The Port Tobacco Times

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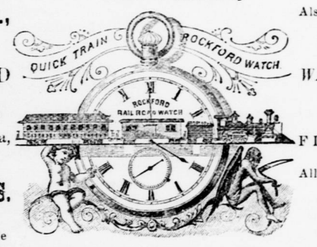

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Correspondence.

TOBACCO INSPECTIONS.

BALTIMORE, Jan. 5, 1882.

Editor of the Times:

In your issue of 23d December, I observe an editorial comment on a communication about Tobacco Inspection in the same paper. In response to your invitation for an "expression of views from our readers on this subject of so much importance," I beg you to publish these lines in hopes they may reach those of your readers who perchance have been misled by the very florid and somewhat dramatic communication of your correspondent Mr. Hawkins.

I do not wish to be understood as interfering in the discussion between that gentleman and the Brothers Boninger, or as taking it up on their part, but since it is so interwoven with the main subject, it is difficult to separate them in my efforts to expose the weakness of his argument.

He opens by giving what would seem to be a copy of the Boninger letter to Gov. Hamilton and makes it appear that the 94 hogsheads specified in that letter, is the sole basis of complaint against the State inspection. He goes on and spends half a column of your paper to show that this 94 hogsheads is an absurdly small percentage of the 11,500 hogsheads supplied to France by the Boningers and that the amount of their claim upon them is a still less percentage of the total value. He reduces it all to figures, four fifths of one per cent. in the first, and one third of one per cent in the other, and very logically reduces the complaint to a "*ridiculus mus*" (using his own terms). Finally he congratulates himself and his fellow inspectors upon the vast improvement in the State inspections, that there were only 94 hogsheads out of 11,500 to be complained of. But on examination of the letter, which Mr. Hawkins refers to in the *Sun* of 2d December, we find immediately preceding that portion quoted by him, the statement, that "*one fifth* of the 11,500 hogsheads turned out very unsatisfactorily, being vastly inferior to the Baltimore samples, etc," and that this 94 hogsheads is but a *part* of the complaint, this particular parcel being found so seriously objectionable, the samples are sent back for special investigation.

The fact is, Mr. Hawkins publishes a part of the letter from the *Sun* and builds up an argument, which falls to pieces as soon as the rest, which he has withheld, comes to light.

Quoting from Mr. Hawkins letter; he asks, "if the allegations are to be accepted that the samples made under a system of private inspection are current all over Europe, while our samples command no respect and are current nowhere how does it comport with the fact, that the French contract last year called for 11,500 hogsheads of Maryland tobacco, and only 3,000 hogsheads of Ohio."

First of all the allegations are literally true, and the unfortunate facts exist, however unpalatable and inconsistent they may seem to your correspondent, but so far as the French contract is concerned, that Government has nothing whatever to do with the Maryland State inspections. The Government makes a contract for a certain quantity of Maryland tobacco to be delivered, not in Baltimore by State inspection samples, but in Havre, Bordeaux and Marseilles agreeable to the inspections of their own experts and certain conditions which the contractors must comply with under a forfeit deposited by them, so if the contractors agents make purchases by certain State inspection samples conforming to the "types" or specified qualities to be delivered and send the hogsheads which fail to correspond, the Government rejects them and the deficiency has to be supplied by the contractors, not in the shape of Maryland State inspection samples, but in the quantity and description of tobacco which is contracted for.

Thus when Mr. Hawkins construes the fact of France buying more Maryland tobacco than Ohio, into a compliment to the State inspections, he exhibits a much less familiarity with the real point at issue than with the statistics (or rather generalities), which he cites to indicate this "very decided preponderance." In his anxiety to show this preponderance, he cites 11,500 Maryland against 3,000 Ohio in 1880, and overlooked the figures of 1881, (more easily accessible) viz. 8,000 and 7,300 respectively. I mention this, not in argument, but merely to show, as in case of the ninety-four hogsheads, how Mr. Hawkins picks out the part which seems to suit him and leaves the rest. For his information, I would say the contract for Western tobacco, which is denied the blessing of State inspection, was for 12,000 hogsheads, equal to about 22,500 hogsheads of Maryland.

So it is the *Maryland tobacco* the French Government wants, because of *its own intrinsic merits* and *not* the State inspections, and it must be obvious, even to Mr. Hawkins, that all the obstacles in the way of dealing in it, are alike a disadvantage to the merchant and producer.

If I should ask Mr. Hawkins why it is that the demand for this important product of our State has fallen off in almost every other direction, so as to leave market practically at the mercy of the French contractors, why is it that thousands of hogsheads are piled up it the State warehouses unstable at a living price? Why it is, that many prominent dealers at home and abroad have given up the business in disgust (to use their own language)? Why it is there is a general cry of complaint from every interested quarter? Why it is that our growth lies neglected in face of a general boom in the tobacco markets of the country? I say, if I were to put these questions to him and ask for an explanation of these incontrovertible facts, he would surely answer in all sincerity, because Maryland State inspection samples "*command no respect and are current nowhere.*"

If these samples were current and had a responsibility attached to them available under the ordinary commercial usages (which the Governor, in a letter last February, says there is not), there is little doubt that the tobacco could be distributed in other markets advantageously to the owners and participate in the general demand, instead of lying where it is to grow gray in availing of the free storage which Mr. Hawkins fears it may be deprived of, if the planter is set free to exercise *his constitutional right* to dispose of his product as he deems best for his interest. And here it is plainly evident, that the continued demand from France is *independent of the State inspections* and the discontinued demand from other quarters is because of that serious hinderance.

Again! Your correspondent resrects a memorial submitted to the Legislature of 1878 by the tobacco trade of Baltimore, and a number of prominent planters, setting forth certain facts in support of their petition to be free from the compulsion of State inspection. Among these facts were a number of statements of reclamations paid by certain dealers on tobacco which failed to correspond to the State inspection samples, by which it was sold in other markets. Comparing these statements with the number of hogsheads dealt in by the several firms, the calculation showed the reclamations to have amounted to $8 each. A most natural deduction from this was set forth in the memorial as follows:

"The direct loss from bad inspection is not, of course, really borne by the Baltimore trade, as the average loss per hogshead necessarily enters into the market valuation and falls upon the planting interest. The Maryland crop ranges between 30,000 to 42,000 hogsheads, so the *laws of trade* annually mulct the planting interest in about $300,000, because of the fraudulent practice of some of the growers and repackers. The honest planter pays the penalty and a premium is set upon knavery."

Now for this propensity for culling, Mr. Hawkins picks out this paragraph from the memorial, without explaining its connection with the rest of it, and characterizes as "brazen effrontery and the sublimity of impudence," any claim against the State inspection for incorrect sampling, on the part of the Brothers Boninger and therefore, on similar grounds, all other signers of the memorial.

I do not know how strictly the Brothers Boninger followed up the calculation in the course of their business, or how far it was carried into practice by the rest of the trade, but perchance they may have been persuaded into reposing more confidence in the inspections of 1880 than in those of 1877, and imprudently disregarded the light of past experience. If this be so, then they have paid the penalty for their indiscretion and if not, according to Mr. Hawkins, they are now and forever estopped from even the ghost of a claim against the State inspections and thus they (the State inspections) are absolved from all responsibility for incorrect sampling.

But, says Mr. Hawkins: "This is not all.—Of the 94 samples alleged to have been rejected by the French Regie, 34 are debited to warehouse No. 3, of which the undersigned is inspector. On investigation the fact was discovered that 26 of the 35 samples were *repacked* tobacco and *frauds* upon their face, as much so as forged notes or counterfeit dollars."

Now if by this he means to say these samples did not not emanate from warehouse No. 3, but were made up outside by the use of a forged seal, labels etc., then the Mess. Boninger were the victims of a swindle for which the State in question is in no way responsible, but, if on the other hand, they were made up in warehouse No. 3 and bore the genuine seal, the responsibility would seem identical with that of the genuine endorsement of a note which had passed into a third hand. But to go further, he says the hhds. were repacked tobacco and frauds upon their face." Now since there is a section in the inspection law expressly stipulating that such tobacco shall be "shaken out" and put in a shape to intercept such imposition as seems to have been practiced in this instance, it is somewhat unaccountable that these hogsheads should have been so tenderly cared for and sheltered in the good warehouse No. 3 and even exported therefrom, while yet in their suspicious conduct, aside from any consideration of the samples.

But again, Mr. Hawkins elaborates upon the exhorbitant charges prevailing in New York, Cincinnatti and Louisville, and puts them down with as much gravity as if they were facts. In the first place the hogsheads which go those markets average in weight 1,500 to 2,000 pounds, or twice as much as Maryland hogsheads, they are much larger packages, containing an entirely different and closely packed tobacco. Thus, in the comparison, he is dealing with another thing altogether, and besides that, his figures are not less erroneous.

For example in New York, the inspection charge is $1,20 and the outage $1,20, making $2,40 instead of $3, as he puts it. In Cincinnati and Louisville the warehousemen and the the commission men are the same, and the charges, which he has also gotten mixed, include warehouse charges, inspection (and guarantee to planter and buyer), commission, auction fees and all the expenses of disposing of the hogshead.

Now since Mr. Hawkins is so particular to note that "facts are stubborn things and are not to be frowned down by insane ravings or evaded by gratuitous assertions," I modestly suggest the next communication which he promises, shall deal more strictly with that stubborn material.

His poetic admonition to the "poor planter," to beware of the "sharks" lurking around to swallow him up, I fancy will not pass unheeded, but in these days of competition there is scarcely any chance, that the rates of charges will be made to exceed those now current in this market, in case the Legislature sees fit, to remove the existing restrictions and permit the planter to deal as freely with his tobacco, as with any other property he may be possessed of. Now even admitting every word of Mr Hawkins' argument, does it establish the advisability of the State's keeping store houses partly supported by general taxation and forcing the patronage of a certain class of its citizens who declare it against their interest and petition to be set free?

I do not wish to appear a captious objector, assailing the honesty and faithfulness of the inspectors or those in charge of the warehouses, but I do declare, that the system of State tobacco inspection has proven a failure in every State where it has prevailed, and it is useless to multiply arguments to demonstrate the glaring fact, that Maryland is no exception. Every other State has abandoned it and the time has come when our State Government should withhold this forcible interference in the private affairs of its citizens.

To call it *protection* to the "poor planter" is a proposition so puerile as to provoke a smile, especially in view of the fact, that some of the State warehouses now refund the drayage and co-operage in an effort to secure a portion of the tobacco received here from other States whereas our own product is denied *by law* the advantage of the existing competion under a penalty of *criminal indictment and fine.*

Yours respectfully,

OBSERVER.

Table Manners.

It is not the custom, as it used to be, to wait until every one is helped; haste or impatience are out of place, but is proper to eat whenever the food is placed before one. One is expected to ask twice for soup, fish or salid, and is seldom helped a second time to desert.

Preference for white or dark meat, rare or well done, should be expressed without hesitation, and all food accepted or declined promptly and in courteous terms. Well bred people never handle the glass, silver or china unnecessarily, or the food; they never make bread pills, or drink or speak with food in their mouths, or leave the table while eating or complain of the dinner.

When the child is strong enough to manage a fork, give him one instead of a spoon, and when the dignity of a knife is arrived at, teach him the use of it, and also, when done with the knife and fork, to lay them in close parellel across the plate, the handles to the right.

Teach them to use the spoon properly; to lay it in the saucer, while he drinks his tea noiselessly, (holding the cup by the handle,) to leave it in the saucer if the cup is to be refilled, and to place it in the empty cup when done.

Young people should not be allowed to flourish bread in the air while spreading it with butter; it is to be laid on the plate; neither should they sop up gravy or soup with bits of bread, or scrape their plates clean or tip their soup plates in order to drain them dry, or take the meat or bones with their fingers. The mouth should be carefully wiped before drinking, and the glass or goblet lifted without putting the fingers over the brim.

Table manners forbid all necessary clattering of knives and forks. Salt is taken on the knife, which is tapped on the forlinger of the left hand, instead of on the fork. The hand is the proper medium for removing grape skins and fruit pits from the mouth to the plate, and the napkin should hide all use of the tooth pick.

We should think scarf pins would get sea-sick. They are so often on the bosoms of such heavy swells.

A Select Story.

A REMINISCENCE —OF— LONG BRANCH.

Long Branch was crowded with visitors, and the fashionable hotels were reaping their annual harvest. One afternoon the guests of a certain hotel were congregated on the piazza enjoying the cool breeze, and some of the ladies were discussing with great animation the last arrival.

Rose Burnett, a lively brunette, exclaimed in rather loud tones.—

"I am sure that Mrs. Grant is an adventuress."

Before she could finish the sentence he friend, Helen Page, whispered "Be silent!" for the object for their remarks was approching.

It was evident that she had overheard the conversation, for her pale cheek flushed as she seated herself on a distant bench.

Belle Grant was attired in deep mourning, and the sombre hue of her garments rendered more apparent the delicate fairness of her complexion. Her golden hair was carelessly pushed back from her broad, low brow, and her large blue eyes were clouded by sorrow. She would have been lovely if her face had not worn an expression of hopeless despair.

A beautiful boy approached. For a moment Belle's countenance was radiant with joy.

"Mamma," said the child, and his big black eyes filled with tears, "all the boys have a papa who is kind to them, and brings them lots of nice things. Why does not my father come to see me?"

The mother bowed down her head and replied,—

"Pray to God, my son, and perhaps He will bring your father back to us."

Rose glanced triumphantly at her friend Helen, and exclaimed.—

"It is just as I supposed; the fair Mrs. Grant is an imposter. She is evidently not a widow, as her reply to her boy proves. But her husband has never made his appearance, nor is he likely to do so, unless the prayers of the infantine cherub work miracles."

"Rose, how can you be so sarcastic?" replied Helen. "I am sure Mrs Grant is a true woman. I think that she is overwhelmed by some great sorrow, and we should regard her with sympathy, and not with ill-natured suspicion.

As Helen ceased speaking, Belle approached the young ladies and addressed Rose with well bred self-possession.

"Pardon me," she said, "but I have been an unwilling listener to your conversation You are correct in your conjectures. I am not a widow, but I am a wife and if I wished I could unravel the mystery by which I am surrounded. However, I excuse your uncharitable insinuations, for you are young and inexperienced; but in future never slander one of your own sex. If you meet an outcast, and she is endeavoring to reform, be womanly; hold out a helping hand to her, and do not push her deeper into the abyss."

Rose's face became crimson from passion as she listened to this well-merited rebuke, and with inexeusable rudeness she turned away from Belle without uttering a word.

"Pray excuse my friend," said Helen. "She is a spoilt child, however. I hope that she will profit by your good advice. And now suppose we change this most unpleasant subject; will you accompany me to the beach? I suppose you enjoy the water."

"Indeed I do!" was the answer. "I was considered an excellent swimmer, but unfortunately I am so delicate that my physician has forbidden me to bathe; however, I will join you in your walk."

As they approached the bench they heard Rose Burnett's shrill voice urging her companions to follow her, and not to be cowards. Belle glanced at the bathers, and noticed that Rose was over venturesome. Forgetting her insulting conduct, she cried.—

"Remember the under current!"

The foolish girl, instead of appreciating these kind intentions became more daring, and ventured out still further. Suddenly a cry of despair was heard. Rose Burnett was sinking!

Belle, without an instant's hesitation, plunged into the water. She was an able swimmer, and soon rescued the unfortunate girl, who was almost exhausted; in another moment, she would have been past human aid. But a firm grasp held her up—gentle tones cheered her. A brave woman had risked her life to save an enemy.

At length she reached the shore. Kindly hands relieved her of her inanimate burden; then her overstrained nerves relaxed, and Belle Grant became unconscious.

She was carried to her room, and Helen watchad at her bedside.

A few hours elapsed, and Rose shared her friend's vigil. The young girl had quit recovered from her adventure, but her brave preserver was not so fortunate; the sudden shock had proved too severe for aframe so delicate, and for many days she lingered on the threshold of death. She became delirious and shrieked in tones of horror.

"Do not look at me so scornfully with your big black eyes! I am alone in the world, but I am a true wife! I tell you, girl," she continued, "that my boy has no occasion to blush for his mother, I am not an outcast!"

Rose was conscience stricken, as she listened and realized how nobly Belle Grant had returned good for evil.

The sufferer again spoke; her delirium had carried her back to woful scenes.

"Oh, judge," she cried, in most imploring accents, "spare my husband! Although apparently guilty, he is not so! Oh, Father in heaven," she exclaimed, they have sent him to jail! I shall never see my love again!"

She sank exhausted on her pillow. Nature was merciful; slumber visited the invalid. Care and sorrow were forgotten in the blissful unconsciousness of sleep. She was happy; the loved one had returned; his innocence was proved; once more she was clasped in her husband's arms.

She moved uneasily; alas! it was but a dream. She awoke; the delirium of fever had possed away; yet her mind was bewildered, and she murmured:

"What has happened?"

In a moment Rose was at her side.

"Thank God," she cried, "that you are better! But do not talk, and I will tell you all that has occurred. I met you, and was envious of your beauty; I was jealous when my admirers deserted me and devoted themselves to you. Although you did not encourage them, yet I hated you, and endeavored by malicious insinuation to injure, you risked your life to save mine—the life of a wicked, heartless girl!"

Tears choked her, and she could not utter another word.

"Rose," said Belle, "we are but human, and none of us are perfect. I am sure that your penitence is sincere, thereforve I forgive you. Bring me my boy, and you will afford me more happiness than you have ever caused me pain.'

Another moment, and Belle clasped her little one in her arms.

"O mamma!" said the child, "I have done nothing but cry since I saw you last. I thought that you had gone to look for papa, and you would not come back."

"My love," was the fond reply, "your mother will never leave you."

A few weeks passed It was Belle's first appearance on the piazza since her illnes; and the ladies crowded around her and overwhelmed her with congratulations on her recovery and with compliments on her heroism.

Her little boy suddenly approached her in a state of great excitement.

"Mamma," cried the child, "I have found my papa!"

Belle looked up; she uttered a scream of joy, and then threw herself into her husband's arms. Her dream was realized! The lost one had returned. His innocence was at last proved, and he was free!

Belle had already won all hearts by her heroism, and her husband soon proved himself worthy of his fair young wife. The reunited pair soon became the most popular guests of the hotel.

Have a Purpose.

It is not possible for every boy to know, at sixteen, just what particular thing he is to do in life, but everyone ought to have some high ideal, and then strive to attain it. One of our number asked me the other day, if I thought every young man could become what he *choose* to be. That was really asking whether the old adage is true: "Where there's a will, there's a way. Did you ever known an aphorism of the ages that was not based on a deep truth? "Find a way, or make a way." In an important sense the adage is true But the will must be full, thorough, complete. It must permeate every fibre of the boy's constitution. It must be permanent and reliable. It must be ephemeral, superficial, or half-hearted. It presupposes some knowledge of the difficulties in the way, and a contempt for them as difficulties. The *means* are essential to secure the *end*. We cannot sit down Micaber-like, [illegible]ing for something to turn up, to [illegible]us in the place we wish to occupy. [illegible]one wishes to become a rich man, h[illegible] must make up his mind to labor hard, early and late, year after year, till the result is reached; he must earn, and he must save every penny possible. Read the life of John Jacob Astor or Stephen Girard, if you wish to learn the way to wealth. It is your ambition to be learned, or eloquent, or honored? You must desire it with all your soul, and strive for it as for dear life; and you must not get discouraged as the years pass by. But you must have that kind of ambition which will admit of no refusal. It must be discoraged by no obstacles, thwarted by no misfortunes, weakened by no reverses. That kind of a perseverance, is what *men* are made of I have heard it said that Lord Baconsfield, in his boyhood, aspired to the first place in the English government, and so he attained it. The story probably has no truth in it, and yet has underneath it a truth worth more than if it were true. You need have no childish wish to become President of the United States, for generally he who strives after that place will never get it. The adage. "The dark horse always wins," has a great deal of truth in it. But you *can* and *ought* to have a high and laudable ambition to prepare yourself for manhood, and for the duties which manhood shall bring to you.—*William A. Mowry.*

"Can there be happiness where there is no love?" solemnly queries an author in a book on marriage. Not much happiness perhaps, but if the girl is awfully rich, there can be lots of fun.

Here rests his head upon the lap of earth; a youth to fortune and to fame unknown. Too much benzine crept underneath his girt, and played the mischief with his temperate zone.

Nature's Undertakers.

How often do we hear the query, "What becomes of all the dead birds!" The secret of their mysterious disappearance was but just now half told by the buzz of those brown wings, and the other half is welcome to any one who will take to trouble to follow their lead. This beetle is one of man's incalculable benefactors. It is his mission to keep fresh and pure the air we breathe. He is the sexton that takes beneath the mould not only the fallen sparrow, but the mice, the squirrels, and even much larger creatures that die in our woods and fields.

These nature-burials are by no means rare, and where the listless eye fails to discover them the nostril will often indicate the way, and to any one desirous of witnessing the operation without the trouble of search, it is only necessary to place in some convenient spot of loose earth the carcass of some small animal. The most casual observer could not fail soon to be attracted by the orange-spotted beetles. Entomologists assert that these insects are attracted by the odor of decay; but from my own humble investigations I have never been able to fully reconcile myself to this theory.

If it were the question of odor alone in this dead bird, for instance, it would be difficult to expiain the bee-line flight of these humming beetles, two of which came swiftly toward me even from the direction of the wind, dropped quickly upon these feathers hidden from sight among the grass. Perhaps in such an instance we might imagine that they had been there before, and knew the way, that they had noted this clump of yarow, maybe; but I have observed the fact before when there was every reason to believe that no such previous visit had been made.

I am always glad of the opportunity to watch the progress of these meadow burials. And had you accompanied me on that morning walk, you would have looked with interest at those little undertakers—seen that feathery body toss and heave with strange mockery of life as the busy sextons worked beneath it, digging with their spiked thighs, shovelling out the loose earth with their broad heads, and pulling down the body into the deepened cavity.—William Hamilton Gibson, in *Harper's Magazine.*

Changing Places.

A citizen who had an office in the top story of a block on Griswold street had half a ton of coal dumped on the walk the other day, and the cart hadn't yet disappeared when a boy came puffing upstairs and called out:

"Say, want that coal lugged up?"

"That's no way to address a person," replied the man. "Why don't you address me in a civil, polite manner?"

"Dunno how," answered the boy.

"Well, I'll show you. Sit down here and suppose you are the owner of the office and I am a boy who wants to bring up your coal."

He stepped into the hall and knocked on the door, and as the cried "come in," the man entered the room with his in his hand and began:

"Beg pardon, sir, but you have some coal on the walk below."

"Yes."

"Shall I bring it up for you?"

"Oh, certainly!"

"How much will you pay?"

"Well," replied the boy, as he looked around at the scanty furniture. "I generally promise a boy fifteen cents and shove a bogus quarter on him, but seeing it's you, and you are the only support of a large family, if you'll bring up that coal and put it in that box, I'll give you my whole income for a year and a half and a pair of old boots in the bargain."

"Boy, what do you mean?" demanded the man, as he flushed up.

But the boy dodged him and reached the stairs, and as he paused at one of the landings to look up he called out:

"I expected every minute that you'd advise me to get that coal upstairs before some creditor gobbled it! You can't play boy for shucks."—*Detroit Free Press.*

VARIETIES.

At twenty, a man is sure he knows everything; at thirty he begins to have grave doubts; at forty he knows there are some things he don't know; at fifty he is certain that he will never again know as much as he once knew.

A colored preacher, in translating to his hearers the sentence: "The harvest is past, the summer is over, and we are not saved," put in: "De corn has been cribbed, dere ain't any more work, and old Satan is still foolin' wid dis community."

In speaking of a newly-wedded pair a gentleman said of the husband:—"The trouble with John is, he has no mind of his own." "Oh, that will make no difference; Sarah will always be ready to give him a piece of hers!" responed the lady.

"Tommy, did you hear your mother call you?" "Corse I did!" Then why don't you go to her at once?" Well, yer see, she's nervous, and it'd shock her awful 'f I should go too suddent."

Which do you like best, your father or your mother?" inquired the visitor of a little chubby-fist. "Oh, I like ma the best. She spanks me with the soft side of her hand; pa takes a shingle."

Germany has solved a problem for us. In that country more girls marry at thirty-five than at nineteen. Now we all know why girls of thirty-five remain nineteen for so many years: they don't want husbands.