

"Oh, yes. Quite so. I see, I see," said Cooper, who was regaining his official attitude, when the speaker paused for breath.

Then she made a new start, and told quite plainly how she had charge of a small private school in Mount Pleasant, and how, in order to interest the children in government, and help them to become thoughtful citizens, she had organized a Watch and Work League, the members of which were to keep from strewing litter on the streets, and try to prevent it on the part of others, and to refrain from shooting through the street lamps with their "beanies," or otherwise injuring public or private property. Each member was to wear a badge, and she thought if some sort of official approval or notice—she didn't know just what—could be given the club it would help the plan.

While she was telling him this, Cooper had been paying more attention to her face than to her words, which is not necessarily discourteous in the case of a woman. He realized, however, that the time had come to withdraw himself, and he was public official enough to know how to do it.

"I see, I see," he began. "Your idea seems a most commendable one—most commendable indeed." He was falling into the official lingo beautifully. "Unfortunately, it scarcely comes within my jurisdiction. It would be better to bring it to the attention of Commissioner Anderson in the form of a written communication. That is the usual procedure of the office, and any digression—"

should watch the progress of the club with the keenest interest, and a sincere desire for its success.

She thanked him, and, smiling again, withdrew.

On Tuesday afternoon Cooper was again at his desk in the District Building, making up the daily budget of news. Washington journalism is peculiar. In some directions it is highly metropolitan in its methods; in others it lies on the plane of the country weekly. In addition to the really important news, it was Cooper's pleasant task to compile daily an assortment of short paragraphs, for which he had just made the beginning by pounding out on his typewriter the following gems for the edification of Washington next morning:

The District Commissioners have denied the application of Michael Healey, 506 F Street, South-west, to erect a bootblack stand at the south-east corner of Ninth and G Streets.

In response to his communication of April 3, a reply has been sent to C. W. Rogers, 3504 P Street Georgetown, stating that the dead tree of which he complained, at the intersection of P and Congress Streets, will be removed.

While Cooper was looking this over with some amusement, a tall, finely-built man entered the room and walked over to his desk. The man, who was evidently a Southerner by dress as well as by speech, appeared for some reason to be much agitated.

"My name," began the stranger, "is



The result of a few hours sport in Manitoba.

"But I went to see Commissioner Anderson, and he sent—"

"Commissioner Benton, I should have said," interrupted Cooper quickly. "When you return home make a written application—"

"But I saw Commissioner Benton, too, and both of them advised me to see you," replied the young lady firmly.

"Oh you did? Well—well, possibly so. You see it's a rather extraordinary request—quite extraordinary. As I said before, you had better make a written statement of the case, and send it by mail addressed to the Commissioners of the District of Columbia. It will then be duly referred through the proper channels, and doubtless—"

"But dear me," broke out the young woman, "school will be over in a couple of weeks! And we've already got the badges. And we promised the boys they would be distributed on Wednesday. And I've heard—evidently she had some tolerably accurate ideas about public affairs, after all—"I've heard," she said, smiling slightly, "that it sometimes takes weeks for matters to be decided that way!"

There was a pleading in her eyes that Cooper could never have resisted as a commissioner, much less as an irresponsible usurper in that place. No authority was required for the existence of the club, of course. Why not give it the commissioner's approval?

So he leaned back in his chair, and told his auditor that no official notice would be required, but she might tell the members, as coming direct from him, that he sympathized with them in this most worthy effort, and that he

Barnwell. Last Saturday my daughter called on Commissioner Charlton, and obtained his official approval for the organization of a club in her school. On returning home it occurred to her that it might not be too much, since the commissioner had expressed such interest in the idea, to ask him to come out on Wednesday morning and distribute the badges in person. So she wrote him to that effect, and what sort of an answer do you suppose she got this morning? Why she got a letter saying that the commissioner did not recall the occurrence to which she alluded, and regretted his inability to be present. Yes, sir, those are his exact words—did not recall the occurrence to which she alluded. Tell me, sir, what do you think of that?"

"Have you—have you seen the commissioner yet?" interrupted Cooper rather nervously.

"Not yet. That's what I came down for this afternoon but it seems he is out. I'll be in again to-morrow," and he set his mouth in a way that looked ominous.

When his visitor had gone Cooper reached into the desk and drew out a sheet of official paper with an envelope to match bearing the customary warning in the left hand corner: "Official Business—Penalty for Private Use, Three Hundred Dollars." In Washington the newspaper men commonly rely upon the government departments for their supply of stationery.

"Yes, I'll do it," said Cooper to himself. "It's a bit risky, but it's the only way out of the scrape just now. Hanged if I wouldn't do it just for the

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