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The Development of Roaring Gap

(BION H. BUTLER)



The handsome new hotel which is now in course of erection at Roaring Gap

I HAVE watched the development of Pinehurst from the day when James Tufts, some thirty years ago, writing from Southern Pines to his wife in Boston, told her that tomorrow the carpenters and the well drillers would be arriving at the new site to begin work. From that day to the present Pinehurst has been a steady move forward until it is pretty widely known all over the United States and is heard of in many sections abroad. But I don't recall anything that is connected with Pinehurst that interests me more in a moderate way than the story that is told by the picture of a new hotel building up in the mountains of this State. The place is Roaring Gap. The hotel site is practically on the roof of the Southeastern section of the United States. For on the two square miles of property that the hotel corporation owns are two springs, one of which feeds the Yadkin river, the water finding its outlet down through North Carolina and South Carolina to the Atlantic ocean, while the other spring, being just across the summit of the Blue Ridge, is tributary to the New river which feeds the Ohio and Mississippi and reaches salt water at the Gulf of Mexico below New Orleans. Two thousand miles the water of these springs journey from each other in opposite direction before reaching tide water, and they wash the shores of thirteen states.

A state highway leads to the mountain top from the centers of civilization, and there on the summit, where in all directions is an unbounded picture of nature in its most rugged and primeval majesty, a group of men have secured a large acreage and are building a summer vacation center mild-

ly patterned after Pinehurst with this fine big hotel built of stone from the mountains. A golf course by Donald Ross, a large artificial lake, and other things that will make the summer there interesting to people from everywhere.

Roaring Gap is the well chosen location. The distance is not great, about 180 miles from Pinehurst, the roads leading through the cities and villages of the Piedmont far enough away from the commotion of existence so that all the promoters of the scheme had to do was to find the place and go to work. The men who planned this venture are a group of the big business men of the Piedmont and mountain section. What interests me most in the scheme is that when they got into their heads what they wanted they proceeded to come down and talk it over with Leonard Tufts. By an intelligent process of reasoning they figured out that he had built up a highly successful resort enterprise at Pinehurst, and that a man of his calibre would be a valuable factor in carrying out the idea they had in their heads of a popular place up in the mountains. Mr. Tufts did not care to add to his responsibilities at Pinehurst any further financial commitments, but the sincerity of the men behind the movement at Roaring Gap and the importance of their project in broadening the opportunity presented for the further development of the state impelled him to join with these men in carrying out their purpose and in putting Roaring Gap on the proper footing.

To that end Mr. Tufts assumed the post of managing-director, and those who miss him from Pinehurst every few

(Continued on page 9)