

T-BONE SLIM

DISCUSSES

TALL TALKING AND TALL TIMBER

"Lumber Jacking" is not exactly "a delightful pastime"—it is not, all, solid enjoyment. It is not a vocation tempered by balmy zephyrs or scents of magnolia—'tleast not in Minnesota—it is not a gradiloquent gesture.

It is something ordinary and substantial—hardly a fortnightly flirtation for saviors and idealists.—And, since the abolition of "lunches," and the substitution of Meals 35 cts., it is even less a paradise and resembles less the halcyon days of treasured remembrance:

I told Jack to do the talking to the cook insofar as I felt sorely depressed and not able to raise my spirits to the surface, which he did—and soon they were exchanging happy recollections of the time they both were in the Minneapolis workhouse and the cook quite oblivious of what he was doing carried out doughnuts for us even while we absent mindedly dipped coffee for ourselves.

Just then the "walking boss" came in. With a glance we saw that he had never seen the inside of a workhouse—much as he deserved it—and with a glance we saw he didn't take kindly to our presence.

"We're not hiring anybody," he opens up; "we're full-handed and, (looking hard at us) we don't feed anybody."

"I see you don't," injected Jack, looking at the doughnuts.

"But you're fillin' up, aint you?" snarled the walker.

"Trying to, trying to," corrected Jack, but I'm not having much success—you can see, yourself."

"Well, there's no use in bucking your luck—git out of this camp . . . and STAY put," he added.

"Hold on, hold on," pleads Jack, "we can't leave until you pay us off—for today's work."

"Today's work? Why, it's only 9 o'clock now," ejaculated the boss.

"That makes no difference. We're here in the capacity of workers, not camp inspectors. We intended to go to work, and, according to American law, intent to commit work is as bad as the actual knack of performing the act—we intended to work three days," explained Jack.

"Well, I'll be damned," says the walker, "you've got three days coming—that's the hell of it—you'll still have it coming when you leave, but—don't be in a hurry—it's getting too late to go any place today, so you better stay here and rest up—and, when you leave, see the cook before you go. . . ." And so, still speaking encouraging words the mighty "walker" wheeled on his heel bent on climbing the frame of the first foreman that may stray into his "swath."

And John and the cook returned to the matter of the Minneapolis workhouse.

—T-b. S.