass it through sieves or other similar devices in the expectation of finding therein the pearl product of many generations of shells.

Some of the more striking incidents of this mode of occurrence may be noted as follows: One of the latest announcements, in October, was that Mr. J. W. McIntosh, of Lonoke County, while digging post-holes in the bed of Cypress Bayou, 3 miles south of the town of Beebe, White County, found a number of pearls, some as large as a ".44-caliber Winchester ball," at a depth of $1\frac{1}{2}$ feet below the surface. The pearls were lying together, but with no shells. Mr. McIntosh had refused a handsome offer for them, and was at last accounts still at work on his land. Another instance is that of a fisherman picking up a dozen pearls in a very short time by simply reaching over the edge of his boat as it lay by the shore of Walker Lake and taking them up from the bottom. Mr. T. J. Sharum, of Walnut Ridge, Lawrence County, which was the central trade-point for the pearl-hunting along Black and Cache rivers, emphasizes the fact that the pearls taken from the mussels were chiefly from young shells; hence it is believed that the old ones lose or "shed" them, and some propose to use a road-scraper next season to take up the mud and obtain the pearls that have accumulated in it. Many other accounts are given of pearls found on or in the soil, or in the mud, from the first main discovery in White County to various parts of the State.

Arkansas pearls were by no means unknown before, but they had not attracted any attention. On the contrary, they had been picked up for years by the country people and used merely as playthings and "luck-stones" among the children, with no idea of their value. Some, indeed, had been gathered and recognized, but the discoverers had kept quiet about them to avoid creating a "rush." Some twenty years ago

pearls had been found by a party of men who were cutting cedar poles on White River; in 1888 a brilliant pear-shaped pink pearl weighing 27 grains was found by a fisherman on White River and sold to Judge E. S. C. Lee, of Augusta, Ark., who had it mounted as a scarf-pin and has worn it ever since; in 1895 a surveying party on White River obtained pearls to the value (it is said) of \$5,000; and country lads of the region have pearls in their possession up to 50 grains in weight, which they have picked up from time to time and used as marbles.

From these accounts it will be seen that the mode of pearl occurrence in Arkansas presents features somewhat different from those usually noted. Generally it has seemed that the sandy and gravelly bottoms were most favorable for the pearl-hunter, and the larger and older shells the most productive, while all the pearls have been taken from the living Unios. Here, on the other hand, appear these novel conditions of the pearls being apparently lost or washed out from the older shells and lying in the mud bottoms or carried long distances by floods, while the younger shells, if the observation of Mr. Sharum be correct, are more apt to contain them. It will be interesting to ascertain more precisely the facts upon these points, to see if the loss of the loose pearls is a habit belonging to some particular species of Unios, and whether it is accidental, or how far the local tradition of "shedding" them has any basis in fact.

Of course, if pearls were lost in these ways in gravelly or rocky streams, it is easy to see that they would soon lose their beauty by attrition among hard pebbles, and become indistinguishable from them, or be washed into the crevices of rocky beds; so that such pearls would scarcely be preserved or noticed, save in regions of mud bottom like those of the Arkansas bayous. It is clear also that only the rounded and perfectly free pearls would be lost in this manner, with the result that those found under such conditions would present a very unusual proportion of large, well-shaped, and hence valuable pearls, as compared with the ordinary gathering of them by opening the shells. This is precisely the case; the occasional pearls found at previous times, and those that first attracted notice and brought on the excitement, were of large size and round or well formed, and so brought high prices. Later, when almost the entire population at many points turned out, and all other work was abandoned for pearl-hunting, and the Unios were gathered and destroyed by tens of thousands all along the streams through whole counties, great quantities of imperfect, irregular, and defective pearls were obtained, with only an occasional one of value.

The pearl excitement of 1897 seems to have developed from several distinct centers, through accidental discoveries in the latter part of the summer as the water became low in the rivers, lakes, and bayous. Specific accounts of these separate starting-points have appeared in the local papers. The first to become highly important was the discovery of a good pearl on the muddy shore of Murphy (or Crooked) Lake, by a young man from St. Louis, who was spending his vacation on a fishing trip. Seated on a log, he noticed this bright object on the ground and, on picking it up, judged it to be a pearl. His negro guide told him that such objects were abundant at some points thereabout, and took him a mile or two through the woods to a spot where a number of similar pearls were easily picked up. The guide was amused at his interest in them, and told him that they were of no use except as playthings for the children. He nevertheless gathered a quantity of them and sent samples by mail to St. Louis and Memphis. In reply he was informed that they were true pearls, and the Memphis jewelry house sent him a check far beyond his anticipation. He then sent other parcels,

and gradually the matter began to attract attention in the two cities named, until Mr. J. A. O'Hara was sent by a Memphis firm to investigate. On his arrival, he found the conditions to be such that he promptly forwarded his resignation to the house, and went into pearl-collecting on his own account. Hon. J. J. Williams, of Shelby County, Tenn., then visited the region, with experts from St. Louis. In three days they found over forty pearls up to "the size of an acorn," valued at several hundred dollars, generally perfect in form, the larger pink and the smaller white. Mr. Williams immediately arranged with Mr. George C. Griffiths, of Bald Knob, the owner of the land, for a lease of the property on which Murphy Lake is situated. A Memphis syndicate was formed, which claimed entire control of the waters, set up notices of warning against trespass, built a house on the shore, and proposes to make a complete and systematic exploration of the mud by means of dredges.

The waters included in this lease are those of Murphy (or Crooked) and Walker (or Miller) lakes; these are bayous or expansions of tributaries of White River, about 100 miles west of Memphis. They are beautiful sheets of water, surrounded by a dense growth of cypress, and have long been favorite resorts for hunting and fishing for all the region around. Murphy Lake is about 2 miles long and some 800 feet in its greatest width; Walker Lake is only half as long, but much deeper, being 15 feet or more, even in low-water seasons, while Murphy Lake can be waded through at many points. The waters are somewhat impregnated with iron, and the district is reported to be malarious. The lease was drawn for five years, at the price of \$4,500. As soon as it became known, much local opposition was aroused, and legal obstacles were interposed, on the ground that portions of the shore were Government land, school land, etc., and that the lakes were part of a public waterway and could not be preempted. The Williams-Memphis syndicate had operated from Bald Knob, White County, which is the nearest town on a main railroad line (the St. Louis and Iron Mountain), and the opposition was especially developed at Searcy, the county seat of White County, some 10 miles west. A party from that place, headed by the mayor, with several leading citizens, went to Murphy Lake to insist upon their right to hunt pearls there, despite the posted notices of the lessees. Both sides were armed with legal papers to prove their claims, and with shotguns also—presumably intended for game. After considerable friendly controversy, matters were left to the courts, and the Searcy party withdrew to another neighboring lake, of similar character but not preempted, to conduct pearl-hunting there in peace. The Memphis company has remained in possession and been actively at work, the lake being guarded by an armed patrol, and illuminated at night by a chain of gasoline lights, to prevent trespassing. At last advices they were paying all expenses and making some profit, though no particulars are given.

Other accounts of separate origin are reported from several points. An inmate of the Confederate Soldiers' Home, near Little Rock, while on a leave of absence, obtained some pearls on the Saline River; finding them to be valuable, he applied for an extension of furlough; and soon the story got abroad, and the furore began all along that stream. At the other end of the State, on Black River, a farmer while fishing opened a shell for bait, and found a pink pearl; this was late in July. A local jeweler gave him \$25 for it and sold it in St. Louis for \$200. The craze broke out in consequence, and the Black and Cache Rivers were soon lined with pearl-hunters. About the middle of September Mr. J. M. Pass, a well-known planter, while fishing in Dorcheat Lake, Columbia County (the southwestern part of the State), opened a

few mussels as an experiment, and obtained four good pearls; one of these he sold for \$125, and the usual excitement arose through the entire neighboring region.

In these ways the pearl-hunting mania was started, and spread from stream to stream. So complete was the absorption of the people in this pursuit, that the local papers at various points reported much difficulty and apprehension on the part of planters as to the prospect of getting in their cotton and other crops, all the farm hands and negroes being occupied in an eager search for the anticipated fortunes in pearls. By the middle of September the jewelers at St. Louis began to be flooded with letters and parcels containing Arkansas pearls. Everything in the shape of nacreous concretions was sent, and very often the whole lot was not worth the postage or expressage that it cost; and the extreme disappointment of the finders, together with the clearing out of all the accessible shells from the "worked" streams, led to the decline of the craze.

There is no question, however, that large numbers of fine and valuable pearls were obtained, especially by the earlier explorers. A few notes are here given as to the sizes and values reported. A general agreement appears as to the large pearls being pink in color, and the smaller, white. This probably indicates two species of shells. One deep pink pearl of 40 grains found in the mud by a woman was sold in St. Louis for \$100, and as it was perfectly round and of fine luster its real value was much more. A farmer's boy obtained a pink pearl of 31 grains on Black River, near Black Rock, Lawrence County, and sold it for \$35. The local purchaser took it to St. Louis and there refused \$75 for it, offered by a leading house, and left it for sale with another firm, who found a buyer for it at \$500. This was doubtless excessive. Other instances have been mentioned above, and the St. Louis and Arkansas papers report numerous cases of pearls up to 40 grains, that were estimated to be worth several hundred dollars when perfect. By the end of August, Mr. Smith, of West Point, White County, had sold pearls to the value of \$1,200, taken from Seven Mile Lake, somewhat south of the Walker and Murphy lakes, and Mr. Thomas, of Bald Knob, had realized \$1,500 from pearls from the Little Red River.

The region of the bayou lakes is reported to be unhealthy, at least for long-continued work in the water and mud, under conditions of exposure and fatigue such as pearl-hunting involves. Nevertheless, among thousands who camped out along the river banks for weeks during the autumn there does not seem to have been any frequent or serious illness.

Passing to a brief reference to other States, allusion has been already made to the pearl mania as extending into the Indian Territory. In the early part of September reports began to come from South McAlester, on the Kansas and Texas Railroad, of rich discoveries along the Kiamichi River, some distance to the southeast, and large numbers of people went thither from Arkansas, reporting the White River and its branches "cleaned out" and the shores covered with the opened and cast-away mussels. A little later quite a number of pearls, some reported as worth \$100 apiece, were brought over the border to Paris, Texas, the county seat of Lamar County, from Boggy River, Indian Territory. Both this and the Kiamichi are northern affluents of the Red River, in about the central-southern part of the Choctaw Nation.

Louisiana does not seem to have been affected as yet, but it is quite probable that a similar excitement will develop there soon. A lady owning a plantation on the Tensas River obtained some pearls there before the war; she then set a number of little negroes to search for them, and thus procured others. Some of these were fine enough to be sent to New York and mounted in handsome jewelry.

Kansas has yielded a few valuable pearls. Eleven lavender-colored ones were brought to a leading jewelry house in St. Louis. The best was rated at \$350, and others at prices ranging from \$50 to \$150, the whole being worth \$600.

Missouri has furnished numerous reports; the earliest, at the beginning of September, came from Poplar Bluff, Butler County, in the southeastern part of the State, where a fisherman in opening Unios for bait found two fine pearls, one pink and one straw colored. This was on Black River, already mentioned in its southward extension into Arkansas. The usual result followed, thousands turning out to search the stream. A number were taken to St. Louis later, but most of them proved of little account.

A fisherman living near Warsaw, Benton County, has been accustomed to bring into Sedalia, every autumn for five or six years, a little bag of pearls taken during the season from the Osage River. His annual sale has varied from \$30 to \$140. Other streams reported as yielding specimens are the Pomme de Terre and the Sac rivers, and Medicine Creek, which rises in Iowa. Plans were on foot at Greenfield, Dade County, to dredge the Sac River in that vicinity and explore the mud. The latest account is from near Cuba, Crawford County, on the M'ramec River, where two fishermen, on an excursion from St. Louis in November, got a farmer to drive across the stream with his drag shovel. The result was that they obtained at one "haul" three loose pearls and 301 mussels, which yielded 207 pearls, up to the size of a pea. The proceeds were shared between the three parties, but the farmer, who owned the land, forbade any further operations.

Tennessee, where for years past the whole subject of Unio pearls has been familiar, has not been so much excited as the States where there was more novelty and less experience in pearl-hunting. But while the former yield was chiefly along Stone River or Caney Fork, and then somewhat on the Calfkiller, Elk, Duck, and other tributaries of the Cumberland and Tennessee, and the main streams also in the central and western portion of the State, the last two or three years have witnessed great activity in a rather new district, in East Tennessee, along Clinch River. In the former region the business has settled down substantially to pearl-hunting in a moderate way by fishing parties in the summer, and by farmers in the fall, who camp out on the river banks after the crops are gathered in and dredge the streams with some system. Along Clinch River, however, the past season has witnessed all the incidents of the first excitement; and quite vivid and picturesque accounts were published of hosts of people camping along the streams, some in tents, some in the roughest shanties, and some going from shoal to shoal in rudely-built house-boats. Many pearls are reported as having brought \$100 or more. The hunters are described as a lively, free-and-easy set of people, working hard all day, subsisting a good deal on fish caught in the river, and dancing at night to the banjo around the camp-fires that line the banks.

In the older pearl region of Tennessee considerable activity has prevailed along Duck River, and large prices are claimed. Much local excitement has also been announced from Smithville, Dekalb County, and Arlington.

In Kentucky an aged fisherman is reported as having obtained a large number of pearls—one of them worth \$70—at the mouth of Little River, which enters the Cumberland in Lyon County.

In Indiana a few discoveries in the central part of the State have led to considerable newspaper comment and some excitement. Toward the end of August some fine pearls were found in White River only a few miles from Indianapolis. Prices

were reported by jewelers in that city up to \$300. Others were taken from the Wabash and Eel rivers, and it is stated that the inmates of the Soldiers' Home at Marion, Grant County, made a regular occupation of pearl-hunting in the Mississnewa, an affluent of the Wabash, and that two of them had realized \$400 for their season's work. Some pearls were also obtained near Rushville, in Flatrock Creek, but no details were given.

In Michigan a plan is on foot, organized by Grand Rapids capitalists, to engage a large number of laborers and operate systematically along the St. Joseph River next year. Many smaller schemes are also being planned. Multitudes of shells were gathered during the past season, and many good pearls reported from that river in the southeastern corner of the State.

In Wisconsin the only important pearl discovery was reported from Janesville early in August, when two farmers found two pearls in Rock River, which they sold for \$200 each. One of them was subsequently, it is said, sold in Chicago at a great advance. Beloit and Marinette are also mentioned as places where some interest has been developed.

In Iowa two men who were exploring along the Mississippi for a pearl-button establishment, to determine the quality and abundance of available shells, obtained a few pearls in a small inlet below Bisping's Springs. Only one was valuable. An interesting circumstance is that the pearl-yielding shells were found at the same spot, while hosts of others which they had opened and examined in the course of their business had no pearls whatever.

Georgia has developed some interest, principally in the vicinity of Rome, at the junction of the Etowah and Oostanaula. This is believed to be the site of the Indian town of Ichaha, where DeSoto stayed for a time during his memorable expedition of 1540-41, and found the natives in possession of so many pearls. The Arkansas reports stirred up a local excitement in this region, when the river became low and clear in the autumn, and multitudes went searching the waterways. Ex-sheriff Mathias, of Rome, is reported as having some 50 pearls, brilliant but irregular. A few miles above, on the Oostanaula, Mr. Bennett, a farmer, on reading of the Arkansas furore, made a trial on John's Creek, a tributary of the Oostanaula; and from a basketful of Unios he obtained several fine pearls, up to the size of peas, for which he received \$180 from a Baltimore jeweler to whom he sent them. Others followed, and many fine specimens were procured.

Florida has not yet been "worked," but it may prove a productive pearl region ere long. The reports of DeSoto's expedition make special reference to the size and beauty of the pearls at a point where he crossed the Oclocknee River, some 30 miles above its mouth. This place corresponds to what is now Langston's Ferry, Wakulla County, and there is little doubt that pearls may be found there now in the Oclocknee and its affluent, the Sopchoppy River. The banks are described as packed full of shells. Mr. Houstoun, a resident near that point, possesses some pearls, and specimens of them sent to the Philadelphia Exposition were much admired. Many pearls are reported as found worth from \$30 to \$60. The average size is about an eighth of an inch, which, when perfect, bring from \$10 to \$15. The two largest and finest weigh, respectively, 68 and 58 grains, and were sold for \$850 and \$600.

Connecticut has also had its pearl fever, again as a result of the press accounts from the Southwest. In October Mr. C. S. Carwell, an old and well-known hunter,

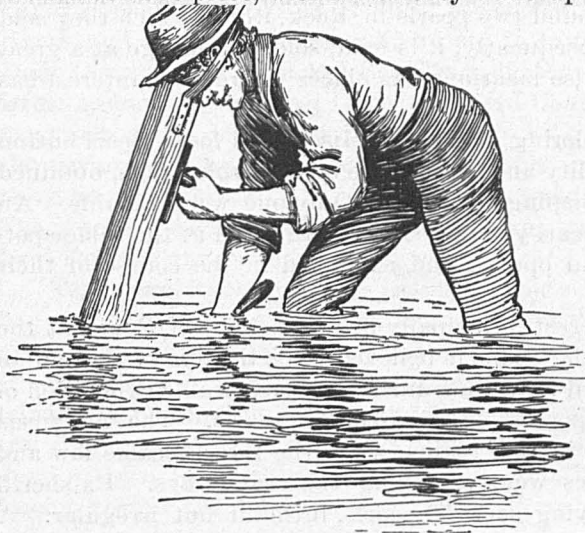
tried exploring about the headwaters of Mystic River, and after a few weeks had gathered a number of pearls, one of which he is reported as having sold for \$500, and two others are estimated at \$400 apiece. From the other end of the State, along the Shepaug River, in Litchfield County, comes an account of the success of Mr. Arlo Kinney, of Steep Rock. One fact here is of special interest. Mr. Kinney, instead of destroying every *Unio* that he examines, uses pincers, after the German method, to open the shell sufficiently to see if there is any valuable pearl, and then returns it to the water. If only this method, so simple and so reasonable, could be introduced throughout this country, enormous waste and destruction could be easily prevented. Crowds of seekers, however, attracted by the reports, have proceeded, here as elsewhere, in the usual reckless manner of wholesale destruction.



Water telescope in use.

son there has been great activity, and multitudes have been pearl-hunting.

The streams here are clear and rapid, and those who make it a business have special outfits for the work. A rubber suit is worn, consisting of boots and long trousers in one piece, with which they wade up the stream, each having slung about

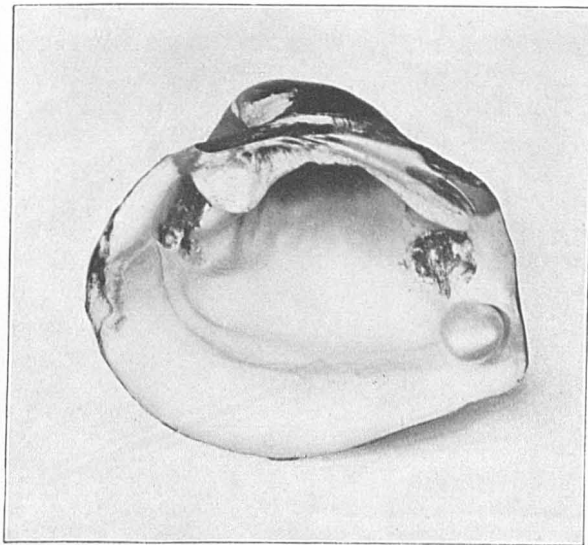


Water telescope in use.

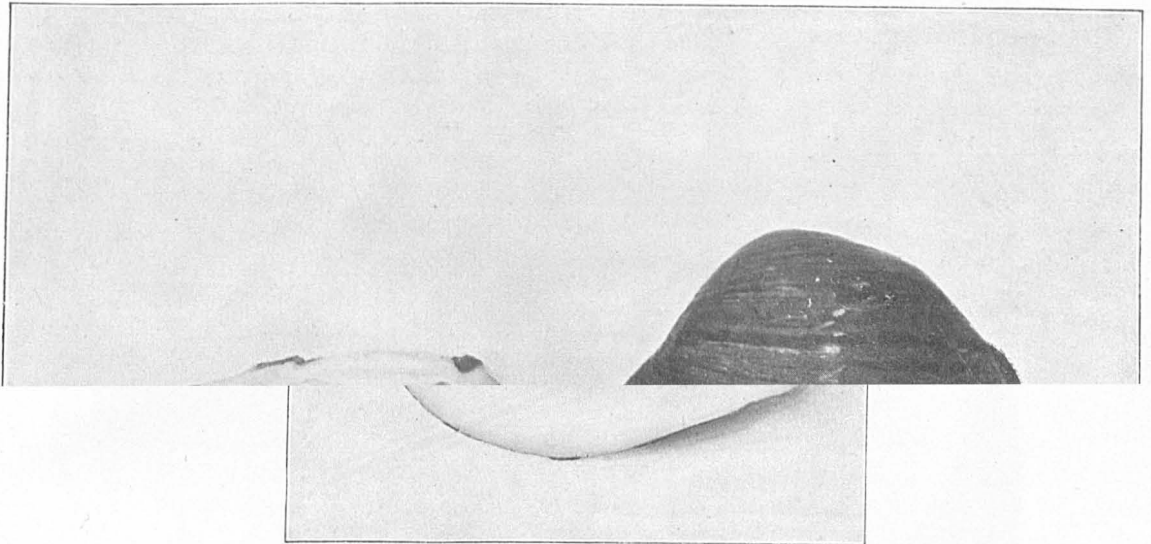
son there has been great activity, and multitudes have been pearl-hunting.

In New York the pearl-hunting excitement has also been felt as a result of the prominence given in the papers to the Arkansas discoveries. The principal scene of activity has been in the northwestern angle of the State, along Grass River and its affluents, one of the streams that drain from the Adirondacks into the St. Lawrence. The central point has been the town of Russell, St. Lawrence County. Two years ago Mr. M. C. Rowe, of that place, on opening a mussel for bait, while fishing in Frost Brook, a tributary of Grass River, found a pink pearl as large as a pea. This he sold at a good price, and has since made several hundred dollars by collecting pearls thereabouts. During the past season

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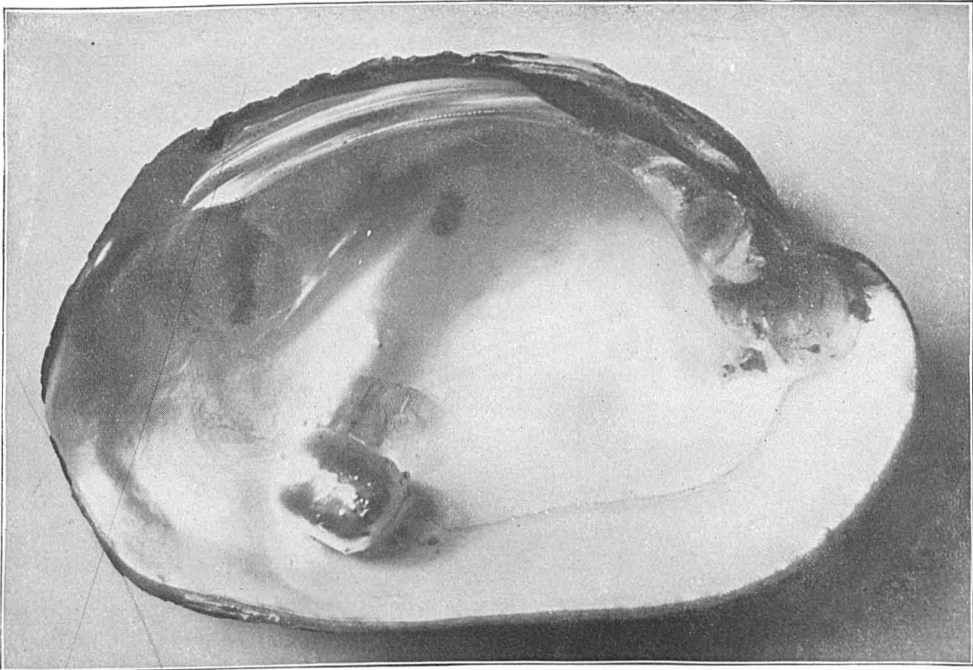
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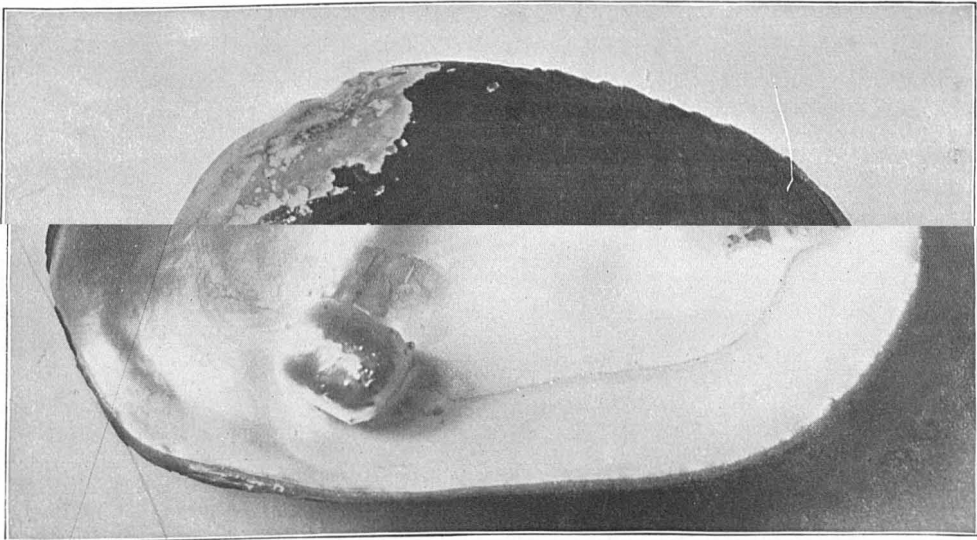
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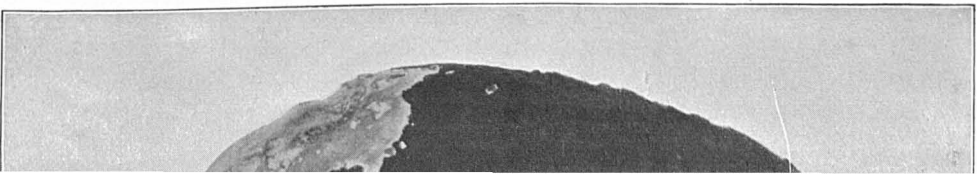
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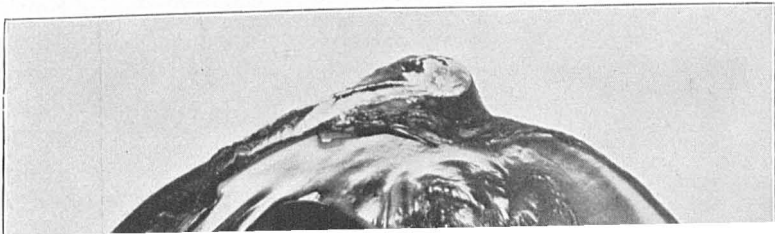
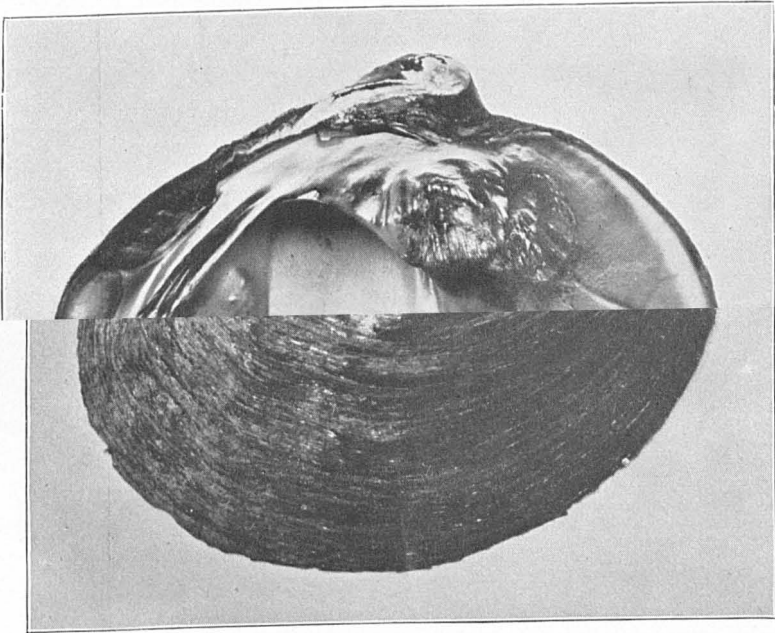
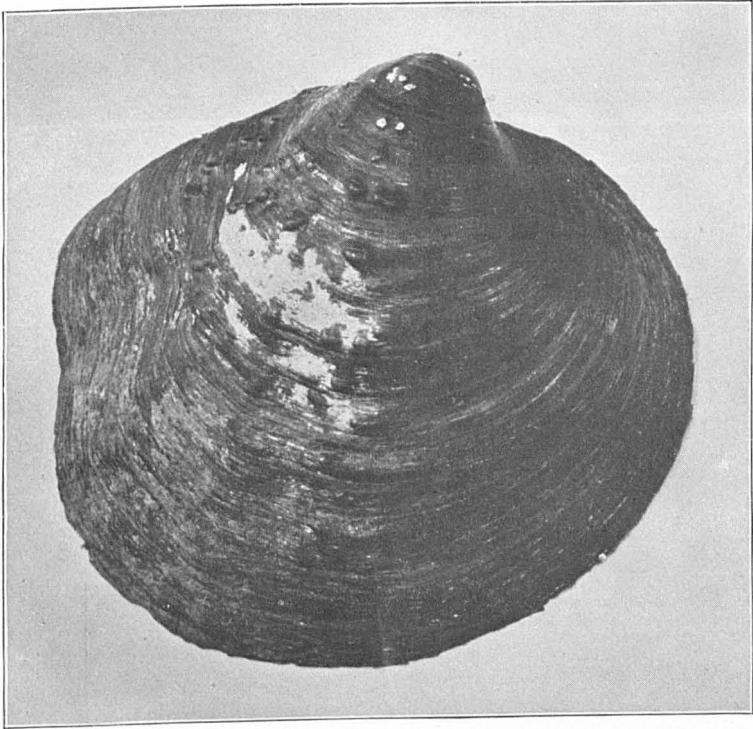


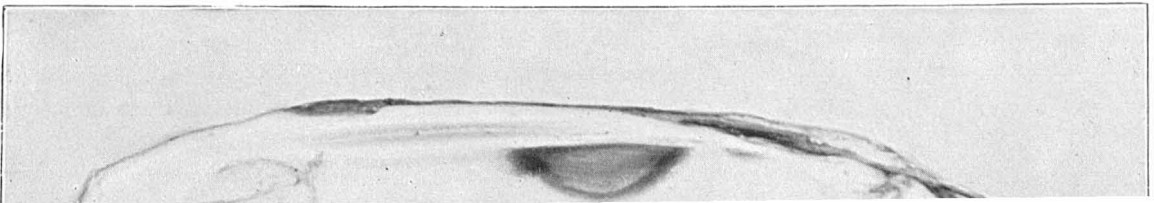
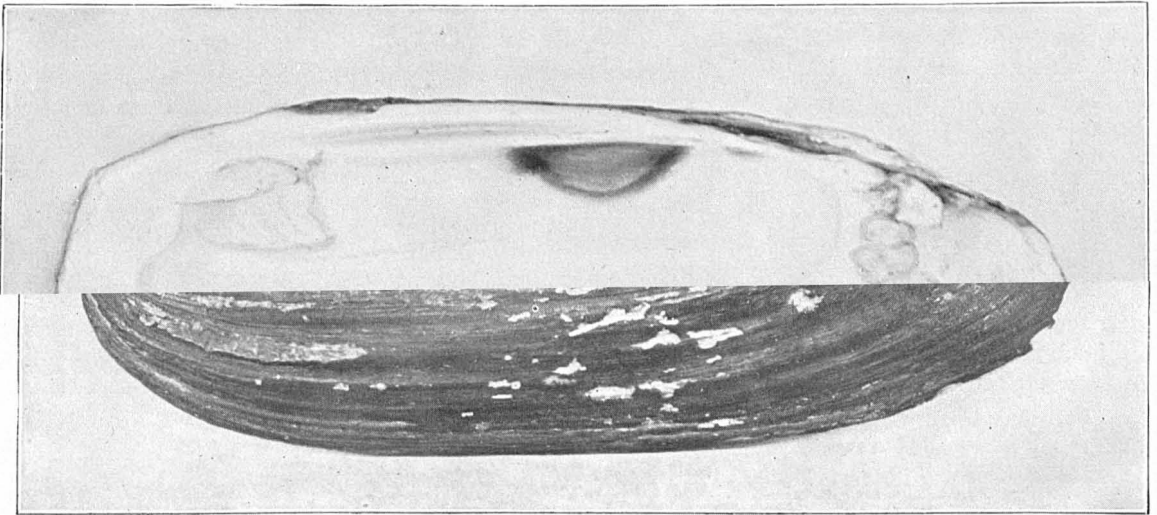
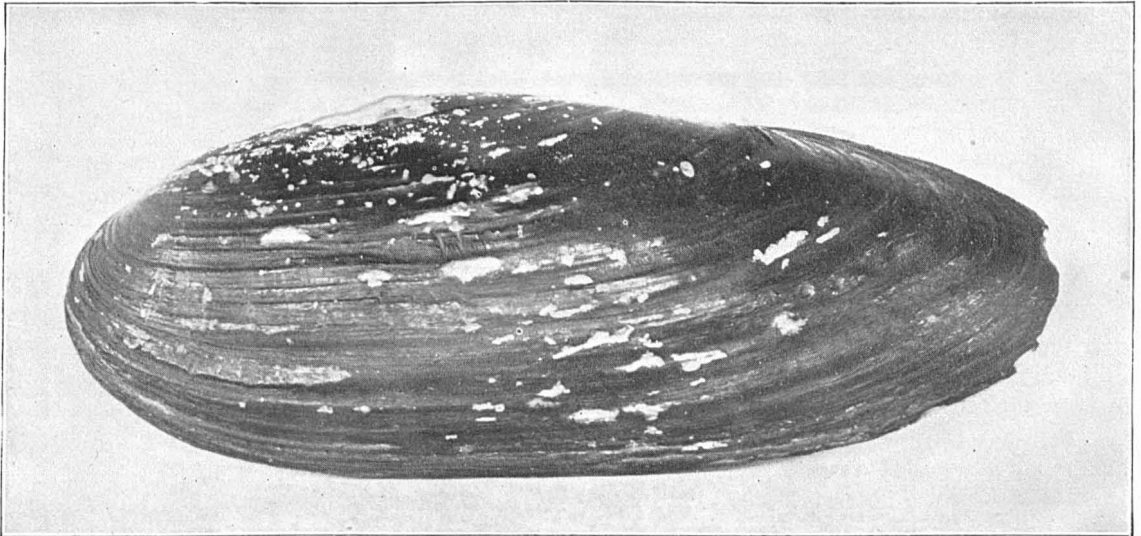
.1 Interior of shell showing barrel-shaped adhering pearl of large size.



.1 Interior of shell showing barrel-shaped adhering pearl of large size.







INVESTIGATION BY THE UNITED STATES FISH COMMISSION.

In view of the great interest and possible importance of the discoveries from time to time made in various parts of the United States, and particularly in the Mississippi Valley, of pearls yielded by the fresh-water bivalve shells (*Unionidæ*) so abundant in many of our inland waters, a systematic inquiry was undertaken in 1894 by the United States Commission of Fish and Fisheries, to ascertain as far as possible the facts relating to the occurrence and distribution of the pearl-bearing species and the extent and conduct of the pearl industry as thus far developed. The value and elegance of many of these pearls, especially as shown in exhibits made at the Columbian Exposition in 1893; the popular excitements or "pearl fevers" at times arising in districts where a few pearls have been found, and characterized by wholesale and reckless destruction of the shells over large areas; the total lack of system in the search for pearls, as contrasted with the methods that have been developed on a smaller but far more profitable scale in Europe, all seemed to call for a careful investigation by the Commission, with a view to better knowledge and wiser direction in the matter of inland American pearl fisheries.

To this end a circular was prepared and issued in 1895, comprising a series of thirty inquiries relating to the habits and distribution of the shells, the frequency and value of pearls obtained from them, the methods and extent of the industry, and various related points. This circular was sent out to several hundred persons in all parts of the country east of the Rocky Mountains, who could be heard of as at all likely to feel interest or possess experience relating to the subject. The circular called for information on the following special points:

The pearl-bearing mussels:

1. Nature of stream in which found; kind of bottom; character of water.
2. Geological character of the district as to rock, soil, etc.
3. General abundance of mussels.
4. Size, shape, and position of the mussel-beds.
5. Local names of mussels.
6. Habits of mussels.
7. Enemies and fatalities to which mussels are exposed; nature and extent of destruction by muskrats, hogs, freshets, etc.
8. Size, shape, and color of mussels.
9. Species of mussels in which pearls are most common.
10. Proportion of mussels in which pearls occur.
11. Sizes, or other peculiarities, of shells in which pearls are found.

The pearls:

12. Nature and origin of pearls.
13. Position in mussel.
14. Size, shape, and color of pearls.
15. Relative value of pearls in different sizes, shapes, and colors.
16. Markets for pearls.
17. Prices for pearls.

The fishery:

18. Method of taking the mussels.
19. Description of apparatus used in taking mussels and in opening the shells.
20. Methods of extracting the pearls.
21. Treatment of pearls when found.
22. Utilization of mussels after extraction of pearls or after opening.
23. Principal occupations of mussel fishermen.
24. Statistics of fishery: Fishermen, boats, apparatus, pearls.
25. Comparative statistics of pearls, etc.
26. Period when pearl-fishing was of greatest importance in district.
27. History of origin and growth of fishery.
28. Exhaustion of mussel-beds; causes, rapidity.
29. Do exhausted beds become replenished, and in what time?
30. Is State protection of the beds desirable or necessary?

To this circular 123 responses were received, besides a few that were so absolutely indefinite and obscure as to possess no value. The replies came from the following States—more than half of them from Tennessee, where of late the greatest activity has prevailed.¹

Alabama	1	Massachusetts.....	1
Arkansas	3	Michigan.....	1
Florida	1	Mississippi.....	1
Illinois	3	New York.....	4
Indiana.....	5	Ohio.....	1
Iowa.....	6	Pennsylvania.....	1
Kansas.....	3	Tennessee.....	74
Kentucky.....	2	Texas.....	6
Maryland.....	2	Wisconsin.....	8

These responses contain a large amount of valuable information. Many of them are furnished by persons not at all in the habit of writing, but who are evidently very familiar with the facts through much experience and observation. The general results are quite clear as to some of the points, and conflicting as to others; this last condition is easily seen to be due to local differences in the very wide area covered, and to the fact that the species of Unios and, to some extent, their habits are different in the different sections of the country. A great desideratum seems now to be a scientific determination of the particular species referred to in these reports and designated by vague or fanciful local names.

To the first inquiry, relating to the nature of the stream and the character of the bottom and of the water, only four of the papers failed to respond more or less fully, though only a part of them include answers to all the three points in the question. In summing up the results, the first, second, and third points may be considered together, with the following result: Thirty-nine papers report the stream as swift, and 7 as slow; 31 give the water as clear, and 2 as muddy; 15 mention it as shallow, and 6 as deep, and 22 refer to it as being more or less "hard." A number of the answers are less easily classified, describing different streams in the vicinity, or the same stream at different points and different seasons, as varying in depth and in the rate of flow. As regards the bottom, many papers report several kinds, as sand or gravel, or both, on a rock bottom, or areas of mud with rock or sand, etc. The most definite statements may be grouped as rock, 35; gravel, 76; sand, 49; mud, 32, including a few references to clay.

The general indications from these data are quite plain, to the effect that the shells are chiefly found in rather rapid streams, in which the bottom would naturally

¹It will be noticed that all these responses were sent before the pearl excitement of 1897, in Arkansas and adjoining States, described on pp. 395-401, above, in which some new and additional aspects were developed.

be sandy or gravelly and the water clear. Other species, however, occur on muddy or clayey bottoms, where the current is slower. The references to rock bottom do not concern so much the immediate surface where the shells are found as the underlying bed on which the softer materials rest. In the matter of depth, also, the large preponderance of answers in favor of shallow streams may mean not so much that the Unios greatly prefer shallow water as that they are more readily found and gathered there. The frequent allusions to "hard" or calcareous water tend to confirm the general impression that streams of this kind are favorable to the development of molluscan shells in both size and abundance.

A few references to peculiar conditions may be noted, *e. g.*, the Florida paper states that the best *Unio* growth is found in lakes with outlets, the water pure and fresh, but adds that it is sometimes sulphurous. One Texas paper (Colorado, Concho, San Saba, and Llano rivers) refers to the water as becoming slightly alkaline in dry times, and another (Colorado and Llano) makes a similar statement. A New York paper (De Grasse River and Plum Brook) mentions the water as brown or black—the clear, brown water of hemlock districts, familiar in northern New York. Iowa and Indiana papers state that spring-fed streams seem to be most productive of Unios, and a New York account, describing them as found in rapid, gravelly streams, over limestone rock, adds that they are most abundant where the country has been cleared, "as the water is apt to be harder there."

The second inquiry, as to the geological character of the district, its rock, soil, etc., has been answered in 95 papers, more or less fully, though some refer only to the nature of the soil, or are otherwise incomplete. Of course no very exact scientific accounts could be looked for in such a body of responses, and the statements given are, for the most part, of a general character, though some are more detailed, and a few specify the geological horizon of the rocks at the localities described. Dividing the answers into two sets, one for the country rock and the other for the soil, they may be summed up as follows:

Country rock: Limestone, 69; sandstone, 21; slate (and shale), 9; "flint" (or chert), 7. A few others are mentioned, viz: The Florida paper reports only "sand overlying clay or hardpan" (sand cemented by iron oxide), and Mississippi "only sand, gravel, and mud; no rock." New York reports "iron-ore"; Pennsylvania, "coal," and Texas "limestone and granite." In many cases two or three of the rocks above named are mentioned in the same paper as associated in the region.

Soil: Sand, 34; clay, 19; loam, 10; and a few other designations, as "mixed," 1; "black," 8; "calcareous," 2, etc. In many cases two or three of these kinds are named together, as "sandy and clayey," "sandy loam," and the like.

The inference from these data is closely corroborative of that from the first inquiry—that a limestone region is favorable to the development of Unios. The nature of the soil seems to be of little or no importance in relation to the shells, as compared with the underlying country rock, outcropping or exposed in the river bottoms or along the bluffs. An Iowa paper remarks that "the presence of lime gives greater luster to the pearls," and several allusions point to a general impression as to the advantageous character of a calcareous region.

The principal geological references are the following: An Arkansas paper specifies the rocks of the district as "the magnesian limestone of the Lower Silurian, and encrinal marble and chert (Devonian); soil calcareous, with more or less sand." The Ohio paper gives limestone and some shales, of Niagara, Clinton, and Cincinnati age (Silurian). One Tennessee circular refers to the Lebanon group (Lower Silurian) and

another to sub-Carboniferous and Trenton. Two of the Wisconsin papers mention limestone underlain by Potsdam sandstone and associated with St. Peter's sandstone. Of course the rocks of the Mississippi Valley are for the most part well known, and the particular horizons here mentioned, so largely confined to the earlier Paleozoic, can have no special significance in the present connection, as only the chemical composition of the rocks could affect the abundance of the Unios, if, indeed, the limestone theory be as important in this respect as is generally believed. It may be observed here that in several papers which make no mention of limestone or specify other rocks instead (Illinois, Michigan, and Texas, sandstone; Florida and Mississippi, sands and clays) there seems no dearth of Unios in the streams and lakes.

Out of 107 papers which respond definitely to the third inquiry, as to the abundance of mussels, 10 describe the shells as at present very abundant, 47 as plentiful, 36 as scarce, and 4 as absolutely exterminated, while 34 papers refer to the fact of diminished and diminishing numbers within a few years past, some of them with great emphasis. Three Tennessee papers estimate the present numbers as reduced to one-tenth of what they were ten years ago, and in a number the same general fact is stated—of former abundance and present rarity—and attributed to the pearl-hunting destruction of recent years. Several papers say that the shells are now scarce in small streams and the shallower parts of larger ones, while still abundant in deep water and where the currents are strong. The answers in detail are as follows:

General abundance of mussels.

State.	Very abundant.	Abundant.	Few.	Diminished.	Exterminated.	No. of papers reporting.
Alabama	1					1
Arkansas	3					3
Florida		1				1
Illinois			1	1	1	3
Indiana		1	1	2		3
Iowa	2	2	1	1		4
Kansas		1		1		1
Kentucky		1				2
Maryland		2				2
Massachusetts			1			1
Michigan		1				1
Mississippi		1				1
New York	1		1	1		3
Ohio			1	1		1
Pennsylvania			1			1
Tennessee	1	34	28	21	1	66
Texas		3	1	2	1	5
Wisconsin	1	1		4	1	7
Total	9	48	36	34	4	106

In response to the inquiry as to the form, size, and position of the beds, the answers are very various, indicating much diversity of conditions, depending evidently on the species of shells and size and character of the streams. A Wisconsin report states the river to be "nearly all mussel-bed for 100 miles." A Tennessee report states that shells lie scattered over the bottom and not in beds, and reports from Iowa and Massachusetts make similar statements. Some 39 papers give estimates of the size of the beds,

varying extremely; several describe the shells as occurring in small patches of a few feet square, but the large majority agree in giving the beds an elongated shape, either along the banks or on shoals in midstream. In the smaller rivers they extend all across, up to a width of the stream of 100 yards (Tennessee). The length of these beds is estimated at from a few yards to several hundred, or in some cases a mile or even 4 miles (Arkansas). They are in some cases reported as upon sandy or gravelly bottom, in shallow water of moderate swiftness, and a few speak of the shells as wedged in among the crevices of rocky or stony bottoms. Very few refer to still water or mud.¹

In two papers (Florida and Illinois) some of the shells are described as in the bank, from 1 to 4 feet below the surface of the water. This occurrence is peculiar, and it would be of interest to ascertain what species possess this habit.

In several instances the shells are reported as packed side by side on the bottom so closely as to be like a pavement (Tennessee and Wisconsin), and sometimes several layers deep in places where there are "holes" in the bed of the stream (Wisconsin).

The Florida paper states that in lakes the beds extend around the shore, their breadth determined by the depth of the water.

There is a general agreement that the midstream beds are upon shoals or connected with islands, bars, or rapids. But the detailed statements vary, some placing them above and others below rapids, and likewise as to islands. Evidently they occur for the most part in places where there is a moderately rapid flow, but somewhat protected from the full force of strong currents. Some interesting particulars are given. One paper (Tennessee) says that the shells lie in beds from shoals up to deep water, where there is rock bottom, and then in crevices in the rocks; and two others (Tennessee) are somewhat similar. Another (Tennessee) reports them as usually at the head of an island above the "breakers," usually opposite the bluff side. An Iowa paper speaks of the beds as extending along bold banks until the current changes to the opposite side, i. e., on the swifter (convex) sides of the curves. The author of a Maryland paper states that the beds vary in location with the varying distribution of the sand and mud of the bottom, the shells traveling correspondingly if the changes are not too sudden. One paper from Texas refers to their seeking and occupying positions where they are best protected from the force of the current in freshets.

It is clear, from all these varying accounts, that the location of the shell-beds is determined by conditions which depend on the size and the rapidity of the stream and the nature of its banks and bottom; the main requisite being water of a very moderate depth, flowing freely but gently, and so producing almost always a sandy or gravelly bottom. In shallow streams these conditions would extend all across; in larger ones they would be found near the shores, or associated variously with islands, bars, and rapids. In slow streams, the shells would naturally be found on the convex sides of the curves, where the swifter current erodes the banks; in more rapid ones they would seek the slower portions of the river, and avail themselves of the shelter of islands, etc., as a defense against the violence of freshets. This last agency is spoken of by several, in the answer to another inquiry, as being highly destructive, especially to the younger and the smaller shells; hence, those without the protection of some island or shoal above them would be most liable to be swept away and destroyed in flood time.

¹ But on this point, see pp. 395-397, above, as to mode of occurrence in Arkansas bayous.

In regard to the local names of mussels, an immense variety of responses was received. In 36 papers 12 report simply "mussels"; 10, "clams"; 1, "clam-mussels"; 1, "oyster-clams"; and 5, "fresh-water clams." The rest are either descriptive names, due to some feature of form or color, or else purely fanciful appellations. Arkansas reports black mussel, white mussel, long white, short white, long red, thick-shell (or flint), oyster-shell, wrinkle-shell, and bedded mussel. Ohio sends long-pointed clam, round small clam, rough stone clam, bottle-shell, striped bottle-shell, blue-edged shell, paper-shell, razor-back, pumpkin-seed, and bastard. Pennsylvania (also Wisconsin, in one paper) gives two kinds, pearl mussel and common mussel. An Iowa circular says that the name "clam" includes some thirty varieties. Tennessee furnishes a host of names, black (24), white (13), yellow (44), pink (15), purple (4), blue (4), black-pink (1), lake (24), bullhead (18), hard-tack (6), fluted (7, including 2 called black-fluted), biscuit (9), she (10), rock (4), shark (3), heel-splitter (3), Nigger Dick (2), and one each of the following: gray, brown, red, broad-axe, Black Maria, sailaway, trigger-back, spike, gunboat, hatchet, thin-shell, deep-water, pocketbook, hawk-bill, fancy, speck-case, Jessie Cook, Dick, negro-heel. Four of these—the purple, Black Maria, hard-tack, and sailaway—are also reported from Kentucky. One paper identifies the "biscuit" and "black" mussel; one makes the "lake" the same as the "rock," and another the same as the "blue"; three identify the "lake" with the "fluted," and two mention them as distinct. One report says of the "bullhead" that there are several kinds of them. Wisconsin gives also quite a list—crinkly (2), horse-foot or soft-shell, heart-shaped or hard-shell, mullet-shell, rough hard-shell, checkered or purple-shell, smooth soft-shell, paper-shell, long blue, slipper-shell, oblong pink-lined, broad-stripe, and Mother Hubbard.

The scientific collector of Unios can easily conjecture from some of these names what species may be meant, but most of them are altogether indefinite for any purpose of recognition. Many of them doubtless are applied in different localities to the same shell, while others may be used for different ages and varieties of identical species in a single stream. It is highly desirable that specimens should be obtained of these variously designated shells in order to their scientific determination.

The question as to the habits of the mussels was answered more or less definitely in 60 papers. Most of these describe the shells as somewhat migratory in habit, according to various conditions, as to food, season, depth of water, etc. Only 7 (6 from Tennessee and 1 from Wisconsin) report them as almost entirely stationary. Six papers relate that at the approach of winter they withdraw from the shore into deep water and bury themselves several inches in the sand or mud, reappearing in the spring when the water is high; then, as the water falls, others relate that they follow it, seeking apparently a uniform depth. Similar migrations follow upon disturbance of the beds by caving of the banks (Texas) or other natural changes. Three papers refer to the young shells as more active than the old ones, and this is probably the meaning also of a statement (Tennessee) that the pearl-bearing shells are stationary and those that crawl of little value. Three papers refer to their being packed so closely side by side on the bottom that they can scarcely dislodge themselves to move about (Wisconsin and Tennessee). One report (Tennessee) says that while some are lying on the surface of the bottom the "yellow mussel" is in beds three layers deep, under gravel and sand. The Florida paper describes one species as living permanently in the sides of banks, sometimes above the water, and a similar statement is made in

an Illinois response, only that the shells are from 1 to 4 feet below the surface. One paper describes them as moving shoreward in the morning and back into deeper water later in the day (Illinois); another as feeding in the morning and evening (Iowa), and another as active at night and resting by day (Tennessee). In an Iowa paper they are reported as coming into shallow water to spawn in midsummer.

Here, again, is evidence of much diversity, according to the species and to varying conditions. Hibernation, by burying themselves at the approach of winter, is an interesting feature that seems in some cases well attested, though a Kentucky paper states that no difference has been noticed between winter and summer. The younger shells are clearly somewhat migratory, but the tendency of the older ones is in many cases, where they have found a secure and favorable bedding-ground, to become closely massed together by gradual increase of size, so that dislodgment or moving becomes difficult.

The responses to question 7, relating to the natural enemies of mussels, in 110 papers, are varied and interesting, and in some respects quite contradictory. The chief natural enemy of the Unios seems to be the muskrat. Ninety-eight papers refer to it, 40 reporting large destruction from this cause, 55 in some degree, and 3 denying any. Hogs come next, and are referred to in 67 papers. Of these, 9 hold them responsible for large destruction, 50 for some or a little, and 8 assert that there is none. Of other animals, raccoons are stated in 14 papers to destroy some shells; mink in 6 (New York, Iowa, and Wisconsin); mud turtles in 3 (Wisconsin); otter in 2 (New York and Iowa); crows in 3 (Tennessee); fish in 3 (Maryland, Ohio, and Texas); crayfish in 2 (Maryland and New York); aquatic birds in 2 (Florida and Illinois); bears in 1 (New York), and cattle, by trampling, in 3 (Maryland, Indiana, and Iowa). All the animal depredators deal only, or chiefly, with Unios that are either young, small-sized, or soft-shelled, and hence not largely pearl-bearing. The only exception to this general rule is the statement in one paper (Tennessee) that many pearls have been found where shells had been taken ashore by muskrats and left to open in the sun.

With regard to physical causes of injury the most serious, no doubt, is found in freshets. Of 39 papers that refer to these, 18 report great destruction thereby, 18 say "some" or "a little," and 3 deny that there is any. Some papers say that their injury is small and that they only shift the beds and redistribute them, but a number describe the burying of beds by washing down and caving in of banks in flood time or the stranding of great quantities of young shells, to perish when the water subsides. Two papers that do not mention freshets should doubtless be included here, however, as they speak of destruction caused to the shells by "covering with mud" and by "change of bars." On the other hand, low water and droughts are reported as seriously harmful in 7 papers and drift ice in 4. Three papers allude to disease as a cause of injury and 3 to boring parasites.

By far the most dangerous foe, however, is man, as his activity in pearl-hunting has nearly exterminated the shells at many points and greatly reduced them at nearly all. Twenty-six papers make mention of human agency as a destroyer, 14 of which regard it as the most serious and some as the only one of moment. Even where pearl-hunting has not yet extended, large numbers of Unios are used by fishermen for bait.

Questions 8 and 9 were answered in a large majority of the papers, but in a manner so general and indefinite that little can be derived from them for a report. The answers to question 8 are chiefly unscientific statements as to sizes and colors that

do not indicate the species with any precision, while those under question 9 have the same uncertainty, as the terms employed to designate the shells most prolific in pearls are the local and popular names already mentioned under the head of question 5.

In response to question 10, as to the proportion of shells in which pearls are found, the answers vary so much that no general result can be gathered from the estimates. This extreme diversity is due in the first place to the fact that no standard meaning is attached to the term "pearls," some of the papers including any such objects found in the shells, while others confine the answer to those that have marketable value. This, of course, involves very great differences, as the small and irregular pearls are somewhat common, while those of good size, form, and luster are, by all accounts, very rare. Other differences are due to natural causes, the productiveness in pearls varying with different species, different conditions, different streams, and different years.

The estimates given in 78 papers which undertake to answer the inquiry range from 1 pearl in 20 to 1 in 100,000 (Iowa). A paper from Michigan and one from Tennessee give a ratio of 1 in 20; five give 1 in 50, nineteen 1 in 100, five 1 in 200, two 1 in 300, five 1 in 500, ten 1 in 1,000, and so on up to 1,500, 3,000, 6,000, 10,000, etc. Many state that the proportion varies in different streams; thus a New York paper says, for the main branch of De Grasse River, 1 in 3,000; for the north branch, 1 in 500; and for small brooks in the neighborhood, 1 in from 300 to 800. Others refer to differences in different species; thus a Tennessee circular gives 1 pearl in 5,000 of the "yellow" mussel, 5,000 to 6,000 of the "rock" or "lake" mussel, 8,000 of the "biscuit," and 10,000 of the "black"; in other species even scarcer. This is for pearls valued at \$25 and upward. Others allude to differences in seasons; thus the Maryland paper states that 5 bushels of shells yielded 3 pearls in 1888, while none were obtained from 160 bushels in 1889. Several papers make no attempt at an estimate, and simply state that valuable pearls are "scarce" or "very scarce."

In the answers to question 11, as to whether the pearl-bearing shells display any distinguishing peculiarities of size or form or other features that may indicate the presence of pearls within, the same diversity appears, in some respects, that has been noted under several of the previous heads, and for the same reason, no doubt, viz, differences of locality and of species. Eighty-eight papers make more or less response to the inquiry; of these, 17 are undecided or indefinite; 11 state positively that there are no criteria; 14 say that pearls occur chiefly in large shells, 32 in medium-sized, and 8 in small; 3 state that the presence of a large pearl is indicated externally by a bulging or protuberance of the shell (New York and Tennessee), or by a ridge (Tennessee); 8 refer to some peculiarity of form as indicative, but rather vaguely, and 2 (Tennessee) observe that the shells appear to have been injured at some time. Several refer particularly to old or old-looking shells, and to those of rough aspect or moss-grown, while a New York paper specifies "the brightest and clearest." Many state that young and small shells contain no pearls of value, as would naturally be expected. Several mention particular kinds as the best, using the local names; but these answers belong properly under question 9.

Question 12, as to the nature and origin of pearls, in the view of those familiar with their occurrence in the fresh-water mussels, has brought out a general agreement among the majority of those who respond, in favor of the usual theory that they are due to the presence of some irritating foreign substance. Other views are

presented by some; and several writers send observations of rather curious interest. Only 51 of the papers answer the question at all, of which 30 pronounce more or less positively in support of the intrusion theory, as above mentioned; 8 are doubtful or non-committal; and 8 advocate the view that pearl production is due to injury or disease. Three papers (Illinois and Tennessee) state that the pearls are at first soft or gristly and acquire hardness and luster gradually later; and one from Texas reports finding them in various stages of growth before they were "glazed over." The Florida paper, while accepting the intrusion theory, claims that all valuable pearls are formed upon an egg which the mollusk has not succeeded in extruding. This suggestion might easily be thought to afford explanation of the peculiar statements in the four papers just referred to.

Interesting notes are given in an Indiana response, where the writer speaks of finding a little twig in a shell "partly petrified" (i. e., pearl-coated?), and in an Iowa paper, where the writer refers to finding grains of sand and gravel partially coated with pearl nacre. One paper affirms that they were "originally created" with the mollusk, and bases this opinion on the fact that large pearls are found in small shells, at least sometimes. One paper (Indiana) which advocates the theory of injury refers to the fact that the pearl-bearing bed is close to a steamboat-landing, and considers the frequent disturbance of the water as a favorable condition. It is apparent, however, that this fact might operate quite as effectively in behalf of the intrusion theory.

Question 13, as to the position in which pearls are most frequently found in the body of the mussel, is answered by a very large proportion of the responses, and with a good deal of variety, though the general results are pretty clear. A difficulty conspicuous in these answers is the lack of definiteness in the terms employed to denote the parts of the shell and the body—the words varying much in the use of different individuals and affording a striking illustration of the value of exact scientific terms, as compared with ordinary phraseology. Notwithstanding this fact, however, it is not hard to ascertain what is meant by most of the writers, and indeed many have expressed themselves very clearly, and only in a few cases is the real meaning obscure.

To this question 112 answers have been received; several uncertain or indefinite—some merely saying that the pearls are found between the mantle and the shell, or similar expressions of an indeterminate character; 16 refer to them as occurring in or near the hinge, but most of these also state that such pearls are rarely valuable or well-formed, being generally "slugs"; 44 specify the borders of the mantle as the chief location for free and valuable pearls, in or near the edge, some saying between the mantle and the shell, others implying a position (obscurely expressed) between the mantle and the gills; 39 state that the pearls are chiefly found at the posterior end of the shell ("thin end," "sharp end," "small end," "tail end," "point," etc.), either "in" or "under" the mantle, or between it and the shell, as before. Four give little sketches to illustrate this statement (Kansas, Tennessee, and Wisconsin). Several refer to them as occasionally found in various other parts of the body, "in the meat," etc. Three papers (Indiana and Tennessee) speak of them as covered with or "incased in" a soft transparent substance; and two refer to pearls as sometimes imbedded in the shell (Wisconsin) or growing so as to "form a socket" in it (Iowa); this fact is well known, though of rare occurrence.

Frequent allusion is also made to pearls attached to the valves of the shell, or flattened on one side against them, forming "button pearls," but rarely of much value.

A peculiar statement is made in a New York paper in connection with this and the preceding question. The writer believes that pearls originate from sand grains taken in at the mouth, passing into and through the intestines, and lodging in the outer edges of the mantle, there causing irritation. Here the larger ones remain, while very small ones "pass on and go into a white substance, which I have called the pearl bag."

It is evident from these accounts that there is no proper reason for the wholesale destruction of *Unio* that has been practiced in many parts of this country, where the pearl-hunting "fever" has extended. Nearly all pearls of any value lie near the edge of the shell, and their presence could readily be ascertained by the use of the little instruments employed by pearl-seekers in the rivers of Scotland and Germany, and the shells not bearing pearls be returned to the water without injury, to propagate their species and, perhaps, themselves produce pearls in succeeding years.

The answers to question 14, as to the sizes, shapes, and colors of pearls found, are full, varied, and interesting. Nearly all of the papers reply to the inquiries more or less, so that the list of answers numbers 122, more than under any other head; although a good many of them are indefinite, and many speak only of some one or two of the points covered by the question.

As to the sizes, some of the responses are given by dimension and others by weight. Among much variety there is a fairly general result expressed to the effect that the maximum size for round or shapely pearls is about half an inch in diameter and about 80 grains in weight. Of course, they range downward to very small sizes, sometimes called "seed pearls," and often compared to pin-heads, bird-shot, mustard-seed, etc., and many of the papers assign much lower limits than half an inch for the maximum size. Of the papers that describe the larger sizes, several say half an inch, five-eighths, seven-sixteenths, etc., and others refer to a bullet, a marble, a large buckshot, and the like, for comparison. A few even exceed these statements, one paper saying that pearls range from the size of bird-shot to 90 grains and even 100 grains (Tennessee); another (Texas) saying that round pearls are found larger than a buckshot, and button-shaped up to the size of a quarter dollar and "up to one inch" (Tennessee), while the Ohio paper refers to the irregular "wing pearls" as in some cases over 2 inches long. About one-fourth of the papers are indefinite, saying that the pearls are of "all" or "various" sizes, shapes, and colors, with no specific data.

As to form, there is a very general agreement in describing the ordinary forms of pearls under various designations. The usual terms employed are round, button-shaped, and pear-shaped. Other descriptions are oval, half-round, biscuit-shaped, egg-shaped, etc. Many refer to rough and irregular pearls, while others omit these as having little or no value, and hence evidently not regarded as worth mentioning. Several speak of the spherical pearls as most valued, then the hemispherical, and then the oval. All this, of course, is familiar.

In regard to color the answers are interesting, as showing the peculiar feature of *Unio* pearls—their wonderful variety of tint. Many papers merely say that they are of "all colors," "various," etc., but three-fourths of them, either under this head or the next, specify certain colors as most frequent, most prized, rare, etc. In 89 of

these, some of which enumerate a variety of tints, the following colors are mentioned, giving a fair idea of their relative frequency:

White.....	61	Yellow.....	10	Maroon.....	1
Pink.....	53	Green.....	5	Copper.....	1
Purple.....	29	Steel.....	5	Silver.....	1
Black.....	23	Wine.....	3	Lead.....	1
Blue.....	21	Lavender.....	3	Cherry.....	1
Red.....	16	Brown.....	3	Salmon.....	1
Gold.....	12	Gray.....	3	Rose.....	1
Bronze.....	10	Ruby.....	2	Slate.....	1

Of these, copper, cherry, maroon, and ruby colors may be referred to red, and, perhaps, in some cases wine color also; gray, steel, and steel-gray belong together; also, bronze and brown; and rose will fall under pink. Yellow may be placed with gold, and probably wine-color; all these last are presumably from the beautiful *Unio dromas*, the only species, or at least the only frequent one, that presents a yellow or golden nacre in a portion of its interior. The frequent reference to blue is surprising, especially from the terms used by several in characterizing the shade. Six speak of sky-blue, four of steel-blue, one of lead-blue, and one of peacock-blue (Wisconsin). One Wisconsin paper also refers to peacock-green as especially valuable, as also lavender. A few allude to the varying degrees of translucency notable in *Unio* pearls, referring to some as "clear," to others as "milky," and as "bone white" (opaque). One (Tennessee) speaks of them as occasionally "clear as crystal." Only two make any discriminations as to the occurrence of different colors, other than their comparative frequency or rarity. Several say that they are of various colors, according to the shells whence they are taken, and a Tennessee paper specifies that white ones come from the "yellow" mussel and steel-gray ones from the black.

The impression produced by reading this account is very strong as to the peculiar interest and value of the *Unio* fauna of the Mississippi basin, in reference to this production of many-colored pearls and the importance of preserving it from the reckless extinction which is threatened by the present rude and wholesale methods of pearl-hunting, in which the shells are destroyed by thousands, for want of some simple and judicious process, such as older countries have devised and applied.

The responses to question 15 are a good deal intermingled with those to question 17, and, so far as they give actual values or prices, have been incorporated in the summing up of the answers to that inquiry. Question 15 properly deals only with relative values of different sizes, shapes, and colors; and therefore these points alone have been considered in drawing up a summary of results. Many of the answers are extremely general, referring only to the fact that values vary according to size and quality; others give simply prices, which, as above stated, are included in the report on question 17. Of 96 papers responding, 61 give more or less data belonging strictly to the question, 37 of which refer to the shape chiefly, and 33 to the color, several to both and to other points of quality.

So far as shape is concerned, nearly all these agree in giving the first place of value to spherical pearls, then to hemispherical and "button-shaped," then to oval and pear-shaped. Several speak of the small and "seed" pearls as of practically no value. One gives the "biscuit" pearl as the most prized (Tennessee); this of course arises from some local circumstance. A Tennessee paper gives a valuable statement to the effect that, compared with a spherical pearl taken as unity, a "button-shaped" one of equal size and quality is worth about two-thirds, and a "pear-shaped" pearl somewhat less. A Tennessee correspondent states that rare-colored pearls are twice

the value of white, and that a 20-grain pearl is worth five times one of 10 grains. Three papers (Arkansas, New York, and Tennessee) state that one-eighth inch in diameter is about the lowest limit for salable pearls.

As to quality, several answers affirm that (of course) only the pearls that are "clear" or "brilliant" have any market value.

In color, the responses vary a good deal, and it is difficult to derive any general agreement, from the fact that while several mention two or three colors as especially prized, only a few specify which of them is the most valued. Of the 33 papers that report, 10 specify pink as either first, or among the first, in estimation; 4 refer to red, 2 as the most valued; 6 to black, 3 rating it as the best, and 4 to yellow or gold color; while, singularly enough, another paper (Tennessee) states particularly that there is no sale for yellow or black; 5 refer to blue, 2 of them rating this color as first and 2 as second, with pink first. Other colors especially named are lavender (Wisconsin), purple, steel-gray, white, and peacock green (Wisconsin).

Evidently the prevalence of certain species in certain districts, the accidents of pearl discovery here or there, and a variety of local and temporary conditions, must enter into such estimates, and would doubtless yield different results in different years or series of years.

Question 16, as to the "markets for pearls," was answered in 98 papers, the rest being indefinite or not responding at all. Out of these, 92 specify New York, 43 mentioning no other, and 47 adding one or several more. Of other places, Chicago comes next, being specified in 16 papers (Wisconsin, Iowa, Tennessee, Alabama, and Texas); then Philadelphia in 14 (one New York and the rest Tennessee); and next Cincinnati in 10 (Tennessee 8 and Texas 2); Milwaukee is reported in 8 (Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Wisconsin); Nashville in 5 (Kentucky and Tennessee); St. Louis in 4 (Arkansas and Tennessee, each 2); and Louisville in 3 (Tennessee). Two papers mention Boston (Iowa and Tennessee); 2 Atlanta, 2 Carthage, and 2 Smithville (all Tennessee), and 1 each the following places: Washington (New York); Memphis, Knoxville, Murfreesboro, Tenn.; Elgin, Ill.; Asheville, N. C.; and Jersey City, N. J. (all Tennessee). Several make general statements as to "any large city," or include London, Paris, etc., from merely public repute. Several specify firms or dealers by name, in New York, Milwaukee, Philadelphia, etc. A Texas paper reports some pearls as sold in "Old Mexico."

Question 17, as to the prices obtained for pearls, has been answered more or less in 86 papers. Of these, 18 are uncertain or indefinite, merely saying that prices vary greatly according to size and quality, etc. The remaining 67 give figures which, however, are extremely diverse and can hardly be analyzed or tabulated with any definite result. This condition arises partly from the different methods of stating the values. Some give simply maximum and minimum prices, obtained or reported, without specifying size, color, or quality; others give prices for only certain kinds and sizes, and others again report the values by weight. Some also include the very small pearls, and others confine their account evidently to those that are marketable singly. From this varied mass of data only a few general statements can be deduced.

Tennessee and Wisconsin are the only States that report any very high prices, save in a few cases from Texas, Arkansas, Indiana, and Iowa. The small pearls—those less than a tenth of an inch—are sold in lots for a few cents apiece. The Florida paper reports selling 16, of one-eighth of an inch, for \$5, an average value of a little over 30 cents; a Maryland paper mentions a brilliant one of the same size as bring-

ing \$1; and a New York circular states that a pink one of that size is worth \$5. Most of the little ones, however, are averaged at 5 or 10 cents in quantity. From these lower limits the values rise with great rapidity as the sizes increase, till single pearls reach to hundreds of dollars, and in some cases thousands. The limits reported range all the way from a maximum of a few cents to \$1,000 (Tennessee, 5 papers); \$2,000 (Indiana and Tennessee); \$3,500 (Tennessee); \$8,000 (Wisconsin), and even \$10,000 (Tennessee, 2 papers); but no other States report anything above \$300 (Iowa), and \$250 (Texas). The estimated values per grain, either given in the papers or calculated from prices mentioned for pearls of specified weight, range from \$1 to \$75 (Wisconsin), and even \$100 (Tennessee and Texas), but rarely exceed \$15 or \$20. In these extreme cases just mentioned the pearls must have been overvalued. Numerous cases occur where pearls have sold locally for many times more than they were worth.

To consider a few of the most definite statements, the first undoubtedly belongs to the remarkable "sky-blue" pearl from Caney Fork, Tennessee, which was sold for \$950, and subsequently brought \$3,300 in London. The same papers (Tennessee) that refer to this, also state that the adjacent Cumberland River, into which Caney Fork flows, has produced no pearls of more than \$25 in value, though both streams have been very largely searched. One Tennessee paper reports a round pink pearl as having brought \$650; another, which mentions \$1,000 as a maximum value, adds that 30 cents and \$700 are the actual limits of price obtained at that place. A Wisconsin paper states that \$30 a grain is the highest price obtained by the writer. One response (Tennessee) gives \$12 as the value of an 8-grain pearl of good quality; if pink, however, it is \$18, and if yellow, \$20—illustrating the differences in value for color; another (Tennessee) mentions \$20 as paid in New York for a fine pearl of 6 grains, and \$300 for one of 31½ grains; and another (Tennessee) gives \$500 as the value of a pearl of 40 to 50 grains.

One paper from Iowa states that the finder generally gets from one-tenth to one-fourth the value of the pearl. Two Tennessee papers refer to the business as far from profitable, one saying that it does not realize an average of a dollar a day, and another that the writer thinks of giving it up as not worth while at the prices obtained.

Question 18, as to the method of taking the shells, is answered in 105 papers. Of these a number say merely that they are gathered with the hands, while 40 mention or describe some form of instrument as used in the deeper water. A Kansas paper states that the method is to pick them up along bars, etc., but the usual process indicated is to wade into the stream and take the shells from the bottom by hand, sometimes feeling for them and detaching them with the feet. In some cases a scoop or shovel is used. They are then thrown into a boat, canoe, or floating tub and taken ashore. In deeper water several speak of diving for them, but generally some form of rake or tongs must be employed—of course, with boats. Various descriptions are given, several mentioning simply a rake, "clam rake," or "mussel rake," others saying "oyster forks" or (Illinois) "a 6-tined fork bent in rake shape." This method is the principal one reported in Wisconsin, and an account is given of "rakes," made for the purpose, about 20 inches long, with 6-inch teeth, "and a wire netting on the other side to hold the mussels when raked up" (Wisconsin), and of a "garden rake with a wire basket back of the teeth, and others, similar but heavier, made by a blacksmith" (Wisconsin); and again (Iowa), a garden rake is mentioned "for sounding the bottom and driving away the mud turtles." Another description is "a rake in the shape of

a pitchfork," with five or six prongs a foot long and a handle 5 or 6 feet in length (Tennessee). Massachusetts reports "a wire dredge."

Several speak of "grubs" and "grabs," and of tongs "like a blacksmith's, only longer" (New York); and a peculiar combination is described and sketched, in a paper from New York, as "a rake with springs, which seize the clam." Two Tennessee papers allude to other methods, one describing a straight rod with a sharp thin piece of iron on the end, which is "pushed into the crevice of the mussel," the valves evidently then closing upon the intruder with such force as to allow the shell to be drawn up thereby, and the other speaking of a "spike," which may be used to a depth of 10 feet—probably the same process; both of these are reported as available only in quite clear water, obviously. Another New York paper makes an interesting reference to the use of the "water telescope," as a box with a glass in the bottom. The deep-water gathering is of course conducted with the aid of boats or skiffs, which are brought to the shore when filled; or in some cases, it would seem, the shells are opened and examined in the boat, though this is not positively stated.

Question 19, as to the apparatus used in opening the shells for examination, received 102 answers. Nearly all describe some form of knife, many referring to the common kinds by name, "case knife," "pocket-knife," "table-knife," "jack-knife," etc., or by describing it as "a short, stout knife," or more frequently "a long knife," "thin-bladed knife," etc. A Maryland paper specifies "an oyster-knife." A hammer, a hatchet, a long-bladed dirk, and "anything with a point" are also mentioned, alone or in connection with a knife. A few describe the method, one or two speaking of cutting through at the hinge, one or two of cutting the adductor muscles, whereupon the valves open. A paper from New York says: "Cut the forward muscle (anterior adductor) and then pry open until the finger can be inserted."

It will at once be seen that the methods are the rudest and simplest, and involve the destruction of every mussel that is examined for pearls, whether yielding any or not. No instance is reported of any use or knowledge of the partially opening tools employed in Scotland and Germany.

Question 20, as to the mode of extracting the pearls, when found, received 93 answers. A large proportion of these are very general, merely saying "by hand," "with the fingers," etc.; but about one-third give more or less description of the process. When the shell has been opened, the pearls, if loose and near the edge, may be readily seen, and sometimes even drop out. These are of course easily taken out with the thumb and finger, or, if small, with tweezers (Arkansas), or on the point of a knife (Tennessee). If more embedded in the mantle and gills, they are detected by feeling for them, passing or rubbing the thumb or finger along and around each valve and about the region of the hinge. The pearls may then be pressed or squeezed out "like the seed out of a cherry" (Tennessee); but if attached to the shell, must be removed with a pair of nippers (Iowa) or a hammer (Tennessee). Care is required in opening not to scratch or injure the pearl (Wisconsin). A few describe different methods; thus an Arkansas paper speaks of breaking shells, and a Florida paper tells of piling the mussels in a dry place to decay and finding the pearls in the emptied shells later. This method is evidently practicable only where little "pearl-hunting" is generally carried on, and where the pile of shells would not be liable to inspection and search by other parties than the original gatherers.

Question 21, concerning the treatment of pearls when found, received definite answers in only 78 papers, which in some respects show considerable diversity of

usage. The pearls are first thoroughly washed, to remove all adhering animal matter, and two papers speak of using alcohol to complete the cleansing. After this the essential point in keeping or carrying them is to prevent injury to the surface from friction; and the majority of those who describe what is done tell of wrapping in cotton (20) or soft paper (12), cloth, flannel, or silk, several speaking of drying them, or keeping them dry. But others would keep them in a liquid, six specifying a bottle of water, and one (Wisconsin) sweet oil or coal oil. Several speak of putting them into a bottle, but with no account of its contents, or whether even dry, though an Indiana writer mentions cotton in a bottle, and a Tennessee correspondent a vial with lint; hence in the cases just referred to it is impossible to judge as to the probable meaning. Three papers mention keeping pearls in starch, one (Tennessee) "in Irish potato," and one (Tennessee) in powdered magnesia. The effect of sunlight is curiously alluded to, five papers (Maryland, New York, and Tennessee) stating that the pearls should be carefully kept from it, and one (New York) that they should be kept in it.

Eight Tennessee papers make interesting references to "peeling" dull and unpromising pearls, merely saying that this is sometimes done "with a sharp knife" and a nice pearl obtained thereby; alcohol, whiting, chamois leather, etc., are said to be used to produce a lustrous surface. Three other papers allude to polishing or cleaning pearls (Tennessee), one specifying that it is done "with Irish potato." Two papers say nothing under this head of treatment, save that there is no way to improve upon nature. Here evidently the purport of the question was not clearly understood.

The answers to question 22, as to what, if any, use or disposal is made of the shells after being examined for pearls and the animals destroyed, give a painful record of the utter waste of an enormous amount of material useful and beautiful for many purposes in the arts. The question is answered in 95 papers, with a melancholy uniformity. In only 17 of them is there any suggestion of utilization of the shells, and in only 1 of the use of the animals other than as fish bait, manure, or food for hogs.

Thirty-two answers say simply that there is no use made of them or that they are "wasted" or "thrown away"; 13 say that they are thrown in the water, and 8 add that the fish eat them, and also the muskrats and turtles; 9 speak of their being used for fish-bait, 10 for feeding hogs or poultry, and 2 for manure. Several merely say that they are left on the banks or shoals for rats, minks, and crows to dispose of.

A paper from Iowa states that the shells are utilized for button-making and that some people use the animal for soup. The actual use of the shells for buttons is also referred to in 7 papers (Iowa, Tennessee, and Wisconsin) and their possible value for that purpose is noted in 4 other papers, though they are not so used as yet. (See pp. 425-426.) A Wisconsin paper says that a few are polished for ornamental purposes; other circulars (Wisconsin and Tennessee) contain similar statements, adding that they are also used to pave garden walks and sometimes burned for lime. This latter use, for lime, is referred to also by 3 Tennessee papers as actual or possible, and 1 says that they might be "ground to cement," and 1 from Wisconsin notes that some are ground up for poultry.

On the other hand, an Iowa writer states that "very few pearls are found in the best button shells" and one in Tennessee says that the shells are too brittle for buttons.

When it is remembered that the native tribes of both North and South America made large use of the river mussels as an article of food, as also some of the soldiers

during the late civil war, it seems extraordinary that only one instance of any attempt so to utilize them should appear in these accounts; and it is very remarkable that the shells, so capable of being wrought and polished into an immense variety of beautiful objects of ornamental art, should be almost uniformly thrown away and wasted.

Question 23, as to the principal occupations of the pearl-hunters, is answered in 84 papers. Of these, 17 say merely that their occupations are various, or that people of all callings are included. The remaining 67 papers state, more or less definitely, as follows: Farmers and farm-hands, 35; laborers, 12; fishermen, 12; and as making pearl-hunting a regular business, 8. Three papers speak of "loafers," and one or two each specify as follows: Stockmen, hunters, trappers, tradesmen, roustabouts, boys, and negroes. One refers to women and children, and the Maryland papers to oystermen. The term "laborers," as used in these answers, probably means in most cases farm-laborers, as stated in a few instances; and the indication is that two-thirds of the pearl-hunting is done by agricultural people, who search the streams when not otherwise occupied, "in off times," "fall," or "late summer," as several of the papers say. Fishermen naturally often combine pearl-hunting with their ordinary calling, and unoccupied persons of all kinds turn to it as affording a possible resource instead or in default of regular employment. The references to negroes, only mentioned as such in two (Tennessee) papers, are curiously few; and it seems that they, for some reason not apparent, engage but little in the business. Many of the farm-hands and fishermen, however, may be colored, although it is not so stated.¹

Questions 24 and 25, as to statistics of the pearl fishery during the year previous to the report and former years, respectively, received so few answers that no definite results can be gathered from them. The few data that are given would afford no estimate of the extent of the industry or of the actual commercial value of its product.

Question 26, as to when the pearl industry was of most importance, has received more or less definite answers in about two-thirds of the papers. The others either fail to make any statement or employ terms so vague as to be of no significance. A number answer by giving the time of year or stage of water, not understanding the purport of the inquiry, and a few say that the yield does not vary much from year to year. Of 80 papers that give definite or approximate dates for the time of chief activity, only 27 mention or include the recent years (i. e., 1894-1897, when the reports were written), though several more do so by implication, using phrases like "since 1890," or "not before 1891." Several state that the yield has diminished within a few seasons past; 41 papers specify years between 1890 and 1897, inclusive, and 19 between 1880 and 1890. One Tennessee paper gives 1878-1884; an Iowa paper gives 1878-1890, and the Ohio paper says 1860 to 1890. The 8 Wisconsin papers give years from 1889 to 1892, two referring to thousands of dollars' worth of pearls as taken in 1890, which seems to have been the year of maximum yield. The Texas dates are rather earlier, two papers giving 1886 and 1880-1886, respectively, though one says 1893. For Arkansas, Florida, Illinois, Indiana, Maryland, and Pennsylvania the dates all range between 1890 and 1894, and chiefly since 1892, the search for Unio pearls having apparently been taken up since and in consequence of the great discoveries in Wisconsin, although in some cases it had a strictly local and independent origin, as shown

¹ It is of some interest to note the fact that in Iowa two well-known pearl-hunters are Indians: On-a-wat at Montour and John Mus-ke-mo at Nonotaker, Tama County. In their cases may perhaps be seen the continuance, to the present day, of an ancestral habit, which is proved by the abundance of Unio pearls in ancient mounds and by the traditions of the early explorers of North America from the time of DeSoto down.

by answers under the next head. In Tennessee it has been carried on at different points since 1880 and even 1878.

The twenty-seventh inquiry, concerning the history, origin, and growth of the pearl-fishing, is answered in less than one-fourth of the papers; only 35 reply to it at all, and 5 of these are entirely indefinite. Several merely give the year when pearl-hunting began, with no incidents or data otherwise. A few allude to it as diminishing (Tennessee); or, when of late origin, increasing (Tennessee and Iowa). The circumstances connected with the origin of the pearl industry, as reported in a few of the papers, are of considerable interest, and may be put on record as follows: Arkansas reports that in 1889 two pearls were found in one shell. Inquiry showed that some twenty had been found from time to time previously, and the facts were then published in the newspapers. An Indiana paper states that the first interest arose from accidentally finding a valuable pearl in opening a shell. The Maryland paper refers it to a newspaper article, about 1885. Texas reports a pearl discovered in opening a mussel for bait; the crops had failed that year, and pearl-hunting was widely taken up. Three Tennessee papers date the first excitement from what is evidently the same incident, related with slight variations, that in 1880 a fishing party came from Murfreesboro, one of whom was a jeweler. He found a pearl in opening a mussel for bait, and sent it to New York, where it was sold for a handsome price. Other responses from the same State give somewhat similar accounts, probably of the same circumstance. A Wisconsin paper states that in 1890 a Norwegian disclosed to a few persons the fact that he had been finding pearls for some years before. An interesting and isolated statement is made in a Tennessee paper that the matter was "brought into notice of the people here (Clinton, Tenn.) by button manufacturers having the shells gathered here," and that it has been kept up by "hard times."

Question 28, as to the exhaustion of the mussel-beds, its causes, and its rapidity, has called forth a very suggestive body of replies in 77 papers. The other papers make no response, or none that is at all definite. Ten papers report extermination of the shells, either actual or imminent, within a very few years past; 23 speak of rapid diminution in their numbers; 23 of decrease as noticed and in progress; 13 are uncertain, or report little or no change; 6 describe them as abundant or "inexhaustible," and 5 refer to partial recovery or replenishment after reduction. In 56 out of 77 papers, therefore, or approximately three-fourths, the process of exhaustion is recorded, at times already complete. Of these, 29 state the cause as pearl-hunting, mainly or wholly, and 10 papers refer to other agencies—2 or 3 each to high or low water, deposits of sand or mud, ice, boats, hogs, and rats. Of the 7 answers from Wisconsin, where so many pearls of remarkable beauty were found in the early "nineties," 5 report the shells as nearly or entirely exhausted, and 2 refer to rapid reduction, due to ignorant and careless persons taking the small and young shells as well as those more likely to contain pearls. A Tennessee paper alludes to the same reckless habit, and estimates the shells remaining as about 5 per cent only of the number in former years. The destruction of the young shells is also mentioned in Indiana. In New York it is stated that a good pearl-fisher can "clean out" a bed of 500 shells in a day; the Ohio paper speaks of hundreds being opened daily, and an Iowa writer states that the river will be exhausted in two years. Of those that speak of little change, several remark that not much is known or done in regard to pearls at their localities. Of the 4 that allude to recovery, one (Tennessee) says that the beds are cleared out about every two years and renewed in four; another (Tennessee) says that they

become exhausted yearly and re-bed in one or two years; still another (Tennessee) states that the shells return every year, but in less numbers; and one (Texas) reports that many beds that had been worked out are recovering, through the growth of the young shells that were left unmolested.

The twenty-ninth inquiry, as to whether exhausted beds recover and in what time, is closely connected with the preceding one. It is unanswered in 25 of the papers and 9 others report no knowledge or opinion on the subject. Eighty-eight replies are given, of which several are indefinite and conjectural. Out of about 80 papers, therefore, or two-thirds of the whole, 26 report the belief that the beds are replenished from year to year; 8 in one or two years; 4 in two or three years, and 4 in four years; 6 name periods between four and eight years and 7 between eight and twelve years; 1 gives twenty years; 1 gives twenty-five, and 2 estimate the recovery as requiring a century or more; 4 papers say that many years are necessary; 6 say "a few" or "soon"; 4 report no exhaustion as noticed, and 6 report no recovery. Several papers are indefinite or uncertain. Two of those that give estimated dates for recovery do so with an expression of doubt ("if at all," "if ever") as to whether it really occurs. A Tennessee paper says that the shells return each year, but in less numbers. As it is customary, more or less, to leave the young and small shells, the question resolves itself largely into two, viz, how far they have been carefully spared and how long it takes them to attain their growth. This last probably differs in different species, as is intimated in some of the answers, and it may also be influenced by various external conditions. Another Tennessee paper estimates the recovery as slow, from the fact, previously brought out very markedly, that the young shells are those that are most exposed to all natural enemies and accidents. A New York paper, which thinks that there is no recovery, states that few young shells are found. A Texas paper says that young shells are found in two years, but contain no pearls, and another from the same State says that many beds are recovering by the growth of the young that were left before. On the other hand an Indiana paper states that when a bed has been worked out plenty are found the next season, and an Iowa paper reports young shells abundant everywhere. One of the papers from Tennessee probably gives a very fair average statement, to the effect that the beds recover somewhat every season, and would, perhaps, recover entirely in a few years, if not molested.

The concluding inquiry, as to whether State protection of the beds is desirable or necessary, is answered with more or less definiteness in 97 papers, and, as might be expected on such a subject, with much diversity. Fifty-nine of the responses see no need or advantage from protection and 33 favor it. One or two fail to understand the purport of the question clearly, and some hold that while not necessary now it may be so in the future. Two or three say that it would be difficult or impracticable. A few of the answers may be referred to more particularly. Of those that do not favor protection, 2 (Michigan and New York) think it not worth while or desirable to preserve the Unios, the latter curiously remarking that "the water would be purer without them." One Tennessee writer seems to hold a similar view, saying that protection is not desirable, though it is necessary to the preservation of the shells; another, failing to appreciate the question involved, opposes protection "because pearls bring in a great deal of money, and the mussels are of no use." Two or three think that the shells are inexhaustible and in no danger of extinction. Of those that favor the suggestion, 1 from Indiana states that it would be well if no shells were taken for five years; the Ohio paper advocates it "if the mussels are to be preserved." One

paper from Tennessee alludes to the value of the shells for pearl buttons as a reason for protection, and 2 others from the same State advocate a limitation as to not opening young shells. A Texas paper expresses the belief that "it would give general satisfaction to all the land-owners on the stream on which the shells are found." This plainly alludes to the trespassing by pearl-hunters on farm lands along the streams as a source of annoyance to proprietors.

The general conclusions most clearly brought out may perhaps be summed up as follows: The shells are most abundant in swift and clear water, where the bottom is sandy or gravelly and the country rock calcareous. While still numerous in many streams, they have greatly diminished within a few years past, wherever the pearl-hunting enterprise has extended, and are at some points nearly exterminated. The pearls found are few, and those of marketable value represent the destruction of thousands of shells for every pearl obtained. No use is made of this often beautiful material, which is simply thrown away and lost, although for buttons and ornamental articles it would be admirable. The methods of gathering the shells and extracting the pearls are the simplest and most primitive, and the activity of a few seasons generally exhausts the beds.

This state of affairs is one that calls loudly for reform. The wealth of Unios that fills our rivers and streams is rapidly being destroyed by ignorant and wasteful methods of pearl-hunting, and either some form of protection is important, or, if that be not possible, a wide diffusion of information as to better methods, and particularly the introduction of the tools used in Germany for opening Unios far enough to see if there are pearls contained, without destroying the animal, which may then be returned to the water.

The whole question is curiously suggestive of the similar conditions in respect to forestry and lumbering; the apparently inexhaustible natural supply; the reckless prodigality and waste of such resources by man; the rapid diminution and impending extinction which it would require years of care and labor to restore; the foresight and remonstrance of the few and the indifference or opposition of the many, as to any limitation or protection designed to preserve the natural resources; and the ease with which they could be preserved by a few simple and intelligent modes of management once established and made familiar to the people; and the pressing importance of some such action in place of the *post nos diluvium* policy at present prevailing.

The question of legislation in such matters is always very difficult, both in procuring and enforcing any restrictions. But it would be most desirable to impose some limitations to prevent the wholesale destruction that is now carried on. Such limitations should aim to prevent the taking of young shells at any time, and establish "closed seasons" occasionally, when the Unios should have a chance to remain undisturbed. Of great importance, also, would be the description and explanation of the opening-tools that are used abroad, and the inculcation of their use upon pearl-hunters in this country, so as to avoid needless destruction.

FRAUDULENT AND ACCIDENTAL INTERMIXTURES WITH PEARLS.

In the small lots and packages of pearls that are sent to commercial centers for purchase or valuation, quite a variety of foreign objects are found, some of which have evidently been introduced with fraudulent intent, while others have got among the pearls accidentally, and were evidently mistaken for pearls.

Among the former are regular artificial pearls, i. e., hollow beads of thin glass filled with wax or other composition; also ground pieces of pearly shell or attached pearls that have been cut from the valve and rounded and polished on the defective side—occasionally rounded and cut entirely out of the shell itself, and of no value. Frequently the round, hard lens of a fish's eye is found in parcels of pearls.

In the second class may be mentioned natural growths found in the shell resembling brown pearls; translucent, but consisting not of nacre, but of conchioline—the material of the hinge and ligament. These are sometimes handsome and lustrous, and occasionally iridescent, but, of course, are not pearls and have no commercial value.

A third class of doubtful character consists of metallic objects that sometimes strongly resemble pearls, and may have been introduced either by intention or by accident. Such are small shot and steel spheres from ball-bearings; these, when bright, look much like the darker and lighter gray pearls, respectively, and are quite frequently encountered.

USE OF UNIOS AS FOOD.

Indications point to the use of Unios as an important article of food by the Indian tribes at the time of the discovery of the country, and occasionally by the white explorers. This practice probably prevailed for ages, in both North and South America, back to the time of the Mound-builders. It seems, however, remarkable that so little use has been made of these abundant shellfish by the whites; and the question is worthy of attention, whether we have not here a ready and valuable source of food supply throughout large areas of the country remote from the sea and its products. There seems no reason why these mollusks should not be palatable and nutritious, and such is the testimony of the few who have tried them.

While sailing down Canadian rivers on their rafts, lumbermen collect Unios for food by fastening bushes to the rear of the raft so that, when they pass through the mussel shoals where the rivers are shallow, the bushes touch, the shells close on the leaves and thin branches, holding to them securely, and at intervals the bushes are taken out and the Unios removed. In the same way we have the fact, referred to by Professor Rau, that the Unios of the Tennessee River were sometimes cooked and eaten, as a change of diet, by the soldiers of the Army of the Cumberland during the civil war, as stated by Dr. Brinton. They might even serve an important purpose in preserving life, in the case of exploring parties or travelers becoming lost in a region where other food was not procurable.



STERLING SILVER TEAPOT.

with baroque pearls from the rivers of Tennessee. Made by Tiffany & Co. Paris Exposition, 1889

STERLING SILVER TEAPOT.

with baroque pearls from the rivers of Tennessee. Made by Tiffany & Co. Paris Exposition, 1889.

PEARLS AND PEARL-BEARING SHELLS IN ORNAMENTAL WORK.

Efforts to make the river mussels of Germany available in ornamental work have met with much success. In 1850 Moritz Schmerler conceived the idea of making small fancy articles of the shells themselves, and succeeded so well that the Saxon Government allowed him to take from the royal beds the shells he needed for his manufacturing business. Large numbers of pearl-shell pocketbooks and hand-satchels have been made since then. The almost faultless white and reddish tinted "rose-pearl mussels" are specially prized for this purpose, as the shell material may be cut so thin that a photograph pasted inside can be seen through the shell, conveying the appearance of being produced on the shell itself. Other manufacturers engaged in the business, and many hundred thousands of the pearl mussels are now annually used at Adorf, where the business is chiefly carried on. The principal sources of supply are brooks in Bavaria and Bohemia that are owned by private persons. Here is a suggestion as to the possibilities of our American river shells. They are now occasionally polished for ornaments, and, with their pearly iridescence and varied shades of white, cream, pink, salmon, and purple, are objects of great beauty; but thus far they are almost unknown and unused in the realm of decorative art.

Some beginnings have been made in this direction in the United States, but only enough to indicate how much might be done. At the Mammoth Cave, there have long been sold as souvenirs to visitors little pocket-books and match-safes made from cut and polished *Unio* shells from the adjacent Green River, and they are often exceedingly pretty articles. Very lately a leading jewelry house in New York has begun to use polished *Unios* for small jewel-cases; they are brilliantly pearly and when lined with velvet are well adapted for such purposes, especially as used for fresh-water pearl jewelry.

In 1893, at the World's Columbian Exposition at Chicago, a large amount of material was shown, illustrating the actual and possible uses of fresh water pearls and pearl shells, and especially of our own *Unios*. As these exhibits were scattered through various public and private displays in several of the buildings, it may be well to bring together here a brief summary of the whole.

At the Tiffany Pavilion in the Manufactures and Liberal Arts Building there was a collection illustrating the occurrence of pearls and the various pearl-bearing shells and mollusks—notably a series of several thousand odd-shaped and curiously formed pearls, pearl blisters, and hinge pearls from the *Unios* of Wisconsin, Texas, Tennessee, and Ohio. In this collection were found round, oval, oblong, and mallet-shaped *Unio* pearls; two pearls ingrown into one another; pearls consisting of scarcely more than a blister, others formed of a single nacreous layer with a central arc of clay, and other curious and abnormal growths of interest to the naturalist, but of little commercial value. A silver teapot incrustured with fresh-water pearls (see plate VIII), and a watch case so thickly covered with Tennessee pearls that scarcely any mounting could be seen, were striking illustrations of the adaptation of these native products to elegant work in art. There were also exhibited *Unio* pearls from Weymouth, Nova Scotia; seven pearls from the original find made in 1856 at Notch Brook,

near Paterson, N. J. (from the collection of Prof. D. S. Martin, of New York, where they had been since a short time after the discovery); and a small quantity of pearls taken from the altar of the Turner group of mounds, Little Miami Valley, Ohio (from the original find of Prof. Frederick W. Putnam, who obtained several bushels of them, resembling strikingly those found by Warren K. Moorehead).

There was also a large collection of various species of Unios, from the small shells to the magnificent valves measuring nearly 8 inches in length, in a series in which one valve of each specimen is polished and the other in its natural state, to show the commercial possibilities of these shells. These were principally from the Sugar River, Wisconsin; others from Texas, Tennessee, and Kentucky.

A glass jar contained a fine specimen of the fresh-water mussel *Margaritana margaritifera*, from the Botova River, in Bohemia, carefully prepared and injected, showing a pearl in place between the mantle and the shell (see plate II).

A very interesting series of mounted fresh-water pearls was shown from Wisconsin, Tennessee, Ohio, and Texas. Among these are some absolutely white, pink, and brown pearls. All those from Wisconsin are very fine, possessing a marvelous metallic luster. In the Mining Building, Bunde & Upmeyer, of Milwaukee, exhibited several hundred Unio pearls, some of them very fine, of the various colors found in the rivers of Wisconsin.

The New York State exhibit, in the gallery of the Anthropological Building, contained a superb collection of Unios, beautifully mounted and well labeled, belonging to the State cabinet. This collection embraces those of the Rev. John Walton, Shelly G. Crump, C. E. Beecher, and others. In the south gallery, forming a portion of the exhibit of Professor Ward, of Rochester, were some magnificent specimens of Unios. Superb examples of *Dipsas plicatus* Lea, from Lake Riwa and from central China, containing pearl figures of Buddha, and flat, pearl-like disks, produced by inserting between the mantle and the shell of the mollusk small tin-foil figures or disks, were shown in the folk-lore collection of G. F. Kunz and in the Ward collection in the south gallery (see pl. III), both of which are now in the Field Columbian Museum.

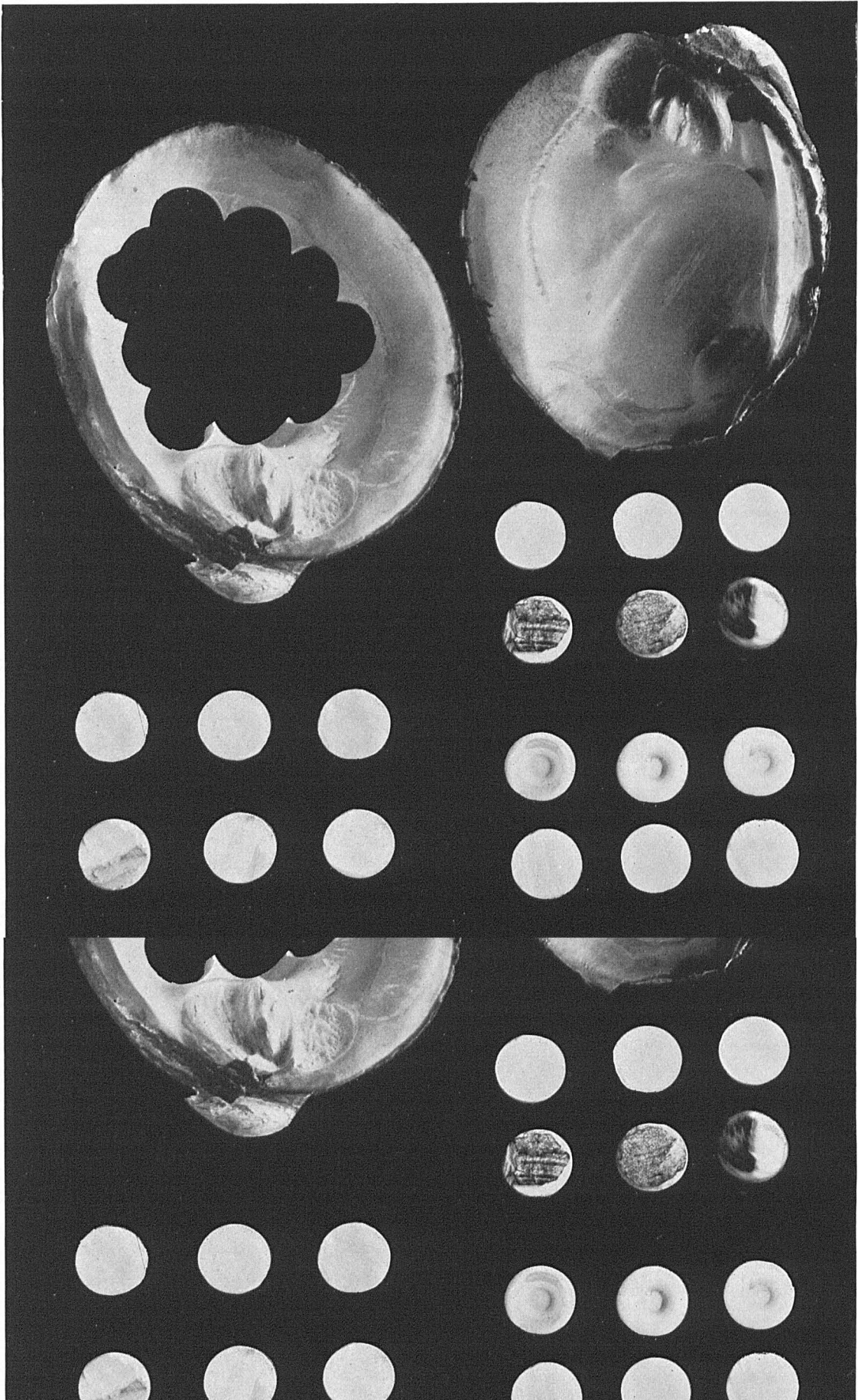
In the southeastern gallery of the Anthropological Building were about fifty specimens of Unios and mother-of-pearl shells with one valve of each shell polished.

One of the most interesting objects of pearl inlay was a small, round earthenware pot in the collection in the Cliff-dwellers' exhibit, just west of the Anthropological Building. In this earthen pot irregular squares of Unio shell have been inlaid in hard clay in regular layers, the clay between the pieces of pearl being about the width of the pieces themselves, and producing the effect of mosaic. This is the only object so decorated that has ever been found.

In the Swedish Building, Augusta Mollenberg, the royal court jeweler, exhibited twelve fresh-water pearls, weighing from 4 to 10 grains each, eight mounted on a chalice and two on an ecclesiastical bowl. A Norwegian jeweler exhibited several dozen pearls, white and faintly pink, from Norwegian rivers.

In the English section of the Manufactures Building, Edmund Johnson, jeweler royal of Ireland, exhibited several fresh-water pearls, weighing over 10 grains each, from Irish rivers, mounted in a brooch, in his collection of reproductions of Irish gold antiquities.

In the Mexican section, in the Fisheries Building, from the district of Jederal, with a series of marine pearl shells from the west coast of Nuevo Leon, was another series of fresh-water Unios, some measuring nearly 10 inches in length.



UTILIZATION OF UNIO SHELLS FOR BUTTONS.

The valuable possibilities of using *Unio* shells in making buttons have at last attracted attention, and an important industry is developing. A correspondent of the *St. Paul (Minn.) Dispatch*, under date of November 13, 1897, gives an extended account of the shell-button manufacture at Muscatine, Iowa, where already a number of factories are in operation. No dates are specified; but the statement is made that it was begun within a few years past by Mr. Boepple, a German, who recognized the possibilities of such an industry and established a factory at Muscatine, soon employing 200 operatives, besides a number of outside people gathering shells from the Mississippi River at that point. The enterprise proved profitable, even under an unfavorable tariff, and several other factories were established; but since the recent protective legislation has gone into effect the business is increasing largely. Eleven or twelve factories are now in operation, running 300 saws and employing 1,500 people. One of these was working on double time, to fill orders for 20,000 gross of buttons for the "holiday trade" of 1897. The business is already an important element in the prosperity of the town; and as the supply of shells is enormous it is expected to increase in extent. Other works exist in Iowa, at Davenport and Sabula, and at Cedar Rapids, on the Cedar River. There are also eastern factories referred to, that cut the shells into "blanks"—i. e., unfinished disks—and send them to Muscatine to be polished and perforated.

The shells have been heretofore gathered by men and boys wading in the shallow water, and working from boats in the deeper parts with rakes provided with a wire net or basket. Now, however, one boat has been built for steam-dredging, and another is under construction. The dredge will take up a ton of shells in an hour, and the steam will be used to cook the animals and clean the shells—a process now slowly conducted in small furnaces. As the gathering can not be carried on in winter when the river is frozen, prices rise in the autumn. Several species are capable of being used, of which two are particularly mentioned; these are "nigger-head" shells, which have risen with the approach of winter from 35 cents per 100 to 70 cents, and "sand" shells, which have advanced correspondingly from \$1 to \$2 per 100.

If the myriads of shells destroyed by the pearl-hunters could only be gathered and sent to the factories, or if cutting-works could be established in the districts affected by the "pearling" fever, much of this fine material could be utilized. On the other hand, the development of a large demand for shells by this industry and the introduction of steam-dredges to gather them by the ton from water too deep for the pearl-hunters to deal with, threaten within a few years' time to obliterate the *Unio* fauna largely, if not wholly, from our waters.

Following are some statistics in regard to the pearl-button business:

Selling price-list: First quality: 16 line, 48 cents per gross; 18 line, 51 cents per gross; 20 line, 55 cents per gross; 22 line, 60 cents per gross; 24 line, 65 cents per gross; 26 line, 70 cents per gross.

Second quality: 16 line, 40 cents per gross; 18 line, 43 cents per gross; 20 line, 47 cents per gross; 22 line, 52 cents per gross; 24 line, 57 cents per gross; 26 line, 62 cents per gross.

Third quality: 16 line, 27 cents per gross; 18 line, 30 cents per gross; 20 line, 36 cents per gross; 22 line, 37 cents per gross; 24 line, 41 cents per gross; 26 line, 45 cents per gross.

Prices paid sawyers: 26 line, 10 cents per gross, sawing whole shell; 26 line, 11 cents per gross, sawing butts; 24 line, 8½ cents per gross, sawing whole shell; 24 line, 9½ cents per gross, sawing butts; 22 line, 7½ cents per gross, sawing whole shell; 20 line, 7 cents per gross, sawing whole shell; 18 line, 6 cents per gross, sawing whole shell; 16 line, 5½ cents per gross, sawing whole shell.

By whole shell reference is made to sawing all the 26-line blanks there are in the shell. A gross is 14 dozen. The extra 2 dozen are to make up for the imperfect blanks or buttons, and these are all counted by weight. By butts are meant two different lines of blanks cut from 1 shell.

Prices paid grinders: 1 cent facing on grinder; 1½ cents grinding one side, per gross, all sizes.

Prices paid turners: 24 and 26 line, 4 cents per gross; 20 and 22 line, 3½ cents; 16 and 18 line, 3 cents; scratch center, 2 cents per gross; ring center, 1½ cents.

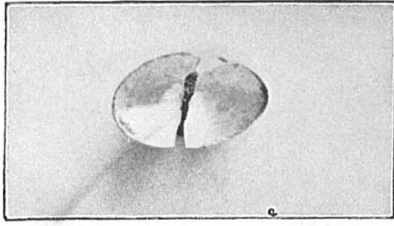
Prices paid drillers: 3½ cents per gross 4-hole, all sizes; 2 cents per gross 2-hole, all sizes.

Carding: 5 cents per gross.

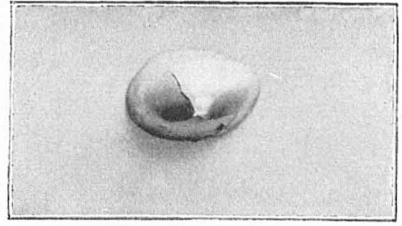
The capacity of a 10-saw factory is from 800 to 1,000 gross per week. The Muscatine buttons now bring a better price than the eastern goods.

Several button companies are now fully organized, and are producing large amounts of material.

In view of the button industry, even more than of the occasional yield of pearls, the question begins to arise as to the artificial culture of Unios. Between "pearling" and dredging for button-factories, the supply, however abundant, must soon be greatly reduced, if not exhausted altogether, unless some means can be found for increasing and maintaining it. For this purpose it would seem that Unio "farming" might yet become desirable and practicable as a source of industry and of profit, more especially if carried on in connection with the insertion of figures, flags, and other forms that might find a ready sale.



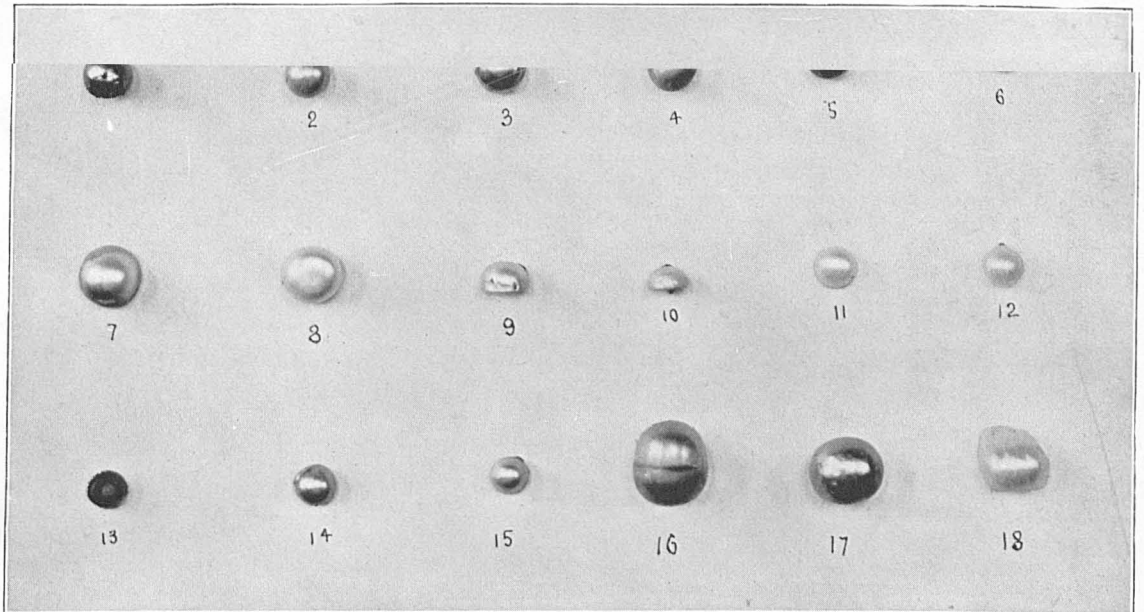
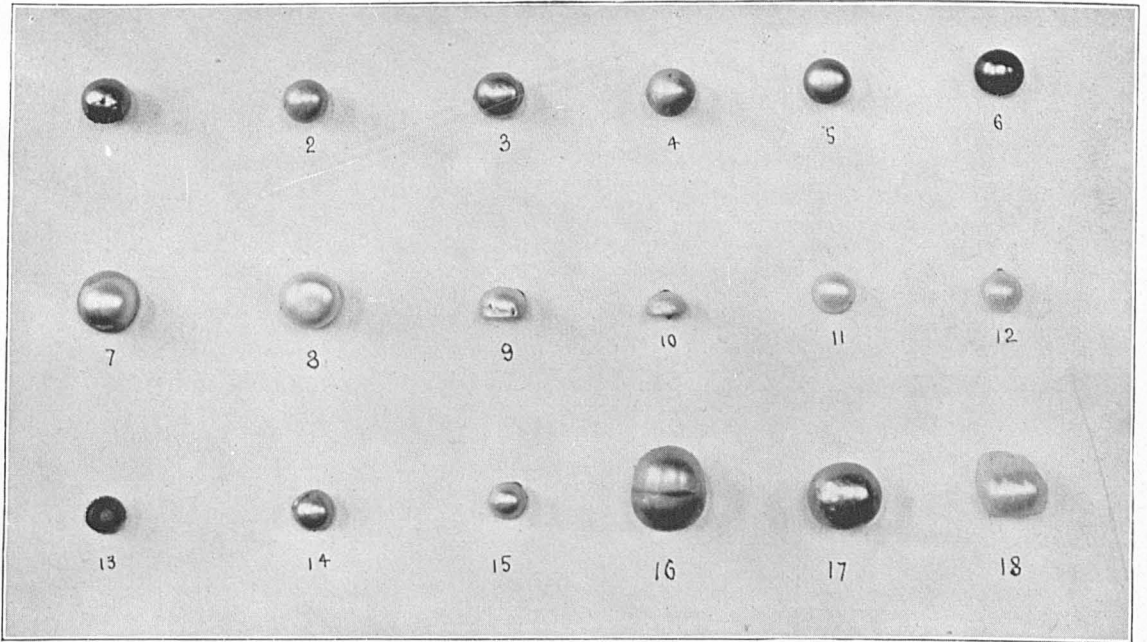
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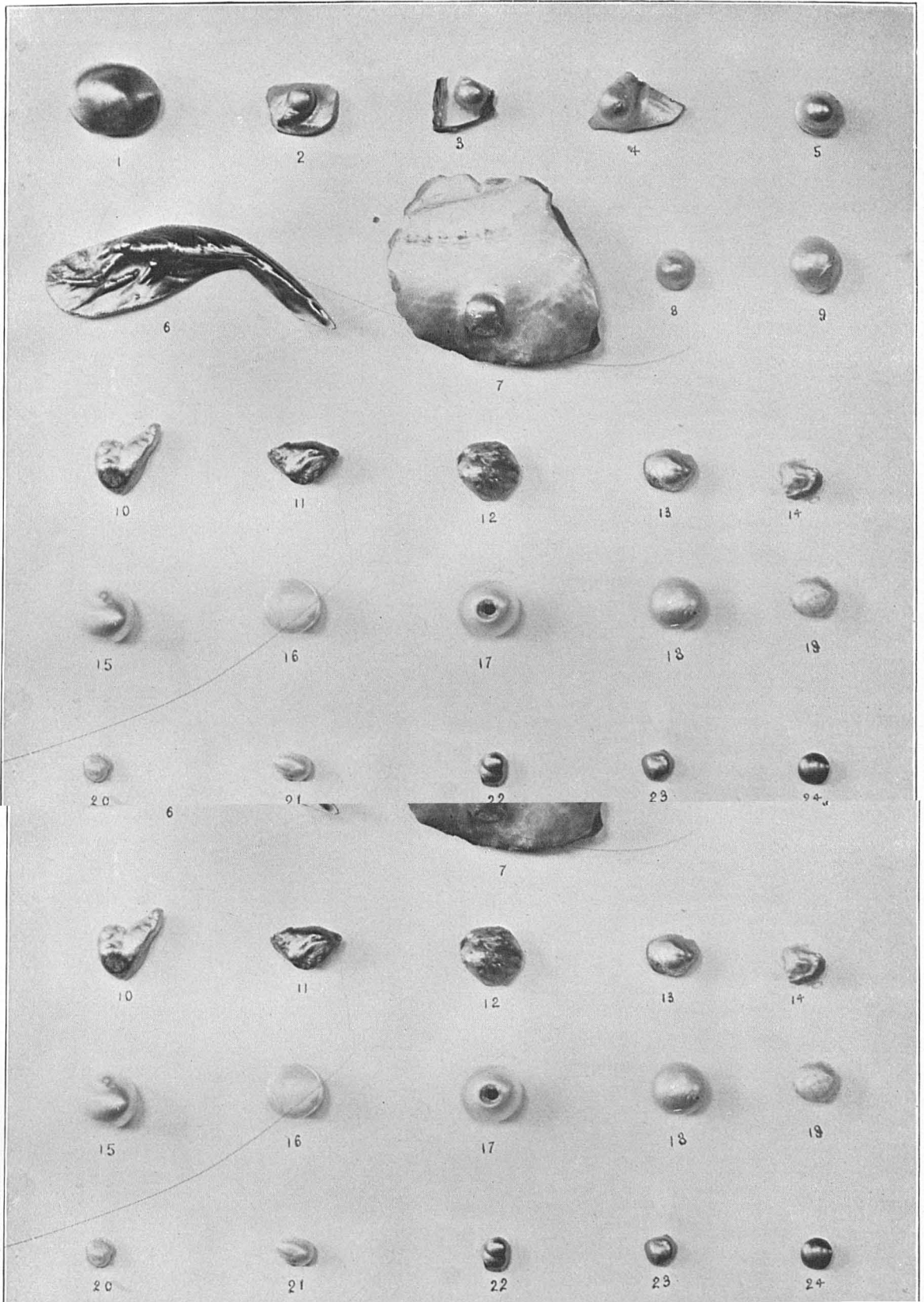


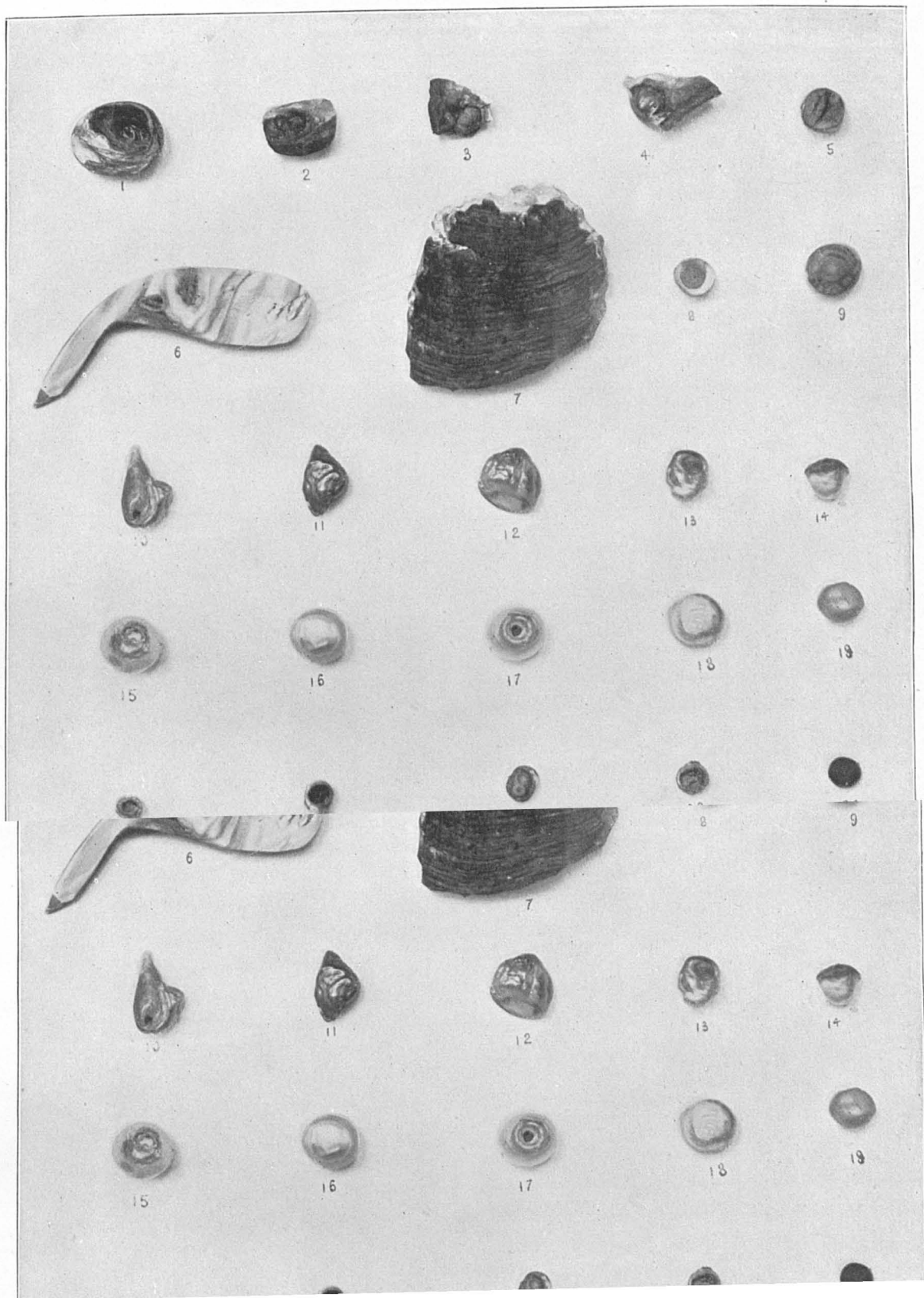
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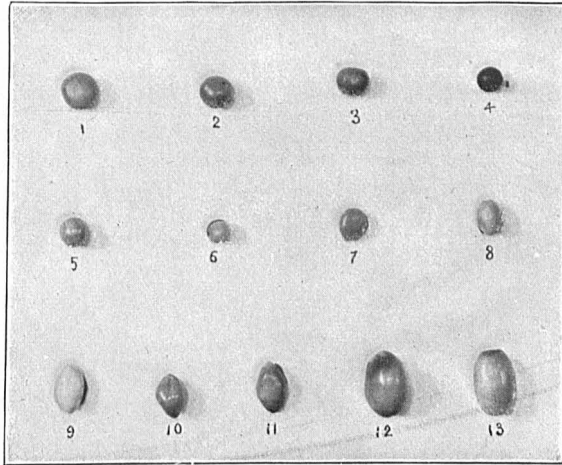
HOLLOW PEARL MADE BY CHINESE, BY SCALING OFF A LAYER FROM A LARGE OVAL PEARL AND FILLING IT WITH A COMPOSITION OF HARD WAX OR SHELLAC TO STRENGTHEN IT.

A, convex side; B, concave side, showing portion of the filling adhering along the line of the transverse crack, which revealed the deception.

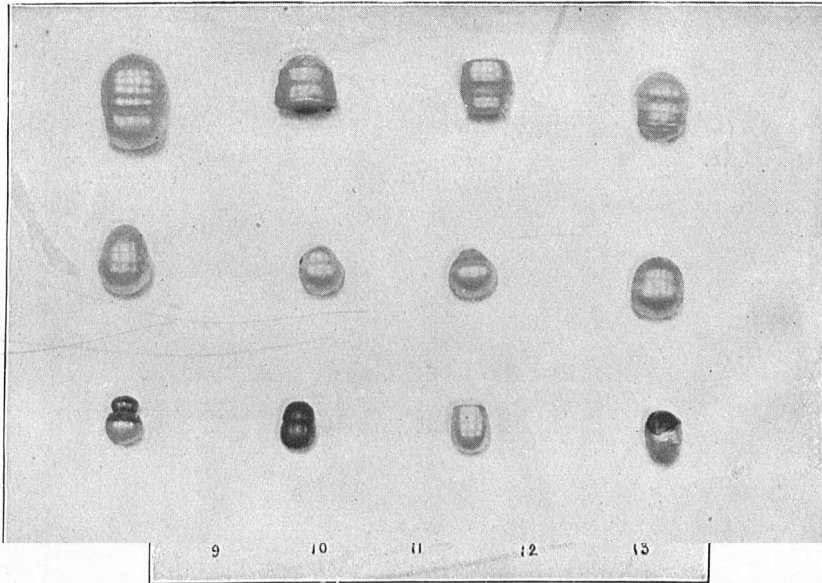




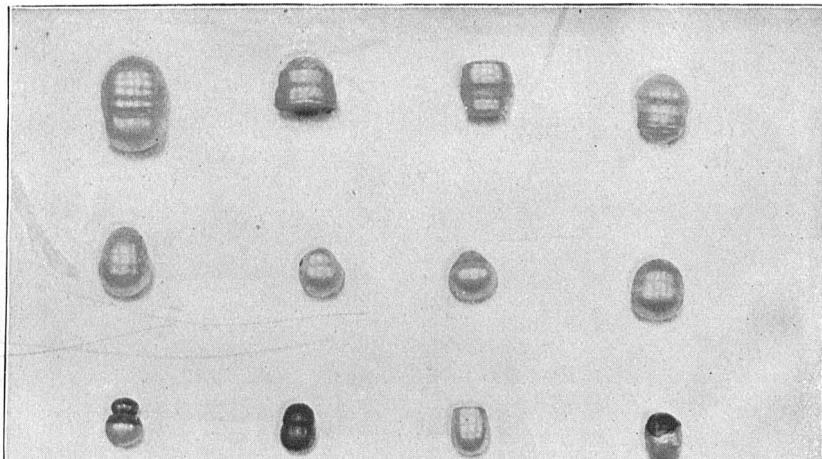


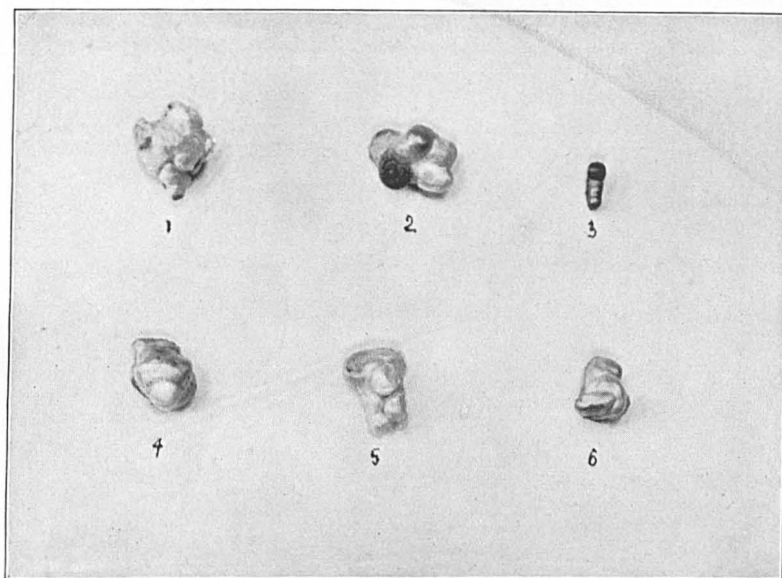


ROUND AND ELONGATED PEARLS.

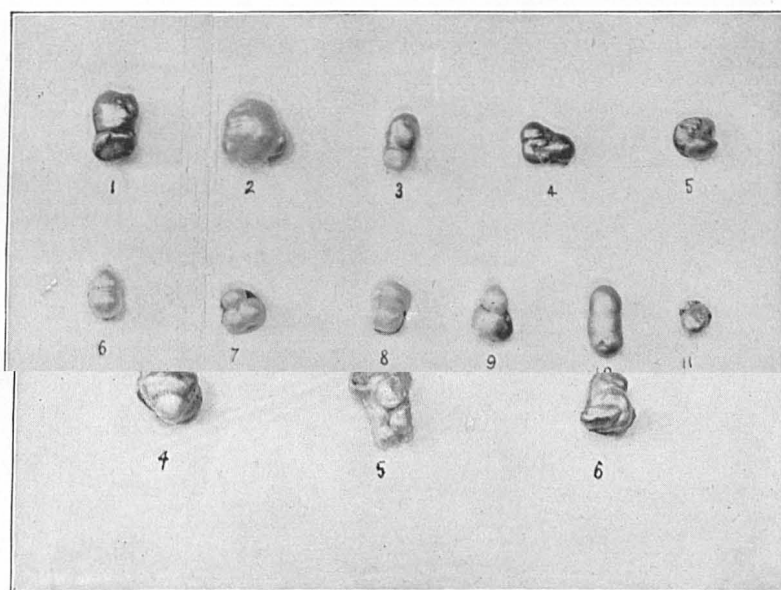


ROUND AND ELONGATED PEARLS.

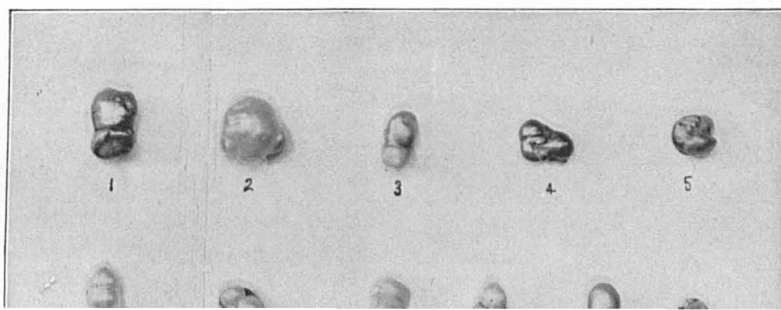


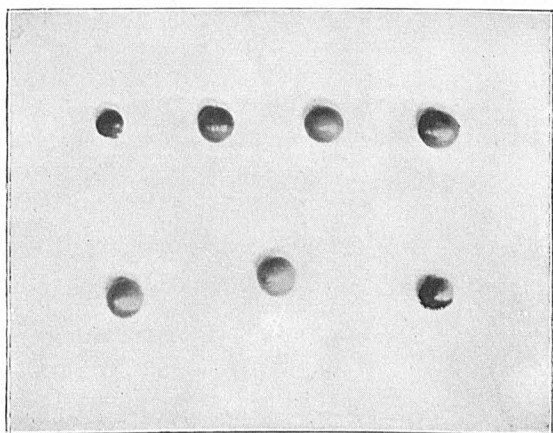
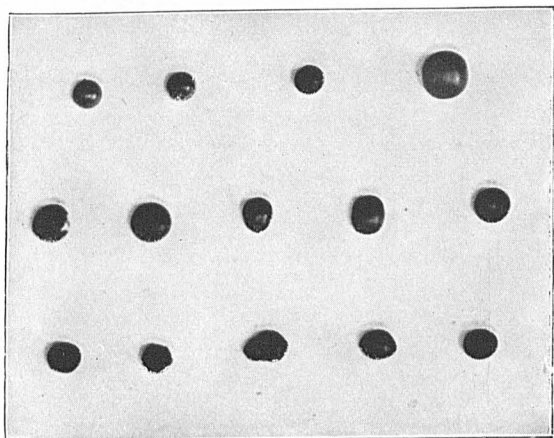


Group A.

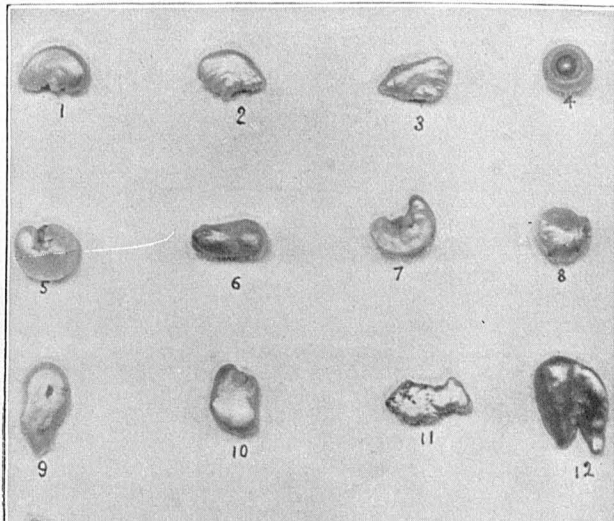
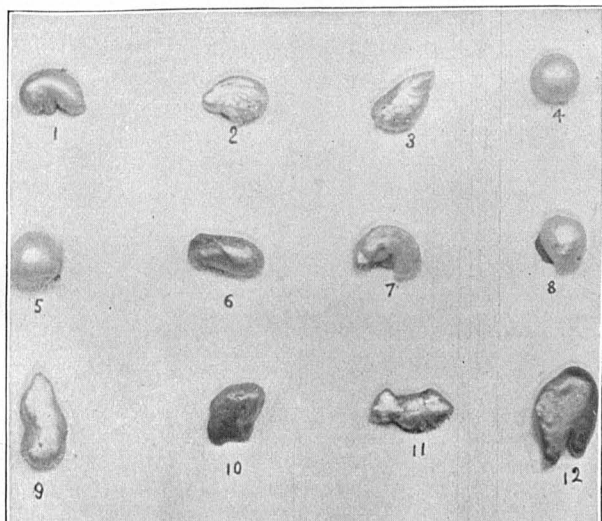
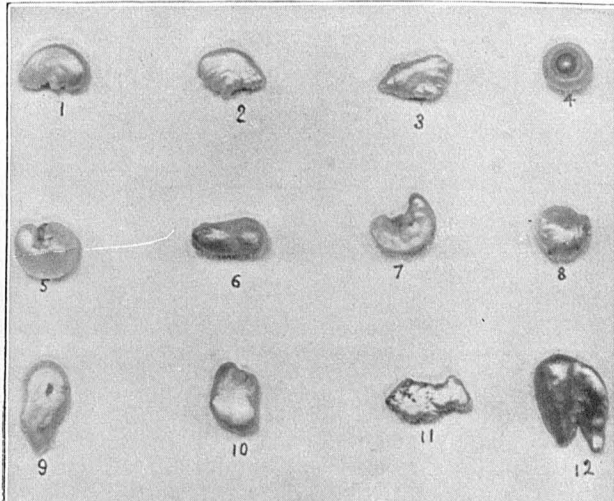
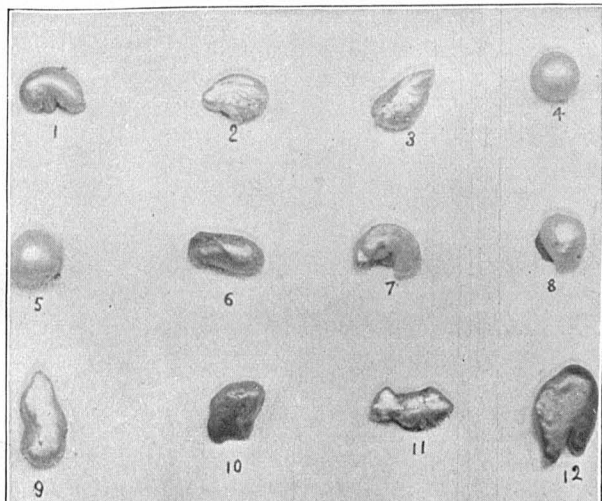


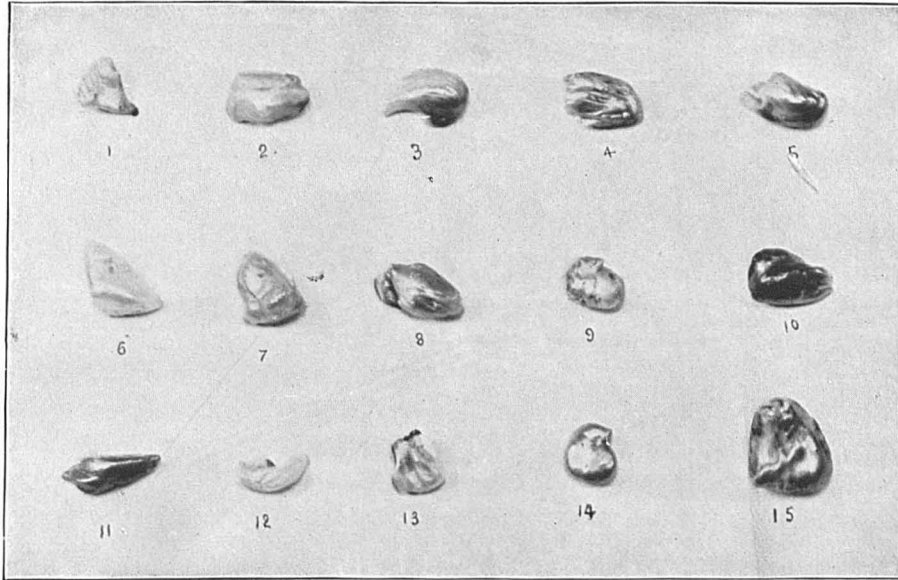
Group A.



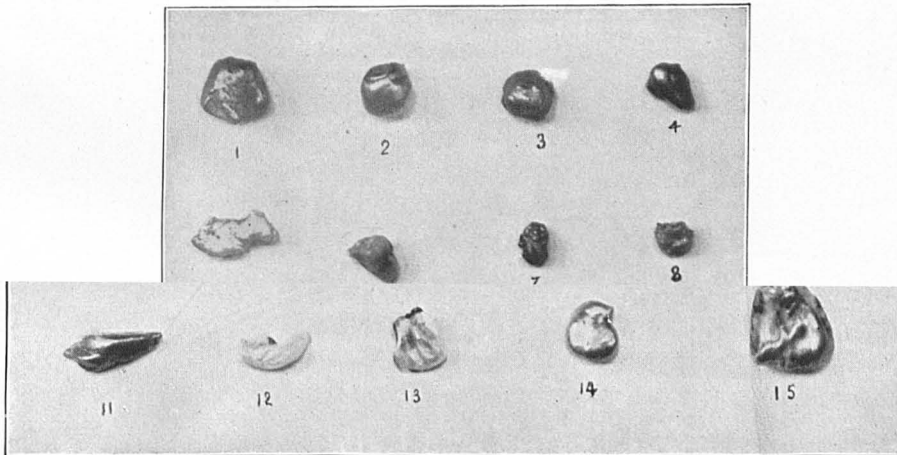


WISCONSIN PEARLS. PINK, COPPER-COLORED, AND BROWN.





Group A.



Group A.

