

"Waters, The Loafer."

By Louis Becka.

We were lying in Apia harbor, ready for sea, bound on a labor recruiting cruise to New-Britain and New-Ireland. It was just about dawn when the skipper and I, who were sleeping on deck, were awakened by hearing a canoe come alongside, and a strange voice hailing the anchor watch.

"Well," said the captain, "who are you and what do you want?" "I'm—oh, my name is Brown—or Smith, if you like—and I want a berth as steward."

"Do you? Well, I have a steward—as you'll find out in a few minutes when he comes on board and kicks you over the side." (Our steward, Simpson, had been given a night's liberty on shore, and had promised to be back at 6 o'clock.)

"He won't, captain. In fact, he can't, poor chap. He's dead. Had a mill with a big Dutchman at Charles the Russian's over a game of cards about an hour ago, and the Dutchman hit him over the heart. He dropped like a stone, and died in half a minute. Too fat, you know."

"And you want to step into his shoes before the poor devil is cold?" "Will that hurt him now that he is dead?"

"No," said the captain, "you stink to your patients—but you can lead me a hand to put in a couple of planks in the second covering boat. That is, if you like."

"Certainly, sir," replied "Brown," the well-mannered steward.

I took the second mate's watch, and the captain worked at the boats. Waters was a man who could "turn his hand" to anything, and every thing from the men.

to the beach, but before touching it was slowed round and backed in stern first. Then the recruiter had his box of trade goods placed on the beach and stepped out of the boat. Generally he was unarmed, as he gave the natives confidence, for sometimes they would present the sight of a revolver in his belt, would stink, and no "business" would be done. Then the boat would push off a little so as just to keep afloat in case of treachery—the crew ready to bend to the oars the moment the recruiter was on board—that is, if he was lucky enough to get there.

Meanwhile the covering boat stood by, ready to open fire and cover the escape of the first boat, or to give the assistance of the recruiter and his crew if they were being overpowered by a sudden rush of savages.

On this occasion I had with me in my boat the two Fijians, two Ratofoingans and a Savage Islander. My trade chest was filled with the usual gear dear to the New-Britain native—12 of the native knives, red beads, hoop iron for making knives, and clay pipes and tobacco, although the latter article was almost unknown to these particular savages, who did not possess a pipe among them.

Just as I was going over the side into the leading boat, Waters asked permission to come with me, as he wanted to get some sand for holystoning the cabin floor. The captain was agreeable and so was I, so off we went, and in a few minutes we were abreast of the village beach, which was thronged with natives, all armed with spears and clubs, as was to be expected, but maintaining a friendly demeanor. Three hundred or four hundred natives were on the beach.

In three weeks Waters had recovered and was at work again, and was of great assistance in helping to get the north coast of New-Britain, where he was well known to the natives. Then we worked back to New Ireland and got sixty more, which made us a full ship and left us to thrash our way against the southern trade back to Samoa.

Just off Rotumah Island, we met H. M. S. "—, which signalled us to hoist to. Then we were boarded by her first lieutenant, a tall, gray haired man, who was good enough after he had examined our papers to obligingly send us on the appearance of the brig and the healthy condition of our hundred "blackbirds."

A TROPICAL FOREST WE OWN.

IT IS IN PORTO RICO AND A VERY INTERESTING POSSESSION.

A Tangled Mountain Wilderness Never Fully Explored, Containing Plant Life New to Botanists—Dr. Gifford Would Make It a Sportsman's Paradise.

In the island of Porto Rico, the United States Government possesses just three years ago a tropical forest. Its folks didn't know much about it, nor for that matter did the native Porto Ricans themselves.

Roughly speaking it comprised some 66,000 acres in the eastern and most mountainous parts of the island. Its boundaries were ill defined, its trees were overgrown with thick vines and tropic plants. It had no paths at all and no one had ever thoroughly explored it.

The reserve has been set aside from public lands formerly owned by the Spanish Government. To two-thirds of it private owners advance some shadowy claims, and in practice the agriculturists to whom the reserved lands belong have already pushed their clearings far up the mountain sides and have helped themselves to whatever timber they needed from the accessible forest beyond.

But all that will now be stopped and the forest scientifically administered. It is small in relation to some of the large reserves in the western States, for the whole island of Porto Rico is only about three-quarters the size of Connecticut. But under scientific management it is pretty sure to become valuable, and anyway it has the distinction of being the only tropical forest which this country owns on this side of the globe.—New York Sun.

CRIMINAL'S STRANGE CAREER.

At present it opens up a new opportunity for study of forest botany. What the forest is a source of timber, it is also a very difficult one to study. It is a very difficult one to study. It is a very difficult one to study.

There is one lighthouse in the world that is not placed on any nautical chart. It is the Arizona desert, and marks the spot where a well supplied pure, fresh water to travellers.

An English barrister, arguing before the criminal court, says: "My Lord, there is much honor among thieves." The justice looked at him severely. "There is gold in sea water," he replied, "but it cannot be extracted in profitable quantities. Go on, sir."

One of the greatest of living English jockeys has a most remarkable collection of tributes from admirers, unknown and otherwise. It contains, among other strange things, paw tickets, writs and summonses contributed by unsuccessful backers of his mounts, tallanans of all kinds to bring him luck in his races, sermons and tracts for his spiritual welfare, recipes for all ailments from coughs to a tendency to corpulence, offers of marriage accompanied by bundles of wretched tickets and a pair of worn-out boots with the legend: "All that is left of them after walking from York to London; backed all your mounts."

At a book sale in a Paris auction room the other day a gentleman turning over the leaves of one of the books saw a time worn piece of paper which he had the curiosity to open.

This proved to be a will executed in proper form about ninety years ago, but never proved. It was that of a woman whose death, as subsequent inquiry has shown, took place eighty-five years ago. As no will could be found, intestacy was assumed, and a personality of £16,000 was divided among relatives. In fact, the will bequeathed everything to a niece, long since dead, and the question now arises as to the claims of her descendants against those of the other participants.

Hard Tack and Permismons. "When the frost is in the pumpkins and the corn is in the shock" permismons are ripe—good ripe; and you don't want to fool with a permismon until it is good ripe. Some forty and odd years ago, away over in the enemy's country, eastern Virginia, when we had been living for months on hard tack and fitch and black coffee strong enough to hold up an iron wedge, we while strolling a little further beyond the lines than was really safe, ran across a permismon tree on which some belated clusters were clinging, although it was midwinter. A change from hardtack to permismons was a delightful one, and we talk we never enjoyed eating anything more than we did those few clusters of Old Virginia permismons.

Treat to Employees. The head of a well known wholesale house on Broadway engaged in the manufacture of specialties in men's clothing attributes the fact that his concern is noted for not having friction with its work people to his practice of annually entertaining the hundreds of male and female help in his employ to a year-end theatre and supper party.

As an object lesson in fostering ideal relations between staff and employer, this mode of celebration is noted as an unalloyed success.—New York Press.

The usual size of the shell of an oyster is three to five inches.

UP TO DATE RECRUITING.

Phonograph and Stereopticon Used to Get Labor for Queensland Plantations.

Thousands of natives of Polynesia are needed to work on the sugar and other plantations of Queensland. These plantations are in the low regions; and as the climate is tropical white labor is not successful.

For many years sailing vessels have been visiting the islands to recruit natives. The trade gave rise to a new industry which has been suppressed since the white labor is not so successful.

A sea captain in the Kanaka trade has introduced a new method of making emigration attractive. Before he sailed from Queensland a year ago he visited a number of the plantations where South Sea Islanders are employed.

He had a camera and a phonograph. Going from one plantation to another he photographed groups of natives and also took individual pictures of well-known fellows from the New Hebrides, Solomon and other groups.

Then he brought the phonograph into service. The best known natives who had a large acquaintance in the islands were induced to talk into the instrument and tell their friends the kind of life they led in Australia and how they were getting along on the plantations.

These photographed letters were obtained from Kanakas who formerly lived in about a dozen of the islands which are recruited vessels are in the habit of visiting. Then the ingenious shipmaster had his photographs turned into lantern slides and off he sailed for the islands well equipped to attract the natives.

According to a Queensland newspaper the scheme has been a great success. The captain had an ample supply of lantern slides showing emigrants from each of the islands he visited.

Everybody was on hand to see the show and the natives were beside themselves with delight when they saw the well-known visages of their friends and acquaintances thrown upon the screen. But the greatest success was when each picture attracted a native who was to come to Queensland.

English Motorist—"Is life held so cheaply in America?" American Chemist—"Rally, I don't know. No true sportsman ever stops to ask if a thing is cheap or not, in America."—Puck.

He says his blood is blue—good luck! He's such a happy fellow! His eyes are brown, his hair is black, His cheeks like apples, mellow, But just a smudge, adown his back, The red runs a streak of yellow.

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AN EX-HERO.

My boyhood's hero—ah, how grand were they! I'll never look upon their likes again; Bob Simpson seemed to me, when I was a boy.

To be a very Laureate; I lay at night, considering how I some day would try to be as good as he was. I longed to look like him; all other men seemed had been made of base clay.

He played the alto horn, and when the band marched down the street I trotted at his side. How bravely his breast seemed to expand. And I envied him!—Today he's dead, and left, and on a little patch of land. He tells to keep the village mart supplied.

Chicago Record-Herald.

Cremate's Will—"I'd do anything in the world for art." J. Condit—"Well, why don't you quit painting?"—Judge.

Charley—"Rowell claims to be a self-made man." Jack—"I don't think much of the method of construction." "There's room above," the wise man said. "Then reach it while you can!" "I will, for I'm," the lad replied, "A second-story man!"

Miss Antiqua—"The man I marry must be a hero." Miss Pert—"There's no doubt about that."—Philadelphia Record.

"What is that old saying: 'Put a beggar on a horse and—' " "He'll kick because it isn't an automobile."—Philadelphia Press.

There is one consolation in being a poor man nowadays anyway: No one is sufficiently interested in him to ask: "Where did he get it?"

"And why have you never married, Mr. Priestley?" asked Miss Oldgirl. "Because," said the curate sternly, "I do not approve of games of chance."—Life.

Skrawler—"I've seen Snippen, the tailor, going up to your studio every day for a week. Is he sitting for you?" Dauber—"No, he's laying for me."—Cleveland Leader.

"Did you hear that the daughter of that rich man in the next block had been driven from home?" "No! When did it happen?" "Just after she got into the carriage."—Baltimore American.

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