

A CHRISTMAS SURF RIDE.

A Story of the Sandwich Islands.

[Susa Young Gates.]

The sands lay white and firm beneath the occasional wave which ran up and gathered great handfuls of it and then ran back, dashing and rolling it over and over in the sucking undertow. Back of the sea washed line, the sand was a pale yellow under the warm December sun, billowed here and there by the wind into small hills and hollows.

Back of the sand, the mantled grass spread like a glossy green carpet, away up to the darkly wooded hillsides, creeping into the very tracks of the roadway with its long earth-tendrils, blotting out of sight the wheeltracks and footprints of the occasional travelers.

The song in the cane field was stilled, and the grinding of the mill was a forgotten sound to the easy and forgetful ears of the innocent Kanaka.

The cattle, released from the burden of yoke and cart, stood idly in the pasture cropping the short, sweet grass with silent enjoyment of the holiday.

In the grassy hill, and in the more modern, white-washed cottages, the noisy sons and daughters of Hawaii lounged in peaceful idleness, laughing, gossiping, spinning their own quaint jokes, or perchance lying prone on the matting floor, sound asleep, in spite of the noise and laughter about them.

It was Christmas!

Whatever that meant to the haori or white man, it meant a holiday or rather several of them, to the native. For, although Christmas came on Wednesday that year, the natives knew, and the konohiki himself knew, that not another day's work would be done by a native on the plantation that week! It was always so.

Behold the happy children, and these dark people are all as children, laughing and ate their pot and sucked sugarcane in blissful unconsciousness of any special attachment of special sentiment to the Christmas day.

So content to go ambling about, trying to make each other happy on that day, for everybody, that is, every native body, was always and everywhere happy.

Two young men, missionaries they were, lay at full length in one of the white cottages, their heads upon palm pillows, and books propped up before them.

"Fuss, I'm tired of this," exclaimed the older one, his dark eyes filled with weariness, raising his black curly head upon his banded arm, he turned over to his companion and said, "Do you know this is Christmas day?"

"I should think I did," exclaimed the other, stretching his long legs, and stroking the golden mustache which covered the full, sensitive lips.

"Haven't seen a word of this page for two hours; for I could see in my fancy the merry scenes at home, father with his quizzical eyes twinkling and winking away the tears of joy as he saw the little fellows with full hearts hugging the dolls and toys brought by Santa Claus; mother, with my last letter folded to her heart and counting the days of my absence, yet busy, with Aunt Mary cooking the Christmas dinner."

The manly voice broke a little, and the youth got up, as if ashamed of his emotion, and his confession, and said as he yawned and threw his arms above his head:

"What on earth can we do, Harry, to make this day pass? Do think of something original. We've dove into every bottomless hole in the river and bay, we've climbed every mountain, and we've swum every river to its mouth. What is there left?"

"Dunno," answered the other, carelessly. Then suddenly sitting up as if struck with a new idea, he said:

"Say, Foss, let's learn to ride the surf today. What do you say? We can find a board somewhere, and the surf is coming in in grand style today. Let's have a surfride."

"All right," answered Foss, his grey eyes sparkling with animation. "That's precisely the thing. Come along, let's go at once."

And out of the cottage they sped, telling the native "mama," who met them at the door, that they were going down to the sea for a swim.

"Let's run into Hoine's and ask him to give us a few pointers," said Harry, as they passed the fat policeman's door.

"Oh, we've seen them do it over and over," returned Foss, "but I don't mind speaking to Hoine, anyway."

The fat fellow came out and smiled broadly in response to their salutation of "Aloha," and said in answer to their queries:

"Oh, yes, you are fine swimmers, who can ride the surf easy; but you must be careful. You see it is this way; you take your boards and swim out, away out to where the coral reef, hidden two or three fathoms down in the sea, breaks the grand swell into waves. Get fixed a yard or two in front of the biggest or third wave, and just as it begins to break behind you, you on your board, face downward, paddle for dear life; paddle with all your might to get up sufficient speed to get yourself started with the oncoming wave. After you have got well started, the wave itself will carry you along without any more work on your part. Hold your board with end downward, your head with it downward, and your feet on the other end of the board up on the edge or crest of the wave. You will come like the breath of the wind shoreward. Then comes the danger. When you reach the shallow water near the shore, you must raise the end of the board, and dive under the waves, and swim back, or the mighty force of the wave you are riding will carry you onward to the shore and dash you upon it with sufficient force to break your limbs or even your neck. You must be very, very careful. Eh?"

This was said in native, and accompanied by many gestures, descriptive of the whole thing he was describing.

"We will remember, Hoine, and thank you for telling us," answered Harry.

"No kekke akama! loa," said Hoine, meaning they were very smart indeed.

Leaving the policeman with another cordial "Aloha" all around, the two young men took their way down the Erassy slope to the seashore.

"We must have a board, Harry," said the slender young Elder as they paced rapidly along, "for it is useless for us to try and ride the surf without. There isn't a native, except Hoine himself, that can do it."

"All right; but where'll we get the board?"

They looked about them, then separated and went far up and down the beach.

At last, in despair, they returned to the boat house, and Foss said hopelessly:

"Well, Harry, there's nothing in the shape of lumber in sight, except the boat house here."

They looked at each other, with a half-grave, half quizzical glance in

men with colored "kerchiefs" bound about their head to protect their hair, their muscular arms bare to the shoulders, stood pumping the bellows, and alternately bending over the anvil, deftly using a hammer in one hand, and working another hammer with the foot by means of a treadle attachment.

This was severe work and poorly paid in those days—ten shillings per week in truck at the village store—and if the work was at all faulty it was "talled," thereby reducing even this meagre pay. Twelve hours per day were these daughters of Vulcan required to labor their youth away in this manner for a mere pittance.

In a village where nails were made, the houses were built for the purpose, having a "stall" attached which contained the hearth. These stalls rented for about four pence per week. Families working in this way were the year 1606. It is recorded "that the said Sir Bevis Bulmer have invented a new, apt or compendious force or kind of engine or instrument to be put in use driven and wrought withal by water or waterworks as well for the concerning a quicker and more apt and speedy ways and means then knowen experimented and used within our realms and dominions within the time of man's memory for, in, about the cutting of iron into small bars or Rods to serve for the making of nayles for the necessary use and service of us and our subjects."

This is but the commencement of a long preamble setting forth the merits of the machine, but, it was not a success. Other trusty subjects continued to invent and patent nail machinery for the next two hundred years, but not until the year 1811, when a Birmingham firm made the experiment of cutting nails, may have originated by weight and count as the hand-made nail weighed 10 pounds per thousand nails, though some say that does not account for the term penny, unless penny, in that case, meant pound.

As late as 1830, nails were sold by count; 40 nails sold at four pence per hundred, penny, of course, being the English penny. These explanations though different are probably both correct as customs were then localized to such an extent, that even weights and measures varied in different parts of the country. Penny as designating weight, long ago passed out of use, even the length now being designated by numbers, except in local instances.

Twenty years ago we had two qualities of cut nails, iron and steel. They were made practically the same way, with a very simple machine which chopped the nail from the end of a flat

PREPARING FOR YULETIDE IN YE OLDEN TIME.

How Our Great-Great-Grand Mammies Got Ready for the Coming of the Christmas Festivities.



Twentieth century maids do not prepare for the great feast of the dying century as did their fair foremothers. Here we see a brace of pretty maidens spinning the flax for the Yuletide linen—and whispering softly, mayhap, of the mistletoe's sweet significance.

WAKE UP! WAKE UP! IT'S CHRISTMAS MORNING.



On Christmas day in the morning millions of merry midgets all over the world awake to see what Santa Claus has brought. Here is a beautiful halftone showing a Christmas morning scene in a twentieth century nursery. Only one sleepy head is missing the fun, and she soon will be aroused to participate in the grand raid on well-filled stockings.

called "free workers" because they were paid by the pound or hundred weight.

The head of the family secured the rods at the village store. These rods were in sizes to correspond to the size of the nails to be made and were paid for in nails at a fixed price. The nails were supposed to weigh back at about 75 per cent of the weight of the rods, allowing 25 per cent for dross and other waste—a liberal allowance one would think, in these days of machine accuracy. In Staffordshire alone, more than fifty thousand people were employed in this manner.

What a curious comment on human nature to note that these families, including women, were the foremost to resist the encroachment of modern labor saving machinery, even to the use of destructive force.

The first patent for a nail machine was granted by King James to his trusty knight, Sir Bevis Bulmer, in

ing or shearing nails off a sheet of iron was a nail machine considered a success. Americans adopted the same principle and improved upon it so that about the year 1820, cut nails could be made by machinery both in England and America.

It is one thing to invent and perfect machinery, but it is quite another thing to have it adopted and brought into general use. For forty years the nail machine was kept in the background, while the great bulk of the world's supply of nails was made by hand.

The first machinery for making horse shoe nails that could be considered at all successful, was put in operation in 1872, but it required ten years to overcome the prejudice in favor of hand made nails. For still another decade the "new fangled" things would tilt the heads and tip the points to agree with their own ideas.

The term penny, denoting the size of

strip of metal. This metal strip responded in width and thickness to the length and size of the nail to be made. They were fed into the machine by hand, the taper of the nail necessitating turning the strip the reverse side up, as each nail was cut. The blanks were cut, they were caught between the jaws of a vice and the larger end pressed with a die to form the head. This completed the process and the nails were dropped into a trough leading to the keg.

It was a common thing for an iron nail made in this manner to split when being driven, the prongs followed the grain of the wood in different directions. Steel nails made in this way were better because of superior toughness which rendered them pliable enough to clinch. The price of steel nails ranged about 2 1/2 cents more per pound than iron. Iron nails were often treated to an annealing process which answered the same purpose.

Wire nails which are used now so extensively, and comprise such an important item in our exports, were not satisfactory as made at first. Heads were uneven, points on sides, the size was not properly adjusted to the length, stock used was too poor and the price was higher than cut nails.

The exhibit at the Pan-American Exposition will show how these difficulties have been overcome as well as the many slow processes that have led up to the present phenomenal success. With a modern machine in operation, taking wire from the coil, and making number ten nails at the rate of twenty-four hundred per minute, the climax will be reached.

By spending an hour in this department of the Pan-American Exposition with such breech-loading, rapid-fire nail machine one can get a better knowledge of one of our most important industries than could be gained in a month in any other way.

EUGENE FIELD IN ST. LOUIS.

Interesting Career of the Poet in the Journalism of That City.

Eugene Field died on the morning of Monday, November 4, 1895, at his home in Buena Park, Chicago. For twenty-five years he had worked on various newspapers in the West, the last ten or dozen of these in the city by the lake, but outside of a certain circle of intimate friends and associates, brother scribes and patrons of letters, had little or no fame, says the St. Louis Republic. It was after his pencil had fallen from his tired fingers that the record of what this genial worker had done began to be looked over and talked about, and the more it was studied the more all of the reading people of this country became convinced that his going away was an irreparable loss. His fame grows with the years.

Field began his literary career in St. Louis, while at the State university at Columbia he had written some little things for the college paper, but his debut as a newspaper man was made in St. Louis. One day in the early seventies, as nearly as my faulty memory as to dates serves me, he became a member of the editorial staff of the Evening Journal, a paper issued from the building on the northwest corner of Olive and Fourth streets, and in many respects the most remarkable newspaper ever published in this metropolis. It was run on a pay day in its calendar. The reporters, editors, printers, pressmen, struck the counting room daily, morning, noon or night, whenever they entertained a suspicion that the management had "made a killing." If there was any money in the drawer the first called was apt to get it; all subsequent visitors received a delightful smile and returned to their respective duties empty handed. But all this is another story, as some very famous writer of jungle tales has remarked.

It did not take very long for Field to satisfy himself—and his associates on the paper—that he was not of the requisite build for a reporter. He lacked the reporter's nose for news. Then, too, he was shy on energy. Hurrying over the town through all sorts of weather, hot, cold, wet, dry, in search of the news, was not to his liking. There was no trouble about the writing of the items; the difficulty lay in the hunting of them. And so it came to pass that Field fell to writing editorial briefings, and the managing editor, Geo. C. Hume, fell to accepting and printing them.

As nearly as I was ever able to get at it, nobody had ever suggested that he take employment in the editorial rooms—that is, nobody in authority around that establishment had suggested it or made any financial advances in that direction. He just invited himself in and went to grinding out paragraphs and firing them through the regular channel with an industry and confidence that excited the admiration of the "staff." Good paragraphs, too, full of meat, bright as new pins

and touching all conceivable subjects. There were good-natured digs at staid, sober old burghers, pleasant poetical allusions to local happenings, witty wags and then a sharp jab at some fashionable fad. We of the "staff" read them with avidity. We talked about them in our travels over town and present in there was a noticeable increase in the demand for the paper. We used to say of the Journal that it contained two departments that were eagerly scanned by the multitude—the legal advertisements of trustees' sales and Eugene Field's pleasant penellings. On the great while some fellow whom Field had paragraphed would climb upstairs to jaw about it.

"There you are," he would say as the tradesman departed. "You can't get right along for months or years writing complimentary things about a chap and he'll never take the trouble to cross the street to say so or thank you for your kindness. But just write one line that touches a weak spot and stick it away off in the most obscure corner of the paper and you may wage your life insurance policy that his eagle eye will catch it. You'll hear from him sure. Yes, he'll climb four flights of stairs to get close enough to let you hear from him."

Then he'd sigh, "Such is life in the fur West," and take up the pencil for work.

When the paper had gone to press it was our custom to have a song symposium. Field was a fine singer. He did the solo parts, and Aleck Webb, Ash Cohen, Major Emory S. Porter and the writer of these lines made up the chorus. Occasionally, when the spirit moved him, Eugene would fly off in a string of imitations of popular actors, public speakers or well-known characters about town. In these he was exceptionally clever. I recall one in particular that was perfect. Carl Schurz was then a big figure in the public eye, making speeches of a political nature or delivering addresses on his hobby, the money question. Field invariably being deliberate and exact: "Ladies and gentlemen! With your permission I will this evening address to you a few remarks on the subject of our national finances."

Field differed from all the other writers of light and humorous lines that I ever met in that he could not only write funny, but talk funny as well. He was an admirable story teller and possessed of a quick wit.

During a session of the legislature Field went up to Jefferson City to have a close look at things. He planted himself in a room under the hill below High street, and there wrote letters to his papers. Not news letters—bless you, no. There wasn't a line of that sort in them; but they were delightfully readable all the same. Such hilarious biographies of learned lawmakers were never before or since written; such chronicles of happenings that never happened, that could not by any possible means happen, were never before committed to type.

It was a custom with this goodly company to have a "possum" dinner every winter during their meeting at the capital. This was an occasion looked forward to with pleasurable anxiety. There was much conferring over preliminary arrangements of details, planning of order of exercises and so on. Then Howard Barnes had to be chosen. Howard was—and still is—the colored proprietor of a "restaurant" in Madison street. "The finest cook this side of the shining stars," Captain Dan Able would solemnly assert. Field sat at the table with these distinguished "possum" eaters, ate his share of the eat, blew in and came with a relish and told this little story:

Two Afro-Americans were riding along a country road on a cold, blustery day, each mounted on a horse. They fozzed along talking about family and agricultural affairs, until finally the conversation drifted to eatables. When the subject of something to eat came up for discussion the Afro-American recognized his best host. They had touched lightly on several times the imaginary menu, and at last came to "possum."

"How'd ya 'cock 'possum?" asked one.

"Well," said the other with a sort of tuddish deliberateness, "I'll tell ya! I hang 'em out at night 'an freeze 'em tho' an' tho'. Den in de mawnin' take 'em in an' put 'em in a pot an' na' bile 'em. When yo' got 'em pa'biled yo' some biled greens, yuh 'in and lay sweet 'taters an' some passley an' some."

"Shet yo' mouf, yo' fool nighah, does yo' want me to fall off'n dis yere hoss?"

GOVERNMENT BUYS RANCH.

R. D. Hubbard last week received a check for a nice round sum from the government in payment for his share in the Hubbard & Thompson cattle ranch in Montana. In 1882 this firm purchased 1,600 acres of land from the government and used this and adjoining land for grazing purposes. Later the government laid out a reservation for the Northern Cheyenne Indians and this land was included within its boundaries. It became necessary for the government to buy the title acquired by settlers and others, and a bill appropriating \$75,000 for the purpose passed the last Congress largely through the efforts of Congressman McClary. The bill failed in conference in the previous Congress, but Mr. McClary got it started again, and it finally ran the gauntlet and was enacted after having been before Congress for four years.

Hubbard & Thompson gave a deed to their land, which is situated on the Rosebud river, in Custer county, Aug. 4th last, and he has received the amount for which they sold the land to the government, \$55,000. The portion of the State where this land is located is historic ground. It was there that the Indian wars were waged. Hubbard & Thompson were among the first white men to take land there—Mankato (Minn.) Free Press.

POLITENESS PACIFIED HER.

Washington Star: The experience of elevator conductors are many and varied, and the better the judge of human nature more satisfactory can he perform his duties toward those who ride with him. Down at the district building there an elevator man who seems to be perfection in this regard, and the way he makes people happy has often been the subject of comment. An instance of this follows: A few days ago a lady approached him and after getting into the car thus addressed him: "I don't know, and I do not know either what office he is employed in."

"I am well acquainted with the gentleman you refer to," was the instant reply of the elevator man, "and he has just stepped out."

The lady left the car seemingly entirely satisfied with the information she had received.