

state, Bill, wrapped in the sarong of some pious Mohammedan.

"Not me," I replied, "too buggy—my rain coat will have to do."

No, Bob in the sarong and I in my rain coat, we stretched out for a long, cold night. We finally went to sleep to the monotonous beat of the agongs across the way, and the drumming of the rain on the nipa roof.

We had been here in Manila for two or three months, maybe longer, enjoying the shows, catching up on a bit of back eating and the like, when I was called to Camarines Norte to examine a property. The day before I left I had suggested a farewell game of golf to Bob, but he had begged off on the ground of a peculiar numbness in his right hand. "Must have acquired a touch of rheumatism in Cotabato," he said, "notice how it's drawn my little finger?" He had held up his hand for me to see, and it was all twisted and contracted out of shape. "We'll have the game when you come back, Bill."

But we never did.

The job took a little longer than I had expected. When I did get back to Manila, Bob was gone and his letter, three months' old, was waiting for me. He had written—

"Dear Bill:

"I went to see the Doc about my hand shortly after you left, and Bill—the Moro woman was right. It was a *swallow maulad* we stayed in that night. If we could have understood her, we would have pushed on, regardless of the rain. I've got it, Bill * * *

and I'm off to Cullion.

"It was that damned sarong that did it. Thank God you didn't take my suggestion and roll in with me! And now, Bill, I'm depending on you to carry out a little last favor for me. Mildred must never know about this.

"I've thought it all out carefully and decided that it is best that I should be dead. Much better for her to think me dead than to be a living horror to her. I am dead anyway, Bill, for all practical purposes, so she will only be a white lie that you tell her, quite justifiable. With me reincarnated over here alive, I would be a bar to her future happiness, and even if I got well there would always be that doubt that neither of us could dispel.

"You can handle it, Bill, I'm banking on you. And now all hail and farewell. *Are Casar, moriturus le saltemus.*" The boatman is waiting to ferry me over the Styx, and I can't keep him waiting. It's sunset, Bill, and I'll soon be alone in the dark. So long!

—Bob."

In due time, because it was best, I told Mildred how Bob had died in central Mindanao, in eight minutes, from the bite of a *doyley-poo*, a cobra—with her picture in his hand and her name on pale lips.

It was almost six years ago. Mildred is married now. I have been around the world and back again, every place except the islands. Never there. Sometimes Bob's little nurse must come to him, as he sits watching the sun go down. "The doctor says that you are better, much better, and maybe, some day * * *." But Bob only smiles—the gray smile of a man who has seen his world tumble about his ears, the smile of a man for whom there is no tomorrow, the smile of a man dead among the living dead—watching the sunset.

Tropical Landscape Architecture

(Continued from p. 13)

is universal.

It is true that many of the best effects are obtained by grouping together plants from many countries and climes, but it is also true that many plants which would be an ornament to any garden are passed by unnoticed because they are wild and common. Such ornamental native plants are particularly desirable because they are already adapted to the climate and are usually easy of culture, not to mention that they usually improve in attractiveness under cultivation.

Improving Buntal Fiber and Buntal Articles

By SALVADOR DEL MUNDO*

The Bureau of Science receives many requests for information in regard to a comparatively inexpensive process for improving the appearance of buntal fiber, not only from various local hat dealers and commercial houses exporting native hats and fiber, but also from private parties. Information that may be valuable to the various people who are interested in the subject is given in this paper.

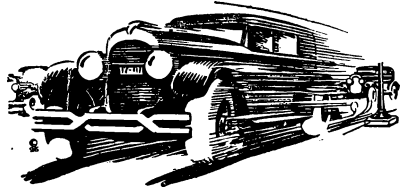
Buntal is the name given to the flexible material obtained from the fibrous bundles of the petiole of the matured leaf of bunt palm, *Corypha glabra*. When recently and properly pulled from the petiole, these fibers are white and glossy, but when exposed to air and light they become discolored and acquire an ugly brownish tint. The fiber is extensively woven into baskets, handbags, and similar household articles of

commercial value, but by far its most important industrial application is in the making of hats which are sold under the name of buntal. Baliang or Luchau, accordingly as the hats have been made in Baliang, Bulacan, or in Luchau, Tayabas. Buntal hats have met with favorable reception in foreign countries and the demand has created a profitable home industry. By request of local firms engaged in exporting native hats, experiments were performed in this laboratory with a view of evolving a comparatively cheap process of improving the appearance of buntal fiber or hats.

In evolving the process outlined below, it was not the primary object to produce a perfect bleach such as may be accomplished with the use of more powerful bleaching agents, sodium

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peroxide for example. Rather, certain desirable features were borne in mind and duly incorporated in the method, namely, the relative low cost of material, the absence of any injurious effect on burlap fiber, and the relative ease of manipulation involved. The present process was tried and thoroughly tested with a number of Haining and Looe hats, and the results obtained were satisfactory even when the operator was inexperienced in the art of bleaching.

METHOD

Materials.—Two solutions are required, a bleaching agent to be designated as solution 1, and a decolorizing bath designated as solution 2.

Solution 1:	Paris
Commercial potassium permanganate.....	5
Commercial sodium carbonate (dry).....	2
Water.....	1,000

Preparation.—Measure out the required quantity of water. Add the solid ingredients a few portions at a time, stirring briskly to aid in dissolving the solid particles. To secure a homogeneous solution, continue stirring for some time after the complete solution of the solid chemicals.

Solution 2:	Paris
Hypo (sodium thiosulphate).....	20
Water.....	1,000
Dilute sulphuric acid sufficient to render acid.	
Note: Acidity solution 2 when it is ready for use.	

Preparation.—Pour the weighed amount of hypo into the measured quantity of water, a little at a time and with constant agitation. When all the hypo has dissolved, pour in about 2 cubic centimeters of commercial sulphuric acid for each liter of hypo solution. An excess of acid should be avoided. Stir. Note the evolution of a peculiar, pungent odor in the acidified hypo solution. The gas which causes this odor effects decolorization, and the absence of odor would tend to indicate that solution 2 is weak, in which case more acid should be added. Solution 2 becomes milky white in time on account of precipitated sulphur, but the turbidity is harmless and should cause no alarm.

PROCEDURE

Immerse the fiber or hats in solution 1; keep them there until they acquire a dark brown stain due to permanganate. The longer the hats are kept in solution 1, the better the bleach obtained. On the other hand, more time is required to decolorize the permanganate stain with solution 2. A little practice will enable one to determine when to remove the hats from solution 1. A bleach is usually secured after an immersion of from one to two hours. A somewhat longer period is required when the solutions become weak. Solution 1 may be used repeatedly until it fails to stain the immersed hats to the required tint; when, of course, the solution may be strengthened by the addition of some crystals of potassium permanganate. A badly spent solution should be discarded.

When the immersed hats have become sufficiently darkened by exposure to permanganate remove them from solution 1. Rinse well with water to remove the excess of permanganate and transfer to solution 2.

Keep the hats in solution 2 (with occasional shaking) until the brown stain acquired from the previous treatment is completely decolorized. If decolorization proceeds rather too slowly, a few more drops of acid should be added to solution 2. Too much acid should be avoided as it is detrimental to the fiber. Slow decolorization is commendable as it imparts a glossy finish to the bleached surface. When the stained hats have become completely decolorized, remove them from solution 2 and wash them well with water (running water preferred). If a piece of blue litmus paper is available, test for complete removal of residual acidity. The hats may now be set out to dry.

When solution 2 becomes too weak from continuous use or from prolonged standing, it often

happens that the stains produced by the previous immersion in solution 1 are removed only with considerable difficulty or, in some cases, the stains are not removed at all; much, of course, to the alarm of the operator. Should this happen, a simple remedy lies in regenerating solution 2 by the addition of a few more drops of acid, or should it be feared to introduce too large an excess of acid, a freshly prepared solution should be secured.

Potassium permanganate is the only expensive chemical used in this process, but the amount of it required is so small as to make the expense

from this source no drawback at all. Sodium carbonate is used to give solution 1 an alkaline reaction. It serves as a detergent for greasy material which will adhere to the fiber surface and hinder the bleaching action of permanganate. Sodium carbonate as well as hypo may be secured from any druggist at a low cost.

Very little attention is required by the method outlined above. After the hats have been dumped into the bleaching or decolorizing baths, all the attention required is occasional shaking and stirring. The procedure should cause no trouble at the hands of beginners and inexperienced operators.

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Roughing It In Russia

By JUNIUS B. WOOD

Pulozero, U. S. S. R., March 8.—"Sit down and have tea," it will take a few minutes to get the tea," said the hospitable young president of the village executive committee. I was stamping my snow covered shoes inside his door. It was 3:30 p. m. and already dark.

The "few minutes" eventually developed to into an hour. A telegram had been sent asking him to provide a reindeer team to go to Lovozero. A village president arranges all such details in Soviet Russia. Also in Soviet Russia time means nothing and a true Russian is never expected to keep an appointment until he arrives. The surprised young man explained that he had received the telegram but was not sure we were coming. He sent a boy out for the reindeer and another muffled, cheerful youngster led us down the village road to call on the school teacher.

Three little boys, a local version of a comic strip, were in the school master's yard. Visitors were a novelty but they were not abashed. Russian children are: they grabbed my hands and started tugging toward the door which one had opened. As eyes became accustomed to the darkness, it was disclosed that the predominating odor in the kitchen came from a fat ewe and a lamb in a corner. A woman and baby came from a bedroom and the pedagogue in felt boots and furs tramped in from the barn.

"Come and look at the schoolroom, twenty-four pupils of all nationalities," was his first remark, proud of the little classroom. "Have seven boys myself, like little steps, three sit in school in Murmansk. Sit 'A Proud School Master' down," as we moved into the room. "The spj will be ready in a minute. This is your room, live right here as long as you are in the village."

The hospitality was appreciated but we explained that we were leaving in a few minutes. He laughed heartily.

"Not a few minutes, not in three hours," he insisted. "The deer are out feeding and must be lassoed and brought in. The village soviet meets this evening. I'm secretary, and you can start after the meeting."

So we had tea and black bread, emptied our half bottle of vodka and walked back to the president's little house. His comely young wife brewed more tea and while she ate sunflower seeds, his mother crocheted lace and local gossip was sat on the floor and talked, we spread our food on the family table and ate. Getting impatient would not catch any reindeer. Anyway, the teacher had explained that Lapp drivers insist on traveling at night.

"How about wolves?"

"Oh, never mind them—" he was not making the trip.

"I heard an American was in the village so came over," a wizened, wily veteran explained from his seat on the floor. "I

Use Tobacco know he'll give me some good Substitutes tobbsnnying added. "Of course," I agreed.

Before I could get a hand into my pocket, his pipe was knocked empty on the floor. When a paper sack of "makhorka" emerged, he was a struck dumb but the others roared. Makhorka