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BY L. V. BLUM.

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[From the Fayetteville Observer.]

THE PUBLIC DOMAIN.

[Concluded.]

I endeavored in my last to exhibit to our people the great value of the Public Lands. I was induced to do so by a desire to meet a common objection ("that they are of no value, that the expense of survey is more than they sell for.")

It is very probable that in a few localities the money received by the Government did not meet the expense of location and sale, for who does not remember the enormous robberies committed in some of the Land offices in Mississippi and elsewhere by the Boyds, the Hawkins and many others to the amount of near a million of dollars, and in what suppliant terms Mr. Woodbury, (then at the head of the Treasury Department) implored them to pay in; and how after filling himself to repletion out of the land sales, graciously resigned and recommended, with unblushing effrontery his successor to the office, the only qualification stated in his behalf being that he was his bosom friend and one of the pillars of the Party. But there is still another reason why it should be understood—to induce immediate action; the Land States already possess great power in the Legislation of the country, and this power is increasing with alarming rapidity. The Territories of Minnesota, Oregon, Nebraska, Washington, New Mexico, Utah and Kansas contain, according to compendium of the Census for 1850, 1,400,984 square miles, or 896,168,780 acres; and the total area of all the States and Territories belonging to the Union is 2,936,166 square miles, it follows that they contain nearly one half of the whole area of the United States. They run through 18 degrees of latitude, and embrace many millions of acres of the finest land, the richest mineral deposits, the finest climate and noblest rivers in the world.

When these vast Territories shall be filled up with population—as they certainly will be—in vain shall we knock at the door of Congress (and they give us timely notice) for our just rights to this rich inheritance of our fathers.

Having disposed of the two first branches of the subject, I proceed now to investigate the Title, to enquire into the rights of the States in the property in the lands, and the duty of the American Congress in the disposition and management thereof. In prosecution of this investigation as in all others of a similar character, we must look first into the instrument of conveyance, the paper writing, setting forth the transfer and the intention and purposes of the party conveying.

Now it has been already stated that the property in a large portion of these lands was at the period of the Revolution, in a part of the original 13 States, that for reasons heretofore stated, it was agreed that in the event of a successful termination of the War, the whole estate should become a common property, for the joint use and benefit of every member of the Confederation.

In pursuance of this agreement, the Land States ceded their property in the lands within their chartered limits, in the form and manner contained in the following Decree of Cession, viz: That all the Lands within the Territories so ceded to the United States, and not otherwise disposed of, shall be considered as common fund, for the use and benefit of such of the United States, as have become, or shall become members of the Confederation or Federal Alliance of the said States, Virginia, or New York, or North Carolina inclusive, according to their usual respective proportions of the general charge and expenditure, and shall be faithfully and bona fide disposed of for that purpose and for no other use or purpose whatsoever. We see here that the Congress of the United States is made a Trustee for the several States, by the legal and technical words, which not only supply, but absolutely create a trust. It was certainly not intended for the States in their confederated character—if it had been the Deed would have stopped at the words United States, but when the State ceding goes on to specify itself by name, and to state the measure and manner for the division of the common fund, it was certainly her intention to distribute it to her sister States respectively, according to the charge and expenditure incurred by each, during the arduous and bloody struggle by which the Title was secured.

But there is a point of view, in which the question may be placed, which to my mind is perfectly conclusive. The States, at that time, were under the articles of Confederation. The present Constitution was not adopted until '89—now under these, the Congress had no power to raise money, but through the State Legislature; each State was independent of the other, and there was no common Treasury, state only

for the purposes of the war—no general charge and expenditure, but for this special purpose. To this state of things existing at the time of the execution of the Deed, must their provisions necessarily apply. The Terms "general charge and expenditure," evidently refer to the means furnished by each State, for prosecuting the war, and just in proportion to the means furnished, was it the intention of the parties to the Deeds that the Lands should be partitioned between the several States, and I would simply say, had the States continued under the articles of Confederation to the present time, whether any other objection could have been placed upon the language of the Deeds than that, the Lands or their proceeds should be divided between the several States, under the above ratio of distribution.

This view of the subject I apprehend must be conclusive, unless it can be shown, that the change of Government upon the adoption of the Federal Constitution, has conferred upon the General Government a title to those lands, paramount to that conferred upon the States, under the Articles of Confederation.

But this cannot be—because it was a compact entered into previous to the adoption of the Constitution, and was referred to, and made binding by that instrument.

The 1st Section of the 6th Article, is in these words: "All debts contracted and engagements entered into before the adoption of this Constitution, shall be as valid against the United States, under the Constitution as they were under the Confederation." And again, in the 3d Section of the 4th Article, it is declared, "That Congress shall have power to dispose of, and make all needful rules and regulations, respecting the Territory, and other property belonging to the United States. And nothing in this Constitution shall be so construed as to prejudice any claims of the United States or of any particular State."

The order in which these articles of the Constitution stand, is I think, a strong evidence, that they were inserted to protect the States in the property of the Lands, for while in the 4th Article, power is given to Congress to dispose of the Lands, with proper security for the rights of each State, the 6th Article is inserted to protect the State in the due observance of all contracts entered into under the Articles of Confederation. So far then from the terms of the Confederation of 1778, being weakened, or the compact as relates to the Public Lands, being abrogated, they appear to be confirmed by a recognition of the claims of the States, and the insertion of every provision in the new instrument, necessary to carry into full effect the understanding which existed between them at the former period.

Such is the tenure by which the States hold all the Lands North of the 31st degree of latitude and East of the Mississippi River, with the exception of Georgia, whose deed of Cession bears date after the adoption of the Federal Constitution, but in, in other respects, in exact agreement with the deeds already considered.

As to the Lands lying within the original bounds of the purchase of Louisiana and Florida, together with those owned by the Indians within the limits of several of the States, they were acquired by purchase, and our right to apply them, rests upon different grounds. This true we have no compact concerning them, nor any Constitutional provision for the disposal of them in any manner, nor can any article be found in the Constitution authorizing the purchase—but it is certainly reasonable and just, that where a large extent of Territory is added to that already belonging to the United States, it ought to be subjected to the same Constitutional provision and principles of law, which governed in the disposition and management of the Lands which were held at the formation of the Constitution. But again, the purchase money for Louisiana and Florida has been paid out of the fund accruing from the Land Sales, as will appear by reference to every statement made on the subject by the Secretary of the Treasury. If then, the proceeds of the Public Lands, the property of the States respectively, has been applied to the purchase of other Lands, it follows by the common principles of equity, that the Lands so acquired, should be subjected to the same rules of distribution which applied to the original subject out of which the payments were made.

It is objected to carrying out the original compact between the States for an equal participation in the property of the public land, upon Constitutional grounds. I think the fallacy of this objection has been fully shown by the reference to the Constitution which has been already made—and the view then taken is confirmed by the opinions of the Supreme Court and the ablest Jurists known to the country.

Judge Marshall, the most eminent constitutional authority, in a letter to Mr. Clay in 1832—soon after his celebrated report on the public lands—writes as follows: "My sentiments concur entirely with those contained in the report which was so clearly and so well expressed. That it must, I think, be approved by a great majority of Congress—unanimity cannot be expected in anything."

For the decision of the Supreme Court, in the case of Jackson vs. Clark—see 1st Peters's Abridged Edition, page 634.

Mr. Buchanan, the present President of the United States, in speaking on this subject, said: "Now, sir, a distribution of the proceeds of the sale of the public lands among the States, would remedy all these evils, and correct all those anomalies of our system. If it would seem to be a settled policy on which the country might rely: It would drive off from the General Government this eccentric source of revenue and distribute it among the States. We would then be left where the Constitution intended to place us; the Government would be administered on its original principles." These were the views of Mr. Buchanan, and endorsed by him together with Messrs. River, Tallmadge and Niles—and Hendricks, Hubbard and King—and many other members of the Democratic party, in 1836, on Mr. Clay's bill for dividing the surplus revenue. The Bill passed the Senate by a vote of 39 to 6, where it was introduced by Mr. Calhoun, and was afterwards approved by Gen. Jackson, and became the law of the land.

The present Governor of Virginia, in his famous Louisiana speech, says: "To enable the States to enter upon the

system?" (he is speaking of Internal Improvement) "fully and effectually, Mr. Clay proposes his great Land Bill. Great, I say, for all the old States especially, without injustice or injury to the new. To distribute the proceeds of the public lands among all the States, to be applied by them as they see proper, to all the great objects of moral and physical improvement—a measure which assures equal benefits to all the States, and benefits not to be calculated in extent or value, without the least violence to the Constitution, and in exact conformity to the patriotic grant of Virginia of this heritage of domain for the common benefit of the Union."

But why multiply authorities? The constant practice of the American Congress in disposing of the lands to the favored States, proves clearly the constitutionality of distribution, or an utter disregard of its provisions by the representatives of the people.

I proceed, in conclusion, to exhibit the unjust and inequitable policy which has prevailed in the disposition of this magnificent property.—To further the views and accomplish the purposes of unscrupulous and ambitious politicians, every expedient has been used, every subterfuge resorted to. When on the eve of a Presidential election it has been deemed important to a party triumph to cede immense tracts of the public land to the Western and North Western States, the pretended constitutional objection was at first overcome. By clothing the improvement for which the appropriation was asked with the attributes of a national road, or highway, and the necessary connection with other roads, or water communications, canals, lakes, or rivers, was easily discovered to quiet tender consciences.

Again, it was pretended, that they possessed no right to grant these lands on any other ground than that it would enhance the value of the Public Domain—assuming and urging that they possessed the power of a private landholder in making improvements over a part of it in order to enhance the value of the remainder. So hard run were the sticklers for a strict construction of the powers of Congress over the Public Domain, that they had to plant themselves on that principle to justify their votes for those donations; but they would make no grants to States which had no public lands. That this was an argument for the occasion and entirely meant for Buncombe, is evident from the fact that it was well known to the friends of the measure that private enterprise was ready and quite able to push the road through the prairies which it was important to penetrate; and from the further fact that these parallel roads were constructed clearly not for the purpose of enhancing the value of the public land, but in order to enable the State, then so large a participant of the liberality of Congress, to locate the sections of the grant upon the most fertile lands, leaving the poorer for the use of its generous but unjust benefactor. When I say unjust benefactor, I am reminded of a fact which, I think, should arrest the attention of the people of our State.

By a grant of the public land to the State of Florida, that State was enabled to raise a fund for the construction of her railroads and the establishment of her public schools. She desired to make a permanent investment thereof, and very wisely purchased North Carolina bonds. I do not censure that State in the transaction; but desire to call the attention of our people to the fact, that with funds acquired from the sale of lands in which they have an interest in common with her schools, by the interest on the Bonds of our State, based upon its property and to be finally paid by a tax on her people.

Again, it is objected as inconsistent with the dignity and with the right of sovereignty of any State that a foreign Government (as this Government was denominated by them,) should have the control and disposition of the soil within its limits. And this abstraction of the States Rights party led at one time to an elaborate discussion on the floors of Congress upon the expediency of granting the whole of the lands to the States in which they lie.

Another fraud practiced in disposing of the Public Domain, was in a grant of forty two millions of acres of Swamp Lands to the States, in which they lie, upon the pretext that they were valueless without draining, and that this could not be done by the Congress of the States. Now it turns out that these grants contain some of the richest and most valuable lands on the Mississippi and other streams where the locations have been made.

But a further objection urged is, that it is unjust to the land States, that the unappropriated lands should be exempt from taxation.—And I have seen this objection to an equal distribution recently urged in some of our public journals. Now, all I have to say to the editors of such papers is, that they ought to have known, and, if they did know, should have stated, that five per centum of the sales is allowed to the States in which the lands lie; and besides this, I am unable to discover a semblance of wrong in the matter, and especially when the unbounded munificence of the trustee to the party supposed to be aggrieved is considered.

A further objection is, that it is anti Democratic. Anti Democratic? Does not the very term premean a government of the people—a government where the people are supreme—a government dispensing benefits and privileges alike to all, and doing justice to all? How can it be anti Democratic, then, to divide equally between all the people of every member of the whole family of States, an immense domain acquired by the united effort, the common blood and treasure of all? It must be right and just and reasonable. The leaders know it to be so—and, being unable to sustain the opposite by argument, they resort to the prejudices of the people and denounce the measure as a Whig or Know Nothing expedient to get into power. Such are some of the objections (I cannot say reasons) to a just distribution of the magnificent property of the Public Domain among all the States. They may be all readily summed up in the one great summary—The population, and, consequently, the power, being rapidly transferred from the old to the new States. The politicians know it—they want the vote of the States west of the mountains. The States want the lands; the arrangement is made, and both parties are satisfied. But our people are defrauded, and thus far seem content to have it so.

Let me implore them as one of their number to wake up to their true interest. To look through the prejudice which obscures their perception of the truth; to investigate the subject with the care and scrutiny its importance demands; and assert and secure their just rights.

I have endeavored to set forth a history of the Public Domain; its value; the title of the several States to a common property in the vast estate; and the gross injustice which has been practiced by the trustee (the Congress of the United States) in the management and disposition of the same, entrusted to it by the compact between the original States.

I now proceed to speak of the advantages which would result to the old States, and especially to North Carolina, by a just and equitable division of the lands themselves in the proceeds of the sales thereof, on the terms of the agreement, by which they were ceded to the States. We possess immense resources requiring development, and completing those already projected and in progress; and the State, I think, with her present means, will not be able to complete even the latter. Our people, I believe, are not aware of the vast resources within their own limits, and are, consequently, insensible to the great benefits we should experience from the adoption of such means as would render them available. Who can estimate the amount of prosperity which would follow from the shipment of half a million tons of coal and a like amount of iron from one of our own ports? How the depreciation of our currency would be corrected, and how the specie basis would be transferred from the bags of unproductive coin in our vaults to the rich beds of iron and coal so abundant in the bosom of our extensive territory! The resources of the forest, too, if rendered available by increased facilities of internal transportation would swell our exports. Thousands of acres of the finest white oak that now invite the industry of the lumberman, are in a state of primitive integrity! Incentives would be furnished to agricultural pursuits, and our rich and beautiful mountains, now uncropped by any kind of domestic cattle, would furnish sheep walks and advantages for wool growing, unsurpassed by Saxony or England! The facility of obtaining the different fertilizers is not one of the least elements of wealth furnished by increased facility of internal communications—and the increased productiveness of the soil resulting therefrom, would directly react, by furnishing a corresponding increase to the business of the road.

Obstacles of an extraordinary character hinder and retard our progress in the works of internal improvement in the State. Geographical dignities create a diversity of interests and disturb the harmony of our people. Formerly the people of the East had more of the material power for improvement, but possessing all ready every facility for carrying their products to the market, were averse to heavy outlays for the general benefit, so that the necessity was on one side of the State—the power to remedy it on the other. Now, a great advantage of facility of internal communication will be, to bring our people more frequently together—thereby acquainting them with each other's wants, and strengthening the social tie, make them essentially one people.

But another and not less important benefit derivable from the possession of this rich inheritance, would be the increase of our school fund. This, though at present very respectable is by no means commensurate to the wants of our people. Our Territory is too extensive, and our population too sparse, to be properly furnished with a system of popular instruction from the means now at our command. I desire to see, (and if we could obtain our just rights, we might all see,) a respectable school house within convenient distance of every dwelling within the limits of the State. And why have we not already gotten at least a portion of this ample heritage? It is because we will not. The vote of the representation from the State would have carried one of the bills lately before Congress for this purpose. Other States send delegations to Congress who advocate distribution, or deposit, or donation, by which they get the land or the money. Their schools are established—their children are educated—their public works constructed. Nor is this all. In some instances a sufficient surplus remains, (as has been already shown,) after such purposes are accomplished, to receive a fund large enough to defray the expenses of the State Government in all after time.

I cannot conclude the subject of these numbers (perhaps already too much extended,) without exhibiting a synopsis of the land sold from the opening of the Land Office to January 1856, together with the number of acres given to some of the States, and the quantity still on hand, and, consequently, the property of all the States. The statement is derived from sources entirely reliable—the Census and other public documents.

The quantity sold is	135,719,675 acres.
Do. given to States,	92,611,626 do.
Do. remaining unsold	1,887,934,001 do.

This is a vast estate—so enormous as almost to stagger the credulity of our people; but if official statements can be trusted, and figures do not deceive, it must be correct. Now let us suppose that the good old State had obtained her just portion of the common heritage, past, present, and prospective—what would be her present condition, and her future bright visions of prosperity? Her works of internal improvement would have been completed; her primary schools multiplied and improved; and she would have been without a debt. I think it will be conceded that these desirable objects cannot be reached with the present means of our people. The debt of the State already exceeds nine millions of dollars, and the annual tax, collected from them is about half a million. They feel and complain of the burthen, but probably will not consent to the increase which will be necessary to finish our works now in progress. Shall we stop there, then, and content to be called laggards in the progress of the States by which we are surrounded; and suffer them to reap the rich harvest which the God of Heaven has placed within our reach? Or shall we not rather exert our just claim to this rich inheritance of our fathers, and by a judicious application of the proceeds

to the requirements of our people, elevate our good old mother to a position among the sisters of the Confederacy, to which her early history and the character of her founders so eminently entitle her? JUSTICE.

Galphinius.

The cry of "Galphinius" has been long considered a sufficient reply to any complaint against the extravagance and corruption of Democratic Administrations. It has been used with great effect against the opposition, because what was known as the "Galphin Claim" was allowed during the Whig Administration of President Taylor.

We append the speeches of Mr. Toombs, a Democratic Senator from Georgia, and of Mr. Hammond, Democratic Senator from South Carolina, copied from the Congressional Globe of the 18th ult. According to them the Galphin claim was right, honorable, and just, and Gen. Taylor's Administration was honor bound to pay it. Not a Democratic Senator rose to maintain the accusation of fraud, though for years past it has been a favorite topic for declamation in the Senate and on the stump. Perhaps the reason may be, that every public man suspected of shaming in that alleged swindle is now (as we believe) a leading Democrat: Mr. Doollittle, a Wisconsin freeholder, in an angry speech intimated that Mr. Toombs was implicated in the Galphin swindle. After some personal remarks, Mr. Toombs replied:—

"So far as the claim of George Galphin for revolutionary services was concerned, I say that it received a unanimous vote in the House of Representatives. There are many members upon this floor who sat as members in that House with me and voted that it was right; and the denouncers of it were miserable slanderers and cowards. The gentleman contended with it was every way one of the most honorable men in the Republic; and I undertake to say that he who assails the justice of it or the motives of my friend, then Secretary of War, cannot maintain as a gentleman what he will say as a Senator. That is all I intend to say on that point. I have said before, that claim received, so far as I know, the unanimous support of the Senate again and again; when it passed, it received the unanimous support of the other House, and the signature of the President of the United States; it was a just claim, founded upon revolutionary service. That it was assailed in the newspapers is true; but it seems that Senator now does not choose to intimate or know on what point the clamor was made upon the allowance of interest by the Secretary of the Treasury of the United States, at the instance of another distinguished friend of mine, then a member of General Taylor's administration—the Hon. Beverly Johnson. The complaint was as to the departmental decision allowing interest. The integrity and validity of the claim have never been assailed in my judgment, by anybody.

When that interest was allowed, I defended it in the House of Representatives, and I defend it here. I know that the then Secretary of War came to the House of Representatives, and demanded that the question should be referred to the Supreme Court of the United States, pledging himself to refund the money if the decision was not affirmed by the highest tribunal of his country; and a partisan majority in this House put it down. I suppose the gentleman got his information from his allies; and I dare say millions of dollars have been stolen in this country under the cry of Galphinius. It is the common cry when there is a desire to plunder the public Treasury. I will give a brief statement of the case now to refresh the public mind.

George Galphin was an Indian trader in the State of South Carolina. He bought from the Indians, with seven other traders, a large tract of land. The amount of his debt, \$3,000, was audited by Governor Wright, at the commencement of the Revolution. The British Government was to sell the lands and to pay the trader's debts. There never was any dispute any where about this debt. It went from Congress to the Legislature of Georgia, and from there here, the dispute being who should pay—Georgia said the United States ought to pay; the United States said Georgia. Georgia said she never used the fund; and the land had been used in the particular defense and in the general defense of the United States. This man, being a friend of the Revolution, called upon his own Government. The other seven traders were Loyalists; they went to the British Parliament and were paid. I hold that the Government of the United States were bound to pay the money, as they had, in 1779 assumed the debts of all the States incurred for the general or the particular defense. The Honorable George McDuffie, of South Carolina reported the bill in this body, and the Senate passed it year after year. It came to the House of Representatives and there I was its ready defender. It went to the Judiciary Committee, of which the Hon. Joseph B. Ingalls of Pennsylvania, was chairman, and that committee reported unanimously in favor of the bill and it passed the House unanimously, as will be recollected by the Senator from Arkansas, who was then a member of the other House, and who was present on the occasion. When General Taylor came in, the question whether it should draw interest according to the act of 1832, as all such claims did, was referred by the then Secretary of the Treasury, Mr. Meredith, of Pennsylvania, who now, I believe, belongs to the Republican platoon, to Hon. Beverly Johnson, a friend of mine then and now, as noble and true a man as lives on the face of the earth, who had been a country lawyer years before he came there, and, without the least knowledge of who the parties concerned were, decided that the interest was due. That is the history of Galphinius.

The cry I know has been the common shibboleth of party newspapers, but I did not expect to see it in the Senate uttered from a gentleman who knew enough about the claim to point out what was wrong in it, when it related public principles. I voted for it, and I glory in it as an act of justice and right, not to my own constituents, but to the constituents of my honorable friend from South Carolina, Doctor Galphin, the executor, in whom the money was paid, lived in North Carolina, and it may be that some of the honorable members here (Georgia) that were a just debt,

part of the price of the Revolution, was unanimously decided by the Senate and House of Representatives, and approved by the President, and honestly decided by the Secretary of the Treasury and Attorney General of the United States. No man, I think, is prepared to controvert it—at least I am ready to take issue with any that does. I repeat that whoever alludes to it by way of imputation, loses his privilege as a Senator to say what he is not ready to maintain outside.

Mr. Hammond. I merely wish to say, as this subject is referred to, that some twenty odd years ago this claim was put in my charge as a member of the other House, and I investigated it thoroughly. Knowing the nature of the Galphin claim, and being acquainted with all the parties, I endorse entirely everything that has been said by the honorable Senator from Georgia in regard to it.

A Singular Adventure.

Last evening Dr. Vinton preached an eloquent discourse to the young men of this city in St. Paul's. The church was well filled, by an attentive audience of young gentlemen; a few ladies also graced the occasion with their presence. The discourse was particularly addressed to young men, and the temptations to which youth are exposed were forcibly set forth.

Many of the young men lingered upon the broad steps, at the long congregation, with thoughtful minds and softened hearts, left the stately edifice.

Among the congregation was a young woman of some twenty years, who was fashionably costumed, in half mourning. As she passed out of the gate into the broad street in front of the church, she (accidentally) dropped a glove, and appeared to be weeping. A white handkerchief was held to her eyes, as she gracefully passed along. A young man, who had heard the discourse of Dr. Vinton, was standing near the gate when the glove was dropped, and the article which in former times, was a challenge to brave deeds, fell directly upon his patent leathers.

The young man at once secured the glove and hastened to restore it to its owner. The glove was received, and a kind word of thanks given in return. A glittering tear lingered in the black eye of the recipient, and she said she was so overcome by the discourse of the speaker that she scarcely knew what she did. Her tears then flowed more hopefully than ever. The young man, who had also been visibly affected by the same discourse, deeply sympathized with the beautiful stranger. He spoke kindly to her, and she took his arm. The parties walked around our beautiful Common by the mellow light of the young moon, and ere they reached the front of the State House, the young woman had dried her weeping tears, and the young man found himself the companion of a fascinating young woman with a Grecian face, a sparkling eye, and hair which more than rivalled the wing of the raven in glossy blackness.

The parties then passed down Park street mall, and lingering for a few minutes for rest took a seat on one of the benches near the corner of Park street. The striking of the clock marked the hour of ten. This reminded them that they must leave for their homes. The young man says that he escorted her to the residence of a well known citizen, not far from Pemberton Square, where he left her, as he supposed, ringing the door bell. When he reached his rooms he found that his portmanteau was missing. It contained \$24 in bank bills, and three or four dollar gold pieces.

This meeting the victimized young man called at the house where he left his faithful friend, but it is scarcely necessary to add that on such person as his acquaintance of the evening previous was to be found. He is of an opinion that his pocket was penetrated by the gloveless hand of his fair acquaintance while they were seated on Park street mall, although he stoutly avers that they sat at that respectful distance from each other which seemed proper for their new and singular relation to each other. He also says that the sermone and the adventure will be lessons for life to him.

Interesting History of Shad.

Robert L. Peñ, Esq., of Beaufort, Ulster county, who has given many years of study to the habits of the finny tribe, and whose fish ponds have become famous, has furnished to a New York paper the following interesting chapter on our favorite spring fish:

The most interesting of all fish to me is the tom-cook shad, (*classadale*) which may be regarded as a source of commercial wealth and national industry, and a miracle of nature in its multiplication and continuance. Notwithstanding thousands of myriads are destroyed by the agency of man, and tens of thousands of straggle in the ova state, we find an undiminished abundance year after year, which can only be accounted for by their extraordinary creative ability. They spawn about forty-five thousand. They have a peculiarly sloping head and tapering body, projecting under jaw, sharp, small teeth, forked tail, dusky blue color, with a line of dark round spots on each side, sometimes four and five in number, and I have frequently seen them without any. They ascend rivers from the 1st of April to the 19th of June, for the purpose of spawning, which they accomplish in the same manner; that is, do, except that the male fish to cover the ova; such necessary operation, is performed by the ebbing and flowing tide. The organization of this fish enables it to breathe in either salt or fresh water, and taking advantage of this fact, I have been enabled to breed them in ponds, and from numerous experiments, am led to believe that they live but a single year, and that when they pass down the river, after spawning, they are so weak and emaciated that they fall in easy prey to voracious fish. They grow in a single season to weigh from five to eight pounds; they take, like the shrimps, (of