

# How I Worked My Way AROUND THE WORLD

## TIMELY TIPS FOR THE YOUNG MAN WHO THINKS HE MUST STAY AT HOME BECAUSE HE ISN'T RICH



pleasure. I shudder even now as I think of those awful precipices. Had the burro made a slight mistake I would have been dashed into eternity. The days were beastly hot and the nights cold. On our journey we passed through the most beautiful village I ever saw, Chilpancingo. We lived on food purchased from the natives and at night always found some one who was willing to provide us with lodging. At the end of the tenth day we arrived at Iguala, and the next morning, purchasing a ticket, I boarded the train for Mexico City, arriving there 12 hours later with the enormous sum of \$1.00 in my pocket, clad in a linen suit and a Mexican sombrero.

I spent the night at the hotel Dos Republicas, paying 50 cents for a room, and went to bed hungry. In the morning I discovered that I was up against a tough proposition. Americans looked upon me with suspicion on account of my clothing and it was simply impossible to get work. In my dilemma I called upon the Y. M. C. A. secretary for advice. He kindly gave me a letter of introduction to an American lady who he thought would be able to help me.

I found the person and she entertained me for a full half hour by indulging in spasms of laughter. I never saw a person laugh as she did, and when she finally got control of herself she begged my pardon, saying she couldn't help it; I looked so funny. I didn't feel funny at all, but on the contrary, was boiling over with rage. She proved to be my fairy godmother, transforming me in a very short time into a white man with the aid of her brother's clothing.

Learning that I was something of a nurse, she introduced me to a number of the physicians and in two days I was on a "case" paying me 10 pesos per day, board and room. From that time on everything was plain sailing. I was always busy, receiving from 10 to 35 pesos per day for my services. A month later I had the honor of escorting my benefactress to the Zacatecana ball clad in my own full dress suit and hired a victoria and cocher for the occasion. On the way to the

CABIN BOY ON A RIVER STEAMER.



WITH LOWE'S SCOUTS TO NORTHERN COAST OF LUZON.



ASLEEP AT THE WHEEL.



JOINED A DOG & PONY SHOW AS A WAITER.



SHIPPED WITH A LOAD OF MULES FOR SOUTH AFRICA.

THEY INSISTED THAT I DRINK WITH THEM.

By Frederick W. Ely

BELIEVE that nearly every young man has a desire at some time or other to travel and see the world, but many are deterred from so doing by a lack of the necessary funds. It seems to be the general impression that in order to travel one must have a large amount of money. I used to think that way myself, but have found out that I was mistaken. During the last few years I have traveled something like 100,000 miles, with my labor as my only capital, and I believe that it is possible for any young man to do the same, providing he is willing to work at anything, suffer a few inconveniences and is strictly honest. And, furthermore, I firmly believe that in "seeing the world" in this manner one gains a knowledge of the world and its affairs that can be acquired in no other way; and this knowledge alone is worth any hardships one may be called upon to endure. At least such has been my experience.

I entered upon my career in New York city, where I found myself with no friends and with but very little money. I was fortunate enough to have good clothing, which enabled me to make a respectable appearance. And right here I wish to say that a good appearance counts for a great deal. It also inspires confidence, without which it is impossible to succeed. For several days I had haunted the office of an employment agency, of the better class, hoping and praying for work, and at last my efforts were successful. I obtained a position as companion to an elderly, refined gentleman of considerable wealth. I was in clover. My duties were light and surroundings congenial. I had been with this kind of gentleman but a short time when we made a trip abroad, touring England, Ireland and Scotland, visiting Paris and Rome. We traveled first class and always put up at the best hotels. Nothing occurred to mar the pleasure of the trip and I enjoyed it all immensely. I have often thought since that fate intervened to make this my initial trip, one of unalloyed pleasure in order to lure me on; certain it is that had I encountered

some of the hardships then that became my lot later I would have settled down at home, "no more to roam."

**In Construction Gang**  
Upon our return to God's country we went down to Palm Beach, Florida, where I soon found myself out of employment owing to the sudden death of my good old benefactor. I drifted to Galveston, where, for want of something better to do, I went to work on the construction gang of the street railway company, boarding with the boss. The work was hard, but the board was harder, the bill of fare consisting of steak, split peas and spuds, cooked up in large quantities at breakfast time, then served in disguise for dinner and supper. I accomplished a wonderful feat in that boarding house—secured clean sheets for my bed. But the maid of all work decided that the towel always was "good for another wipe."

From Galveston I shipped with a load of mules bound for South Africa, my work being to feed and water those same mules. Having considerable leisure time I made a special study of "mule character" and gained one or two points which have been a great help to me in my career, viz.: Stick-tiveness and just how and when to make a "kick" most effective. I had anticipated a somewhat lengthy sojourn in South Africa, but was disappointed, as I was compelled to return on the same vessel. We came back empty, and as we had nothing to do, it was a very monotonous trip and I was glad when we at last arrived at Newport News.

I next visited Mobile, Ala., where I shipped as a deck hand aboard a Norwegian vessel bound for British Honduras. I was practically the only English speaking member of the crew, but I did not have time to get lonely, as I was kept busy scraping ventilators, scrubbing decks and at night taking my turn at the wheel. I shall never forget my first watch. I knew absolutely nothing about a mariner's compass. The first mate gave me some instructions in broken English and gave me the course, warning me not to take my eye off the needle and to be sure to keep it at a certain point on the compass. Then he settled himself down for a snooze and soon, unintentionally, I did likewise. I simply could not keep awake. It made me sleepy watching that needle. I awoke with a start to find that we had completely changed our course. I tugged furiously at that wheel and turned the ship about at such a speed that the entire crew were awakened and rushed on deck, thinking we had met with some accident.

**Shared Meals With Pig**  
We touched at various ports along the coast of Honduras, taking on a cargo of bananas, then made a quick run back to Mobile, but none too quick for me. I never ate a meal during the trip but what I had to share it with the ship's mascot, a pig, whose table manners were most hogish. Arriving at Mobile I decided to go north, but this was easier said than done. I seemed to be hoodooed, but would no sooner start to work than the sawmill would shut down for repairs. The last sawmill I worked in did not shut down, however; it didn't get a chance—it blew up. It was a grand and awful sight to see that sawmill soaring in the air. I had one good position in the south. It was as engineer in an enormous cottonseed oil plant. I had to work only 12 hours each night, and had to look after a Corliss engine, an electric dynamo and a hydraulic pump. My pay was \$1.25 per night. Fortunately the supply of cottonseed gave out the second night or that mill might have blown up too, as I took the job on my nerve, never having had any previous experience as engineer. I took a side door Pullman to New Orleans, where I shipped as cabin boy aboard one of the river steamers and made the trip up the Mississippi to St. Louis.

Such a delightful journey that was! Every night the negroes would gather on the deck and sing the old plantation songs and dance in the moonlight and some of the older ones would spin such wonderful yarns about slavery days, and then there was the excitement of "shootin' craps"; ah, I tell you there wasn't a dull moment on that whole trip. At St. Louis I joined a dog and pony show, going as a waiter. We traveled east, making all the principal towns and some of the smaller ones. I remained with them until we arrived at Syracuse, N. Y., where I was taken ill and had to go to the hospital. In order to make room for some other unfortunate I was discharged from the hospital before I had fully recovered. I was unable to work and the Salvation Army was kind enough to take me into its industrial home, where I had the opportunity of my life to study human nature.

**Home a Dickens Paradise**  
I never saw such a variety of characters gathered together under one roof as I found there. Charles Dickens could have found material for some wonderful stories in the characters that were in that home. Very soon I went on to New York city, where I obtained a position with a big advertising firm. I remained with them nearly two years and during that time I traveled through every state in the union, tacking up signs, etc. It was a wonderful opportunity to see my own country and make a fairly good living at the same time. When I arrived in San Francisco I severed my connection with the firm, as I had decided to visit the orient. I was fortunate enough to procure a position in the steward's department on one of the

big liners plying between San Francisco and the orient. I made three voyages on that steamer, visiting Honolulu, Yokohama, Kobe, Nagasaki and Hongkong. I had shore leave at every port and did a wonderful amount of sight seeing. I left the ship at Hongkong on my third trip, from which place I paid my passage to Manila, where for a time I was employed at a candy store on the Escolta as a dispenser of ice cream soda and other drinks. Having a little knowledge of medicine and nursing, I easily obtained permission to accompany Lowe's scouts on an expedition through the interior to the northern coast of Luzon; saw a little fighting and a great deal of the country in return for the little service I was able to render my companions. I was given free transportation back to San Francisco.

**Off for Panama**  
Feeling the need of a little rest, I took a trip down to Carmel to visit a friend. While there I took a notion that I would like to visit Panama and soon after passed the examination for a position as nurse in the government hospital at Panama and in a short time received my appointment. Of course I was given free transportation, so that there was no expense incurred. I remained there six months and certainly earned my salary. There is something about the climate there that makes a man irritable. A healthy man was mad enough, but a sick one was anything but agreeable. Upon leaving Panama I paid my passage to Acapulco, Mexico, and on the way up stopped at a few of the principal ports of the Central American republics. I had decided to leave the ship at Acapulco and make an overland trip through Mexico. I was much interested in the historic old town of that it had once been the principal seaport of the Pacific coast. While there I nearly lost my heart to a little senorita, but I knew that I simply never could become used to their mode of living. Then, too, I was always prejudiced against international marriages. So I sought safety in flight. I stole away under cover of darkness, travel-

ing on foot, headed for Iguala, where I expected to take the train for Mexico City. I had arrayed myself in native garb and as I trudged along that night over the lonely trail, the telegraph wires my only guide, I was about as forlorn a creature as could be found in the universe.

**Among Drunken Indians**  
I had walked for several hours when I saw looming up in the path directly ahead of me the figure of a man. As I drew nearer, for I dared not turn back, he called out in Spanish and immediately there swarmed about him a score or more stalwart Mexican Indians. I was paralyzed with fright. I knew I would lose what little money I had and perhaps my life, but was utterly helpless. They began to circle about me, exclaiming all the while, "Americano, Americano!" I was relieved to find that they did not offer to molest me. They were all drunk on mescal and insisted that I drink with them, which I pretended to do, simply touching the bottle to my lips. It seemed to be a source of amusement to them and I earnestly wished that I might share in their pleasure, but I could not see where the joke came in. I was allowed to proceed on my way, and the early morning hours found me in the little town of San Marcos.

Here I had the good fortune to meet a Spanish senora who spoke very good English and who was able to give me much valuable information. I learned that I would have to travel nearly 300 miles in order to reach Iguala and that the journey was looked upon as most hazardous. Through her efforts I secured a young muchacho as guide; also two burros. That night I spent at the home of my Spanish friend, occupying the guest chamber, the principal feature of which was an altar and a life sized statue of the Virgin Guadalupe, the patron of Mexico. The surroundings were uncanny, to say the least, and I slept with one eye open all night. We were off bright and early and for the next few days we did nothing but climb mountains. I was never so near heaven and the other place before or since. Had that burro so willed he could have ended my career at his

ball my companion broke into a hearty laugh, saying that she could not help but think of how funny I looked the first time we met, and what a wonderful change had taken place in my life in the space of one short month. I was called upon to nurse the German ambassador at his palatial residence in Coyacan, a beautiful suburb of Mexico City. He became quite attached to me and, upon his recovery, insisted that I remain with him as a companion. I was delighted with the proposition, for he was most congenial. My salary was good and I had servants to attend to my every want.

Such a change had come into my life and its surroundings that I was forced to stop and ask myself the question "is it?" I traveled with the ambassador to Vera Cruz, where we took the steamer for Havana, remaining in that city a month and then went on to New York, where he took passage for his own country. It was with a genuine regret that I parted with him, for he had been a "good fellow." Surely I discovered a gold mine in Mexico! I spent most of my savings seeing New York both by daylight and lamplight, and when I got down to the last penny I looked for work. I agreed to take a consumptive out to Colorado. It took us something less than four days to make the trip, but it seemed like four weeks to me. That man was a regular fiend, but I suppose the poor fellow couldn't help it. However, when we arrived at Colorado Springs and I had seen him comfortably settled I lost no time in hitting me away to Denver, where I went "broke" on my part, for I had to go to work washing dishes for a living. I believe some call it "pearl diving." I left Denver in charge of some horses bound for San Francisco, arriving here only a few months ago, and here I have remained. Whether this is to be the end of my journeys I cannot say. It has all been most interesting to me and yet somehow I cannot help but feel that I have missed the best things in life. I look about me and see so many of my old friends so very happy and contented in their home life; for after all, "there's no place like home."