

DEMOCRATIC WEEKLY.

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"CRIMINAL WASTEFULNESS,"

As applied by President and press to the onslaught upon our forests, is good. How that term should strike home to us Virginians when looking at our fish and oyster industries! For generations we took from our waters the myriads of oysters and, through lack of thought or perspicacity, returned nothing in the nature of seed or seed catchers nor even the time producing shell; when we found that shells were rapid money producers only then did we give back to the bottoms a little return. We have been taking without restraint fishes big and little, the latter utterly useless and thrown upon the shores or dead upon the waters, just because it is a little trouble to bail them out alive and free them or because we fear a marketable one may be lost. Visit the fishing banks and see the merciless slaughter of what in a twelve months would return, if liberated, to add to our wealth; or look at the oyster shell piles and see the magnitude of infant life destroyed because it is a little trouble to pick them out and return to the water at a busy period; or see little fellows that are opened and put upon the market, hardly paying the shucker for the time spent upon them—the same time that would be more profitably spent (to the buyer) if sorted out and sent to the plant beds. After what is in sight and not looking ahead for the morrow for self or posterity! How wasteful a policy. Who makes two blades of grass grow where only one grew before is accounted a benefactor to mankind. Isn't the application more pertinent to our oyster and fish interests—to the planter, and far more so to the tonger and fisherman? The one is an actor producer; the others have only to be negative, in letting remain what nature is developing. To cultivate seed by means of spat and shells is creating wealth, and to leave undisturbed the small oyster upon the rocks or return to the water while yet alive the little fellows clinging to shells, or the little fish, is assenting that nature be let alone to create wealth. Either, or both, are mandatory, due to nature and ourselves and to posterity. We are prone to view the resources of nature through boundless tracts of seas as limitless, yet the whole of America is beginning to feel the pinch in our water products, just as we are doing over our vanishing forests.

THE esteemed Warsaw News, failing to "make good" its grounds against the CITIZEN's material points, dodges as usual, side-stepping into a hole and emitting venom in its pet "billingsgate." Whether our English is faulty or not, it is laughable to see how sore some "has-beens" are at anything the CITIZEN or its editor does. We rest satisfied with a Yale graduate's commendation—and that of hundreds of others—on the English and points at issue, and let you cry "scissors" all you want, dear Sachem Hydragogue. We have work to do; no time for spiteful machinations.

IT WOULD seem that the committee from Virginia recently named by Governor Swanson to the National Rivers and Harbors Congress will have as its especial care the deepening of Norfolk harbor and urging the proposed canal through eastern North Carolina. The accomplishment of these will mean much to shipping along the coast, and more to Tidewater Virginia, just as the completion of the Panama Canal will bring the greater results to our South Atlantic States.

Clawson Slaughter has killed 63 partridges this fall.—Heathsville Echo. Quite a fitting name. In behalf of Bob White, we move it be changed.

OH, WAD some Power would give it to Turkey where his namesake got it yesterday!

ORGANIZING AGAINST PAPER TRUST.

The increased cost of publishing a newspaper, which is due largely to the advances in the price of white paper made by the paper trust, has aroused Virginia newspaper publishers to the point where they will band together to protect their own interests.

A meeting of the newspaper publishers was held in Martinsburg recently. One of the principal objects of the organization will be a concerted effort to have the tariff on wood pulp abolished, thus reducing the price of paper.—Index-Appeal.

State Board of Fisheries met Saturday in Richmond and Monday in Urbana. All five members were present. In the Essex shore cases, upon agreement of counsel, Surveyor Reudiger is to be called to complete survey of public rock No. 17, after which the Board will give its decision.

A report on conditions around Tangier Island embraces the following: "The oystermen at Tangier are doing fairly well. Dredged oysters are bringing 65 cents per bushel, and tonged ones over \$1.00 per bushel. The dredgers are all licensed and have been culling their oysters good. The same is true about the oystermen who went to the seaside."

Virginia oysters are all right in quality and quantity, but the stringency of the money market and the catch of Maryland dredgers has affected the orders, and dealers here are blue on account of few orders and the countermanding of some orders already given. Whatever affects the oyster business in this section affects every other line of business to a wonderful degree.

The civic opening of the Colchester, England, oyster fishery is described by the London Daily Mail. The Mayor and Corporation proceeded in a steam dredger to the limits of the fishery, off Brightingsea, where they consumed gin and ginger bread, according to custom, while the Town Clerk read in quaint archaic phraseology the proclamation which declared that the fishery had been the property of the Corporation "from time beyond which the memory of man runneth not to the contrary." The Town Sergeant then shouted "God save the King!" and cheers were given, after which the Mayor hoisted up the first dredge of oysters. An oyster supper was served, at which the chairman of the fishery company announced that they had in the river nearly 60,000,000 oysters.

Capt. Frank W. Darling, of Hampton, is about to try an unusually interesting experiment in getting oysters to the fresh water fattening grounds up the Elizabeth river. Heretofore oysters have been loaded into ordinary floats, open on the sides and bottom to the water, and held up by barrels, these floats then being towed to fresh water loaded. Of course they proved a dead weight in the water and were very difficult for steamers to drag, and they were also open to fresh water and salt alike. After studying the situation, Capt. Darling has built a barge that will give far superior service. In the bottom, under the floor of the oyster pit, and on the sides of the barge are large air-tight compartments that give the floating power and take the place of barrels and at each end of the barge is a door opening so that water can come in. When the barge is loaded with oysters it will be towed to fresh water, and then the seacocks will be opened until the oysters are sufficiently submerged in the fresh water. When the barge is to be brought back to Hampton, the water will be pumped out of the compartment, the doors will be closed, and the barge easily towed back. The barge is a splendidly built one and is quite large. With slight alterations it could be turned into a first-class floating dry dock.

PLENTY OF LAW.

We have in our State very good oyster laws. If the laws were enforced we would need no more changes in the law, except to stop oystering on certain rocks, that furnish a large quantity of seed oysters. Let such rocks rest every other year for four years, and by this method we would soon have large oysters, where we have small ones now. We have two rocks in the lower part of the Rappahannock, if handled in this way, would do away with lots of the trouble we have now with small oysters.

I do not see where we could be benefited by renting out any more of the natural rock. Ever since we have been letting planters take up oyster rocks to plant on, oysters have been getting scarce. Every time you cut off ten acres from the rocks, you put the oystermen closer together on what is left, and then in a few years the cry will be heard—oysters are getting scarce on a certain rock. Leave all the natural rock there is, and carry the cull law to the letter, as near as it can be, and everybody will have plenty of oysters. \* \* I would say when the Legislature meets again instead of making so much oyster law, try to amend what we have, to make it better.

As I have stated before, everything, except oysters over three inches, should be made fineable—rocks, bricks, grass, crab-shells, and oysters under three inches must be put back on the rock or bottom from which taken. We must be looking more after the future dollar just at this time than the present cent. Let everyone think more of the future and all will be well. I would like to hear from some others on this subject.—T. J. Lewis, in "The Oysterman."

TALKING HORSE SENSE.

(Accomack News.)

In another column we print a communication from Capt. John Drewer, of Saxis, whose knowledge on the question he handles in this issue is second to no man, who pretends to know anything about the waters of Pocomoke Sound and the oyster interests in that section. Capt. Drewer can talk "good horse sense" when you get down to the oyster question, just as can an Accomack farmer talk it when you get down to the question of best methods to use in raising sweet potatoes; consequently what he says can be relied on, as the truth, and what he advises is by all means for the best interests of the industry and those engaged in it. Could our oyster navy, now working day and night, be backed up by organization in every village along the bay among those directly interested for the protection of the natural rocks, then the work on the inspectors and the entire navy would be lessened, and the cry for more funds to protect would die out and the coming Legislature would be advised that every oysterman on the bay and rivers of our Virginia waters are organized for the protection of the baby oyster, and are pledged to see that there are no depredators to come along, and that, in this manner, are they

aiding the oyster navy in upholding the law and punishing violators.

Capt. Drewer ends up his appeal on this wise:

Let in each community, oystermen who have a desire to see the young oysters stay on the natural bottoms until they become marketable, organize as they have done at Saxis, and are going to do at Sanford, and report to the police or inspector any person or persons violating the oyster law, summer or winter.

Now, young and old men, if you will take these steps and help your humble police and inspectors, Pocomoke Sound will soon be back to where it was 13 or 14 years ago, and you will not have to leave your own homes and loved ones and go elsewhere to gain a livelihood.

J. R. DREWER, Oyster Inspector and Special Police of Dist. No. 5.

SOMETHING DOING ON WATERS.

Says Wednesday's T-D.:

"Senator George B. Keezell and Hon. R. A. James, members of the State Board of Fisheries, passed through Richmond yesterday, en route to their homes after an important trip on State business up the Rappahannock river. They encountered a storm on their way, and certainly Mr. James will never forget it. The Danville editor and former State Senator is looked upon as a man of undoubted courage when on land. As a political leader and an editorial writer he is said to have no fear, but he has never learned the ways of the water or become accustomed to storms at sea. The night was bad. The Potomac, on which the party traveled, rocked at first, and then she jerked and jumped and dashed. She got absolutely wild, so Mr. James thought, and he there upon became sick. According to one who was aboard, he approached the captain and timidly asked, "What of the night?" The answer was not "All's well; the morning cometh." Indeed, it was far less comforting. "You haven't seen anything yet," replied the captain. "We are shortly to enter the mouth of the Rappahannock, and then something will be doing," he replied. Still on sped the Potomac, riding waves as high as the boat itself, until the mouth of the famous river was entered. Here it is said Editor James almost collapsed. He is alleged to have prayed aloud, and promised in consideration of a safe return to his Danville home to either resign at once from the Board of Fisheries or not to attend any other meetings on the Rappahannock river. Senator Keezell says he stood the trip all right but for a slight attack of seasickness, though he declares there were times when he would have preferred to be beside the still waters of "Cub Run," where he was born and raised and where he has always resided. It is said that the only man on the boat who seemed to enjoy the proceedings was Commodore W. McDonald Lee, chairman of the board."

The "Commodore" fesses up that he "lay low" and discussed machinery with the chief engineer down in the 'midship hold where the strenuousness was weakest. "Will" Matthews had the shivers, due to doors opened for the dozen ladies who were "hors," and made the night hideous by parading saloon and stateroom wrapped in dressing gown and blanket. But "Apple Grower" Massie bore off the palm; he smoked and cracked jokes on the statesman from Cub Run, never feazed. The latter, under his "first impressions," fell outside the breast works through sympathy, it is claimed, for the valorous Danvillian, and struck up a Methodist air, he says to screw up that editor's courage. The next day it eked out that Nelson's Bland warrior during the lunges had offered five hundred dollars for a square foot of earth. He weakened when this got out, and took to snoring while experiences were being rehearsed.

CRIMINAL WASTEFULNESS.

The proposal of President Roosevelt for a conference of the Governors of the States and Territories to meet him at the White House in Washington May 13th, 14th and 15th next to discuss the question of means to conserve the natural resources of the country, is receiving favorable comment. There is no doubt that the President's endeavor is along the right line. Something must be done to save the natural resources of the country from waste and destruction. The country does not belong to the people of this generation alone. Generations which are to follow have an equal interest in its natural resources. We have no moral right to take more than our share. They are committed to us in trust, and we must be faithful trustees. The nation which does not provide for its posterity is sure to degenerate. It is a law of nature.

But taking a more selfish view, we must begin at once to conserve the forests and to replenish the lands from which timbers are cut, or soon there will be no forests.

Chief Forester Pinchot declares that of the estimated 400,000,000,000 feet of standard hardwoods, 25,000,000,000 are cut yearly, at which rate the supply will be exhausted in sixteen years.

He further says that in twenty years the entire timber supply in the United States, on government reserves and private holdings, at the present rate of cutting, will be exhausted.

Ours is a land of such vast resources that we have fallen into the habit of wastefulness. We have cut into the forests as though they were inexhaustible, but we are now dangerously near to a timber famine.—Times-Dispatch.

KECH-AWLS FROM EVERYWHERE.

B. F. Bywaters, of Culpepper county, sold ten couples of fox hounds to Mr. Kilmer, of New York, for one thousand dollars.—Culpepper Exponent.

The trim little gasoline launch Palmore, belonging to R. B. Moore, of Reedville, Va., is at anchor in the Elizabeth river with a party of visitors to the Jamestown Exposition aboard. She is in command of Capt. J. A. Ketcham and will remain in these waters for several days longer. In the party, besides Mr. Moore, are W. A. Hastings, the designer and builder; H. Rice, Robert Blundon, T. T. Owens, J. E. Fitchett, C. S. Towles, A. J. Douglass and M. V. McFarland. The Palmore is on her maiden voyage and, it is said, has behaved herself splendidly on the trip.—Norfolk Ledger Dispatch.