

# *A Heart to Heart Talk with Mr. Ranger*

By ANTONIO P. RACELIS  
*Forester, Bureau of Forestry*

A ranger is not a man who will scare anybody to death. He is not a highway-man either, although sometimes he may stop and arrest somebody on the highway who is trying to steal timber or makes a caingin or commit other forest violations. He is not, as he is used to be called in the United States, "any old tie-hack"; neither is he a scarecrow nor a bugbear, but a living human being, pure and simple—a "homo sapiens". The bard sings of the dignity of his life:

"His throne, a lofty mountain peak,  
His realm, the country 'round,  
His joy, the bursting sunsets  
His life, what God sends down.  
His law, the law of the great outdoors,  
His power, a mighty force—  
The trust of God and man combined—  
And service is its source."

He is in fine nothing more than an ordinary man, with adequate training in the fundamental principles of forestry, capable of doing and handling field and office work for the Bureau of Forestry. His training and experience fit him wonderfully for the job he is in.

In order to be a good ranger four qualifications are necessary, namely; honesty, intelligence, industry and courage.

A ranger must first of all be honest. Though the work he does is largely done right in the brush, naturally far from the sight and observation of the more responsible man in the office, it should show, as far as is practicable, accurate information. In other words, it must be reliable; but a ranger can not make it so unless he be

honest. If he does his work in a haphazard way, I can not see how the information could be possibly be reliable. Psychologists point out that a man is more apt to be a guesser than a knower. Suppose a man is sent out to examine a tract of forest land in order to make a report on the area as to topography, the amount of timber, etc. He goes out perhaps full of "pep" but very soon there comes a hard rain. He naturally gets wet and then he gets tired, and perhaps disgusted with his guide. By and by you will hear him say awful words. Finally he comes to examining the land. He will probably say; "O well, I'll just guess at that, at that, and at that. Nobody will ever know how I came by the information, and I don't care," "I guess I don't care"—these are the things that put a chill into the hearts of the men holding responsible positions in the Bureau; these are the things that deserve our special attention. You have got to be honest. That is all there is to it. In fact you need not have much sense to be honest. Remember, forestry cannot afford to have dishonesty in its work. It is a weed—that is all—we have got to kill it. No, I will not say that, for I want to be rational in my treatment—we have got to uproot it.

A ranger must be intelligent. By intelligence here I simply mean a greater degree of common sense. An intelligent ranger is one who possesses common sense. Another thing he must have is a good deal of capacity for painstaking work. He who is not careful in his work has hardly any common sense. That's a fact. If he is sent out to do a piece of work, he is required to turn in a satisfactory report. How can you ex-

pect him to get good results if he lacks even common horse sense? For instance, you do not want in your report all the unnecessary details which do not mean anything but simply fill the report in with a whole lot of words. It is of course an attempt at showing fine erudition, but it is liable to come out a muddle. What if what you say in your report does not correspond to what you have beautifully drawn on your sketch man? It's not common sense. It is non-sense. That's all. You can pick up for yourself hundreds upon hundreds of instances in connection with this topic and you will finally reach the conclusion that intelligence,—a greater degree of common sense—is indispensable in the work of a ranger, nay, in almost any kind of work, for the simple reason that if there are blunders committed they are not only a financial loss but a time loss as well.

A ranger must be hardworking. The area under his jurisdiction is frequently so extensive and so rugged that he cannot afford to be indolent and stay most of the time in the office doing clerical work. He is supposed to travel a good deal, covering many kilometers of distance a day, frequently with no other means of transportation than his own legs, to examine all cutting operations, and to detect timber-stealing and caingin-making. If his feet are heavier than his heart in doing outdoor work, he can not hope to discharge his duties satisfactorily. People will have reason to say that he well deserves the title of any "tie-hack", or "a good-for-nothing timber chaser." What is required of him is thorough and painstaking work. For example, if he is sent out to inspect a license area of considerable extent, he should not visit some cutting areas and skip the rest, where possibly some cases of flagrant violation may be found, but he should go thoroughly over all the area, without paying attention to the guide, if he tells him that there are no more cutting areas to inspect. Frequently guides are reluctant to show all the cuttings because the way

may be extremely difficult requiring several hours' hike, and making it impossible for them to go back to the stopping place in the barrio that night, where perhaps a fairly good looking "dulcinea" is eagerly waiting for the prompt return of her gallant knight.

A ranger has got to be hardworking. There is no joking about it. His partial and superficial examination of the cutting areas is a distinct reflection on what he is capable of doing. It shows markedly the degree of his industry in performing work of this kind. You can not make your superiors believe that you are working hard unless you become an inspiration to them in all duties well done. The inspiration is derived more or less from honesty and self-respect, which compel a man to be up and doing. Furthermore, a man who (does not have a high sense of duty), is likely to let his duties go, particularly if he is far from the sight and observation of his superior. Near or distant, in sight or out of sight, a ranger should do his work satisfactorily to the best of his ability and knowledge. That ought to be the spirit which characterizes a ranger.

Lastly, a ranger must have courage, his honesty and industry will amount to naught if he is easily frightened, and if he is not courageous, for the simple reason that he is likely to forego all his plan of work, just because he lacks sufficient courage to resist intimidation. If a ranger is running a traverse classifying and delimiting public lands and happens to chain through alleged private property, he sometimes comes face to face with the resistance and the intimidation of the "owner" of the land who does not intend to allow him to measure his alleged property. What happens is that the ranger insists on measuring through the land, and the squatter resists to the extent of threatening him with violence. You need not be moved by such a ludicrous resistance. It is but natural for an uninformed man to feel irritated whenever somebody commits what he erroneously thinks is trespass on his property. You should not get chicken-

hearted or lose your temper, but hold firmly to the conviction that what you are doing is for the public and not for any particular person. The law is with you and you are protected by the government. What you should have in you at that very moment is just a particle of the courage of Ranger Pulasky, (1) who in spite of danger besetting him and his party, braved and challenged his fearful odds. Any intimidation or threats should be resisted notwithstanding the consequences; at the same time you should be sufficiently cautious, and deal with the person kindly but firmly. That is courage well displayed—duty well done.

With all the foregoing qualifications, you as a ranger are capable of doing all kinds

---

(1) Ranger Pulasky was in the employ of the United States Forest Service when he met danger in the form of a big forest fire that broke out in one of the regions in his district. It was so appalling that had it not been for his courage, all his men and some inhabitants of the region might have perished in this conflagration.

## North Star Lumber Company, Inc.

26-28 Plaza Moraga  
Manila

EXPORTERS OF LOGS  
AND LUMBER

Cable Address: NORLUMCO      P. O. Box 3150  
Tel.: 3-82-61

of work that may be assigned you by the Bureau, without shirking responsibility. You may be many miles away from your superior, in one of the lonely islands in the Archipelago, but with your honesty and self-respect your work will always be reliable. You may have plenty of work to do, but with your intelligence and care you can dispatch it with promptness and put all your information gathered from the field in an accurate and comprehensive report; you may have a big territory to cover, but by being hard-working you can visit all the places under your jurisdiction and with no more equipment than a compass, a bolo and a haversack you can hike miles and miles in a day and climb mountains ordinarily inaccessible to the majority of the people. And finally, you may face danger on the way by having to cross a swift river without a banca, or you may be threatened, but never humiliated. And with courage unflinching, that courage which has been taught and imparted to you and instilled in your mind while in the Forest School, you will almost always come out triumphant, and able to show the exemplary courage of Ranger Pulasky. (*Reprinted from the "Makiling Echo"*)

### PHILIPPINE FORESTER . . .

(Continued from page 26)

work put in by the latter, the profession was "99 per cent perspiration and one per cent imagination."

De la Cruz also wanted one of his children to be a physician. He was only partially successful in this. His only daughter, he said, became a nurse and later married a physician.

Two months ago, de la Cruz' first grandchild was born to his daughter. The forester hasn't seen the grandchild yet.

And though he expressed gratitude to MSA, the Forest Service, the Department of Agriculture and many other public and private agencies which he said had made his U.S. trip very pleasant, he was just like any other first-time grandfather about wanting to see that grandchild.