

# YUKON INDIAN OPENS CONEY ISLAND EYES

## Walter Harper, Who Climbed Mount McKinley, Rings the Bell Twice.

### STRENGTH TESTER POPS

#### Ducks the Negro with Ease and Shoots Glass Balls to the De- light of Archdeacon Stuck.

Walter Harper, half-breed Alaskan Indian, 22 years old, 6 feet tall, strong and skillful from training in the wilds of the Yukon district, the first human being to set foot on the topmost peak of Mount McKinley, went to Coney Island on Decoration Day, and ballyhoo men all over the Island, ticket takers, and sight-seers were talking about that visit all day yesterday.

The Rev. Hudson Stuck, Archdeacon of the Yukon, who headed the party that climbed Mount McKinley, or Denali, as Mr. Stuck prefers the mountain to be called, was the personal conductor of Harper's tour around Coney. Harper was the strong man and heavy worker of the Stuck party, and it was he who was leading the march when the top of Denali was reached. In his book, "The Ascent of Denali," Mr. Stuck gives the Indian full credit for being the first human being to step upon the highest point on this continent. Mr. Stuck found Harper years ago on one of his missionary trips into the interior of the Yukon district. The boy's father, who had been the first white miner in the Yukon, had married an Indian woman, and, because the father died soon after Walter's birth, the boy was raised by his mother among the Indians of her tribe. He was converted to Christianity by Mr. Stuck and has passed through all the grades of the Alaskan schools.

Harper arrived in New York a few weeks ago on his way to attend a school in Massachusetts. It was the first time he had left Alaska since his birth. After seeing the city under Mr. Stuck's chaperonage the Indian expressed a desire to visit Coney Island. Mr. Stuck was agreeable, and, with two of his friends, H. W. Jervey of Satterlee, Canfield & Stone and John Woods, Secretary of the Protestant Episcopal Board of Missions, he took Harper to the Island last Saturday. Things began to happen at Coney as soon as the Indian limbered up.

In the first place, Harper is strong. Mr. Stuck's simile for him is "strong as a moose," and he is. The first attraction that caught the Indian's eye was the strength-testing machine in Luna Park. The machine consists of a block of wood attached by springs to a dial on which a hand indicates the number of pounds pressure in a blow delivered on the block. One is supposed to strike the block with a twenty-pound hammer, and if the block is struck hard enough the hand on the dial will whirl around and ring a bell—but it isn't often that the bell is rung.

"Guess I'll take a swing at that," the Indian said quietly to Mr. Stuck as he picked up the hammer.

"Ring the bell, gentlemen; ring the bell," shouted the ballyhoo to attract other customers, and Harper quietly—he always speaks quietly—answered, "Yes, Sir."

Harper rang the bell—twice. He brought the hammer down on the block, the hand on the dial flew around twice, the bell rang twice in such quick succession that the sound seemed one nervous tinkle, and then something popped in the machine. There was a click, a rattle, and whirring of springs. The ballyhoo man stopped hollering to investigate. It was two hours before he hollered "Ring the bell, gentlemen," again. It took him that long to repair his machine.

After apologizing for the wreck he had made, Harper wandered over to Luna's shooting gallery. Three little silver balls were bouncing up and down on streams of water in it. Harper bought three shots for a nickel, and picked up a rifle.

"Think I'll shoot at the balls," he said.

Crack, crack, crack—three shots sounded as rapidly as the words can be read, and the three little balls disappeared. Harper hadn't even seemed to aim at them, he had shot so quickly.

"That sure is some shooting," said the keeper of the gallery, who had seen many marksmen, but Harper had had enough and was off seeking new amusements to conquer.

There is a negro in Steeplechase Park who sits on a little platform above a pool of water. Under the platform is a small tin disk about six inches in diameter. One is supposed to throw base-balls at this disk and if one is fortunate enough to hit it, the structure under the negro's platform collapses and the negro slides headfirst into the water.

That negro has had lots of fun this season "kidding" the amateur pitchers, who have spent many nickels throwing at the tin disk. It is his habit to sit on his little platform and guy those who try to give him a ducking, and can't. He seldom gets wet.

"Did you ever throw a baseball?" Mr. Jervey asked Harper, as the party approached the negro.

"No," answered the Indian, "but I've chucked rocks. Used to kill ptarmigan with them when I was a kid."

"Killed the birds on the wing with rocks!" exclaimed Mr. Jersey. "Then take a shot at that negro."

Harper took three balls. The negro, according to his custom, at once began his guying.

"Hit 'em, Mister Man, hit 'em!" he shouted, laughing. "Gimme a ducking, Mister Man—if you can."

Harper let one of the balls go—and before the negro had time to close his mouth he was splashing in the water. Surprised, the negro climbed back to his seat, and started to laugh again.

"I don't mind that," he shouted. "Just one little ducking. First ducking today."

Harper let go the second ball—and down into the water went the negro again. When he had climbed to his platform once more he didn't shout or laugh—he appeared to be hoping only—hoping that the third ball would go wild. But it didn't. The negro shot into the water the third time, and all smiles were gone from his face when he came up.

"Say, mister," he said to the manager of the booth, "if you has any regards at all for the poor nigger what's workin' fer you, don't sell that dark-skinned man no more balls."

Harper didn't want any more balls, and, in the course of the afternoon, the negro began to laugh again.

The Indian went about the Island reproducing a more or less mild sensation wherever he stopped. Late in the afternoon he went, in bathing. Mr. Stuck and the others in the party noticed him sitting on the beach piling sand, and thought he was merely idling, but when the Indian rose to his feet Mr. Stuck exclaimed:

"Look, he's reproduced Denali."

Harper had made a topographical map in the sand of Mount McKinley and the region around it. Mr. Stuck vouched for its accuracy. And then, while many attracted by the exhibition looked on in wonder, the Indian traced with a stick the path of the exploring party that climbed Denali from its camp at the base of the mountain to the top.

After dinner Harper and his friends returned to the city, and last night Harper took a train for his Massachusetts school—but they are still talking about him at Coney Island. And the man with the strength-testing machine and the negro in Steeplechase are hoping that he never comes back.