

Masonry is prohibited in the Philippine Islands, and therefore all lodge meetings are held in secret. I once attended a meeting of the blue lodge in the dining room of Mr. Barnard, a wealthy carriage manufacturer, whose house is directly opposite the Hotel Bala. In Manila, as well as in China, there are many native lodges, but the ones that I have especially alluded to are English, although many natives are enrolled as members.

On one of my visits to South Africa a party of English officers intended starting back toward the mountains from Grahamstown, Cape Colony, on a hunting expedition and I was asked to join. Capt. Thompson was in command, and it was he who collected the natives and saw that our horses and wagons were ready for our use. We started out early in the morning before the sun had risen, and by noon we were miles away from the beaten road and civilization had been left leagues behind us. Recollect this was nearly ten years ago, and in those days the means of reaching the interior were not as perfect as they are now. The Kimberly diamond mining industry was in its infancy then.

We were on the plains at the base of the hills and were having great sport. We had about a dozen white men in the party and not less than thirty natives to drive the wagons, take care of the horses and beat up the game. We had passed a number of springboks and antelopes, and Lieut. Miles, who was my hunting mate, and I had bagged our share.

Among the natives I noticed one man whom I thought I recognized. He had charge of the teamsters and appeared to be a fellow of more than ordinary intelligence. When we broke camp the next morning I had a little difficulty with one of the men whose duty it was to look after my horse. But when we had mounted and started out for the day's sport I forgot all about the occurrence. It appears, however, that the native had a better memory. I think it was the third or fourth night

after this that I started out on a little tour of exploration. It was a glorious night and the moon made the landscape almost as light as day. I had hardly gone a quarter of a mile when I felt a sharp blow on the head. The next moment I was unconscious. When I recovered my senses, I found the foreman kneeling over me rubbing my hands.

"What is the matter?" I gasped. "What has happened?"

"It is lucky for you I was near you," mysteriously replied the Negro, in excellent English.

A few minutes later he explained to me that he had heard the hostler I had quarreled with make threats against my life and he had consequently kept a close watch upon him. He saw him follow me this night and therefore joined in the chase. Before he could reach me, though, he saw the fellow hit me on the back of the head with a club. He fired a shot from his revolver and hurried to my side, but the would-be assassin had escaped.

On our way back to camp I asked him why he had taken such an interest in me. In reply he held out his hand, and, to my amazement, gave me the grip of a master mason. He was a member of the native lodge in Grahamstown and knew me to be a member of the craft by the gold watch charm I always wear.

The lodges in Singapore and Rangoon are regular English organizations, as are most of these in the Indian empire. The temple in Calcutta, where True Friendship Lodge, No. 218, of which I am a member at the present time, meets, is one of the handsomest Masonic buildings I know of. This lodge was organized by the members of the old East India Company, and is one of the best conducted working under the English constitution in the world. I have visited Parsee lodges in Bombay, Persian lodges in Malaga and Bagdad, English lodges in Great Britain, French lodges in France, native lodges in Mexico, Dutch lodges in Java, Spanish lodges in Cuba and South America,