

value of from forty to sixty thousand pounds sterling are annually imported into Britain. France and other countries of Europe also receive large annual importations of the same costly marine production; while oriental luxury absorbs a still greater amount. Ingenious means are accordingly resorted to for supplying the enormous demand. The Chinese practice one successful mode, by inserting into the living animal a silver wire with a nucleus for the pearl to form upon. Still further improving on this process of making the living pearl-muscle an obedient worker in their service, they not only produce pearls of various sizes and qualities by the introduction of pieces of wood, baked earth, &c., into the living animal, which it covers with the nacreous deposit which converts them into marketable pearls; but also small metal figures of Buddha, in the sitting posture in which the divinity is usually portrayed, are treated in a similar manner. These miniature pearl-encased penates are highly valued by the Chinese as charms, and produce large prices. But while thus dwelling on the prolific pearl productions of southern seas, it must not be forgotten that Britain has also her pearl-producing bivalve. The river pearl-muscle, *unio margaritiferus*, is found in various Scottish rivers, but chiefly in the Tay. There was formerly an extensive pearl-fishery extending from Perth to Loch Tay, and the pearls sent from thence from 1761 to 1764 have been estimated in value at £10,000. Single pearls are still procured from the Tay, which readily sell at from one to two pounds sterling.

The discovery of the economic use of the larger *strombinae* as an important material in the manufacture of porcelain, as well as the introduction of the practice of working camei on these shells, and the increasing demand for this beautiful and artistic class of personal ornaments, have united to create a novel trade in the gigantic tropical shells. Immense quantities of the *strombinae* are now annually brought to Europe, and so many as three hundred thousand shells of the *strombus gigas* and *strombus pugilis* have been imported from the Bahamas to Liverpool alone, in a single year.

Did the object of this paper require a minute consideration of the modern economic applications of shells and other marine products, it might be greatly extended by reference to the varied applications of mother-of-pearl shells to all the purposes of inlaying, carving, and decorating. The value of the shells imported in recent years into Britain for this class of manufactures alone, has fallen little short,