

SPORTING NEWS.

THE OUTING OF THE SUNSHINERS

By Fred A. Olds in Charlotte Observer.

One of the events of the year for the Raleigh children has come to be the annual outing of the "Sunshiners" to Beaufort. There is a personal element in this trip which is quite out of the ordinary and the cause for this is obvious. It is because the trip is one which by reason of special care is made so cheap that poor children, who otherwise would never get even a glimpse of the sea, are enabled to see it for ten days for \$10. Now this sort of an affair need not be peculiar to Raleigh at all. Any gentleman in Charlotte, for example, can take fifty or a hundred boys and girls to the coast and give them such an outing at no greater cost. All that is needed is a little energy and tact and care in making arrangements. There is no reason why Beaufort, for instance, should not be full of children for ten day periods all the summer long. If the Raleigh children who have been there would be paraded, with their well-tanned faces and arms, and every sign of perfect health, in any community, it would be aroused to the fact that it could do something of this sort for its own youngsters. To my mind such a trip is worth a month in any school. It is broadening; it is full of instruction and it brings about a comradeship among children greater than that which even school life can engender and quite beyond any other sort of association. To be sure there must primarily be organization and if "Sunshiners" take this up it will be found that money will come in to help the poorer children to have such pleasures and it will be found that such an organization will be very apt to make itself felt in school work too. We do not know enough about our own state and so travel and stay at the proper places is of the highest benefit.

The Start.

There is nothing quite so fine as the sense of comradeship, and second to this comes that of ownership, and so, when the Raleigh Sunshiners, 67 strong, boarded the train a little after 4 o'clock on the morning of July 4th, and occupied their two comfortable special cars, their own boys having loaded the cots and other property, they felt as if the world were theirs, the train their very own and everything they saw through all the fair country between Raleigh and the sea set out for their special delectation. There was the personal touch in it all and the "veterans," for some of them were going on their fourth trip, a lot on their third and more still on their second, were able to be of great service to the youngsters who were getting their first experience. Children are far more observant than older people think they are. They have quick eyes and they absorb things, and they took in the panorama from the train windows, as one child put it, "flatten out," and looked back at the line, as straight as a ruler, through a country which seemed as level as a floor. They saw the splendid crops, and the dark soil, which they were told was very like the prairie country. They saw the difference in ripening time of crops in the extreme east and at Raleigh; this being very striking indeed. They saw flowers in the vast stretches of savannah which they had never seen before; inky black streams, bordered by meathery cypress and juniper trees which gave the water their color. In these early morning journeys there is a thrill which never comes to those who lie late a bed. The air has a sweetness and a silence all its own and we saw from the windows on one side the big moon, getting dimmer and dimmer, almost upon the horizon while the eastward the blooded sun came up, looming large and in strange contrast to the paleness of the other orb. One girl said the sun and the moon were balanced in the sky, like two children on a sea-saw, and that the world was the see-saw. A strange fancy this, but yet a striking one.

Delighted With Water.

Many of the children had never seen any stream of water larger than Neuse river here and a mill pond embraced their idea of a watery expanse, and so when New Bern was reached there was delight at the sight of steamers, sailboats, the Trent river and the Neuse, but this was as nothing when we began to run along Bogue sound and the children saw the capping waves and the faraway outline of the great banks which screen the sea from the sound and they drew into eager lungs the tang of the sea.

Presently the train passed by "Camp Glenn," where many men were putting the finishing touches on buildings for the use of the troops, and a little later the long bridge which gives entrance to old Beaufort was crossed and into the quaint town the train moved slowly, then stopped, and the Beaufort boys and girls clustered around the station, renewed old friendship and began new ones with our youngsters. Down the shaded streets we walked to our quarters, the elms arching overhead, and the strong sea-breeze keeping everything in a rustle. It took but a little while to make the girls at home in their fine quarters on the second floor of the Masonic Hall. This had been used for a school and the writer had had it thoroughly disinfected and cleansed so that it was as neat as a pin. The same thing had been done to the boys' quarters, the armory of the naval reserves, a block away, and immediately upon the waterside. The Sunshiners' cots were put up and covered with snowy sheets and then all were ready for dinner. We dined out-of-doors, the finest dining place in the world, by the way, and in the spacious yard of the girls' house and adjoining the quaint church yard, which was one of the "sights" of Beaufort, and canopied by wide-spreading live oaks were our two tables. Last year we thus ate 28 meals out-of-doors without being rained upon and this was again our good fortune in this year of grace, 1908. Venerable "Aunt Becky" Shaw, who has cooked for us four years, and has probably cooked for others at least half a century, fed us well at a cost of only 30 cents a day. The meals were brought up in big baskets and Sunshine boys were the servers, these being experts, with the training of last season behind them, and they would make the average hotel waiter look like 30 cents, so swiftly and carefully did they set out the well-cooked and varied food. The bill of fare was well arranged, embracing fish, truffle stew, crabs, clam fritters, scallop fritters, chicken, beef, veal, mutton, raw tomatoes, stewed tomatoes, Irish potatoes, butter beans, corn, clam chowder, corn bread, biscuit, etc. Everything was substantial and the dinner as good as the average hotel puts up. We layed just as near to nature as we could; sleeping with every window open and being in the sunshine as long as it lasted.

A Plunge in the Surf.

Of course there was a wild desire to see the ocean. The "Tenderfoot" found this to be a passion and so I took them to the surf that first afternoon. The wind blew almost a gale, in the sound, and they never minded the wetting in the least. Some of the children fairly gasped as the ocean burst upon their view and they were told that there was nothing but water between them and the African coast, 3,100 miles away. The surf was simply tremendous and yet this very fact made it safe, for nobody could get beyond the second breaker. Of all the things the children love, the surf takes the lead. Of course it requires care for them, and good swimmers are always provided, and scattered here and there, so as to be ready at the least sign of trouble, and hence there has never been an accident.

Any visit to Beaufort without a trip to the life-saving station and Old Fort Macon would really be no trip at all. We were joined there by Congressman Crawford, of the Tenth district, and he entered very heartily into the spirit of our work and heard the stories I told the children about Beaufort and its history; of how the Spaniards, who laid claim to this coast, were whipped in the harbor and a number killed or captured and also the story of the capture by the federal troops of Fort Macon. On this old fort, by the way, a modern gun was mounted in 1898, when it was thought the Spaniards might be looking our way again. We had a splendid view of the sea and the sound and everything else from the observation tower of the life-saving station. The crew there does not go on duty until August 1st, having a rest during June and July, these not being stormy months. We walked into the old fort without seeing anybody, every door standing wide open and the desolation being infinite. I never saw a lonelier place and thought of the first time I ever entered this fort, when everything was epic and span without and within and when a smart sentry was at the great and gloomy portal; when guns were on every hand and everything wore the aspect of war and of that readiness which war demands. Now there is utter abandonment; rank grass, weeds and trees are everywhere and rusty iron work, vacant gun mounts, falling plaster and rank vines show the old place has finished

its course. Soon it is to come down and a modern fort, vastly different in every way, will take its place, for Beaufort is to be fortified, as the southern entrance for the great inland waterway work on which is soon to begin. In other words the dream of many a long year is about to come a reality and Hatters will have no more of terror for small craft.

Special Spots.

One of the main causes of the continued success of the Sunshiners is the fact that they always try to do some special "stunts" and to pull these events off in the best style. The cruiser Pararie, which used to be one of the best ocean liners, a passenger ship, the St. Paul, and which the United States took over in 1898, when the war with Spain began, had come to Beaufort to take out the North Carolina naval militia. She draws 25 feet and so could not enter the harbor, there being only about 18 feet of water on the bar. She could not come to us but we could go to her and so one glorious morning, in our two boats, the "Beasle Hellen" and the "Neta Bettie," we sailed out as a special escort to the four boats which took the naval militia to the Prairie. The wind was not high by the sea ran strong and out there near the sea buoy, where the Prairie lay, its beauty was indescribable. The boats rose and fell upon the swells of the deep green water. Our Sunshine flags fluttered and we could see the officers with their glasses studying us intently. We cheered the naval militia and they cheered us and we cheered the people on the Prairie and they returned the greeting, as we sailed round and round the trim and stately vessel. The captain's monkey was brought out by a sailor and grinned at us from the rigging. It was easy going out to the Prairie, for the wind was from the northward, which kept down the sea, but we had to beat our way back into the harbor and almost every Sunshiner on one of the boats experienced the joys of seasickness, while on our boat only one was the victim. Children regard seasickness as a joke, but older people take it more seriously. As a matter of fact it is a splendid tonic. They were full of talk about the trip to the Prairie and of what sort of adventures the naval militia would have in their cruise up Chesapeake bay. It seemed strange to them that some of the naval militia did not want to go on the trip, and one boy declared he thought it beat any picnic he had ever heard of. The children had seen in the early morning at Beaufort, armed patrols beating the town, looking for men who were trying to desert, or in other words shrirk their duty, and they had seen one man brought in in irons and carried on one of the boats, to be taken out to the cruiser. Another fellow who had tried to make a sneak was caught under a bed. One made a quick get-away into the country in a buggy, while another took to the woods, and two nights later sneaked into his home, where he told his people he had been almost eaten by red bugs and ticks and fairly tortured by mosquitoes. He did not dare to stay even in his own house but a little while and back he went into the woods. The Beaufort people said they did not think much of men who would thus desert a pleasure cruise, and wondered what they would do when real war came.

Davis Island.

Fifteen miles up Core sound from Beaufort ("down east" as the people thereabouts say) lies what is known as "Davis Island," for a great many of years belonging to the Davis family and it is a very famous place for picnics. Some years ago a Mr. Lechler, a millionaire from New York, of sporting proclivities, bought it and spent a great deal of money in the way of buildings and improvements and developed a wonderful farm. His passion was baseball and his employees were required to be baseball players and so he had two nines and could have a game any time on his own premises. Year before last he sold the place to Mr. Deming for \$30,000, and the latter finds his island home a delight both winter and summer, though he uses it mainly during the winter, for the shooting, when of course is extremely fine there. During the summer it is in charge of his friend, Mr. Charles Lumsden, of New Bern, who certainly made the Sunshiners welcome there. We had a dinner and a watermelon feast, went in bathing, had our pictures taken, under the live oaks, and then had a splendid sail back to Beaufort, through the "straits," by Marshallburg and Harker's Island. At one end of this island, which is about seven miles long, are a church and school house which were built by a woman who went there from the North some twenty-five years ago and devoted her life to the natives, of whom there are several hundred. One of the sights which the children saw

(Continued on Page Three.)

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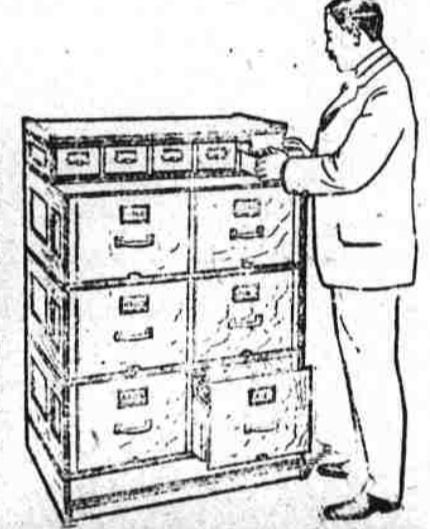


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