

dy stood and regarded the place with an immense depression. It would not do at all. It was no better than a cattle pen. He was about to turn away when the two Scanlons appeared on the scene. Their keen noses having scented out a job. The Scanlons were burly half-castes, of a muddy, sweaty complexion, whose trustworthiness and intelligence were distinctly above the average. The Scanlon brothers, to any one in a difficult position, could be relied upon as pillars of strength. There was nothing a Scanlon brother wouldn't do—and do well—for two dollars and fifty cents a day. Mind and muscle were both yours—Scanlon mind and muscle—for this paltry and insignificant sum; and the consul, in a quandary, welcomed the stout, bristly-haired pair as though they were angels from heaven.

In less time than it takes to write, Alfred Scanlon was appointed a United States' marshal, Charles Scanlon, an assistant United States' marshal, and the arrangement was made with them to take full charge of Captain Satterlee during the trial. He was to live in their cottage, have his meals served from the International Hotel, and while carefully guarded night and day, was to be treated "first-class" throughout.

"The law of the United States," boomed out little Skiddy, "assumes that a prisoner is innocent until he is actually convicted. I want both of you to remember that!"

The Scanlons didn't understand a word of what he said, but they saluted and looked very much impressed. When you bought a Scanlon you got a lot for your money, including a profound gravity when you addressed him. It was the Scanlon way of recognising that you were paying, and the Scanlon receiving, two dollars and fifty cents a day!

At the head of his two satellites, who kept pace respectfully behind him, Skiddy next directed himself to find Dillon. Dillon was a variety of white Scanlon, though of an infinitely lower human type, who kept a tiny store and cobbled shoes near the Mulivae bridge; and who, from some assumed knowledge of legal procedure, invariably acted as Clerk of the Court—any court—American, English, or the Samoan High. You associated his heavy, bloated, greasy-fleshed face and black-eyed whiskers as an inevitable part of the course of justice. It was his custom to take longhand notes of all court proceedings, as, of course, stenographers were unknown in Apia; and at times it would seem as though all Samoan justice boiled down to dictating Dillon. As a witness you never looked at the judge; you looked at Dillon, and wondered whether he was taking you down right. A careful witness always went slowly, and used the words that Dillon was likely to understand.

Dillon having been found and engaged, the next procedure was to appoint the assessor judges, of whom the Consular Instructor insisted on their being four. This weighty matter seemed to require the co-operation of the vice-consul, Mr. Beaver, a highly respected quack doctor, whose principal nostrum was faith cure plus hot water.

After arguing away your existence, which he always could do with extraor-

inary fluency, he would plunge you into a boiling bath till your imaginary skin turned a deep imaginary scarlet, and then send you home with some microscopic doses of aconite. The best that could be said of him was that he never really harmed anybody, scalded the poor for nothing, and was willing (and even pressing) to turn over serious cases to the regular practitioner, Dr. Funk.

There were, twenty-seven American citizens on the consular roll of male sex, sound mind, and above twenty-one years of age. Four of them lived far from Apia, and were therefore unavailable. Two more, as known deserters from the United States navy, were considered unworthy of the judgment seat. Forged or suspected naturalisation papers threw out another five. This reduced the residuum to sixteen, whose names were written on slips of paper, thrown into a pith helmet, and tumbled together. The first four withdrawn constituted the assessor judges, who were at once warned by messenger to be in attendance at the consulate at ten the next morning, or be punished for contempt.

What a stir was made in the little town as the news went round! Satterlee, the cherished, the entertained, the eagerly sought after Satterlee had been discovered to be a pirate! The "Southern Belle" was no "Southern Belle" at all, but the James H. Peabody! He had shipped as supercargo, putting in a thousand dollars of his own to lull Mr. Crawford's suspicions, and then had marooned the captain and mate on Ebon Island, and levanted with the ship! Heavens, what eckle, what excitement, what a furious flow of beer in every saloon along the beach! It was rumoured that the great bargain-day sales might be cancelled—that the goods might have to be returned—that not a penny of compensation would be paid to the unlucky purchasers. Then what a rubbing off of marks took place, what a breaking up of tell-tale cases, what a soaking off of tars! The whole eighty tons disappeared like magic, and you could not find a soul who would even confess to a packet of pins!

The trial took place in the large office-room of the consulate. The big front doors stood open to the sea, where a mile away the breakers tossed and tumbled on the barrier reef. The back door was kept shut to keep out the meaner noises of domesticity, but at intervals in the course of the trial you could hear the deliberate grinding of the consular coffee, the chasing of consular chickens, the counting of the consular wash, shrill arguments over the price of fish—a grotesque juxtaposition that seemed to make a mockery of the whole proceedings.

The consul, in well-starched white a diase etad et oirro esthrodttaoiettaeta clothes and pipe-clayed shoes, sat on a dais beneath the crossed flags of his country, giving the effect of an elegant and patriotic waxwork. Below him were the four assessors, sunburned, common-b, sea-faring men, with enormous hands that they did not know what to do with, who moved uneasily in their chairs and looked about for places

to spit—and then didn't dare to. One, whose brawny arms far exceeded the shrunken sleeves of his jumper, unbarred to view on his hairy skin the tattooed form of a naked mermaid. A table stood in the centre of the uncarpeted room, with a lawyer on either side—Purdy, the gouty-haired, dirty, elderly man, half-blind, sharp-voiced, rasping out his case. Opposite him, Thatcher—a slinky, mean-looking young man who was reputed to have left New Zealand under a cloud. He looked what he was, a cheap lawyer's clerk, of the pinched, hungry variety one sees in gloomy ante-rooms. At the head of the table was Dillon, the everlasting dictator, his dyed black whiskers drooping in the heat, who raised a fat hand from time to time as a brake on outstripping tongues. And there the captain, the cause of all this singular assembly, tilting back in his chair, or occasionally leaning over to whisper into his counsel's ear— spare, angular, crew-neck, with his grim mouth and resolute air, as though the soul within him refused to be cowed by such droning foolery.

Beside the front door was a shabby, basket-work sofa, where members of the public were entitled to sit. They would optoe in, these members of the public, furtively, as though expecting to be shot on sight, the bolder ones perhaps exchanging a whisper, the weaker brethren silent and trembling if they caught an official eye. Outside, on the steps of the broad verandah the brothers Scanlon lolled and slumbered, with powder stars on their sweaty bosoms, enjoying the deep contentment that comes with two dollars and fifty cents a day.

The trial lasted two days, but judgment was held over for the third. The case against Satterlee was complete. The San Francisco affidavits, properly made out by competent hands, were confirmed by the confession of Ah Foy, the cook, who (besides Satterlee) was the only present member of the original crew. Satterlee set up the lame excuse that he had purchased the vessel from Crawford, and was, therefore, her actual owner. He was sworn, and gave evidence accordingly, but Purdy's cross-examination left him without a leg to stand on. He cut a pitiful figure as he floundered and lied and contradicted himself under the lash of that relentless tongue, miring himself ever deeper with explanations that did not explain, and agitated references to a "conspiracy" whose object it was to ruin him. No, the only thing to be considered was the degree of punishment that would adequately offset his crime.

On the reassembling of the court on the morning of the third day, little Skiddy, from the majesty of the dais, summed up the case at length. It covered nine sheets of foolscap, and had cost him hours of agonizing toil. Beginning with a general rhetorical statement about the "policy of nations," and the "security of the high seas," he descended by degrees to the crime of barratry—or, in plain English, the theft of ships. He looked at barratry from every side, and the more he looked the less he seemed to like it. It was the cradle of piracy; it destroyed the confidence of owners; barratry, if fre-

quently repeated, would shake the whole commercial structure. A person who committed barratry would commit anything. In this manner he went on and on, reviewing the evidence of the case, destroying the whole fabric of the defense, dwelling at length on the enormity of the entire transaction. The "James H. Peabody" had been deliberately seized. The prisoner had lawlessly converted her, the property of another, to his own base uses. He had broken into the cargo and shamelessly sold it as his own. He could plead neither the extenuation of youth, nor ignorance, nor the urging of others. He had conceived the crime, and had carried it out, single-handed. The court could not accept the contention that Ah Foy, the Chinaman, had been in any sense a confederate or an accomplice. The court dismissed the charge against Ah Foy. But after mature deliberation its unanimous judgment was that John Forster, alias Satterlee, was guilty. The court sentenced John Forster, alias Satterlee, to ten years' penal servitude.

Purdy popped up with some question as to the scale of court fees. Thatcher winked at Dillon, and began to roll up his papers. Skiddy descended from the dais, and became an ordinary human being again. The Captain, leaning forward in his chair, gazed ab-

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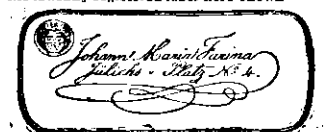
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