

## The Oyster Panic.

It is a solemn time, when men refuse to eat oysters on invitation. It is not simply the abstinence from a most delicious and—to save our lives we cannot doubt it—wholesome food, that gives it the solemn aspect, so much as the dreary thoughts that will in and out while one declines to touch the proffered delicacy. How doleful the saloons seemed yesterday! At all great dinners the absence of one accustomed dish acted like a skeleton at the feast—nipping budding jokes, tempering cross humors, solemnizing men who hate to be serious.

Now, the ground of all this panic is a rumor that there is a sickness caused by eating oysters prevalent, and that it has caused five deaths. The more we follow up these rumored cases of sickness, the less definite they seem. We are unable to get facts enough out from behind the rumors to justify any panic at all. Then, as to the deaths, they are not much better proven upon the oysters. In the case of Mr. FOSTER, a brother of the deceased furnishes some facts which certainly tend to show that they had very little to do with his case. He was not well for several days prior to Saturday last. Saturday night he ate oysters. At 2 o'clock Monday night [Tuesday morning?] he died. The oysters may have increased his trouble,—they may have done that if they were perfectly sound and fresh. Toast might have done it, or a plate of rice. It strikes us as curious that they should have been charged as the cause of Mr. FOSTER's death, though they may have been the innocent occasion of it. Possibly the facts of the other cases might, if published, show as ungrounded a charge as this.

Thousands of oysters were eaten last week and until Wednesday night. We hear, however, of no new cases of sickness from them. The oystermen in their idleness eat them and grow fat. We, feeling a philanthropic, CURTIUS-like willingness to give the world the benefit of our experience, tried at the very first of the panic, a plate of "raw on the half-shell." They tasted—we have no words to express our sense of that. We do not remember feeling any unpleasant sensations in consequence; or if we did, we charged it to the hearty supper taken rather unseasonably directly afterwards. We do not fear to let our family try our own experiment. We may be sacrificed—we hope not. The cases that alarmed us in common with the public do not stand examination well. The doctors that we consult do not protest or give a reason for abstinence. We suspect that the storm is about blown over, and that we shall soon take our oysters to our hearts again, as ever.