Kent News

SATURDAY, - - - FEB. 15, 1896.

OYSTER PLANTING.

Mr. Ellinger Tells about the Industry in Long Island Sound.

ORIGIN, GROWTH AND HISTORY.

Allotment and Taxation of Water Areas—The Industry Employs a Vastly Increased Number of Men, Who Are Prosperous and Contented—A Lesson for Maryland and Virginia.

Mr. William Ellinger, of Fox Island, Va., writes to *The Sun* as follows:

The object of this communication is to place before your readers the investigations of the writer made during a sojourn among the oyster-planters of the North, to relate the origin and the development of a splendid industry, to tell how these intrepid men wrested success from bleak shores and waste bottoms infested with enemies so numerous and voracious that only by making a faithful and unremitting fight against them can oysters be grown at all.

If such achievements make us of the Chesapeake, possessors of the best and safest oyster area in the world, blush for our supineness, they may also act as a spur to overcome it.

The impression that the oyster in its natural state is found everywhere on the New England coast is erroneous. It was never abundant anywhere on it, and never existed as a habitat north of Cape Cod, excepting in a few spots where, within a restricted area and in limited numbers, local and exceptional conditions favor its growth. The shell heaps north of Cape Cod, popularly believed to be oysters, are clams. This information is derieved from a great teacher and writer at whose feet I was privileged on more than one occasion to sit and learn. I speak of the eminent zoologist, Professor Verrill, of Yale.

This brings us back to points on the New England coast, where oysters in their natural state, though never abunant, have always grown and lived. I use the words grown and live because there are waters in which oysters grow, but perish after a brief existence. It is hoped that it will not be thought invidious to say that the entire area of the North favorably adapted to oyster growth is probably less than that of the Chesapeake. It may also be of interest to state that an oyster-planter of New Haven who had a pecuniary interest in the ascertainment of the area and value of the natural oyster-beds on the coast south of North Carolina as far as Fernandina, Fla., and who had visited them, expressed the opinion that it is not as great as it is popularly believed to be.

Rise of the Connecticut Indurtry.

A brief review of the rise of the oyster industry of Connecticut seems proper. Capt. Jeremiah Smith, a venerable citizen of New Haven, informed me that in early davs the oyster business consisted of catching a few oysters from the natural beds, storing them in cellars, shucking them from time to time and sending them out with boys to sell to such persons about town as wanted them, much after the same fashion that the colored man, with his unique cry and tin bucket, still does in your city.

In those days oysters, like men, died of old age, and as they died higher grew the heap upon which the new growth anchored. This tells us how our oyster rocks were builded. These, too, were the days of rough roads, jolting wagons and weary journeys, conditions unfavorable for the shipment of perishable food. His majesty, the oyster, required royal transporation. Railroads came along and furnished it, since when oysters have not had time to die on their self-created mounds. Its influence upon the natural oyster promises to be the same as was that of the rifle upon the buffalo, which exterminated them and is now exterminating the seal.

It will eventually exhaust our oyster rocks. We have no further to go than the Chesapeake to prove it. In this connection it may be said that, had the oyster bed of the Chesapeake been so recuperative that each year's growth would have equaled each year's catch, they could not have supplied the growing demand of an ever increasing population, with railroad transportation not only keeping pace, but in many instances outstripping it, any more than the buffalo could have furnished the demand for meat, though he had not been exterminated. Oysters must be planted, or eventually there will be none.

Going to the Chesapeake.

Transportation, once furnished, the supply of natural oysters in the North was soon exhausted--with determination characteristic of the New England man, he resolved to stay in the oyster business and betook himself to the Chesapeake at a time when most of our rocks were yet virgin. Oysters were freighted to New England, and Captain Smith told me that as many as fifty boats could be seen at Fair Haven awaiting berth for unloading. The Virginia rocks, because nearer to the capes, were the first used by these enterprising men. Oysters on arriving were bedded in the spring, left to grow and fatten until fall, then taken up, shucked and shipped to interior towns.

The Pioneer Oyster Packer.

Meantime the Baltimore and Ohio railroad was built and offered better facilities to Baltimore than any other city at that time enjoyed. Maltby, and a New Haven tinker, grasped the situation—Baltimore, with the Chesapeake at her feet and the Baltimore and Ohio at her command, ought to be the place where oysters should be handled with greater profit than in New England. He converted his tinware and other property into money, brought it and a head full of brains to Baltimore and gave the impetus which made Baltimore the oyster mart of the world. Others from New England followed. What these men accomplished is a part of the annals of Baltimore. Their decendants are among her honored and influential citizens. Baltimore once in the lead, the oyster traffic of New England waned.

Allotment of Water Area.

How is water area now acquired?—how much is alloted?—what is the price charged?—what is the nature of the title conveyed? Area is acquired through application to the commissioners of shell fishery of Connecticut. One dollar per acre is the uniform price, the applicant paying all charges for surveying area and buoying same. There is no limit to the acreage which may be applied for—the best being taken up and all being taxed, though not cultivated, checks the desire for large ownership. Oysters are not taxed. Bottoms are. Some are assessed as high as forty dollars per acre, from that down to one; the value of bottoms being derived from the crops they produce, governs the principal of taxation. The value of crops is ascertained by information gathered by years of observation. The producing power of the various holdings is well known. The maximum tax of $40 per acre is, in some intances, very low considering the producing power of the area taxed, but the commissioners necessarily and justly consider the perils to which oyster culture is exposed. The storms of 1893 destroyed nearly all crops.

The idea of dictating to an oyster planter what implements he shall or shall not use, when or how he shall use them, how or when to work his ground, whether he shall or shall not use capital secured outside of the State, whom he shall or shall not associate with himself in business, would no more be thought of than to attempt to dictate to a farmer when to milk his cow, sheer his sheep, shoe his horse, or take his dinner. The man who would attempt to do so, if he were an idiot would be forgiven; if an intermeddler, he would be jumped on with both feet. No one has a right to throw a tong or dredge on a planter's grounds, whether cultivated or not. The use of steam power on the natural rock is forbidden by law.

The product of the natural rocks, which is taken off when it is from three to eight months old, is growing less each year. It is a very small factor now and will soon cease to figure at all.

Planters and Oystermen.

I mingled freely with the laboring classes, found them intelligent and contented. The provident and temperate getting along well. There is no trouble between oyster planters and their employes. Where in days of purely natural growth one man was employed at oystering, there are now ten engaged to say nothing of the tremendous force of men represented by the steamboat's power.

Of the oystermen who work the natural rock quite a number have acquired planting area and not a few have become rich. It is the same old story—the temperate, the provident and the industrious get along; the others, well, they are daming the planters, the steamboats, and scratching for a living.

Planters divide themselves up to specialists; one grows seed to sell to buyers who transplant, some both raise seed and transplant: others raise what is known as shippers. The shipper is an oyster raised for the English market, which takes from one hundred to one hundred and ten thousand barrels annually. They are cultivated in such a manner that each oyster is smooth, round in shape, free from projections and almost alike in appearance. This is high-grade oyster farming, and it is to be doubted whether agriculture or horticulture demands greater intelligence or more assiduous labor. It may be of interest to note in this connection that the English only eat oysters in their raw state. They will not use them when cooked. It is estimated that not over one-tenth of the oysters raised in Long Island Sound are shucked and shipped from Connecticut points.

Princess Bay.

No account of the northern oysterfield is complete that does not include the beautiful Princess Bay, which bathes the shores of some of the prettiest spots in America, which I visited and where I was shown the hospitality which characterizes the northern planter wherever found. Its nearness to New York city adds great value to its oyster bottoms, which, nevertheless have for the last 7 or 8 years failed to produce good oysters They were meantime green in color and poor in meat; they are now again as fat and finely flavored as any in the country. It is to be hoped that the change may be a permanent one. Owing to the causes stated and the great storms of 1893 the stock of oysters growing in Princess bay is not more than one third of its former proportions. The enemy here is the drumfish, which destroys not a few oysters. The starfish, the drill and the winkle do no appreciable damage. Princess bay ought to prosper because it is at the very door of an imperial city.

Oyster-Farming.

So far I have used the word 'planter.' There is a more appropriate one—one which will convey to your readers a better idea of oyster culture and will perhaps raise their estimate of its nature and value. Properly speaking, the so-called oyster-planter is an oyster farmer. Farmer is the word. Let anyone go over the ground I have, let him hear the oyster farmer as I have, talk of preparing a piece of ground under the water for a new crop, of cultivating after it is underway, of destroying the oyster's enemies almost as a farmer would potato-bugs, of raising seed to use himself or sell to others, of transplanting or thinning out a crop, of how, after a crop had been made or transplanted, it were best to let the ground lay fallow for a season of how pieces of ground not over 100 yards from each other will produce a thicker or thinner shell, and consequently more or less meat, or this or that shape, hence, more or less desirable for this or that purpose, how much a dredge should weigh if used on this or that sort of a bottom; aye, if he were to hear the thousand and one points discussed pro and con, just as intelligent farmers do when they meet and compare notes a better conception would be had of oyster-farming, of the forces it calls into play, and of the future that is in store for it, for just as surely as there seems to be no limit to human intelligence, just so surely is there none to the objects which engage its activities. People somewhat familiar with oysters imagine oyster culture to consist of throwing something into the water for spat to catch on, and next to market the oysters If the practical work of the oyster. farmer were better understood the merit of his industry would be more greatly appreciated. Our brother farmers working the valleys and hillsides of Virginia would then claim us as their own, and legislators would not overlook us nor give us half-hearted encouragement.

The Trouble in Virginia.

Speaking from actual experience, I know that the hindrances to oyster culture in Virginia do not find their reason half so much in the opposition of certain oystermen as to the indifference of the people of the interior. Our oystermen are not all fools or pirates. Oyster planting in the North found oystermen its bitter enemies; most of them now its best friends. Our industrious, temperate and provident oystermen will be among the planters of the future, and so far as the disorderly class is concerned, it will not cost one-tenth as much to land them in the penitentiary, or some worse place, as it costs our northern friends to fight starfish.

I asked one of the brainiest planters of Connecticut, a peer in the in real of intelligence, whether, in the event of the exhaustion of the oyster rocks of the Chesapeake, the northern planters could supply the demand, he promptly responded: "No we have not the area."

We of the Chesapeake have the area, no storms, no starfish drills, or winkles, a salubrious climate, a country where land and water vie with each other in the production of the finest food, and while, in my opinion, the day will never come when the intelligent planters of the North will fail to make every acre of available oyster area produce a satisfactory return, the time may come when they and their stalwart sons may wish to overstep their restricted territory and share with us the magnificent results to be wrought out of the farms lying waste under our waters—possibilities which now lie dormant in the lap of a lovely though slumbering mistress. What will the royal Chesapeake be when Virginia awakens? The answer is found in Connecticut.

Scrofula

Miss Della Stevens, of Boston, Mass., writes: I have always suffered from hereditary Scrofula, for which I tried various remedies, and many reliable physicians, but none relieved me. After taking 6 bottles of S.S.S. I am now well. I am very grateful to you, as I feel that it saved me from a life of untold agony, and shall take pleasure in speaking only words of praise for the wonderful medicine, and in recommending it to all.

Treatise on Blood and Skin Diseases mailed free.

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SWIFT SPECIFIC COMPANY, ATLANTA, GA.

$1.35 Cash! $1.35 Cash!

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Kendall Farm Gate!

Gate 11 feet long, 5 feet high, 5 slats, made of Cypress. Strongly made. Orders solicited. Order 1 week before you need gate.

A. M. KENDALL, FAIRLEE, MD.

m30-tf.

WHITE WINE VINEGAR for sale by E. W. F. SIMPERS.

OF ALL SEASONS OF THE YEAR,

Now is the Time to save the $ $

CASH A MIGHTY LEVER.

Bring it along with you. It will tell in your purchases. We are going to make a SWEEPING REDUCTION in prices from now until February 10th.

ALL WINTER GOODS!

In fact, all surplus stock, whether in or out of season, must be moved to make room for Spring purchases—if price cutting will do it.

Ladies', Misses', and Children's Coats and Capes

MUST GO REGARDLESS OF COST!

$ 3.00	Coats Reduced at	$ 2.00
4.50	" "	3.00
5.50	" "	4.00
6.50	" "	4.50
7.50	" "	5.50
11.00	" "	8.00
15.00	" "	10.00
10.00	" "	7.50

Carpetings, Oil Cloths and Mattings!

65c., 60c., 55c., and 50c. Remnants of Carpet reduced to 43 cents per yard. Come and select your choice for 43c. Rag Carpeting, excellent values, for 27½c. Our 25c. Ingrain is worth 30 anywhere. If you want to save the dollars come along.

Oil Cloth Remnants at and below cost, to close, ranging from 17½c. per yard up.

MATTINGS, MATTINGS.

We have ordered our Spring Stock, and we want to clear the store of Remnants. Come and take your choice of 25c., 22c., 20c. and 18¾c., Remnants for only 16c. per yard, and if this does not satisfy you then we'll throw in the tacks.

TABLE DAMASK and TOWELS.

22c.	Red Table Damask for	17½
30c.	White " all Linen	23½
50c.	" "	40c.
25c.	" All-Linen Towels	19½

Our 5c. Towel is cheap at 8c. Our 6¾c. Towel is cheap at 10c.

Napkins from 39c. per doz. up.

BLANKETS, White and Colored, at Ppecial Prices

BED TICKING and MUSLINS.

For 12½c. per yard we will give a tick worth		18c.
For 15½c. " "	9-4 Bro. Sheeting worth	18c.
For 18c. " "	10-4 " "	22c.
For 5c. " "	4-4 Bro. Muslin worth	6¾c.

and so on down the list.

SHOES and BOOTS.

Have lots of them, and purchased before the advance. We can save you money, come on. Gum Boots—have a few pairs large sizes at $1.90 per pair.

Men's Heavy Over and Underwear at less than cost to close. 50c. Heavy Overshirts. Goods that are good for 40c., and $1 goods for 79c. and $1.75 for $1.25.

SPECIAL PRICES ON

Sugar, Coffee, Tea. Soap, Molasses, etc., and Buckwheat. Flour lower than the lowest. Very truly yours,

R. F. PARKS.

CLOVER, TIMOTHY and ORCHARD GRASS SEED for sale for cash. Get prices and compare values. R. F. PARKS.

A SPECIAL INVITATION TO CALL AT

A. FRIEDMAN & CO.'S

A GREAT SEMI-ANNUAL REDUCTION SALE COMMENCES TO-DAY, which will create no little sensation among those who watch our advertisements with interest, knowing the advantages therein, will be afforded a great opportunity. The year 1895 has ended most satisfactorily, and we have decided to make a GREAT SACRIFICE of all our remaining goods, consisting of

Men's and Boys' Overcoats and Suits,

And a Complete Line of FURNISHINGS.



Men's Overcoats.

Fine Imported Black Blue and Brown Kersey, Beaver, Cassimere and Cheviots in various shades, for $3.75, $4.50, $5, $7.50, $8.75, $10 and $12.50, all of which have been reduced to one-third their former price.

Men's Suits.

All-Wool Dickey Kersey for $5. Fine Imported Clay Regent Frock, Plain Cassimere, Fancy Worsteds and Cheviots $3.75, $5, $6.25, $7, $8.50 to $11, which is a reduction of about 20 per cent.

Men's Single Pants.

In Fine Imported Worsteds, Cassimeres & Domestic Goods, in neat Stripes and Plain styles, $1, $1.50, $2, $2.75, $3.50.

Boys' and Children's Overcoats.

Boys' Stormers, Kerseys, Cassimere and Beavers, from 14 to 19 in size, for $2.75, $3.50, $4.75 and $5, many are marked from $8 and $8.50. Children's Coats from 4 to 14 years, with and without capes, in Stormers, Cheviots, &c., from $2 upward to $4.

Boys' and Children's Suits.

All-Wool Kersey only $3.75. Union and Plain Cassimere, Fine Imported Worsteds and Cheviots in Long Pants Suits for $2.75, $3.25, $4, $5.50 to $7.75. Short Pants Suits for $1, $1.50, $2.25 to $3.50. A few Boy's Refer Overcoats left, which wil go at $1.87.

Boy's Single Pants meet a similar reduction as other goods hereabove mentioned.

Shoes! Shoes! Shoes!

The Shoe Trade has been VERY good, and we have now many pairs of single Shoes which will be sold at a big loss, besides we have a line of complete sizes, which will also be sold at a reduction. Our line of UNDERWEAR, HATS, CAPS, NECKWEAR and HOSIERY are unexcelled in quality, and prices upon them to suit the times.

Thanking you for your liberal patronage in '95 and wishing you all a prosperous year of '96, I am

Yours, very respectfully,

A. FRIEDMAN & CO.,

Directly opposite Stam's Hall. Leading Clothers.

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WHITE PINE BARN BOARDS,

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Va. and Georgia Pine Flooring,

JUNIPER PICKETS

FOR WIRE FENCES.

3,000 Locust and Cedar Posts

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For Sale by

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CHESTER RIVER STEAMBOAT CO.

STEAMER EMMA A. FORD will leave Chestertown at 8 o'clock A. M. on Monday, Wednesday and Friday, stopping at Rolph's, Booker's, Quaker Neck, Bogle's, Queenstown and Kent Island. Returning, will leave Baltimore at 10.30 A. M. on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday, making the above stops.

The daily round trips on the Centreville route will be discontinued after Nov. 2. Beginning Nov. 4, the

STEAMER B. S. FORD, will leave Centreville at 8 A. M., Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday, stopping at landings on Corsica River, Jackson Creek and Rock Hall. Returning, will leave Baltimore at 10.30 A. M., Monday, Wednesday and Friday, for same landings.

A Special Round Trip from Baltimore to Rock Hall and return will be run on SATURDAYS, leaving Baltimore at 3 P. M., and leaving Rock Hall at 5 P. M. This will give Rock Hall patrons an opportunity to leave home Saturday morning for Baltimore and return same day.

GEORGE WARFIELD, Pres't.
Nov. 2, 1895.

BALTO., CHESAPEAKE and ATLANTIC RAILWAY CO.

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WATER AND RAIL ROUTES

to Ocean City and all points on the Chesapeake Bay.

FOR HEALTH, PLEASURE AND BUSINESS.

Unexcelled facilities for both passenger and freight traffic. Close connection with the trunk line railroads, insuring convenience to the traveller, and the quick dispatch of all freights. Fifteen commodious and handsomely fitted out steamers. Comfortable staterooms. Good cuisine. Polite attendance. Steamers from Piers 3, 4, and 4½ Light St. Wharf, Baltimore, as follows:

RAILWAY DIVISION—4.30 p. m. daily, except Saturday and Sunday. Saturday 3.00 p. m., for Claiborne and stations to Ocean City.

CHOPTANK RIVER LINE—8 p. m. daily, except Sunday, for Easton, Oxford, Cambridge, and landings to Denton. Returning, leave Denton at 12.30 p. m. daily, except Saturday, Cambridge 6 p. m., Oxford 7.30 p. m., Easton 9.30 p. m., arriving in Baltimore 5 a. m.

WICOMICO RIVER LINE—5 p. m. every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday for Wingate's Point, Deal's Island and landings to Salisbury. Returning, leave Salisbury at 2.30 p. m., every Monday, Wednesday and Friday, arriving in Baltimore at 6 a. m.

NANTICOKE RIVER LINE—5 p. m. every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday for Deal's Island, and landings to Seaford, Del. Returning, leave Seaford at 12 o'clock noon Tuesday, Thursday and Sunday, arriving in Baltimore at 5 a. m.

GREAT WICOMICO AND PIANKATANK RIVER LINE—5 p. m. every Tuesday and Friday for the Great Wicomico River, Dividing, Indian and Dymer's Creek's, Little Bay, Milford Haven and Piankatank River to Freeport. Returning, leave Freeport 6 p. m. every Monday and Thursday, arriving in Baltimore at 5 a. m.

STEAMERS FROM SOUTH STREET PIER:

POCOMOKE RIVER LINE—5.30 p. m. every Tuesday and Friday for Crisfield, Tangier Island, Onancock, and landings to Pocomoke City and Snow Hill. Returning, leave Snow Hill at 6 a. m., Crisfield 6 p. m. every Monday, and Thursday, arriving in Baltimore at 6 a. m.

MESSONGO RIVER LINE—5.30 p. m. every Monday and Wednesday for Fords, Crisfield, Harborton, Evans, Boggs, Hunting Creek and Messongo. Returning, leave Messongo every Friday at 6 a. m., Crisfield 6 p. m., arriving in Baltimore at 6 a. m.

OCCOHANNOCK RIVER LINE—5.30 p. m. every Sunday for Ford's, Crisfield, Harborton, Evans, Boggs, Cedar View, Nandua, Concord, Read's, Davis', Shield's, Rues. Returning leave Rues every Tuesday at 8.30 a. m., Crisfield, 6 p. m., arriving in Baltimore at 6 a. m.

WILLIARD THOMSON, Gen'l Mgr.
Baltimore, Maryland.

BALTO. & DELAWARE BAY RAILROAD.

TIME-TABLE,

TO TAKE EFFECT NOVEMBER 27th, 1893.

Going East. Pass. No. 1 Daily ex. Sunday.	STATIONS.	Going West Pass. No. 2 Daily ex. Sunday.
Leave. A. M.		Arrive. P. M.
6.50	CHESTERTOWN	12.05 A. M.
7.05	WORTON	11.50
7.10	LYNCH'S	11.45
7.15	HEPBRON	11.40
7.28	KENNEDYVILLE	11.27
7.41	BLACK'S	11.14
7.54	LAMBSON'S	11.01
8.08	MASSEYS	10.47
8.22	DELANEY'S	10.32
8.30	BINGHAM'S	10.25
Arrive.		Leave.
8.40	CLAYTON	10.15

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