

MAYOR PINGREE AS A REPORTER.

Helped on the Rumor That Don M. Dickinson was a Chained Madman.

'I never see the name Pingree without recalling a visit to him when he was Mayor of Detroit, and I am sure that he was scared out of his boots for once.'

With this introductory a retired correspondent told a San reporter what follows:

'It was soon after the passing of the first Cleveland Administration. I was in the middle West, looking after general news, holding myself in readiness, always with one grip packed. Just after I had retired one night I was called up by another correspondent, who informed me that he had a great sensation, but an immediate trip to Detroit was necessary before the sensation could be sprung. He could not go. But he was instructed by his home office to let the newspaper which I represented in on the sensation if I could make the trip. I found that I could make a train in an hour. I was four miles from the station. I had to call at my office on the way. I made it, however, and had seven minutes' leeway in which to turn over the mission ahead of me. I looked over my mental annotation, made while I was preparing for the trip, from the hurried statement of my co-worker:

'Don M. Dickinson crazy in his own home. Great secrecy. No one knows it but his wife and the physician. He is kept chained in order that he may do himself or others no harm. Condition said to have been the result of a big political row with Cleveland. Be careful. Motion it to no one whom you cannot trust implicitly. Use your judgment. Worth a page.'

'That was the sum total of the story as it was told to me, and I was heading for Detroit, where I knew no one. At Kalamazoo I left a rush message to a friend in Chicago whom I knew to be a personal and commercial friend of Mayor Pingree. They were in the same business, the manufacture of boots and shoes. The message was, in effect, that I had been sent to Detroit hurriedly, and that the success of my mission depended upon my getting the confidence of Pingree. To that end I asked my Chicago friend to wire Pingree to let me in. Then I went to sleep. I loaded about Detroit a half day, during which time I passed the house of Hon. Mr. Dickinson several times, wondering in which room he was chained, and if I should see him, and how I would startle the country the next day.

'I was at luncheon at 2 P. M. in the Russell House, when I received a message from my Chicago friend. I was informed that Mayor Pingree had been asked to receive me into his confidence, and to assist me. The last words of the message were: 'What', up?' I replied my knowledge and added: 'See to morrow's—', putting in the name of the paper I represented.

'It was 6 o'clock before I could reach Mayor Pingree. After I had told him my name he led me to his private office, having placed a guard without, whose instruction was to halt anybody who came within a hundred yards. He said in the most earnest manner: 'Tell me all.' It may read heavy-villainish, but it didn't sound that way.

'Don M. Dickinson is mad,' I said. 'Mayor Pingree sprang from his chair like the wizard who pops through a stage trap. As soon as he was sequestered—as they say in Boston—from his excitability, he listened to the rest of the story.'

'I remember,' he said, 'that it has been said that Mr. Dickinson was somewhat chagrined over his failure to have the influence with Mr. Cleveland which he expected to have, or which he had led his friends to believe he had. Dickinson's is a high-strung make-up.'

'Can you ascertain what truth there is in the story?' I asked, looking impatiently at my watch. 'That is the first thing,' I added. 'Let me know that he is mad, chained or unchained, and I will melt the wires between here and New York and between here and Chicago.'

'I will find out before I go to bed, else I am not Pingree,' he replied as he picked up his hat and led the way. We were driven to the Dickinson mansion, and Mayor Pingree left me in the coupe while he called. In spite of my newspaper instinct I did not envy him.

'He came out in less than ten minutes. He whispered to the jehu. The Mayor took his seat beside me and said: 'We shall know in a few minutes.' I used every article I could command to guess what Mayor Pingree had learned, or what he thought, but he dodged most adroitly. The cab stopped before a great building, brilliantly lighted. Was it the asylum? I asked myself. We passed what seemed to be a private entrance, of course they would not take Mr. Dickinson through a corridor. I heard music. In a moment we were in a private box. I was introduced to Mr. Dickinson, who was the centre of a brilliant party. They were enjoying the horse show.

'I never learned the origin of the rumor. But for eighteen hours two newspapers in this country were hanging by their eyebrows.'

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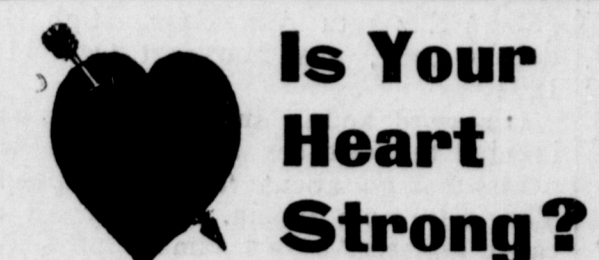
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MEXICAN PEARL FISHING.

The Annual Yield of the Gulf of California is about \$250,000.

The agent of the English proprietors of the concession granted by the Mexican republic for a monopoly of pearl fishing in the gulf of California recently arrived in San Francisco and gave some interesting details of the present methods employed in their industry which has continued ever since the occupation of the country in the time of Cortes.

The whole coast of the gulf of California abounds in pearls, and the concessions control the entire territory. Until within the last few years native divers were employed, and the depth to which they could descend did not exceed 35 feet. With the introduction of diving apparatus the limit of depth was increased to 30 fathoms. The best divers could formerly remain under water not to exceed two minutes. A modern diver thinks nothing of a two hour stop in water 100 feet in depth, though at greater depths the stay is necessarily shortened on account of the enormous pressure of the superincumbent water. A diver when upon the floor of the ocean looks about for the oyster which he tears from the object to which it is attached, and places it in a small bag hanging to a rope, which is hauled into the boat on a given signal. Sometimes the number of oysters secured is large and at other times only a few are caught.

The diver does not confine himself to the pearl oyster alone, but if he sees a rare specimen of coral or a new species of shell he places it in his bag and sends it to the surface, where it becomes the property of the concession and one source of its large income.

Last year the value of the pearls harvested in Lower California was alone \$350,000. In addition 5,000 tons of shells were exported, which were valued at \$1,250,000 more. Pearl fishing is the entire occupation of the natives, and La Paz, the headquarters, a city of the peninsula, with about 2,000 inhabitants, is solely dependent upon the industry. The business is one of chance, and the pursuit is a fascinating one to the natives, who are born gamblers.

Every oyster does not contain its pearl, and only at intervals, and rare ones at that is a really valuable pearl discovered. The largest one ever found was about three quarters of an inch in diameter, and was sold in Paris to the emperor of Austria for \$10,000. Many black pearls are found in Lower California and are valued higher than the pure white. The large majority are seed pearls and are only of moderate value.

San Francisco is not the market for Mexican pearls, though it ought to be. The harvest is exported straight to London and Paris and distributed from those great markets.

The dangers of pearl fishing have always been exaggerated, possibly to give a fictitious value to the beautiful gems. The loss of life in the fisheries in Lower California was undoubtedly larger before the introduction of the diving press. But it is not an established fact that the deaths were always caused by the shark or octopus, though these marine monsters were without doubt responsible for the loss of many lives. Every diver has plenty of hair raising stories to relate of narrow escapes from death, but as he is the only witness of these affairs it makes the difficulty to substantiate them so much greater.

The occupation at best is a hazardous one, and those who were engaged in it before the introduction of diving apparatus were always short lived. The demand in the world's markets for pearls of extra beauty is always far in excess of the supply.

—San Francisco Call.

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Sailors' Eyes and Electricity

Owing to the intensity of the electric light used on board of men-of-war men are frequently affected with eye complaints, which in some cases have led to total blindness, says a French military journal. It has been observed that eyes in which the iris is not heavily charged with pigments, that is to say, gray and blue eyes are more likely to be injuriously affected than brown eyes. These eye troubles are ascribed to two causes, viz., the intensity of the light and the action of the ultra-violet rays. Oculists recommend the interposition between the eye and any powerful light of a transparent substance, which will intercept the ultra-violet rays, such as, for instance, uranium glass, which is yellow. The French naval authorities supply dark blue glasses for the use of those who have to do with search lights, etc., and the cases in which injury has been caused to the eyes were those of men who had neglected to use these spectacles, which, however, do not appear to afford any protection against the ultra-violet rays.



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IF YOU SEE IT IN THE MOON.

No Matter What It Is You Will Have Some Sort of Luck.

'If you see the new moon over your right shoulder it's good luck all the month'—over the left shoulder being bad luck, of course. 'If you meet the new moon face to face with money in your pocket for a month'—and so on, this last being taken from an old black-letter treatise on 'things worth knowing.' Everywhere in the world the idea prevails among those who lack scientific training that anything failing to the lot of man when the moon is waxing will likewise increase, similarly decreasing while the moon wanes. The Hindu troubled with warts looks at the new moon, picks up a pinch of dust from beneath his left foot, rubs the wart with it—and the moon goes, so does the wart. If you fall ill you can be cured by herbs gathered in the full of the moon.

The Moslems in the Kingdom of Oadh cure insomnia, palpitation of the heart, nervous prostration, and similar evils by stationing the sufferer with a basin of water in his hands in the light of the full moon in such a way that its refulgent image shines directly from the liquid into his eyes. Then without moving his gaze, he is required to swallow the water at a draught.

In northern India the people lay out food in the full moon that comes in the months corresponding to our September and October, half of each, and give it to their friends as a means of insuring longevity. That same night the girls pour water in the moonlight, saying they are getting rid of the cold weather.

It was not long ago noted the Yorkshire maids 'do worship the new moon on their bare knees, kneeling upon an earth-fast stone,' and Lady Wilde says that the Irish damsels drop on their knees when they first catch sight of the moon and say: 'Oh moon leave us as well as you find us!' In India the native take seven threads from the ends of their turbans and give them to the new moon, with a prayer.

The spots on the moon are caused by many persons or things. Sometimes it is a man with a tagot on his back, sent thither for picking up sticks on the Sabbath. Chaucer calls him a thief and puts a thorn-bush on his shoulders. Dante says it is no less a criminal than Cain. Shakespeare provides a dog to keep him company. Hindus keep not a man but a hare in the moon and the well known connection in the minds of the man of the moon and insanity may account for the statement regarding the March hare, and possibly the thornbush may be the distinctive covering of the hatter—at any rate, this is as good guessing as a lot of the sun myth people have done; while Baring-Gould identifies the moon children, Bill and Hiuki of the Northern mythology, with Jack and Gill of the nursery rhyme.

The Greenland Eskimo believes that the sun and moon were originally brother and sister. She, being teased by him past ordinary endurance, seized some lamp-black and rubbed it on his face. Then she ran, her brother after. Finally she went so fast she rose up into the air and became the sun, while her sooty-faced brother turned into the moon. In Samoh when a great famine oppressed the people the moon rose one night big and round, like a bread fruit. A patient mother, unable to quiet the pangs of her little one, looked up and said: 'Why don't you come down and let my baby have a bite of you?' This made the moon so angry that she simply picked up both mother and child, and they have been there ever since.

All sailors are certain that sleeping in tropical moon rays will either make them cross-eyed or blind. On the American vessel El Capitan a year or two ago a number of the crew, disregarding the advice of their fellows during a spell of hot weather, slept on the deck in the moonlight, and soon after went completely blind at night, though they could see as well in the daytime as ever. The skipper of the ship reported the occurrence, and with it made a statement to the effect that up to that time he had been a disbeliever in so-called moon blink. Paul Eve Stevenson reports that he, too, was hurriedly awakened on his way to New York from the Bahamas with the assurance from the Captain that all sorts of things would happen to him if he kept in moonlight. This is a disease unknown to the medical profession.

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