

The Silver King.

By FISHER AMES, JR.

"I'd give fifty dollars down for a hundred and seventy-five pounder, in good condition!" declared the host of the Anglers' Anchorage.

"Poof! I'd give five hundred!" laughed the New Yorker, who owned several electric rods and was a director in one or two banks.

"On your own hook and line, sir," amended the host, suavely.

"Of course. On my own hook." The Bostonian dropped a bead of oil on the axle of a dismembered reel, and delicately smeared it over the steel with his finger-tip.

"I had a good one on yesterday, but—"

The New Yorker and the man who favored an eight-ounce rod exchanged the glance of cynical brotherhood.

"We know that one," they said, wearily. "The one that might have been!"

"But my reel was gummy and the line parted," continued the Bostonian, with characteristic deafness. "I think he weighed at least one hundred and thirty. One of the Salem Kents caught a hundred and ninety pounder last season. But that happened at Tampico."

"There's no doubt that Mexican fish run heavier," said the man who always felt a desire to apologize for the Bostonian. "But these are big and game enough for me—when I get one. Three days without a bite!"

"It's a little early," reassured the host. "The main body hasn't struck in yet. When they do there'll be fishing."

The Bostonian, tenderly assembling the oiled bits of steel, smiled coldly.

"Yet you offered fifty dollars for a hundred and seventy-five pounder a minute ago."

"Sure. And I expect to pay the money," said the host. "If I had time, I'd go out and win the reward myself. I want a nice fish for the hall mantelpiece, that's all."

As he bustled indoors, the New Yorker and the man with the eight-ounce rod exchanged another glance of understanding.

"His fifty is safe," said the New Yorker.

"Wish I could feel as sure about my little pile," said the other. "This place is too far up. Only the light scouts will ever get here. Wish I hadn't exchanged old camps for new."

On the lowest step of the veranda, Bert Christianson and Sidney James listened reverently. The new Anglers' Anchorage had dropped like an Aladdin's palace into their surroundings, and every day they came to bask in its atmosphere of elegant leisure. Here were grown men from the North, stout and florid with good living, who talked of fishing as if it were the business of the land. It was upsetting yet fascinating, this new light on the unfamiliar waters of the blue lagoon.

They were fishermen themselves, although in the surreptitious fashion of boyhood. Seining, which is hard work, had the family approbation, but bait-fishing was frowned upon. These men of the North would as soon dynamite the lagoon as sweep it with a net, and here was Host Simpson offering half a hundred dollars for a mere herring! Bert and Sidney exchanged looks that recorded a common vow.

"But where are we going to get the tackle?" mourned Bert. "I've nothing that will hold one as big as that."

Neither had Sidney. As he was considering the problem, the host reappeared and called to him, "Here you, Sid! Take Mr. Worthington out, will you? It's no use waiting for that lazy ducky," he added, to the Bostonian. "Like as not he won't come round, and the boy knows where the fish are all right."

The man from Boston studied the boy through his glasses. The eyes behind them were sharp but kindly. "Perhaps you'd like to try for that fish of Simpson's," he suggested. "I've several extra rods, and you may use one."

Poor Bert! He could not help feeling envious as he watched the joyous Sidney tuck the rod under his arm and sally forth. One by one the other gentlemen, accompanied by their negro boatmen, went down to the landing. No one noticed him sitting there on the step. The clear blue of the sky and the flashing water mocked at him.

"I s'pose they think I'm too young," he said to himself. "Sid's two years older. That's why."

It was not much of a consolation. It was none, in fact. He sat there trying hard to be manly, but seeing the little scattered flotilla of boats through a mist.

Again the host came to the door, and his eye rested on the rather forlorn figure. "Hello, young man!" he said. "How are you—pretty quick on your pins?"

"What, sir?" asked Bert.

"Good with your legs? Can you use 'em? Make 'em move faster than a ducky? I want an errand done at the village, and I want it done quick."

"I reckon I'm quick, sir," said Bert, as a plan darted into his mind.

Lean and wiry from outdoor work, he made the trip to the village and back in less than half an hour, surprising Mr. Simpson exceedingly.

"What, back so quick!" he exclaimed. "You're all right! I'll have to use you again."

He held out a bright quarter, but Bert, flushing, put his hands behind his back.

"I'd be mighty glad to run errands for you, sir," he said, breathlessly, "any time, sir. But I don't want money. If you'd let me have—if you'd—"

"If I'd what?"

"If you'd lend me an old rod, I'd try to catch that tarpon for you."

Mr. Simpson slowly pocketed the quarter. "You think fifty dollars in the lagoon are better than a quarter in the hand, eh? Well, I don't know."

He eyed the boy meditatively. "Ever used a rod?"

"Lots of times. I've caught sea-trout and cavally and kingfish and tarpon, too. But they were small ones," Bert added, truthfully.

"I don't know," mused Simpson.

"Well, all right. I'll let you have a rod and fixings if you'll promise to do more errands. A rod costs good money."

"I'll promise," said Bert.

After a man is tired of trout, and has come to be a match for the skillful salmon, he is likely, if he is a consistent angler, to turn to Southern waters for new conquests. There he will find among the hordes of strange fish eager to take his bait a giant herring, that for weight, agility and cunning is the king of all game-fishes, with the possible exception of the huge leaping tuna. Men who have found salmon-fishing an easy sport have had their pride lowered when they came to cast a tarpon line in some placid lagoon. There are no running waters or eddy-encircled rocks to complicate the battle; nothing but the big fish himself to fight, but the chances are that he will beat you.

Bert had his own logy bateau and his particular friend and admirer, Wash Lee, who stood ready to do menial labor for him at any moment.

It never entered the youthful autocrat's head to ask a favor of Lee. If he planned a fishing expedition, he merely mentioned the fact within Lee's hearing, and it was then understood that the ducky was to do the rowing.

The idea of fishing for tarpon like "de gentlemen from de No'th" inflated Lee with an unusual sense of importance. At the appointed time he appeared at the landing with a brand-new rag round his perennially sore toe, and the left hind foot of a rabbit in his trousers pocket.

"She'll shore bring us luck, too," he confided. "She's de same what Yaller Jack bruck de las' dry spell with."

Bert sniffed. He had not much faith in such charms, at least, when it came to fishing. He put a pop-eyed, slippery, one-pound mullet on the hook and swung it overboard. The velvet cluck of the big reel was inspiring music. He had never held such a perfect rod in his hands before, and his pulse stirred bravely.

There was not a ripple on the surface of the dead blue lagoon. The scattered boats from the hotel lay off to the north, as motionless as if glued there. Bert had chosen new ground near the narrow inlet, where the tide runs in from the sea in long, pulsating jets, like blood in an artery.

He had dropped anchor there at slack water, but the iridescent film that gathers on the surface at such times was now beginning to break up into lines and darkening feathers that glided slowly toward the head of the lagoon. Soon it was all gone. Then the first clean gush of seawater came, lifting the boat a little, and letting it sink gently as it rolled on.

With this green water came predatory fish. Few of them were visible, but now and then a porpoise showed a slice of fat, muddy back, or a piratically slanted fin ripped the surface. In the lagoon there was plenty of gentle prey.

When the tarpon came, it was a descent of Norsemen. Boring their way up the inlet, their bright backs rising and falling, they came in rushing fleets—eager to be the first on the feeding grounds. They stretched from shore to shore like the metal plates of a steel corset, racing so close to the boat that they cast spray into it, but not one noticed the hooked mullet. He was too insignificant all by himself. They wanted a school to charge and devour, worry and scatter. In a few minutes they were gone with the inflow that had brought them.

"We's too far down!" wailed Lee, in despair. "Dey's gone up to de boats, and Sid'll catch our fish, sure. Pull up de anchor, Mister Bert. Pull him up!"

"Pull up nothing," said Bert, sturdily, although he was somewhat pale. He had never seen so many of the great fish before. "I've watched this place, and if you can't catch one here, you can't anywhere."

He drew in his line and put on a vigorous mullet from the bucket. The "bait" scooted here and there, feeling the danger. In every way it did its best to draw that danger down upon its defenseless head; but the sun passed the zenith and sank slowly toward the west, and the reel hung silent on the rod.

The fish "were not biting," as the anglers say. They were there and at work. Patches of shadow and patches of foam mottling the blue of the lagoon showed that the mullet and

small fry were being harried, but no silk line tautened. Anglers are patient folk, but they have their superstitions, and one of them is that when fish show a disinclination to bite, they cannot be made to. One after another, as the sun sunk, they quietly took their rods apart and stole back to the landing; all but Bert and the Bostonian, who had made it a principle to combat all conventional conclusions.

It was high flood. Six hours had passed. The drowsy Lee came out of his cat-nap suddenly, and with an inarticulate expression. Something had surged in the water close by. The drooping line took life and straightened mysteriously.

But before Bert could strike, the water boiled and broke foefully, and a wide dorsal fin cut it like a knife. On the hook were the staring head and bleeding shoulders of a tarpon, the rest of whose body lay in the maw of a thievish shark.

"I reckon we-all better go on home," said Lee, shudderingly. "I doan' like fishing 'fo' sharks."

Bert put on another mullet and cast it clear of the cloudy spot on the water.

"This is where we get action," he said. "Some of 'em are going out hungry."

The bait had scarcely sunk below the surface before the same uncanny upheaval occurred. Again the line crept out and out, stealing away from the boat. Then Bert struck, and with a shower of drops the line straightened like a steel wire, and the rod creaked under the dead weight. It was a dead weight only for an instant. After that it was so much alive that the reel shrieked high to the fierceness of its rush.

One hundred feet from the boat the tarpon shot out of the water. Up he went, his cheeks flaring from the red gills till he seemed all enormous head. Still he rose, foot on foot of blinding silver, and at the great length of him Lee gasped and pulled the rabbit's foot from his pocket.

"Conjure him! Conjure him!" he yelled, and shook the little hairy pad at the fish as it curved in a high arc and fell back, driving foam to the boat.

Now he rushed steadily and straight for the head of the lagoon. The raised tip of the rod put its strain upon him, but a tarpon six feet long is not to be turned or tired by such tricks. Foot after foot of the line spun from the reel. Bert had no finger-stalls, and the thin silk ate hot into the flesh of the thumb with which he tried to brake the line.

Two hundred and fifty feet ran out, and the fatness of the reel was gone before the tarpon swung. He came straight for the boat. Bert reeled frantically. It would not do to give the fish too much slack. There was a dreadful droop to the line when the second leap came and the tarpon rose, higher than before, and slatted his great head vigorously. When he turned in mid-air he bent like a steel bow, and snapped out straight again with a jerk that tossed the line high.

But in the heart of the suds and broken water the line stiffened, and Bert knew he had the fish well-hooked. Well-hooked is far from being safely landed. A tarpon can perform more acrobatic feats than almost any other game-fish in the sea; and a straight rush, if not stopped in time, will inevitably end in a broken line.

Not once did the tarpon sulk. It was straight fighting every minute. With rod and reel and bloody fingers Bert fought back, and the hour that passed seemed a dozen. He was bathed in sweat, and every muscle ached. Even his teeth ached under the dogged pressure of his jaws. Lee chewed on his precious rabbit's foot with savage disregard of its value. He might have ground it up if the tarpon had not intervened.

"During the first half of the second hour the fish seemed as fresh as ever, but a series of huge leaps and their smacking falls tired him. For the first time Bert was able to gather in a hundred feet of line, the tarpon yielding sullenly to the strain. He lay now within a few yards of the boat, dorsal fin out, his six feet of silver gleaming through the water.

"Coax him, Mister Bert!" pleaded Lee, gaff in hand. "Lemme get jus' one jab at him with dis yere pike."

Bert touched the reel with rumbed fingers, but gentle as the pull was, it roused the tarpon to a last fury. Out of the suddenly swirling water he rose, open-mouthed, and before the boys could move he was upon them with an impact that sent Lee and the oars flying, and thrust the gunwale of the boat beneath the surface.

Bert and the tarpon and the broken halves of the centre seat thrashed about on the flooded bottom. The boy's length was less than that of the great fish, but he thrust his hands into the wide gills and wound his legs round the slippery body, and fought with shut eyes. He was fighting in his own element and the tarpon was not. The muscular body ceased to heave under him; and when the streaming Lee cautiously appeared at the gunwale, the rabbit's foot protruding from his lips, the real struggle was over.

The tarpon, stuffed and varnished, hangs over the hall fireplace of the fashionable Anglers' Anchorage, and under it is this inscription: "The Silver King. Caught by Herbert Christianson, June 3, 1907. Weight 204 pounds." And when the new guest stands open-mouthed before it, the host adds something like this: "Yes, sir, that's a record fish for this coast. If I'd known you were coming, I'd have tried to arrange a day with Bert for you. He's our best guide, and his time is booked way ahead."—Youth's Companion.

OF INTEREST TO WOMEN

New York City.—The dress that is worn over a gullepe is one of the prettiest included in the younger girl's wardrobe, and this season it is being shown in an exceptional number.



ber of attractive designs. This one is extremely charming yet perfectly simple and can be made from challis as illustrated, from cashmere, from

Simplicity in Lingerie.

A superfluity of trimming on stout women's lingerie is not desirable on account of its fluffiness, yet the plump type usually likes dainty underwear quite as much as slender women, and so a description of a charming yet suitable model for the former will be interesting.

Blouse or Shirt Waist.

There is no waist quite so useful as the simple tailored one, and this model would be charming made from linen or soft finished pique, from the pongee that is so serviceable and so fashionable, from the thinner madras and also from silk or from washable flannel. It makes a most satisfactory model whatever the material may be, and it suits both the separate waist and the gown. The tucks that are stitched for their entire length give a tapering effect and the wide box pleat allows successful use of the ornamental buttons that make such a feature of the late season. In this case white linen is trimmed with big pearl buttons and worn with a collar of striped lavender and white.

The waist is made with a fitted lining, which can be used or omitted as liked, and consists of the fronts and back. There are tucks over the shoulders that are exceedingly becoming, and there are narrow tucks at both centre front and centre back. The closing is made invisibly at the left of the front. The sleeves are in regulation shirt waist style, with straight cuffs and the neck-band, over which can be worn any style of collar that may be liked, finishes the neck.

The quantity of material required for the medium size is three and

three-quarter yards twenty-four, three and a half yards thirty-two or two and seven-eighth yards forty-four inches wide.

chiffon Panama cloth or any similar simple wool fabric, or from pongee or some material of the sort if a more dressy frock is wanted. In this case the blouse is trimmed on its edges, and the trimming is extended over the centre front of the entire dress, but whether this last shall be used or omitted is entirely a matter for individual taste to decide.

It consists of the over blouse and the skirt. The shoulder edges of the over blouse are joined for a portion of their length, but fall apart prettily over the sleeves, and the under-arm edges can be seamed for their entire length or left open a portion of the way as liked.

The quantity of material required for the medium size (ten years) is three and a half yards twenty-four, three yards thirty-two or two and a half yards forty-four inches wide, with seven yards of banding.

All in the Sleeve. In the new sleeves lie the most novel of the waist features. They vary in length, fulness, shape and method of trimming. They are plain or full; tight from wrist to shoulder, or puffed, or capped, or slashed, and filled in with net or flit. They are extravagantly trimmed or perfectly unadorned.

Scented Buttons. The latest fad in buttons made over molds is to have them scented. Sift powder under the material before making up the novel dress trimmings, then milady's costume breathes just the faintest whiff of her favorite satchet.

New Satin Ruff. The latest neck ruff is merely a satin pleated band with a bow and a single tulle frill at the neck.

Waist Smartness. Crepe de chine of heavy soft texture is, it is said, to be one of the leading materials for fall waists for tailor-mades. Net of the same color as the gown is also to be used.

The Classical Bandeau. The chaste and artistic simplicity which is the characteristic feature of the jewelry of the moment is nowhere seen to greater advantage than in the classical bandeaux now so fashionable.

Station Sergeant—"Are you married?" Prisoner—"No, sir." Officer—"Beggin' your pardon, sarge, he's wrong. When we searched him we found in his pockets a clipped receipt for curin' croup, a sample of silk, an' two unposted letters in a woman's handwritin' a week old."—Tit-Bits.

A ready speaker will utter about 7500 words an hour in making an address.

SCIENCE AND INDUSTRY

The solar orb would appear blue to anybody who should view it outside of this planet's atmosphere.

Professor Rubner, of the University of Berlin, has just invented a registering apparatus which enables one to calculate the number of noise waves striking upon the ear in any given period.

A petrified forest covering an area of one hundred square miles has existed for centuries in Arizona. Thousands and thousands of petrified logs strewn the ground, and represent beautiful shades of pink, purple, red, gray, blue and yellow. One of the stone trees spans a gulf of forty feet wide.

In accounting for the rumbling or rolling of thunder, which has heretofore been explained by the echo theory, it is now stated that a flash of lightning is made up of innumerable smaller flashes, which go to make up the whole. The rolling thunder is due to the primary sounds of successive discharges or flashes.

Professor Louis Agassiz, many years ago, first announced that the ice sheet, or glacial flow, at the north-west of Maine could not have been less than a mile deep; while later geologists have confirmed his statement, adding the more recent conclusion that the ice was of that thickness at least over the larger part of New England.

The boring of an artesian well is not an easy task. The well of Grenelle (France) required from December 24, 1833, to February 26, 1841, for completion. The one at Passy of the same depth took only two years to make. Our engineers now count upon one year in which to complete the well of Maisons-Laffitte. This well is already at a depth of 460 meters. It will go to a depth of 550 meters.

An electric truck, its movements absolutely controlled by wireless electric waves, has been installed in the yards of the Union Pacific Railroad, at Omaha, where its operations startle the uninitiated. To see a motor truck, attached to several other trucks, heavily loaded, start along the tracks or suddenly stop without any apparent cause, making its way through the big yards unattended, is sufficient to startle most people.

A Promise Given. Representative Longworth, at a dinner party during the Republican convention in Chicago, talked about honest politics.

"Honest politics alone pay in the end," said he. "Your dishonest politician comes out like Lurgan of Cincinnati."

"Lurgan, of Cincinnati, was canvassing for votes. He dropped in at a grocer's."

"Good morning," he said. "I may count on your support, I hope?"

"Why, no, Mr. Lurgan," said the grocer. "I've promised my support to your rival."

"Lurgan laughed easily. "Ah! but in politics," said he, "promising and performing are two different matters."

"In that case," said the grocer heartily, "I shall be most happy to give you my promise, Mr. Lurgan."—Washington Star.

Rural Police Desirable. Change will come slowly under our American system of dividing States, cities and towns and having no general police, but it is idle to suppose that a country with no rural police, and only a common courtesy uniting its city police, can keep human life as safe or track murderers as surely as the enveloping dragnet an English or European police can spread over an entire country. Our States need an efficient rural police, in constant service, patrolling the roads. Closer relations between the police and our cities must come if crime is to be successfully suppressed.—Philadelphia Press.

The Feminine Way. His Wife—"John, these shoes don't fit me at all. You'll have to take them back and get me another pair." Her Husband—"Why, they look comfortable." His Wife—"Yes, that's the trouble. I've had them on nearly an hour, and they don't hurt in the least, so, of course, they are entirely too big."—Chicago News.

A Married Man. Station Sergeant—"Are you married?" Prisoner—"No, sir." Officer—"Beggin' your pardon, sarge, he's wrong. When we searched him we found in his pockets a clipped receipt for curin' croup, a sample of silk, an' two unposted letters in a woman's handwritin' a week old."—Tit-Bits.

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