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MADE IN CANADA

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SEEKING RUBBER ON THE PATUCA RIVER, HONDURAS.

Prospectors Found That Their Servants All Were Anxious for Plunder.

Some years ago, when rubber was fetching prices almost as high as those of to-day, rumor had it that the upper reaches of the Patuca River, in the Republic of Honduras, Central America, were almost entirely unexploited, and simply teemed with rubber. For once Dame Rumor told the truth; and when Robert W. Cater and his partner Anson pitched their camp on the river bank, at a distance of about forty-five miles from the coast, they found rubber trees abounded in quite extensive patches, and none of them appeared to have been tapped before.

Their jubilation was shared by ten men—nine Caribs and an Indian whose name was Diego Castro. In addition to a monthly wage, each man was entitled to a premium of two Dees, or native dollars, for every hundredweight of rubber he brought in. Cater and Anson know, however, that of all the lazy, worthless, and out-and-out scoundrels there was none to equal Diego.

THE FIRST INSIGHT

which the two prospectors got into Diego's character came on the third day, when he refused to take a turn to hunt for fresh meat, and mutinously declared as there was plenty of reserve of tinned meat he meant to have some of that. Anson thereupon threatened him with strong measures.

"Bah! What could you do!" rejoined the Indian. "See—I have you nicely covered," he continued, nonchalantly. And, suiting the action to the word, he raised his gun to his shoulder and, screwing up an eye, aimed along the barrel at Cater with the other.

Whether the native really intended to shoot at Anson or no is a moot question, but shoot he did, for Anson—naturally alarmed at Diego's action—instinctively put his hand to his hip for his revolver and—well, that did it!

Considering what scarcely ten of them experienced them, it is little short of marvelous that Anson was not blown to pieces. Instead, however, the shot alone reached him, lodging in his forearm and causing him a minor wound. With a cry of rage he rushed towards the Indian just as Cater arrived on the scene with the nine Caribs, fortunately in time to prevent further trouble. Diego was soon overpowered and disarmed, and, precaution being the better part of valor, the two partners had him bound and deposited in his quarters.

Next morning Diego expressed sorrow for his action, saying that he was

DRUNK AT THE TIME,

and decided to forget the affair, merely resolving to keep a closer eye on the Indian and never again permitting him to handle firearms. But Diego was merely biding his time. He was out for revenge. On the twelfth day, Cater and Anson decided, as the near supply of rubber was exhausted, to abandon the first camp and move up the stream.

Three nights before moving the camp, however, Cater, who had been unable to sleep on account of the mosquitos, and who had gone outside the little apartment which he shared with Anson for a smoke, observed a light gleaming through the trees in the direction of the crew's camp, which was situated some forty or fifty yards farther along the bank. Creeping up, he discovered Diego and one of the Caribs carrying bale after bale of rubber to the boats, evidently with the intention of making off with a goodly portion before sunrise.

"What does this mean?" he queried.

"It means, boss, dat we doan got no mo' use for you at presen," was his impertinent response, and with the last word he rushed at Cater. Stepping aside just in time to avoid the blow, with a lucky shot from his right hand Cater sent him reeling backwards, and, tripping over a sapling behind him,

HE FELL UPON HIS BACK.

"I lost no time in springing upon him," says Cater, "and pinning him to the ground, but my advantage was short-lived, for a moment afterwards I myself lay beside him. Diego Casco had come to his confederate's assistance, and creeping up to the rear had felled me with an unexpected and terrific blow upon the head, which stunned me at once."

About an hour later Cater recovered consciousness. He aroused the camp, and as the robbers had taken the two boats they made a raft of canes and some bales of the remaining rubber, and paddled in pursuit, accompanied by three of the Caribs. After several hours they came up with the two boats moored by the river bank. Cater and Anson immediately landed, and instructing the Caribs to secure the two boats they crept to the spot where Diego and his confederate had made their camp. To their amazement they discovered one of the Caribs on his knees earnestly pleading for his life, while Diego stood over him with a cruel-looking knife. Diego did not want to share the rubber with the Carib, neither did he want a man alive who could tell the story of the robbery. He raised the knife ready for the blow which was intended to rid him at once of his confederate and a possible witness against him, when the Caribs upon the raft hailed

THE WOULD-BE MURDERER.

Diego was so startled by the unexpected salute that he seemed to be quite dazed for awhile, and stood there gazing vacantly towards the river. But he was not long in regaining his composure, and a few seconds later darted to the water's edge and sprang upon the raft.

Seeing himself cornered, the scoundrel dived headlong into the river, and, to quote Cater's own words, "there is a great deal of rock made up the bottom of the Patuca in places, and huge boulders hidden beneath the water in others, with innumerable alligators, occasional sharks, and no end of strong currents, so that in the absence of evidence it would amount merely to a speculation as to why he never came to the surface again.

"That is how we recovered a goodly portion of our stolen rubber. Delighted with the success of our chase, we shook hands with ourselves and each other all the way back to camp, journeying throughout the night. Then came the hardest blow of all—the five men we had left in charge had disappeared, and so had a remainder of our rubber! Evidently taking a leaf from Anson's book, they had fashioned a similar raft to his, followed us closely down stream, passed us under cover of night, and probably by then had disposed of their illgotten gains and reached a safe hiding-place!"

*

PEACHES $12 APIECE.

Peaches, at about $12 apiece, imported from the hothouses of the south of France, generally appear on the tale of the Czar of Russia on certain festive occasions, which shows that the Russian imperial cuisine is carried on on a most lavish scale, though, as a matter of fact, the Czar's tastes are very simple. Codfish, fried in oil, scarcely requires a chef with a salary running into four figures to prepare, while the national dish, known as "shtshi," which includes pickled cabbage, meat broth, and a few other specifically Russian ingredients, is a dish that every national cook has at her finger ends.

*

"Darling," said he, tenderly, "I have made up my mind to ask you—to ask you—" "Yes?" she whispered, breathlessly. "To ask you to become my wife. I know, dearest, that it is bold—it is presumptuous for me to do so. You are so much superior to me. I am, I feel, unworthy of your—" "Say no more, John. I am yours. You may be unworthy of me, but—" "But what, dearest?" "Half a loaf is better than no bread."

JAPAN'S FLOWER ARTISTS

ONE SCHOOL IS THIRTEEN CENTURIES OLD.

Japanese Household Decoration Was the Original Idea of Prince Shotoku.

In no other country but Japan is the art of flower arrangemtnt taught as a special accomplishment by trained masters and according to fixed rules established by the various schools. There have been different authorities on the mode to be followed in this important decoration in a Japanese household, according to a writer in the Japan Magazine, but none has displaced the original school, which had its inception in a family named Ono, generally known as Ikenobo, in the seventh century.

Prince Shotoku was really the one with whom the idea originated. He instructed Ono-no-imoko, a Minister of State, to form a set of rules for flower arrangement. Imoko was a man of learning and culture and had enjoyed the advantage of foreign travel, having twice made a voyage to China. He took for his model Mount Sumi, Indian associated with the Horai Islands of Sofuku, and from these developed what is known as the rikkwa, or upright grouping of flowers, so much admired at the present time, and of which through forty-three generations of this notable

FAMILY OF ARTISTS,

the same essential elements have been preserved, and one might almost say reverenced.

Upon the death of Prince Shotoku Ono-no-Imoko went into retirement, became a Buddhist priest and founded the Bokkakudo, or hexagonal temple, at Kioto, where he enshrined the image of Kwannon or goddess of mercy, of whom the Prince had been a votary during all his life. Later the flower enthusiast established his temple of Shinnzho, where he daily devoted himself to his chosen art, offering the pleasing results of his endeavors to the departed spirit of his beloved Prince.

His influence became widespread, and successors in his family from generation to generation have been proud to continue in the pursuit of flower arrangement and do honor to the name of so worthy an ancestor, one, Seno, who stands twelfth in the line, being considered to have been the most skilled expert among all the devotees of the art. He it was who introduced many new and beautiful adjuncts and was so highly appreciated by the people of his time as to have had bestowed upon him the title of

"HIGH PRIEST OF RIKKWA"

for straight flower arrangement. He simplified the method of rikkwa and originated what is now known as the Ikebana system of grouping, which is supposed to typify the existence of the soul in the body, and which he used to the end in instructing the people in this prized refinement of their customs.

Through its priestly advocates flower arrangement attained its greatest height, and became so closely associated with Buddhistic expressions as to be regarded as one of the essential ornamentations for the tokonoma, or raised dais forming the decorative feature of a Japanese room when religious paintings or images were shown.

When the power of the Fujiwara family was at its zenith and the various members vied with one another in perfecting the elegance and beauty of their homes, even those who disliked any semblance of Buddhism and its practices conformed to their manner of flower arrangement, so powerfully did its charm appeal to them, and during the days of the Ashikaga Shoguns it was considered an indispensable drawing room decoration, and upon such occasions as the fetes of armour absolutely necessary in point of etiquette.

Rival schools in the art aroused such jealousy among the enthusiasts as to cause the eighth Shogun of the Ashikaga family, Yoshimasa, to issue a declaration to the effect that

THE ONO FAMILY

was to be considered the authority for highest school of flower arrangement, and passing unimpaired through the stormy days of Ojin the art received further promotion at the hands of Emperor Mizuno-o, who presented a handsome flower vase, ornamented with dragon handles and still kept as a great treasure, to the head of the Ono family, Ikenobo.

Afterward he was so honored as to be allowed to visit the Imperial Palace, and later received permission from the Emperor to hold the festival of the flower arrangement of Tanabata (July), which had been previously celebrated at the palace, at his own house. Further favors from the throne came in the form of the gift of a screen from Seiryoden Palace, to be used on the above occasion, all being high honors and greatly enhancing the popularity of the art and its famous representatives.

The Tokugawa Shoguns were no less patrons of this evidence of culture than their predecessors had, and new schools continued to spring up and its promotion became such that all of the upper classes were skilled in the art, and poor indeed was one who was denied the advantage of some training in this accomplishment. The present day finds it still one of the chief features in the attainments of cultured Japanese young women of polished education.

THE ANDALUSIAN PLAINS.

Remind the Traveller of the Western Prairies.

To traverse the great plains of Andalusia is not only to travel through an exceedingly interesting and characteristic part of Spain but to receive an impression, at least from a distance, of the Western prairies as they formerly were.

For miles and miles on either side of the Guadalquivir (which, for all its romantic name, is a very muddy stream) the country stretches away into a faint blue haze of distant hills, with the foreground and middle distance full of herds of horses, mules and cattle feeding slowly or lying at ease in the long grass and low gorselike scrub.

The wide and lengthy tracts of grass country, the immense herds and the mounted cowboys combine, says the Wide World, to present an aspect which seems to belong much more to America than to Europe. On closer inspection of course this illusion is dispelled.

For example the horses instead of having ordinary foals at foot have mule foals, and interspersed among the horses and cattle are herds of mules, with occasionally a few donkeys. Moreover, near the alquerias or farms will be seen droves of pigs of a dull red color, flocks of goats, and in some places merino sheep.

Spain, especially on these plains, is a country of magnificent sunsets. Words fail absolutely to describe the glories of the evening sky. Silent and statuesque against the distant glow one sees silhouetted perhaps a mounted herdsman, a brooding figure, motionless and grim—or on a river's bank a black bull standing dark against the roseate sky.

Again in the moonlight one may descry the faint and dusky forms of feeding cattle, the moonlight now and again catching on a gleaming horn. The silence, broken by the faint lowing of distant kine or the weird cry of some night bird, gives an enhanced beauty to a wonderful scene, not easily forgotten.

* * *

ODD CLAIMS FOR INSURANCE.

British Employers Are Liable For Accidents.

When a few years ago British employers became liable at law for injuries suffered by employes in the course of their work cartoonists got busy depicting the hired girl gleefully tumbling down stairs with the tea tray or the coal box, secure in the prospect of a long rest and no loss of wages. Householders, of course, cover their risk by insuring each employe against accidents. English courts, as a rule, place a liberal construction on the word accident, and accordingly on the books of the insurance companies may be found many odd claims. Here are a few:

A cow whisking her tail caused injury to a milkmaid's eye.

A farmhand was stung by a bee.

A manservant sprained his leg through stamping on a rat.

A coachman coming out of a stable was struck on the face by his master's boot, intended for a caterwauling cat.

A cook was breaking coal and a piece went down her throat.

A curate was scalded through stumbling while carrying a tea urn at a parochial gathering.

A servant was pricked by a rusty needle while sewing on a button on her employer's clothes.

It is somewhat difficult to imagine that success could attend claims like these:

A servant received a shock through seeing a large Teddy bear when the room was only dimly lighted.

Another servant fetching coal out of a cellar collapsed from fright caused by the silent appearance of a washerwoman and broke her arm.

CHINESE ANTI-QUEUE CRAZE

CHINESE BARBERS PROCLAIM A NEW LIFE.

They Are Cutting Off Queues by Thousands to Show Their Adherence.

A revolution in social custom of far-reaching significance is now sweeping over China. This is the cutting off of the queues.

Starting with the radicals of the New China party, the docking of the queue was urged by them as the visible and necessary sign of an acceptance of new ideas. Patriotism demanded that the Chinaman should rid himself of all the customs of the dark ages, said the reformers, and there was no better evidence of emancipation from conservatism than the absence of the queue.

It was not more than three years ago that the New China party started the queueless crusade, and so rapidly has the movement spread that before the end of last year a rescript from the dragon throne itself advised the wholesale cutting of the hair, and the new, half-organized Tzucheng Yuan, or National Parliament, passed a measure commanding the

REMOVAL OF ALL QUEUES.

This change is all the more significant in that it came from Chinese inspiration, and not through foreign suggestion. Thirty and more years ago the foreign missionaries in China attempted to make headway against the practice of foot-binding, and their suggested innovation was at first bitterly resented. It was not until within the last ten or fifteen years that anti-foot binding societies composed of Chinese made any great headway against the evil, and now the reform is by no means general.

But so rapidly has the queue-docking idea spread throughout all the provinces that a foreign paper published in Hong Kong estimates that in December alone over 40,000 Chinese in that city and its vicinity cut off their queues. A despatch from Pekin, published in the North China Daily News in December, says that all the officers in the Imperial navy and in the army in the northern provinces have fallen in line with the reform, that the members of the Wai-wu-pu, or Board of Foreign Affairs, now appear queueless, and that instructions will soon go out to all representatives in the diplomatic and Consular services ordering them to dispense with the

APPENDAGE OF DARKNESS.

In December there were haircutting festivals in Canton, Hong Kong, Amoy, and even in Manila, where on Christmas Day over 1,000 Chinese underwent shearing. In Singapore and other cities of the Straits Settlements, down in Batavia, throughout the cities of Japan and Corea, the snip-snip of the progressive shears has been sounding the knell of the old regime.

In Shanghai the craze has been deep-rooted. At one time 4,000 Chinese gathered in a market place in the heart of the native city and patiently stood in line under a blazing sun until each could take his turn at the shaving stools of the corps of barbers. Each man picked up his once precious queue as it fell from the shears and carried it home with him in the sleeves of his blouse.

The North China Post describes a remarkable scene which occurred in Hong Kong recently. The occasion was the shearing of six of the oldest and most influential Chinese of the city.

A congregation of Chinese packed in the largest hall available in the city and the six old men took their seats on the rostrum. Then, while all who could found seats on the floor and tea was passed around, five of the leaders in

THE NEW CHINA PARTY

addressed impassioned oratory to the multitude.

The old men sat nursing their queues in their hands meanwhile, not seeming at all ardent in their desire to fall so suddenly into this new regime. Then when the speeches were finished the six old men stood up while a camera snapped them in two positions, front and back. They had said that at least they wanted to preserve a record of how they had looked.

That done six barbers advanced to the stage. Every whisper was silenced and the whole assemblage sat in breathless awe, while the barbers snipped the grey queues from the hads of th six patriarchs. Then when the six thin wisps were held up there was a great cheer, and the old men left the platform with tears in their dimmed eyes.

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FIRST PORT OF THE WORLD.

$70,000,000 to be Expended on the Port of London.

The London (England) port authorities propose to spend more than $70,000,000 in improving the dock and harbor facilities of the Thames estuary, with the view to making London in reality as well as in name the first port of the world. Experts have been studying the subject for fifteen months and they have now issued a report containing recommendations. The scheme is a far-reaching one, but in no wise more elaborate than necessary to prevent London from succumbing to the competition of other British and foreign ports. It includes the dredging of the river channel from Tilbury to London Bridge, the part used by the large vessels being widened to 1,000 feet and deepened to thirty feet. Half a million pounds sterling has already been expended in a dredging plant. Other striking features of the scheme are the construction of three new docks at Tilbury of 65, 126 and 138 acres, respectively, to accommodate the largest vessels afloat or projected, which will be "capable of dealing with any possible growth in the size of vessels for very many years to come."

The existing docks will be enlarged and deepened and the entrances widened. There is also a plan of railway extension to bring the docks within easy communication with all parts of England.

The construction of a passenger landing stage similar to the Princess landing stage at Liverpool is contemplated. It is intended to follow the present scheme with another programme of extension, the scope of which will depend on the development of the shipping business after the present improvements, which will take twenty years to accomplish, are completed.

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KING HAS NEW CHEF.

Monsieur Cedard Will Superintend Coronation Banquets.

His Majesty King George of England has a new chef, or rather a new chief chef. Of course he is a Frenchman as was also his predecessor M. Menager, retiring from the royal service. The name of the new chef, who receives the modest sum of $10,000 per year, is M. Cedard.

It may be a far cry from a king's kitchen to Westminster Abbey, but the man who has been imported from France to supervise the meals of British royalty also is destined to serve the Coronation banquets and to feed hundreds of king's guests on that auspicious occasion. We opine that M. Cedard will, so to say, have his hands full in more senses than one.

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