

THREE INTERESTING PRODUCTS

I. ASPHALT



Getting Asphalt

IF YOU have been in Manila or some other large city, you have seen streets paved with asphalt, which is a mineral pitch found in natural beds. Some asphalt is manufactured from petroleum. Asphalt has been used for paving streets and roads since the days of the ancient Babylonians.

In the British island of Trinidad near South America is an asphalt lake. Men have been removing chunks of the hardened crust for many years, but when a train-load is taken away, the hole fills up by itself, as if nothing had been taken away. The lake is renewed by soft pitch

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II. CHALK

WHEN you write on the blackboard with a piece of chalk, you hold in your hand the mineral remains (shells) of thousands of tiny creatures which died millions of years ago. They lived in the seas, and as they died their tiny shells sank to the bottom and became consolidated into soft

III. AMBER

AMBER is a brittle, yellow, transparent substance, hard enough to be cut into beads and ornaments, but not hard as compared to marble or glass.

The ancient Phoenicians, Greeks, and Romans valued amber highly. They thought it had mysterious powers, because it becomes electrified when it is rubbed and attracts light bodies. The Greeks called it *elektron*, from which we get our word *electricity*.

Countless ages ago clear pitch or resin came out from pine trees, and accumulations of it were covered up by various layers of soil. In the course of time these buried lumps of resin became hardened and changed somewhat in substance, becoming amber.

The variety of pine which produced amber grew chiefly on the place now occupied by the Baltic sea and the North sea in Northern Europe. This part of the earth's surface gradually became submerged, that is, covered by the ocean. When these waters are disturbed by violent storms, pieces of amber are frequently washed out and cast upon the neighboring shores. The ancient people got all their amber by picking up these pieces but today the most of it is obtained by mining.

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limestone known as chalk. After long periods of time these beds were elevated, and became parts of the dry land. This process of making chalk is still going on in warm ocean waters, and perhaps some day earth disturbances will raise these deposits for the use of future genera-

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THE HUMBLE BEAN

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species also includes many varieties of wax and string beans, eaten green with the pods, or shelled and dried.

The lima bean also came from South America. It has large flat beans in a broad pod that grows on either a bush or a vine. The pod is not edible, but the seed is eaten both green and dried.

Soy beans are the common beans of China, Japan, India, and the Orient, where they are an important item in the diet of the inhabitants who eat much rice. Soy beans are not eaten as a vegetable, but are prepared in a great variety of complex forms.

The common bean of Europe is the broad bean which has been used as a food since remotest times.

Beans are prepared for use in a number of ways. Enormous quantities are ripened, shelled, and dried. Dried beans are also cooked, seasoned ready for the table, and canned as baked beans. String beans, and shelled green lima beans are also canned.

SOMETHING TO DO

Tell as much as you can about the bean after you have studied this article.

ASPHALT

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from underground sources. This lake, the world's largest supply of relatively pure asphalt, occupies more than 137 acres with a maximum depth of more than 175 feet.

CHALK

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tions.

In color chalk is usually white or whitish, and is composed chiefly of carbonate of lime.

When chalk is mixed with some other substances, it becomes the crayons which we use in school.

AMBER

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Amber is usually found in small pieces but some lumps weighing 15 or 18 pounds have been found.

Amber, which is expensive, is used chiefly for the mouthpieces of pipes, for beads, and for other ornaments.

REVIEW

1. Tell all you can about asphalt.
2. Tell all you can about chalk.
3. Tell all you can about amber.

KAPTAIN KIDD

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3. Here is a list of the big words in this story and their meanings. Can you memorize these?

unconcernedly, not caring

brazenly, without shame
prodigious, big

stalks, walks

surreptitiously, slyly

lopped, dropped or hung

back

ceremoniously, with

great display or show

immaculate, very clean

achieved, secured

overtures, offers

fastidiously, daintily

mangy, mean

phenomenon, unusual

happening

worsted, defeated

primly, in a very polite

manner

apologetically, as if asking

pardon

accusingly, as if blaming

gyrating, moving

promenaded, walked

minute, small

accomplishment, something

well done

4. What have you learned from Kaptain Kidd?

5. Why did the children like Kaptain Kidd?

6. Do you think Kaptain Kidd would ever learn to say h-ow?

7. Why did he learn the other three "words"?