OYSTER SHELLS.

Once Little Valued, They Are Now a Boon to Oyster Growers.

Ten years ago any stranger could spot the shore location of an oyster fishery by means of the mammoth piles of oyster shells. These were heaped up on the shore in great stacks sometimes from thirty to forty feet in height. These shells were considered of little value. In many places they were actually given away and they were used to be crushed up and spread over road beds and they were also burned in order to get the lime from them.

Today these piles have disappeared and if you wanted a ton or so of them you would have to pay a pretty good price, simply because the owners want to dump them back into the sea.

There used to be a great deal of difficulty in preparing oyster beds for breeding purposes. Then it was discovered that the best possible breeding place for the embryo oysters was on the smooth inside surface of the adult oyster shells, and so every year the shells from the shucked oysters are taken out and scattered over the beds. The baby oysters attach themselves to these surfaces and thrive mightily.

There are experts today who know nothing of fishing for oysters or marketing them, but who devote all their time to the preparation of artificial oyster beds. This has become a recognised part of the industry. After the shells have been properly spread over the bottom of the water the spawn is liberated upon them and they are left to fight their own battles with the crabs, periwinkles, starfish and other enemies—Boston Herald.

SOURCE OF SHELLAC.

Insects Producing It Are Victims of Their Own Industry.

Scale insects of the group coccidae are responsible for one of India's most interesting exports, lac, the export value of which amounts to nearly $9,000,000 annually. Lac is the resinous exudation of the insect. The insects live upon the twigs of certain trees, and soon become covered with a resinous secretion that increases in thickness, protecting the body and the eggs

When a colony, consisting of a few adult females and one or two males, find their way to a new branch, they attach themselves to the bark, and having pierced it with holes through which they draw up the resinous juices upon which they feed, they become fixed or glued by the superfluous excretion, and after a time die, the females forming by their dead bodies little domes or tents over the myriads of minute eggs which they have laid. In a short time the eggs burst into life, and the young, which are very minute, swarm over the twig in such countless numbers as to give it the appearance of being covered with blood red dust. Generation after generation dwells upon the same twig until it is enveloped in a coating of the resinous exudation often half an inch thick.

In the beginning the insect was much collected for the dye it contains. Later when the use of the resin became known the demand for the dye began to diminish, until now it has been almost completely displaced by coal tar colors. After separating the resin from the coloring matter the former constitutes the shellac of commerce.—Argonaut.

Condors in Chile.

The majestic condor is, air men excluded, the largest flying creature in the world. Swift and extraordinarily strong of wing, it figures in the Chilean national arms as a symbol of strength. The following is one of the native devices for killing it:

The hunter, having covered himself with the skin of a newly slain ox, would lie on his back on the ground, while his companion would hide himself not far away. Down would swoop the condor to feast upon the carcass, but directly the claws touched the body they were seized from within the oxskin by strong gloved hands that held the bird a prisoner. Then the partner would break cover and slay the captive with what Chaucer would have called "a yerde smerck" from a club.—"Chile—Its Land and People."

The Sin of Trousers.

Trousers were not introduced into England without a struggle—a struggle in which the great Duke of Wellington suffered his only defeat, for it is on record that in 1814 Wellington was refused admission to Almack's "because he wore trousers instead of breeches and silk stockings." Next year trousers were admitted to Almack's and Wellington won Waterloo. —London Tatler.

Disapproval.

"Growcher doesn't look very cheerful. But you must give him credit for one thing. He doesn't quarrel."

"Humph!" exclaimed the excitable man. "He's so ill natured that no one wants to get well enough acquainted even to quarrel with him."—Spokane Spokesman-Review.

Japanese Gardeners.

Artist gardeners in Japan earn large salaries. They are required to twist and direct young trees and vines until they assume the shapes of various animals.

Ambiguous.

Mrs. Exe—How does your cook take it when you go into the kitchen and tell her how to do things? Mrs. Wye—Oh, she doesn't mind.—Boston Transcript.

In law it is good policy never to plead what you need not, lest you oblige yourself to prove what you cannot.—Lincoln.

IDOLS OF THE ANCIENTS.

Those That Gave Their Names to the Days of the Week.

In the museum at Berlin there are representations of the idols from which the names of the days of the week are derived.

From the idol of the sun comes Sunday. This idol is represented with his face like the sun, holding a burning wheel with both hands on his breast, signifying his course round the world.

The idol of the moon, from which comes Monday, is habited in a short coat, like a man, holding the moon in his hands.

Tuisco, from which comes Tuesday, was one of the most ancient and popular gods of the Germans and is represented in his garments of skins, according to their peculiar manner of clothing. The third day of the week was dedicated to his worship.

Woden, from which comes Wednesday, was a valiant prince among the Saxons. His image was prayed to for victory.

Thor, whence comes Thursday, is seated in a bed, with twelve stars over his head, holding a scepter in his hand.

Friya, whence we have Friday, is represented with a drawn sword in his right hand and a bow in his left.

Saeter, from which comes Saturday, has the appearance of perfect wretchedness; he is thin visaged, long haired, with a long beard. He carries a water pail in his right hand, wherein are fruits and flowers.

READY FOR A WRECK.

The Careful Man Who Believed In Taking Every Precaution.

Two friends boarded a great transatlantic liner and set sail for Cherbourg. One was a good fellow. The other was a niggardly man. The first night out they went to their stateroom.

"Say, Bob," said the niggardly man, "I wish you'd step out on deck while I undress."

"That's a remarkable request," objected the good fellow. "Why have you developed this streak of bashfulness at this late day? I never saw any signs of it before."

"Never mind about that," said the niggardly man. "You get out!"

After a long and acrimonious argument the good fellow went out on deck and stayed half an hour. When he returned to the stateroom the niggardly man was stretched out in the upper berth. Moreover, he was dressed up like a Christmas tree in a beribboned nightgown and a woman's boudoir cap.

"Say," exclaimed the good fellow, "what in thunder is the matter? Why have you got that makeup on?"

"Look at me and be wise," said the niggardly man. "Remember the rule 'In case of a wreck women and children first.'"—Popular Magazine.

Peru the Source of Cocaine.

There is a shrub in high Peru which does not bring the blessing of the potato—I mean the cocoa tree, whence comes cocaine. The leaf is chewed by young and old. Some doctors say it is very bad for the people of Peru. The infantile death rate is high, and they say few old persons are to be found. Other doctors aver that the cocoa leaf is very good for the peasants. I am inclined to take a view between the two opinions. I met a man in Cuzco who was running a grocery store, and Professor Giesecke told me they had very good proofs in that town that he was a hundred and fifty years old. He sold me chocolate and also cocoa leaves. I chewed the leaves to try to cure an ulcer in my stomach, and they helped me more than all the medicines of civilization that I had tried.—Peter MacQueen in National Magazine.

The Dream Lion.

A Vienna professor is credited with saying that dreams are usually wish fulfillments. Maybe so. What about that childish dream in which the ferocious lion comes bounding along behind you, and you run as boy never ran before, and the lion closes the gap little by little, and then, all of a sudden, your legs grow limp and your muscles turn to water and your feet fray out and the lion leaps and you awake with a yell if your voice isn't paralyzed, and everybody in the house wakes with you?—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

The "Antique" Craze.

Those of us who can afford it steal and borrow and beg the arms, the dress, the emotions of Greece and Rome. Too often we hang their rotting trophies upon our walls, ignorant of their origin, unacquainted with their meaning and not even sympathetic with the emotions that produced them, bent only upon the paltry respectability that their presence argues.—World's Work.

Noah Identified.

"Why do you sign your name Norah?" asked a teacher of one of the Chinese boys in his class. "Don't you know that Norah is a girl's name?"

"Oh, no," was the reply. "Norah is the name of the famous American who built the ark."—Youth's Companion.

A Safe Proposition.

I lay it down as a safe proposition that the fellow who every little while has to break into the baby's bank for car fare isn't going to evolve into a Baron Rothschild.—Philip D. Armour.

Historical Sayings.

Teacher—What were Webster's last words? Pupil—I don't remember, ma'am, but they all began with Z.—Philadelphia Ledger.