URGES CHANGES IN OYSTER LAWS

Radical changes in Maryland laws regulating the oyster industry are proposed in a tentative draft of bills submitted to the Tri-State Seafood Association meeting in Salisbury. The Association includes Delaware packers.

The association will meet again on December 14th to receive the final drafts and vote on the proposals.

Measures which the association will adopt before the General Assembly in January are:

To repeal the 10 per cent. shell return law. The validity of this measure enacted by the last session of the legislature has repeatedly been contested by oyster industry. Receiving adverse decisions in the Circuit Courts and the Maryland Court of Appeals, the test cases have been taken to the United States Supreme Court, from which a decision is expected next month.

To abolish all dredging for oysters in Maryland waters except the seed area north of a line drawn from Swan Point to Sand Point and to permit dredging in this area for seed oysters only during two Spring months. Adoption of this measure would make idle hundreds of dredge boats and throw out of immediate employment thousands of Maryland watermen. Tongs would be the only implement permissable in taking oysters from the bay and tributaries under this act.

To repeal the Shepherd Act.

To prohibit the opening of the oyster season earlier than October 1st. In some counties the season now opens on September 1 and all areas are being worked by September 15.

The association went on record as favoring more extensive planting, cultivation and private ownership of oyster beds; and for continuance of the three inch cull law, except in private planting grounds which are now exempted.

I. B. Andrews, of Cambridge, is president of the association, the membership of which controls operations in 35 per cent of the Maryland oyster areas. Invitation is to be issued to the remaining 15 per cent. of packers to become affiliated with the association.

The committee which submitted the legislative program is composed of C. H. Loockerman, Crisfield; I. B. Leonard, Cambridge; W. A. Valiant, Trappe; Isaac Tawes, Crisfield; W. A. Northam, Charles county.

An essay, "My Country and I," promoted by the Chautauqua at Rock Hall, was won by Miss Mary Hatcherson. Other participants were Miss Doris Downey, Miss Clara Joiner, Albert Dowling and Edwin McCrea.

As a rule, when a man can support two children, he has ten. When a man can support ten children he has two.

LICENSE FOR FOX HUNTING

A movement to require license for fox hunters has been started among Marylanders who enjoy the pursuit of other game and have to pay license fees for their recreation.

Rabbits and birds need to be restocked each year by the State out of funds provided by their license fees and yet it is the quarry of the fox-hunter, who pays no fee, that reduces the rabbit and game bird population to a point that makes restocking necessary, they argue.

Lewis F. Eckhart, of Mount Washington, speaking for a Baltimore County group, said Thursday:

"We don't want to do anything that will hurt fox-hunting. It's one of the grandest sports ever known. But we do feel that the fox hunter ought to pay for his fun just as we pay for ours—and for his—by a license fee.

"The hunting of all game is allowed only with a license in Maryland. But they say foxes aren't game. Well, they're either game or vermin. If they are vermin they ought to be exterminated and if theyr'e game they ought not be hunted except with a license.

"The license is only $5.25 and I never heard of many fox-hunters who couldn't pay that.

"What we pay goes to restock the covers with the game we shoot, but they wouldn't need so much restocking if the foxes didn't kill more than the hunters."

Mr. Eckhart said he did not believe a license for fox-hunting would restrict that sport in any way.

JUDGE SEVERE ON VIOLATORS

Following in the steps of the Circuit Court of Talbot county, Judge Walter Preston of the Harford County Circuit Court in his charge of the grand jury last week deplored the violations of the local option law, and urged that the county commissioners provide a fund to employ persons to seek evidence and aid in the enforcement of the law. He also urged that the Legislature restore the penal sentence clause to the county law which was changed into a provision for fines before the Volstead Act went into effect.

A proposal for the adoption of State income tax laws to relieve the taxation burden on tangible property owners was approved last week by the National Grange in its last convention session in Washington.

The report of the committee on taxation which was presented by Ralph W. Smith, master of the Iowa Grange, also proposed an excess profits to be levied by the states, leaving the tax on tangible property for the local needs in counties and municipalities.

The report would provide for the retention of the Federal inheritance tax with no reduction in existing rates, and continuation of the Federal income tax until the war debt is paid.

Commending the action of the County Commissioners and groups of public spirited citizens in furnishing funds to hire detectives to secure evidence against violators of the county local option law, the Grand Jury of Talbot in its report admitted its helplessness to deal with the rum violators on the anonymous complaints that had been made. The jury condemned the anonymous complaints as insults to the "dignity of the grand jury."

The grand jury also called the attention to the court to the fact that there were three drug stores, each licensed to sell liquor on prescriptions in Talbot county, and that one of these stores sold 1,700 pints of whisky during the last year.

Four persons were given sentences for violation of the local option laws of the county, by Judge Thomas J. Keating. They were as follows: James Jackson, three months in the Maryland House of Correction; Gerold Nichols and Henry Queen, each three months in the Maryland House of Correction; Roy Nicols, an invalid, sixty days in Easton jail.

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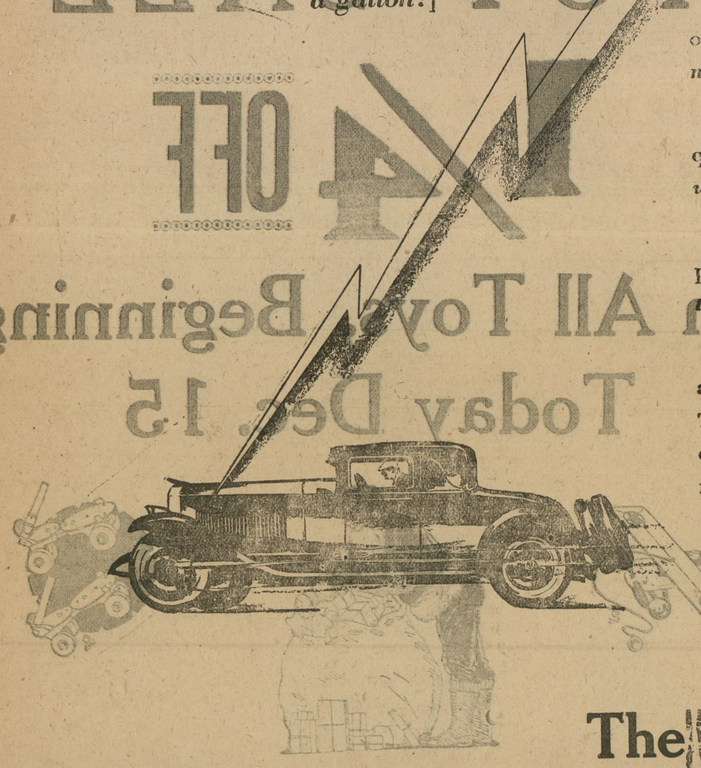
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