

## THE CAROLINA CLAY-EATERS.

A Physician's Analysis Shows that the Clay Contains Arsenic.  
From the Philadelphia Times.

It has been a matter of speculation for years as to why the "poor white trash" of Central North Carolina ate the clay that is found in that part of the country. It remained for a Philadelphia physician to solve the mystery. A short time ago Dr. Frank H. Getchell, of 1432 Spruce street, went on a gunning expedition to North Carolina. His quest for game led him into the wild country back of Salisbury, which is inhabited, for the most part, by a miserable race of beings with only just enough energy to eke out a wretched existence. These creatures are nearly all veritable living skeletons, and, with few exceptions, are addicted to the habit of clay-eating.

While shooting wild turkey and other game in this wild region, Dr. Getchell made an incidental study of this peculiar habit of vice among the inhabitants. It is a mountainous country, and in the spring little rivulets start out from the caps of snow on the mountain, and, as the days grow warmer, the little rivulets become torrents, and great wash-outs are made along the mountain-side.

The soil is of a heavy, clayey nature, but there are strata of clay that is heavier than the rest, and when the water rushes down this clay is formed into little pellets, and rolls and accumulates in heaps in the valley. These little pellets and rolls are what the clay-eaters devour with as much avidity as a toper swallows a glass of whisky.

"Among the poor people of this section," said Dr. Getchell, "the habit of eating clay is almost universal. Even little toddlers are confirmed in the habit, and the appetite seems to increase with time. While investigating the matter, I entered a cabin occupied by one of these poor families, and saw a little chap tied by the ankle to the leg of a table, on which was placed a big dish of bread and meat and potatoes within easy reach. The child was kicking and crying, and I asked his mother why she had tied him up. She replied that she wanted him to eat some food before he went out to the clay and he refused to do so. The woman confessed that she ate the clay herself, but explained that the child's health demanded that it eat some substantial food before eating any earth. Almost every one I met in this section was addicted to this habit. They were all very thin, but their flesh seemed to be putty out. This was particularly noticeable about the eyes, which had a sort of reddish hue.

"All of the clay-eaters were excessively lazy and indolent, and all of these conditions combined led me to the conclusion that there must be some sedative or stimulating qualities, or both, in the clay, and I determined to find out whether there was or not. I consequently brought a lot of the clay home with me, and Prof. Tiernan and myself made an analysis of the stuff and discovered that, instead of clay-eaters, the inhabitants of Central North Carolina should more properly be called arsenic-eaters. All of this clay contains arsenic, but exactly in what proportion we have not yet discovered. Arsenic-eating is common in many parts of the world. It acts as a sedative and also as a stimulant. The mountaineers of Styria, Austria, are habitual arsenic-eaters. They give as their reason for eating it that they are better able to climb the mountains after eating the poison, and their explanation is a perfectly reasonable one, as arsenic acts as a sedative to the heart's action. The habit is also prevalent in the Tyrol and in the Alps.

"It is also said that the peasant girls of Switzerland and parts of Germany and in Scandinavia eat arsenic to give luster to their eyes and color to their cheeks, but this is a matter I have not investigated. It has been shown that arsenic or arsenical fumes are a sure cure for intermittent fever. The inhabitants of a section of Cornwall, England, at one time all suffered with this type of fever, but when the copper works were established there the fever disappeared. This was accounted for by the arsenical fumes created in the treatment of copper. As to whether arsenic-eating shortens life I am not yet prepared to say, but I intend investigating the matter thoroughly."

### Fight with Grizzly.

While two telegraph-repairers were carrying on their work in the Selkirk Mountains, one of them was attacked by a grizzly bear, which caught him by the calf of the leg as he was drinking from a stream. The bear endeavored to carry him into the cave, but he placed his arms around a tree and belied for his companion, who came close to the bear and emptied seven Winchester balls into him. Seeing the seven balls did not make him relinquish his hold, he caught the ferocious animal by the ears and tried to haul him off. This caused the animal to move a little, thus enabling the friend to pull his companion's rifle from under the bear. He then commenced pouring his friend's seven bullets into the bear's head, and had fired the last shot when the bear rolled over. The trouble then was to get the jaws open to release his hold. This was done by inserting the barrel of one of the rifles and prying it open.—*Winnipeg Sun.*

### Was on Another "Lay."

A correspondent writes: "I send you a little poem called 'The Lay of the Lark.' If accepted, let me know." Rejected, with thanks. If you will send a few specimens of the lay of the hen we will accept.—*Burlington Free Press.*

## The Search for Wilkes Booth.

The assassination of Abraham Lincoln was a military crime. While actually in command of the national forces, he was killed in a city which was his headquarters, strongly fortified and garrisoned, with a military governor, and a provost marshal whose patrols were abroad night and day arresting all persons found violating the "rules of war." Not only was the murdered commander-in-chief, to use the words of the Constitution, "in actual service in time of war," but it was a time of "public danger," in which the assassins were constitutionally excluded from any right to a trial in the civil courts. Peace had not then been concluded; there was a powerful enemy in arms, to whom "aid and comfort" could be given; the leader of the rebellion was still at large; many loyal men were becoming disheartened by the conscriptions and by the prolonged expenditure of blood and treasure; and there are good reasons for believing that many enemies of the Union, having traversed all the stages of crime, confidently hoped by this assassination to inaugurate anarchy at the North, and thus to prepare the way for a dictator.

Before the martyr-President had ceased to live, Secretary Stanton directed a search for the recognized assassin, and an investigation into the circumstances connected with the perpetration of the bloody deed. The next day, in a letter to the Hon. Charles Francis Adams, Mr. Stanton said: "ALL's well that ends well," said the surgeon as he plunged his scalpel into the abscess.—*St. Paul Herald.*

THOSE who take Dr. Jones' Red Clover Tonic never have dyspepsia, costiveness, bad breath, piles, pimples, ague and malaria, poor appetite, low spirits, headache, or kidney troubles. Price 50 cents.

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Dr. Robert Newton, late President of the Eclectic College, of the city of New York, and formerly of Cincinnati, Ohio, used Dr. Wm. Hall's BALSAM very extensively in his practice, as many of his patients, now living, and restored to health by the use of this invaluable medicine, can amply testify. He always said that so good a remedy ought to be prescribed freely by every physician as a sovereign remedy in all cases of lung diseases. It cures consumption, and has no equal for all pectoral complaints.

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