

# LET? WONDER CITY OF THE UNIVERSE

By T-BONE SLIM

GRANITE FALLS, Minn. — The main purpose of this article is to serve notice on Fellow Workers Elsassar and Rommel that a 157 pound catfish was caught at this port. It was 6 ft., 1 inch long and measured 28 inches around the horns—a genuine Mississippi cat, and so tough a bunch of hardened old sows got lock-jaw trying to eat it. This place is noted for being the home-port of Mr. Andrew Volstead; the man who rid this country of snakes and tremens all at one fell stroke. It was here that Andy spent his happy boyhood and finally devised a way to end the bad habits of his rum-guzzling countrymen—ah, had Aimee Semple McPherson been born here this town's pride would overflow the rim of its joy-cup and hiccup . . .

The rumor that Andy was run out of town is false—he is away on business—and the good citizens maintain the spirit of tolerance and fellowship by attending an occasional barn dance and in imbibing in mysterious potions that light their happy beings with kindness and wrinkle their faces with smiles of genuine friendliness. But when "that big cat" was caught the civic pride did get beyond bounds and a movement was started immediately to send her out-standing son, Mr. Andrew Volstead, as ambassador to Sahara Desert where water is water and whiskey is something else again . . .

It may be well for Hanley Falls to brag about its big mud turtles and its best drinking water but fish is fish and when they start biting, seven feet long, its time our membership take notice and impale liver on their hooks.

As I understand it, and I don't doubt it a bit, some of those catfish got peeved the other eve and chased citizens for blocks around the town and in the excitement one of them, slightly deranged, thought himself a farmer and tried to hire a crew of men to thresh hotcakes—yes, the man wanted first of all a man to run a binder, and to cut the flakes, but to go around and around practising up for derby to come later. All his "racks" were to be one-horse racks and common table forks were to do duty to catapult shocks into the separator.

Beautiful ladies would pass the shocks to the crew on trays.

Nevertheless, his hallucination was so realistic that like a true farmer he refused to pay more than 30 cents an hour to the syrup hauler.

Other farmers around here are offering \$4 a day which all helps to prove the lower figure emanates from an unbalanced mind—and no man can reasonably argue that a man fleeing catfish can retain his full reason—mind you, I'm not arguing that a farmer must outrun a school of cross-country "cats" before he qualifies for a nuthouse; I'm merely pointing out that the smaller figure is a sure sign his mental condition has been overstrained. Such mental deterioration is common, and not peculiar to farmers alone. I've known bonafide workingmen to experience the disintegration of thinking ability; it happens in the best of families, but at this time I have in mind the railway trainmen, a brave bunch of men, that would disdain to run away from catfish. Few years ago, in 1915, the trainmen had a union they were proud of and their sayso and saga was considered good law—now one of their members tells me he has no union at all and that he belongs to an insurance company divided into five major parts, and sixteen minor parts.

Sixteen parts? Can it be there is a clue to something or other?

Now, let me see, wasn't it William Jennings Bryan that invented the measure 16 to 1—is it possible the railroad men went "free silver" to the extent of chopping up their organization that way—what kind of paranoiacs would that be?

No. It is more likely they go by weight, and not by piece: sixteen ounces equal one pound. No, No. No, I tell you, no! This can not be . . .

Let's see.

Ha! I have it.

A mud turtle has sixteen kinds of meat in its carcass. It's entirely possible the rails figured if sixteen kinds of meat are good for the snapper nothing less satisfies a hard working rail . . .

That's reason all right and logic but there is a flaw; wieners under sixteen given names are still for the most part cereals and pepper. They can't prove the meat like a mud

turtle can—why, they can't prove the longevity even. If they can, then why the insurance.

That's the end of this article but somehow there appears to be no power to it. How can there be if it's chopped up into 16 parts and no insurance.

Anything of that description needs insurance. What was it we had?

We had: R. R. trainmen, one kind of meat with sixteen names;

Mud turtle, sixteen kinds of meat with only one name.

How are you betting—I'm going catfishing.

—T-B N.