

NYE AS AN ANGLER

His Piscatorial Experience at Ticktown.

WILLIAM DESIRES A BOARDER

With Lung Difficulty and a Couple of Blankets—How Ticktown Looks and How It is Reached.

TICKTOWN, N. C.

Ticktown, N. C., fifty years ago had never been thought of as a summer resort, yet even then it was considered remarkably healthy, and the vital statistics showed that no one had ever died there except poor people, and death can hardly be regarded as a calamity to people who have no means.



NYE LANDS A CARRP.

Forty-eight years ago Colonel (now General) West, of Cass Creek, this state, visited Ticktown while on an equestrian trip around his justly celebrated trick mule Mary, and was delighted to notice how hungry he was on arriving there, and also how much more so he was when he came away.

He also detected what the other citizens had not before noticed, as there were no scumlike fumes rising in Ticktown, that the place had a usual rainfall and a view of Pisgah and the Rat. These facts, together with the appetite he acquired while there, led him to consider the feasibility of making Ticktown a Mecca for the invalid. Here, said he, wealthy men who have no appetite may come and get mighty hungry, if they stay long enough.

That was only forty-eight years ago, or near that. In fact, last Christmas they tell me was forty-eight years ago. The governor, in speaking of it to me the other day, said that it struck him that was a good while between Christmases, but we will let that pass.

The altitude of Pisgah, which may be seen from the hill just back of Ticktown, is 5,737 feet.

Craggy mountain, which may be seen from the top of Pisgah, is 6,000 feet high. From the top of this mountain one may see Mount Mitchell, which is 6,717 feet high, and from the top of Mount Mitchell one may see Mr. George W. Vanderbilt's magnificent place with a powerful glass; also what his idea was in building same.

The best way to visit Ticktown is by diligence from Asheville, N. C. You will arrive there about noon. Then by the time you can gather your strawberries and catch a cow you will be right hungry. No place can furnish such an appetite with so few facilities for quenching it as Ticktown.

The French Broad river is only a short drive from Ticktown, and furnishes rare sport during the fishing season. All sorts of game fish, such as the red horse, the hog sucker, the stone toter and the maltese cutfish are abundant in the French Broad, and are caught with a club or dynamite when the grand jury is not in session. These fish are all rich and nourishing, especially when put on a cucumber bed.

The German carp is also to be found here in great abundance, and seven of the mamma carp on a pleasant summer night will easily lay eggs enough to stop navigation. With them it seems to be a sort of gift.

The sportsman during the carp season provides himself with a twig with which to scare her off the nest and then a sled stake with which to take her life. It is very exciting. You also take along a small colored boy. It is his duty every time you land a fish to burn a rag.

The hog sucker, or stone toter, as it is also called by ornithologists, is so called because it has a flat place on the head on which to carry stones for the purpose of building wing dams for a nest. Some call him the free and accepted mason, because he lays such a beautiful wall around his nest. The stone toter makes good eating, but does not resist around like the trout of the back. I have caught everything most, but nothing that reminds me of the stone toter. Catching him reminds me more of catching the mumps than anything else.

The hog sucker is so called because he has been very often fed to the hog. But the native or Sarah Bernhardt hog will not eat the hog sucker. Only the northern hog does it. He says: "Oh, how lovely! Isn't it nice to look at Mount Pisgah and eat hog suckers? And it makes one feel so all filled well and so vigorous too. I could live here forever if I could just smell the magnolia and eat the hog sucker."

But the native or Goldsmith Maid hog says nothing, but says wood. He fills himself up on acorns and such things, takes a turn or two around a kite shaped track, sleeps an hour, eats a bunch of corn on the ear, goes over to the depot and eats the packing out of a couple of sleeping cars, trains an hour or two to keep his flesh down and then goes to bed. In this way he becomes a favorite with the life insurance companies while the northern hog dies soon of heart failure, and early in November you will see him with a chip in his mouth and another holding his chest open so that you can see the nice hard flaps on the inside of his thorax.

There is another fish that one finds in the French Broad river, called the Pride of Pisgah, I think. It has legs on it, and when a man catches one he throws down his pole, gives two blood curdling shrieks and hurries for a Kenley harness. The representative of my farm told me that he caught one a few weeks ago and didn't feel like working for two or three days after that. The mouth was made at a time when it was thought there was going to be more material than there really was, and so the body is slight and the legs are badly bowed from trying to carry the mouth around in search of more things to eat.

What Ticktown needs is a good hotel. At present it is sadly deficient in hotels; also everything else. But a good hotel is needed first. Also a large, powerful, urbane man to stop people who unconsciously pass through the town and never come back.

It is quiet. It is only two miles from the main road and only fourteen miles from Plum Level's View. Good neighbors can always be found by coming to my place. Street cars are contemplated also by a man who has been that way ever since he fell out of a hammock that was hung on his piazza in the fall of 1871 by a son-in-law who then lived in Michigan, but who has since moved to Oakland, Cal., to open a dental office, according to a local paper published in the interests of the trade at \$3.50 per year, with the understanding that it is to be paid for in advance or as soon thereafter as may be, though this is no way to publish a paper, as Isaiah so truly said, for the laborer is indeed worthy of his hire, and this is found to be the case especially among workmen, and in the language of Dr. Bartle, speaking of the Alliance itself, and especially of Euripides, where he tells of Antisthenes, who was one day working in the new lot back of the M. E. church with a pair of restless steers and a quarterly meeting going on at the time, so that he could not address the steers as he would have liked, and the piece being a trifle rocky, as also was Antisthenes, and the briers having awashed his bare legs below the toga, which did not amount to much anyhow. "And what are you driving at?" says Euripides, who had just got a poem into a Greek magazine with the understanding that it was to be paid for as soon as it was published, if nothing happened, and to be used anyway in case of his death, so he was feeling pretty well. "Driving at?" says Antisthenes; "I am driving at those pesky steers and doing a little more work to get a little more money to buy a little more food to give me a little more strength so that I can do a little more work and get a little more money to get me a little more food to give me a little more strength so that I—"

Dr. Bartle says that he and the ladies both came away and left the out man sitting on the plow beam vaselineing his brier boswatted limbs and going over and over in the midst of his quaking beard with this same old, old grievance, which is bothering every workman today, dear reader, you and I and all of us, and no member of congress can help us out of it. No Republican or Democratic platform or hoarse campaign resolves can take this mighty burden from our aching shoulders. Only God's kindly hand, when the day is done and the drowsy crickets review the beautiful torchlight procession of fireflies, can with gentle touch take off the heavy, galling burden that he put there when the world began, when every man was told to eat with one hand and wipe his brow with the other.

Is it not so? And yet Ticktown, as I was saying, is free from malaria. Sewer gas and civilization are unknown here except among the better classes, and as the promoters have removed all fatal cases to another county early the death rate is low. Capital and a bag of flour are all that we need here now to make things lively. Buckwheat flour would be best.

Ticktown is the home of the red bug, which has recently become such an industry here. If time should be hanging heavily on your hands this summer, sit down on an old log at the corner of Soudan and Coon streets, where the site for the new opera house is patiently waiting for the capitalist, and after an hour or so of gentle thought you will



THE RED BUG.

think of something, and it will not be what you come there to think of, it will be something else. It will jog your memory, and you will find when it is too late that memory is not where you thought it was.

The red bug was the very first white child born in Ticktown. He could tell us some strange tales, I wot, if he would, of northern people with whom he has associated—the young, the fair, the aged and the venerable—but he has spared none of them. The young, the joyous and the gay, the crumbling wreck of former grandeur, he has speckled them all.

He lives in old logs that are a little soggy and still have the bark on them, but he does not live on the same. He lives on the health sector from Boston, Charleston and Tompkinsville, S. I. He buries all past differences and every day is Decoration Day with him. I wish you could have seen me yesterday evening, but possibly you might not care to. I was as spotted as a trout, and I felt like leaning up against a tree and rubbing the bark off the tree by means of myself.

The red bug was made for a purpose, but I wish I had a dollar for every time I have wondered what that purpose was. Still I suppose that the finite should not seek to sneak under the great tent to learn the purposes of creation or get into the infinite, as Sam Jones was so truly saying the other day when he saved quite a number of souls and turned away money besides. Ticktown is a little quiet at Ticktown this season, owing to low prices in both cotton and coal; hence and Bas. Yankees are many of them going to Bas Harbor, hoping to see Mr. Blaine's place, while the growth from the north have not yet arrived for the summer at any of the mountain resorts.

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arrived for the summer at any of the mountain resorts. What we need at Ticktown is really capital and a sack of flour. There is no race feeling here at all. Though the town is entirely settled by colored people, the white race is cordially invited to come and settle here. A hotel with a poste cochiere and printed menu is very much needed here; also a horse team to do odd jobs about town.

A good live paper could be started here in connection with the regular bill of fare at the hotel.

Most any one around here can tell you where Ticktown is. It is a pleasant ride from Ebenezer to Ticktown past Potato Hill. It is also pleasant to ride back again. Ebenezer consists of an old church with a thrifty graveyard annex. It is a quiet place.

Possibly the reader has doubts about the existence of Ebenezer and Ticktown, but if he had faith like a mustard plaster or would drive out here for a day he would find that they are to be seen with no great difficulty, together with some bound dogs who will betray considerable pleasurable emotion when he heaves in sight.

Last year a man talked of starting an ox yoke industry at Ticktown, but he had to go home to Fort Dodge, Ia., and is doing time now in that state.

There was some agitation here also eight years ago about having the county seat at this place, but owing to the red bugs the legislature said it would hurt the place as a county seat, so it was abandoned.

Corn is looking a little pallid, but root crops are doing very well, and with good growing weather in July and a couple of boarders I shall make my farm almost self sustaining this year. I am trying a little patch of cotton this year—three quarters of an acre. You have doubtless heard of the cotton belt. I want to have one myself, if possible, raised right here on the place. I haven't worn one since I was a child.

The Richmond and Danville runs near my place, and is a good road. I have been trying to sell it the right of way over my farm so that I could tell one of my boarders to pack his stuff and go elsewhere, but the road says that a right of way over my place would lengthen the line eight miles, and it is feared also that I would drive my feeblest stock on the track to get killed.

A good steady boarder with lung difficulty and a couple of blankets of his own could find a pleasant home at my house, with most on the table whenever we butcher.

*Bill Nye*

P. S.—The climate here is like that of Turin. People who have them sleep under blankets the year round. In that way they get a good deal of rest.

B. N.

An Echo from Mississippi.

"Say, Bones, I send a man makin' garden plittin', an' what do you p'pose he's g'oin' ter raise?"

"Oh H. U. P."

"Plittin'."

"No!"

"You sah, 'kase he was plittin' bird-seed!"—Harper's Bazar.

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