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LETTER FROM THE SEA-SIDE.

WILMINGTON, N. C., Feb. 20.

MY DEAR EDITOR:—I will begin this letter with the rich flavor of stewed oysters still lingering about my lips. How I wish you and all those whose mouths water for oysters, while reading these words could be with me sometime when I am feasting on this, the best of seaside luxuries. I would be as clever as a "boomer" knows how to be and divide with you until you pronounced yourself amply full. Language, when even dripping from the pen of an expert, has not "sufficient art to trace," or poetic smack to express, even the faintest shade of the blissful idea of appreciation that floats through the cells of imagination just in the rapturous instant when a fresh, full sized oyster "plays the slip" on the grip of the throat and passes to the "region beyond." You fellows that eat "mummy" oysters from old tin cans could hardly believe your taste if you were to try a few fresh from the shell. Distance from the sea "lends no enchantment" to eating oysters.

It's good to stew or fry, and serve them on the table, but this boomer prefers to take his old pocket knife and a bottle of vinegar, or pepper sauce, a few soda crackers and go down on the beach at low-tide, when the oyster rocks are above water, and, without salt or ceremony, break them off one by one, split open the shell, pour on a little vinegar or sauce and bid the jelly-like creature a "gentle good-bye" before you place it on your anxiously dripping tongue; for, notwithstanding he is as large as your thumb, he will glide down your throat like a meteor pounced with "rye mash" and polished with "greased lightning." Between times take a bite of cracker for sake of variety. When you have split the shell you have then what is termed in the city market, "oyster on the half-shell." This adds a sea-side naturalness to eating them.

But let us attend a very usual gathering by the sea-side during the late fall, and early spring months. It is a party of young people who are off for an "oyster roast"—on the same style of a mountain picnic party. We get in wagons, carts or buggies and drive several miles from town to some place on the beach not usually visited. We arrive at a broad area of marsh-land through which flows a stream seeking the ocean; some two or three young men in a boat to find an oyster rock where the oysters are large and abundant. A suitable place is soon found and the party conveyed in boats thither—the boats return to main-land for a load of dry brush, wood, etc., with which to build a roasting fire—the fire is made by the young men while the young ladies take baskets and carry the oysters that have been broken loose with hammers, and throw them on the fire. Soon a crackling and popping is heard like unto the sharp-shooting of rifle-men.

Then all hands make haste, for the oysters are ready. Uncork the bottles of pickles, vinegar, pepper sauce, get out your crackers, open your old barlow knives—ready to eat and be merry. Whoever heard of anyone trying to "chaw" an oyster unless 'twas a mountain boomer? Swallow it whole. A vice hasn't grip enough in it to hold one, much less a loose-jawed mortal. Yes, let me go to the oyster party. O, how happy a fellow feels sitting by his sweet-heart, eating stewed oysters. It's love "biled" down, sure enough.

The taste for them must be cultivated. When first this boomer came east he could not bear an introduction to the snail-like creature, but how different now! I can eat a half gallon per day and then sigh for more—no jesting. And for colds there is no better cure; so full of heat are they.

But a few words on their natural history. They belong to that part of the animal kingdom known as mollusks; as also do the cuttle-fish, clam, squid, mussel, etc. All along our coast oyster beds are found in large numbers. One found a few days since in Pamlico sound was four miles long and about 18 feet under water. During the months of June, July and August the oyster is unfit for food, or as the sailors say, "any month that has not the letter 'r' in its name." This would include May, which month ought to

be included in that time. During these months they deposit their young, which at once adhere to whatever substance they happen to fall among and at once begin their growth. You often notice their shells growing on the timbers of a wharf, among old snags, etc. But they never grow to perfection only in their regular beds, from whence they are taken during their proper seasons by a "dredge," an iron frame work, about which is fastened a net in which the oysters are caught as the "rail-grab" machine breaks them loose from the beds. The appearance of the oyster rock looks as if they ought to belong to the mineral kingdom; their manner of growth to another like the leaves of the flat-leaf cactus seems to link them to the vegetable kingdom. As animals they inhabit the border lines that mysteriously divide the animal, mineral and vegetable kingdoms one from the other.

Our Father in Heaven—a wise creator, a kind benefactor, has placed them just where humanity most needs them as an article of food. Many a hungry fish-man, and wrecked seaman has found in this "ready made" food of nature the means of saving his life when threatened with starvation, the most horrible of deaths.

But suppose we change our diet from oysters to crabs, which are the next best food on the sea-side table. Now there is no sport more enjoyable than catching crabs. We get a cord 8 or 10 feet long and to the end we tie a rock or some heavy substance as a sink. Just above this we fasten a piece of raw meat (fresh beef is best) as a bait, and take a seat on the wharf or gang-way. Very soon creatures which look as if they were all legs will begin to gather around your bait. Just as they begin to take hold, pull your line gently to the surface, stopping the bait just under the water; then, while the greedy crabs are giving all their attention to the bait, take up your little dipnet, place it quietly under the crabs, quickly bring it up and "you've got 'em." Shake them out of the net into your box. Don't fool with them; be careful how you finger about them, for if they get your finger between their jaw-teeth grab claws they will call to your mind the terrible days of the "Spanish inquisition," or completely unfit you for repeating the "golden text" of the last Sunday school lesson. I will venture that the crab can entertain more meanings in less space than any other creature in the universe. No wonder they call him the "devil crab" when served on the supper table.

But on the table he is docile in death, minus his legs he becomes the victim of your appetite. What an exquisite flavor seems to hover round about a "devil" dish of crabs—poetry of the dining room.

The next most popular dish on the sea-side dining table is the shrimp, which, like the crab, belongs to the crustacea division of the animal kingdom. To the non-reader in natural history I would say that the shrimp is "next of kin" to the craw-fish, with the advantage decidedly in favor of the shrimp.

They are caught in nets 2 by 3 feet, fastened to a handle 8 or 10 feet in length. When the tide is high you will see an old fisherman wading along in the surf, sliding his net slowly on the sandy bottom, now and then you will see him lift it from the water take out the little brown creatures, from two to four inches in length, and drop them in to a pouch fastened about his waist; this he continues till low-tide, after which he goes about town selling his shrimp at 20 cents per quart.

The cook then places them in a vessel and pours boiling water over them, then takes off the outer skin, leaving the shrimp a delicate pinkish hue; after this they are dished, and vinegar poured over them. Then the closing act in the shrimp drama, "delightful," "just splendid."

The clam, a species of sea-mussel, is also a highly valued article of food. They are picked up in great quantities along the shore at low-tide, and, when poured out on a floor, they resemble those round rocks on Mulberry and John's river more than any thing I can just now compare them with, rounded on one side, tapering to an edge on the other. Take your knife and split one open, scoop out the "goody,"

eat it and tell me how you like him. I don't suppose you will like the first but perseverance will bring your taste all right.

The sea-siders walk along the shore, pick them up and eat them just as you boomers eat apples. But I must say that I like them best made into soup and eaten with crackers.

The conch-shell is well known even in the mountains. In the spring of the year the conch is taken from his shell and, with him as a kind of a nucleus, a most excellent soup is made, a most popular dish among sea-men with which to begin a dinner.

Then they also catch sea-terrapins, the meat of which, when nicely prepared, is very tender and palatable, a luxury indeed for a hungry aristocrat or day laborer.

Then to change our sport and diet we will take our double-barreled shot guns and, getting into our boat with a stout son of Africa to row us about in the marsh, we will try our hand at bagging a few of the much prized marsh-hens. These are about the size of a half grown chicken and are found in great numbers in the marshes along the coast. We can easily get in gun-shot of them and that explains why a bad marksman killed forty-seven of them in about three hours. When frightened three or four of them will run together. Shoot just as they get together and bag four at one shot. For tenderness, sweetness, and delicacy of flavor the flesh of this bird cannot be excelled.

Gunning for the common duck is also most excellent sport among the marshes and along the streams near the ocean. They are found in abundance.

Thus we have hastily followed the sea-sider in procuring much of his food. While much of it is good, I am not ready to say that I like it as well as I do the food upon which I fed while a boy on the farm in good "old Caldwell." This is a fine country for the sale of "Simmon's Liver Regulator," owing to the fact that the liver needs a stimulant to aid it in digesting these heavy articles of diet. Perhaps in this we may find the reason why eastern men, as a rule, have less brain power than western men; down east it requires all the energies of the body to keep digestion in order, sparing none to develop the mental powers, while in the west, with a better climate and more easily digested food, the brain power gets its needed ratio of the vital energies. Among the masses of the western portion of the State there is a vine of energy, a go-aheadiveness of determination, a sprightliness of thought, that would actually astonish the average down-easter.

Perhaps some might say 'tis not prudent for me to speak thus while my work is down east, but with me truth and patriotism are stronger by far than present motives for silence. I love my native hills and for them my voice shall ever speak. The ardent longing of my heart keeps time with the steady murmurings of those mountain streams.

I'll come again.
HERNDON TUTTLE.

CONCERNING CENSURE OF JURIES.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TOPIC:—Surprised at the article of "one of the jury" in your paper of February 11th, under the above heading, and being a member of the last of the two classes at whom he aims his "barbed arrow" of "solemn oath," namely: "Editors and outsiders," I ask space in your columns to give an "outsider's" opinion of the "law and the evidence" in the now famous trial and verdict of Edward W. Ray.

I agree with "one of the jury" that he was one of twelve men "sworn to give a verdict in accord with the law and the evidence," and being thus solemnly sworn, those twelve men had no moral right to allow their sentimental instincts of mercy to obscure their clear view of justice, not alone to outraged humanity but to the prisoner as well. Nor had they any right or excuse to take such action as should require later explanation, but, without one moment's consideration of the consequences to the prisoner should have returned "a verdict in accordance with the law and the evidence." Did they act in accord with their

"solemn oaths" in returning a verdict only of manslaughter for the killing of Miller? Did they not take heed to the subtle manipulations "of the law and the evidence" by eminent counsel, rather than the evidence of undisputed witnesses, and the applicable law as it fell from the Judge's lips? If the verdict was the result of an impartial weighing of the "law and the evidence" in the case, what was the necessity of rushing into print to explain to "editors and outsiders" the grounds upon which that verdict was built? If that verdict and the jury which rendered it were, like an historical Roman lady, "above suspicion" surely the jury would look more solemnly in resting beneath the mantle of truth, justice and impartiality afforded by their verdict, than in attempting to explain what needed no explanation! When a man begins to explain, "outsiders" begin to think something needs explanation.

"Editors and outsiders" sat that trial through and listened to the evidence, as witness after witness detailed the horrible killing of Miller and young Burleson, and the cowardly shooting of the elder Burleson in the back. Did not the jury also hear this evidence? Perhaps "one of the jury" will tell an "outsider" when, where and by whom these witnesses were contradicted! The only contradictions an "outsider" heard were the eloquent imaginations of eminent counsel "big" with merciful leanings. And this is the "wide range editors and outsiders" have for "forming and expressing their opinions" in this case!

Now for "one of the jury's" few points which he accuses "editors and outsiders" of not considering when forming and expressing their opinions: First, "the difficulty of Saturday before the homicide was compromised, and Miller and Ray were friends!" Indeed! So close and striking was the friendship of the prisoner toward Miller, that he (Ray) considered it vital to his interests that he started Sunday morning to Bakersville, some ten miles distant, to procure the deadly Remington rifle of Anderson, and also, if possible, Anderson himself; and if not him, then his pistol. What extreme anxiety the prisoner manifested that Anderson should be there to witness the friendship between himself and Miller! But if Anderson could not go, then his trusty pistol would help maintain and cement that friendship. "Secondly, that Ray did not go down in that shaft voluntarily, but was knocked in by William Burleson." That is an "outsider's" recollection of this part of the testimony, and to him the necessity which required Burleson to knock Ray into that shaft is one among the worst features of the case against the prisoner, for to "editors and outsiders" that testimony was conclusive that right there and then commenced the scene in that horrible drama which placed Edward Ray on trial for his life for the killing of Miller. "One of the jury" seemed to have lost sight of that portion of the same witness's testimony which explained why Ray was an involuntary visitor in that shaft, and makes an unfair use of a fair legal proposition in favor of Ray, while he forgets to give Miller and Burleson the advantage of the same.

In reply to his paragraph commencing: "Again Judge Gilmer, in his charge to the jury, said, &c." I wish to call "one of the jury's" attention to what is an "outsider's" recollection of one of Judge Gilmer's law propositions, as follows: "In this case, if the prisoner came to the mine and with the strong arm endeavored to drive off the deceased, and began the fight, it is murder, even if he was in danger of losing his life, for he cannot take advantage of his own wrong."

At what point of the trial did the prisoner put upon the stand a witness to contradict Burleson's evidence that the prisoner struck the first blow? If he did strike the first blow, it looks to a common man very like the prisoner commenced the fight. But, Mr. "one of the jury," to an "outsider" the case against the prisoner has other strong points. For instance, "outsiders" seem to think that the prosecution certainly proved that Miller and Buchanan had been in possession of that mine for at least 7 or 8 weeks prior to the prisoner's trespass and tripe crime; also, that the land upon which the mine is opened was

the property of one Col. Bailey, and had been in possession of himself or family for 40 years. Does not this look like the prisoner coming to the mine and, with the strong arm, trying to drive off deceased? Did the prisoner controvert the above facts? No! except by more beautiful allegorical fancies of eloquent counsel. In fact, simple-minded "editors and outsiders" are foolish enough to think that the prisoner, coming from another county "to the mine, and with the strong arm," trying to drive off the rightful owner or occupants, constitutes a sufficiently strong case to have warranted an extreme verdict!

"One of the jury" says further: "Ray's character as a dangerous man was not in question before the jury." Either our author is mistaken or my recollection is at fault in this particular. Certainly James Miller spoke of his reputation as a dangerous man, and even swore how Ray, by force of that very reputation, tried to drive Miller out of the mine by repeating that terrible name, after he found that Miller could not or would not receive and read the paper he (Ray) handed him.

I have tried, Mr. Editor, to present to "one of the jury's" mind a few of the considerations which may have led to the censure of "editors and outsiders" to the verdict under discussion. Men cannot see or act alike in all matters. With "one of the jury," or with the twelve we have no quarrel and no charges to prefer against them. From what we know of that jury, we were led to expect honest, conscientious results, and dreamed of nothing else till we read the explanations of "one of the jury." But when he or any other juror or lawyer denies "editors and outsiders" the right of entertaining their own opinions and expressing them, even the august privilege of criticising the verdicts of juries, this country will have fallen upon evil days; our large oaks will become "Tyburn" trees, whose fruit will be supplied by Judge Lynch, and our society will degenerate into chaos as in a large western city last summer. I would like to have compared two or three other of his propositions with the evidence decided on that trial but enough for this article. I will close by assuming that "editors and outsiders" have as clear a right to form and express opinions, and are generally as competent to judge of "law and evidence," as an average jury of twelve men.

In conclusion I desire to ask "one of the jury" if the remarks of his Honor, Judge Gilmer, in passing sentence upon the prisoner, had no significance to a jury who had just rendered a verdict so vastly different from what he might possibly have been led to expect by the law and the evidence in the case. Judge Gilmer said, "Edward Ray, for several days past I have been impressed with the thought that I should be compelled to pass the extreme sentence of the law upon you. You may congratulate yourself upon having secured a jury who could, conscientiously, find you guilty of only manslaughter, and thus relieve me of the terrible necessity of passing that dread sentence upon you."

Thus it seems not to be very presumptuous to say that the Judge as well as "editors and outsiders" really had "law and evidence" to warrant them in anticipating a different result to the Ray trial.

"OUTSIDER."

What We Find to Appreciate and Deprecate.

MR. EDITOR: We desire to submit some thoughts on our attachment to our native land, which are directed to those who have a disposition to desert the home of their childhood. "Home, yes, that word of all most dear to the youthful heart."

Young man, stop, let us consider whether there is real cause for leaving our dear land. It does seem to me that there is no cause. There are avenues open for efficient laborers. Our resources are to be developed; our people to be educated; our soil to be cultivated. Considering, young man, that efficiency gives room at the top in all callings, and further, that our country is at that point in her history when proficient workers in every sphere are needed, is it not strange that so many of our young and talented youths act so inconsiderately?

Think once, how our forefathers

have borne the inconveniences of life to which they were subjected, to prepare for us a home of peace and plenty. Have we any incentives to labor for our country? Imagine, if you can, the condition of our rural home 50 years or more ago. Compare their encouragements with ours. Mark the contrast. Then, our country was largely in original growth. All resources were undeveloped. With few exceptions, farming was the sole employment, and the veteran farmer who produced 15 to 25 bushels of wheat was accounted successful. He could, with utmost care, have biscuit for breakfast on Sunday morning. Really they were destitute of most of the comforts of life. But space will not permit us to dwell here, suffice it to say there is a great change, and that of advancement.

Now, while we exult in our progress, we should not forget to love and venerate our fathers for the fortitude with which they bore trials for their posterity. By comparing this retrospective view with the present, how marked is the contrast? Then we may ask what makes it? and hear coming along up the silent corridors of bygone years, it is the determined hand of progress. Our country is progressing. Behold! what are those we see standing out on fame's immortal tablets? They are the names of North Carolina's artists, poets, ministers, orators, Statesmen and warriors. Our country is cultivated and teeming with the ambrosial sweets of life. Our farmers are educated and are educating their children. An age of financial prosperity has dawned upon us, but the most consoling thought is the glorious intellectual advance of our age. The transcendent brightness of the sun—intelligence—is beginning to shine in upon us in calm magnificence, its effulgent rays are penetrating the remotest corners; each year adds new stars to the clear serene firmament, whose scintillating orbs still grow more bright and beautiful. May we soon emerge into the moonday. The dark cloud of ignorant and superstitious intuitions are fast receding. Oh! may we soon witness their interment beneath the calm and placid waters of the great ocean of oblivion.

But just here I remember that the brightest day has its succeeding night, "no sweet without its corresponding bitter." Yet, painful to say, there still exists a degree of foggyism, which, in our opinion, deserves severe censure. There are men in the country who should have advancement as their happiest theme that advocate such ideas as these, or rather bring them under the head of resolutions. 1st. That men should furnish their wives and daughters with one calico dress per year and that to be brilliantly spotted. 2nd. That we should have no railroads in our land as they are very injurious, but should hitch two mules to an old wooden axle wagon, swing on a bucket of tar, and travel 24 days on a trip to Columbia or Charleston, feed six bushels of corn and 20 dozen bundles of fodder, besides their rations and whiskey bill, and there purchase our luxuries, and further, that the supply must not exceed one dollar's worth each of sugar and coffee, and five gallons of molasses, for they were better than now. 3rd. That every man should be allowed to make all the brandy and whiskey he desires, and learn his boys all to drink it, because those who get a taste of the damnable stuff are not half so apt to make drunkards.

The same class have resolved furthermore, that all commercial fertilizers, machinery and improved agricultural implements are a nuisance and should be discarded. All agents laboring in such interest are, to say the least, intruders, and should at once be excommunicated. Such opinions we have heard expressed by men who have reared families, and as boys are likely to inherit the temperaments of the father, we may yet expect trouble.

Youths, be on your guard. Head not such instruction. The youth who becomes addicted to regular dram drinking is, nine times out of ten, a drunkard in the same sense that a pig is a hog, just as soon as he can grow to it. Remember that such ideas as those taught by this near sighted sect, are derogatory to character and prosperity, and seriously dangerous to the ultimate end of life. Let the rising generation become attached to home, fall into line with the already great army of combatants, and ere long we shall have felled the dread monster and come off more than conquerors.

Ja.

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