

# The Port Tobacco Times.



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## Poetry.

From the Baltimore American.

### AUTUMN.

BY J. EDGAR JONES.

There are voices in the forest, there are murmurs in the breeze,  
There are rustling leaves that whisper, as they nod upon the trees;  
They are dancing as they whisper, with the zephyrs passing by  
And are donning robes of glory, golden and crimson, ere they die.

There is plenty in the homesteads, shocks and sheaves of golden corn,  
Ranks and rows of smiling children, in the happy spring-time born;  
These have filled the land with gladness, thus the farmer's labor cheers  
To behold his toils rewarded, with a million glistening ears.

There's a gathering of the warblers, from the hill and from the dell,  
Into twittering bird conventions, ere they bid our fields farewell;  
As they rise on airy pinions, melting in with passing lands  
Who are seeking home for winter, in some southern summer lands.

There's a thousand indications that the Autumn time is here,  
Time of sad and solemn import. Time withal of joy and cheer;  
Time of life and death commingled. Time when Nature's charms decay,  
But to wake renewed in beauty, when the frosts have passed away.

There's an Autumn to existence, that will come to you and I.  
Some there are, who, like the leaflets, grow in beauty 'till they die;  
Some there be, who reap rich harvests, in their few declining years,  
Rich returns for early plantings, nurtured long with toil and tears.

There are others, like the warblers, birds of summer and of song,  
They have cheered our hearts with music, bearing mind and soul along;  
In their happy, hopeful pathway. 'Twas but for the summer time  
They departed in the Autumn, for a happier, heavenly clime.

There are lessons in the leaflets, scores of sermons on the land,  
Essays stamped on field and forest, by great Nature's mighty hand;  
But I need not point the moral—wouldst thou know where it is found?  
Ope thy eyes, self-blinded mortal, and behold it all, self-found.

## Selected Miscellany.

### OYSTERS AND INSANITY.

Result of an Investigation of Oysterland.

[From the *Spanische Archiv für Naturgeschichte*, September, 1873.]

[Professor Anton Siegfritz, of Goritz, who was selected some two years ago by the Government (in accordance with a motion made in the Prussian Parliament for the improvement of the resources of our rivers) to examine into the praevalent zollity and expediency of making plantations of oysters, similar to those of Ostend and St. Nazaire, has just made a preliminary report, an abstract of which we give below. The report was delayed by the need the Professor was under to visit the chief oyster-bearing countries of temperate zones, and observe for himself the processes of this important industry and the effects of this sort of diet upon the human economy. It will be seen that Professor Siegfritz strongly opposes the proposed plantations, while admitting their feasibility, upon moral and physical grounds. We do not by any means wish to appear as accepting his views, but, as they are new and ingeniously presented, submit them to the judgment of our readers.]

In accordance with the written instructions (a copy of which is here-with appended, marked A) which I had the honor to receive from the Bureau of Public Economics, dated June 10, 1871, I beg to report that I have performed the duties entrusted to me with diligence and fidelity. I have made proper inquiry into the nature and habits of the oyster, his place in geology and history, his *modus vivendi*, and his nutritive and economic value. I have followed him to his natural homes, and inquired into his habits in a state of domestication. I have seen him at Ostend and on both sides of the British Channel; have looked into his homes on Long Island Sound and Chesapeake Bay; have pursued him to the Bay of Fonseca, in Honduras, and have not neglected him even in distant California. In short, I have done everything but eat him. Had I supposed that my commission required that duty of me I would have discharged it also; but happily upon consultation with the Minister at the head of the bureau, I was informed that I was not expected to eat any oysters unless I was inclined to do so.

In separate appendices hereto annexed, I have made succinct reports upon the oyster, considered in each separate light in which I felt myself called to contemplate him. These are only preliminary to the complete report which I am preparing upon the subject. It only remains for me in this prefatorial report to give the general conclusions to which I have arrived in as brief a summary as possible.

1. A careful examination of our coast

line assures me that, while the shores which we have that are adapted to ostrearea and ostreculture are not numerous or extensive, we have yet some considerable bays and estuaries where the bivalves may be planted with success and the assurance of rapid and prolific growth. I think that the circumstances are as favorable for the cultivation of oysters at some points on the Weser and in Jahde Bay as in the English Mersey, and I am quite sure that the coast of Essex, not even excepting Colchester, is not a better place for bedding oysters than an area of creeks and coves some 200 square miles in extent, which I carefully noticed inside the mouth of the Ems.—The Elbe waters are too muddy, and the North Sea coast is generally too sandy and turbulent, but, taking the whole line into account, from Cuxhaven to The Dollar, and I am safe in saying that our oyster fundum embraces not less than 450 square miles of first quality bedding grounds and upwards of 700 square miles second quality. It will be seen by appendix W that, assuming the average of seasons and a management as thorough, careful, and economical as that of our royal forests, and the Government may reasonably expect a return of 12½ per cent. upon the outlay should this whole area be planted.

2. Assuming a plant of fifty bushels to the acre, and a triennial increase of tenfold, with enough left to keep up the plantation, and we have (at a gallon of oysters shucked to the bushel) an annual addition, after the third year, of over 100,000,000 gallons to the food resources of the empire.

3. This, were there no obstacles, would be a great economic triumph. I do not, however, recommend the planting of oysters upon any parts of our coast, no matter how available.—On the contrary, I strenuously oppose it, upon every consideration, and especially with a view to the moral salubrity of our populations. Having said thus much, I am of course bound to give my reasons for not wishing our hitherto happy German peoples to make the acquaintance of that fascinating but fatal bivalve. I call it fascinating not because I have eaten it myself but because I have seen the avidity and gusto with which other people eat it. I call it fatal precisely for the same reasons.

I believe that it was the learned and excellent zoologist, Louis Agassiz (a German by affinities, though now long since settled in and identified with America,) who first stated the fact that a fish diet contributed more phosphorus to the system than any other diet, and hence was to be recommended for brain-workers, who consume their phosphorus more rapidly than other classes. In this regard oysters are to be classed among fishes. Indeed, if my analyses are correct (appendix 2,) a larger portion of phosphorus is eliminated from them by the system than from any other of the inhabitants of the sea. But I have discovered that indulgence in oysters is by no means a safe thing. Their least injurious effect is upon the brain-workers, who, probably by reason of their greater combustion of phosphorus, seem capable of assimilating many oysters without evil consequences. But, in the case of all those who do more bodily than mental labor, and in proportion as the physical exceeds the mental exercise, I have observed a distinct and positive tendency in the oyster, when eaten, to produce emotional insanity, or that sudden, transitory, unheralded, yet terrible phrenesis which so fatally disturbs the peace of society.

It was among the fishwomen of Ostend that I first came to suspect that a peculiar action of the cerebellum might possibly be induced by intemperate use of this article of diet, and I remembered enough of my classical and other reading to recall the fact, which then first acquired significance, that fish-wives, the world over, from the dames of Piræus to the dames des Halles at Paris, from Balsora to Billingsgate, from Novgorod to Fulton Market, New York, have been characteristically described as possessing peculiarities similar to those which characterized and vexed me while pursuing my investigations about the piers and markets of Ostend. This was a peculiar irascibility of temper, a strange disposition to quarrelsomeness and de-

flance, and a singular readiness and fluency in the use of foul language.—The distinctive trait of this discourse was its redundancy in coarse epithets, which were flung out with profusion, without connecting verbs, with much gesture, and a graphic mobility of features. When, pursuing my inquiries about the markets, I was harassed by this sort of thing, and was even assaulted by one hag more obstreperous than usual, who seized a flounder in her thorny hand, smote me upon both cheeks with it, and compelled me to beat a hasty retreat, while she pursued me with volleys of fish-guts and graceless epithets (simply because I supposed, from the fact of her saying that her oysters were bearded, that they must be old,) I recalled to mind the immemorial fidelity of the true poets to nature, as when, for instance, in that fragment still extant of the "Impostor" of Amphipolis, the comic poet, we read:

'Tis easier to get access to the general,  
And one is met with language far more courteous,  
And by more civil answer from his lordship,  
Than from those cursed fishings in the market.  
For when one asks them anything, or offers  
To buy aught of them, mute they stand like  
Telephus.

And just as stubborn;  
And neither listen nor appear to heed,  
But shake a dirty polypus in your face.

"I did long believe the Gorgons an invention of the poets," says Antiphanes, in his "Young Men," "but when I came into the fish-market I found them a sad reality." And Diophanes, in his "Busy-body," confirms these traits I have mentioned as being characteristic of the tribe of fish-wives everywhere:

I used to think the race of fishmongers  
Was only insolent in Attica;  
But now I see that like wild beasts they are  
Savage by nature, everywhere the same.

But, to be just to the fishmongers, it is not they alone who bristle with these quarrelsome peculiarities. I have noticed it among all sorts of out-door people who eat oysters. That brain combustion of phosphorus which but barely feeds and keeps alive the lamps of the pale Aristarchus—the worms hid in holes, the polysyllabic animals, the students of philosophy and Pythagoras, who lay down rules of spare living and at banquets nearly eat their finger ends off—in the case of the out-cast toilers who live by muscle, seems to set their brains on fire. I have seen the rude stokers, coal-heavers, and stevedores of Liverpool, after eating but a dozen or two of oysters, washed down with a gallon of porter and a few three-pennies of gin, suddenly turned from men into wild beasts.—With horrid oaths they would pound and kick one another, clenching and wrestling like infuriated mastiffs, and trampling and pawing the sanded or saw-dusted floors of their taverns with their hob-nailed high-logs like cavalry horses at the first notes of the bugle's pas de charge. I have seen the quiet Norman peasant, after but a dozen oysters, with a pitcher of cider and a tasse of brandy or absinthe, shake off his native lethargy and revile the restored German Empire with indescribable vivacity and emphasis, and in language too foul to repeat.

The American oyster, which has not been tamed like ours by centuries of cultivation, is still more violent in its effects. In New York, pursuing my studies about the wharves and the markets, I had frequent occasions to note the violent accession of frenzy which ensued upon the consumption of bivalves. Sailors, laborers, mechanics, grown men and mere lads, after indulging their appetites for bivalves and whiskey, would be almost sure to quarrel and fight. Then the pistol and the knife were suddenly called into requisition, and a murder almost inevitably ensued; sometimes of Saturday nights there would be three or four most brutal homicides in rapid succession. I blush to say that even the emigrants from our pacific fatherland, when they have acquired this unhappy appetite for bivalves, are no longer to be relied on for a faithful observance of the laws and the peace of society, but frequently become infuriated and frenetic to the last degree. So thoroughly well understood are the morbid influences of this poisonous article of food in the metropolis of the United States, that moral insanity has not only come to be recognized in courts as a valid and sufficient plea in all cases of homicide and ravishment and brutal assaults, and in some classes of robberies also (such as defal-

cations, thefts of bonds, bank robberies, and the like,) but the victim of the disease, in spite of all the atrocities he commits in his frenzy, receives the greatest amount of sympathy and commiseration from large classes of the community. One may well conceive the humanity which gives rise to this sort of feeling; but is it legitimate to suppose that an abnormal state of society ensues in consequence, and that the effects are not conducive to what we are used to consider good government.

In appendices M and N, as well as in my larger report, I have gone more thoroughly into this subject, and endeavored to cite a sufficient number of cases to establish my position. Appendix O relates to suicides, the increasing frequency of which is a marked phenomenon of our modern societies, particularly in the New World. It will be seen that in a number of cases I have been able to trace the act of *felo de se* to emotional insanity directly induced by ostreopathy. I have given much thought to this subject, and as the result of my reflections, am strongly disposed to attribute the great access of madness which prevailed in the first centuries of the Roman Empire, and manifested itself in the wildest extravagances of luxury in untold brutalities, murder and suicide, principally to the great passion for oysters which then seized upon that people. Suicide, which we have come to regard as the supremest act of heroism or of desperation, became as much a matter of course among the Romans of the empire as it is among the Japanese—whom, by the way I much regret my inability to visit, for they are large consumers of shell-fish. It was one of the most frequent occurrences under the empire. The excellent M. Beute, in his portraits of the age of Augustus, has more graphically illustrated this fact than I can hope to do. To despise death, as he says, was a daily lesson; to seek it by suicide a regular mark of good education. Hundreds of Senators, thousands of the equestrian order opened their veins at the slightest command of the Cæsars; at a sign gladiators slew themselves in the amphitheatre, slaves flung themselves from the walls, even sages hastened their end to get away from the imperial regime, and the step of a centurion over their thresholds sufficed to provoke the supreme act of enfranchisement. Not only did the stoics brave the risk with serenity, not only did women and girls seek death with their husbands and fathers, but the epicureans also knew how to shorten their lives with the same indifference and ease that they would have plucked a rose of Pæstum from its stem. Two or three signal examples may be mentioned. Under Claudius, the rich Valerius Asiaticus killed himself in order to yield to Messalina the magnificent villa that had belonged to Lucullus; when just ready to stab himself he saw that the flames of his funeral pyre would scorch his fine trees; he had the pile taken down and built up in another place, and then died.—Under Nero, Petronius, the most dissolute and licentious personage of the court, quitted life as was suitable in a grand manner of the pleasures. He called together his dearest friends, the loveliest women of his acquaintance, surrounded himself with flowers and perfumes, took a bath, opened his veins, closed them again, discoursed with spirituality, dined, slept, had himself bled again, and again banded four or five times, until a gentle enfeebling of his powers conducted him insensibly to eternal repose. Under Otho the infamous Tigellinus succumbed, crushed beneath the public indignation. He assembled his concubines and associates in debauchery, and presided at a last and gigantic orgie before taking the razor to cut his throat. The learned Gibbon says that these efforts to escape from a tyrannous or disreputable world were "rendered familiar by the maxims of the stoics, the examples of the bravest Romans, and the legal encouragements of suicide." But there is a wide difference between actions inspired by heroism, stoicism, and simple effeminacy. These suicides, and notable Petronius and Tigellinus, relapsed from active life into luxury and oysters. Moral insanity speedily supervened.

While I was in America I saw the excitements caused by immoderate indulgence in shell-fish violently illustrated. They have there a sort of political assemblage called a clam-bake, where speeches and music and songs are interspersed with profuse feasts upon a species of oyster called the clam. Vast crowds attend these celebrations, and no sooner are they gorged with the insidious comestible than they become full of excitement and furores; swear themselves away in fealty to the most worthless of demagogues; sing, fight, dance, gouge one another's eyes out, and conduct themselves like madmen in a conflagration. Now, it was precisely similar madness that infected the Roman world and made so many tyrants, brutes, and suicides there. And it was from a similar cause. For, from the time of Cæsar, the Roman passion for oysters was a passion simply without bounds. They became connoisseurs in shell-fish, ransacked every sea for them, from Syrian syrtis to Britain, planted them everywhere, and ate them without moderation. Hence, Apicius slew himself under Trajan. He had the art of preserving oysters, but could not preserve himself. The last fatal delirium or Lucullus, in which he passed away after many banquets, can only be explained upon the ground of moral insanity from ostreopathy.

That which made suicide made tyrants likewise. Tiberius went to Capree for oyster as well as to indulge his sombre hatred of man. Nero, Caligula, and that great brute Vitellius were all pre-eminent ostreophagists. The latter, after eating a monstrous pie of peacock's brains garnished with oysters, would slaughter a thousand Ramans, take a vomit and turn to eating again. His morbid appetites for oysters and for blood were equally pronounced and equally remarkable. But instances are too numerous to mention here, especially as I have collated them very carefully in the appendices. I will simply refer to the case of Philoxenus the Selenitic, a man who was perverted into a demagogue and a tyrant by the fact of his having in early life caught oysters for a livelihood. It is related by Phenias the Eresian.—He was first a humble and contented fisherman this Philoxenus, but was induced first to take oysters, then to taste them, and so turned from his honest pursuits to demagogery and tyranny, and was finally fatally wounded. *Sic semper ostreotyrannus!*

The ancients, thought they had many mistaken ideas in regard to oysters—as, for instance, in supposing them to promote the peristaltic and glandular activities in a regular and wholesome way—yet seem to have dimly understood that they were dangerous as food, and especially that they provoked the temper and brought out into sharper relief the rugosities of the natural disposition. Some sorts of shell-fish are styled by Epicharmus "the banishers of men," because I suppose, they tend to make people unseizable. The sea-limpet is credited with relaxing the mind by Alcæus. The cockle is by all the Greek poets noted as rough and gaping, like fishwives.—"Offspring of a rough dam" is the epithet Aristophanes applies to the oyster, and Minutius, a practical writer, long ago attacked the bivalves on account of the unwholesome salts they contained. This must refer to phosphorus. It cannot mean sea salt, since the Greeks were so persuaded of the salubrity of that that they invariably diluted even their finest wines with it.

At Colchester, in the English Essex, and at Pongateague, Choptank, Maggoty, Annemessex, Accomac, and other places on the Chesapeake Bay, where I went to observe the processes of planting oysters and the kind of beds in which they thrive best, I noticed an apparent exception to the circumstances above noted, which puzzled me a great while. The people of these places live surrounded by oysters, and make them their principal diet, yet are the most pacific and mild-mannered folks. Their temperament is lymphatic, and they themselves are a cold, watery, flabby tribe, with sallow, soft flesh, pale blueish eyes, straight yellow dead hair, and speaking a dialect very different from and nearly unintelligible to the people around them.

At Philadelphia, however, mentioning the anomaly to some savans, it was quickly explained to me that the rea-

son for the exemption of these people was the fact that they invariably ate their bivalves fresh from the water.—Philadelphia, which is renowned for its medical schools, has the reputation of producing more medical experts than any other part of the globe. The business is pursued professionally in this city of furnishing professors who appear as witnesses in criminal trials and give suitable illustrations of infinitesimal or metaphysical distinctions such as are not apparent to the vulgar understanding. Hence, I have great pleasure in accepting the explanation which one of these ingenious gentlemen furnished me of the difference between oysters in the state in which they usually come to market. The oyster is a gross feeder, omnivorous and voracious. Deprived of water, he begins to assimilate air. But this induces quite a new activity in the phosphorus he secretes. A process of slow combustion begins in it, and this increases with each day the oyster is kept. It is to this condition of phosphorus, combusted in the stale oyster, that the learned Professors attribute the origin of emotional insanity; and I am convinced his ingenious theory is the correct one.

But it is impossible to supply any parts of the German Empire except those binding immediately upon the coast with fresh oysters. We must accept stale ones or do without any.—But stale oysters make us liable to emotional insanity. I therefore respectfully recommend that our oyster fundum be not planted with bivalves.

### How Indians Escape Their Pursuers.

During the early part of the fight every precaution is adopted to prevent leaving a heavy trail, or one easily to be followed; to this end, instead of moving, as is customary, in single file, thereby leaving a clearly defined path, each warrior moves independently of his fellows, until all danger from pursuit is safely passed, when the party falls into single file, and with the chief at the head, moves along in almost broken silence. If during an attack upon the frontier settlements the Indians should encounter unexpected and successful resistance, necessitating a premature withdrawal and flight on their part, they still resort to stratagem in order to secure their safety. In accordance with a plan previously formed and understood by each member of the party, and specially provided for an emergency, the war party finding themselves about to encounter successful resistance on the part of the frontiersmen beat a hasty retreat, but instead of taking their flight in a single direction and in one party, thereby leaving an unmistakable clue for their pursuers, the entire party breaks up into numerous smaller bands, each apparently fleeing in an independent direction, a few of the best mounted usually falling behind to attract the attention of the pursuers and give time to those of the party who are burdened with prisoners and captured stock to make good their escape. In such an emergency, as this, a rendezvous for the entire party has been previously fixed upon. Its location is usually upon or near some water-course or prominent landmark, distant perhaps thirty or forty miles; thither all smaller parties direct their course, each by a separate and usually a circuitous course. Should either of these smaller parties find themselves closely pursued, or their trail being followed, and all efforts to throw the pursuers off prove unavailing, they relinquish the plan of uniting with the others at the established rendezvous as that would imperil the safety of their comrades, and select a new route leading neither in the direction of the rendezvous nor of the village, in order not only to elude but to mislead their pursuers. Then ensues a long and tiresome flight, until, having worn out or outwitted their pursuers, of whose movements they keep themselves thoroughly informed, they make their way in safety to the village. At the latter, lookouts are constantly kept on some prominent hill to watch the coming of the absent warriors and give notice of their approach. A war party returning from a successful raid into the settlements, and bringing with them prisoners and captured stock, is an event of the greatest importance to every occupant of the village. Having arrived within a few miles of the village, and feeling safe from all danger from pursuit, the chief in command of the war party causes a signal smoke to be sent up from some high point along the line of march, well knowing that watchful eyes near the village are on the alert and will not fail to observe the signal and understand its meaning.—General Custer, in *Galaxy* for December.

COMPOSITION PUDDING.—One and a half cups molasses, one cup shred suet, two cups of milk, two teaspoons soda, flour to make a stiff batter. Boil steadily one and a half hours.

### Bits of George Eliot's Wisdom.

There are moments when by some strange impulse we contradict our past selves—fatal moments, when a fit of passion, like a lava stream, lays low the work of half our lives.

Always there is seed being sown silently and unseen, and everywhere there come sweet flowers without our foresight or labor. We reap what we sow, but Nature has love over and above that justice, and gives us shadow and blossom and fruit that spring from no planting of ours.

The golden moments in the stream of life rush past us, and we see nothing but sand; the angels come to visit us, and we only know them when they are gone.

There is a power in the direct glance of a sincere and loving human soul, which will do more to dissipate prejudice and kindle charity than the most elaborate arguments.

Our habitual life is like a wall hung with pictures, which has been shown on by the suns of many years; take one of the pictures away, and it leaves a definite blank space, to which our eyes can never turn without a sensation of discomfort. Nay, the involuntary loss of any familiar object almost always brings a chill as from an evil omen; it seems to be the first finger shadow of advancing death.

There is an unspeakable blending of sadness and sweetness in the smile of a face sharpened and paled by slow consumption.

In those distant days, as in all other times and places where the mental atmosphere is changing and men are inhaling the stimulus of new ideas, folly often mistook itself for wisdom, ignorance gave itself airs of knowledge, and selfishness, turning its eyes upward, called itself religion.

Wordly faces never look so wordly as at a funeral. They have the same effect of grating incongruity as the sound of a coarse voice breaking the solemn silence of night.

Religious ideas have the fate of melodies, which, once set afloat in the world, are taken up by all sorts of instruments, some of them woefully coarse, feeble, or out of tune, until people are in danger of crying out that the melody itself is detestable.

Opposition may become sweet to a man when he has christened it persecution; a self-obstructive, over-hasty reformer, complacently disclaiming all merit, while his friends call him a martyr, has not in reality a career the most arduous to the fleshly mind.

### Salting Meat.

Nessler considers the questions, what are the best proportions of salt, sugar, and saltpeter? and is it better to treat the meat with a dry mixture of the above substances, or to dissolve the salt and the sugar in water and apply this solution? As to the first point, he recommends a mixture of 6 pounds of common salt, 3 ounces of nitre, and 1 pound of sugar to every 100 pounds of meat; these figures correspond very closely to the proportions employed for salting meat in England. As to the second question he is in favor of using a solution instead of the dry mixture, because this matter extracts from the meat not only water, but also some of the most nutritive constituents. On the other hand, it must not be overlooked that salting by means of brine requires special care in order to insure thorough contact of all the parts of the meat with the salt, and also a longer time for subsequent drying.—*Dingler's Polytechnic Journal*.

"Tom, a word with you." "Be quick, then, for I'm in a hurry." "What did you give your horse the other day?" "A pint of turpentine." John hurries home, and administers the same dose to a favorite charger, who, strange to say, drops off defunct within an hour. His opinion of his friend Tom's veterinary ability is somewhat staggered. He met him the next day. "Well Tom," "Well, John what is it?" "I gave my horse a pint of turpentine, and it killed him as dead as Julius Cæsar." "So it did mine."

A little six year old was asked by his teacher to write a composition on the subject of water, and the following is the production: "Water is good to drink, to swim in and to skate on when frozen. When I was a little baby the nurse used to bathe me every morning in water. I have been told that Indians don't wash themselves but once in ten years. I wish I was an Injun!"

A negro was put upon the stand as a witness, and the judge inquired if he knew the nature of an oath. "For certing, boss," said the citizen; "if I swear to a lie, I must stick to him!"

Man has no love for spiritual life and immortality, until sin breaks to pieces the earthly things on which his affections are fastened.

Bad temper bites at both ends; it makes one's self nearly as miserable as it does other people.