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PETOSKEY'S PROGRESS.

Interesting Talk With Hon. John L. Shaw.

Mr. John L. Shaw of Grand Rapids, a pioneer of Petoskey and considerable property owner here, discussed the early history of the place with the RESOSTER last evening as follows:

"I was one of the contractors who built the G.R. & I. road here," said he. "The line was finished to this point some time in January, 1874, I think, and the town was plotted about that time. Archie McMillan, sub-contractor, and myself purchased the land of old Chief Petoskey. The plat included from Rose street to Mitchell, commencing at Petoskey street and running back from the bay nearly to the baseball grounds, extending south between Petoskey street and Howard street and bounded on the north by Rose street and on the south by the quarter line south of the school house. The piece of land, containing about 55 acres, we purchased at twenty-five dollars per acre, and I retain some of it yet.

The first building here, I think, was the old Occidental Hotel, erected by Dr. Little. The town has grown some since then, hasn't it? The first idea of making a summer resort here struck us when the Methodist people began talking of founding Bay View. I worked hard to keep them from going to Traverse City and other points, and they were finally persuaded to locate at Bay View, the railroad company giving them the land and Petoskey citizens grading the road bed to Bay View from the water tank near the Arlington, the terminus then of the road. About this time some people with hay fever drifted in here and were benefitted, and the fact soon became noised abroad. The railroads boomed Petoskey as the equal, which it is, of White Mountain and other hay fever resorts. Its future as a resort was then assured.

That is the only thing that Petoskey has ever received that might be called a boom. Its growth has been steady and healthy. This season there are over 25 per cent, more resorters here than ever before, which is owing, I think, not to the warm weather farther south, but to the fact that Petoskey is becoming better known, and because the location is so good. Twenty-five out of every thirty days during the season is a safe estimate to put upon the in-shore winds, which all summer visitors like, of course. This summer I think it would be safe to say twenty-seven out of thirty.

Yes, you were correctly informed. I first started the craze for polishing Petoskey corals. The first attempt was made on the Cushman House steps, and I used a piece of railroad iron for a polisher. That was my first summer season here. I don't remember just how long ago it was, but I had noticed that people here varnished them to bring out the colors and then put them in their windows as ornaments. I got some at the shore one day and when I broke them, I noticed that they are about as hard as marble, and as an experiment, I tried the marble polishing process, which proved admirably suited to the purpose. I broke the stones into as near the shape I wanted them as I could and then polished them. I've got about a half dozen of them at home now. Among those who watched my first experiments was a man who saw a chance for business and from that day to this has carried on the business. That was the origin of the coral and agate working here, which has since become a very important Petoskey Industry, employing no small amount of money, and making one more attraction for resorters.

I have spent ten seasons here now, not for my health, because I am never sick, but for a good time. I enjoy Petoskey immensely, and predict that it will always be the resort center. Here a man can find accommodations to suit his pocket. He can get good board for five dollars a week, or can pay twenty-five and get the worth of his money.