

TRI WEEKLY EDITOR

MY LITTLE BOY-BEAU.

Is hidden away with the keepsakes
Of summers and winters ago—
A love-letter yellow and faded
And crossed, from my little boy-beau.
The envelope reads, "To my dearest."
The pages are tattered and torn.
The childish handwriting is blotted,
But it breathes of life's roseate morn.

The little boy-beau he is sleeping
Where his regiment laid him to rest,
In a uniform buttoned and braided,
With a flag and a sword on his breast.
But it is not the dashing young soldier
In sabre and sash that I see,
But the little boy-beau with his ringlets—
He will never grow older to me.

Since, a girl of eleven, I found it
Slipped into my grammar one day
The years with their rains and their roses
Have rapidly glided away.
Lovers and hearts they have brought me,
Tears and my portion of woe;
But never so pure an affection
As the love of my little boy-beau.

—Missa Irving, in Judge.

AUNT PHEBE'S STORY.

AM willing to confess that I would have married Gus Waters at a word. He was the sort of young man a girl instinctively likes and trusts. Perhaps this is not the kind of feeling the story books call love, but I fancy it is just as good.

Gus was good looking, with strongly marked features, rather tall, and well built, and when he chose to be well dressed made a good appearance, and never looked ill, however old his clothes might be, when about his ordinary work. He did not depend upon his clothes to command respect.

He had a calm, confident air, and could express himself concisely when he needed to assert authority. That is what a woman likes—to have a man able to deal with men and not be turned aside from his purpose or make a mistake. He was a good talker with a fine, easy humor, not putting himself forward to be amusing, but easily holding his own. Like most strong men, Gus was hard to provoke to a quarrel, though in his school days he had his allowance of fistful encounters.

Yes, I will admit I would have married Gus had he asked me, though I did not think he was in love with me nor I with him. I did not believe he would fall deeply in love with anyone.

Perhaps I was too reserved, or feared to show a decided preference unless it was shown first, though other girls said I had myself at his head, and he greatly chagrined when he devoted himself to Hattie Tinde. I had other admirers, and if I was not as handsome as Hattie, mere beauty is not everything. There is no denying that Hattie was the prettiest girl of our set, and she was pretty without having to care for her complexion or wear becoming clothes. We girls all knew she was intolerably selfish, and wondered that the young men did not find her out. But beauty hides a great many defects of character, and if a girl only pretends to be kind and sympathetic she is supposed to possess all the angelic qualities.

One day Robert Carpenter asked me to marry him. He proposed in a blundering, roundabout way, so clumsily that I did not know at first what he meant. He made me almost as confused as I do not now recollect, but he went away smiling, so I conclude he thought himself an accepted lover, and I had a ring which I put away in a box, undecided whether to wear it or give it back.

After Robert departed I looked for the newspaper containing the notice, but could not find it. He had had several in his hand, but the special copy he had taken with him. I do not know what prompted me to write a note of congratulation to Gus and dispatch it by my brother Ned, a lad of twelve. I mentioned having seen the notice in the paper, and said I was sorry he had not confided in me.

It was after 10 o'clock, and I retired to my room. Half an hour later I heard Ned coming up stairs. He stopped at my door.

"Did you see Gus?" I asked from within.

"Yes, he's down stairs. He came back with me."

"What does he want?"

"He wants to see you, I guess."

"What for?"

"He didn't say. Probably wants to borrow your overshoes. Better go down and ask him."

TALES OF PLUCK AND ADVENTURE.

Reseized by Lions.
LION-HUNTING is dangerous enough when the hunter's health and strength are of the best. But an inveterate sportsman does not regard consequences, and the author of "Sport in East Central Africa" gives an account of a foolhardy adventure which he seems to have enjoyed. He was ill with fever in a little settlement of blacks, but since lions were in the neighborhood he must needs insist upon having the carcass of a boar placed as bait not far from his hut; and although his legs were too weak to allow him to walk a dozen steps, he had himself propped against the door-jamb, and laid his double-barrelled rifle across his knees.

It was nearly 1 o'clock, he says, when the lions gave notice of their whereabouts. I heard the heavy grunting sighs of three or four of them as they moved about in the scrub two hundred yards away. Then followed a series of rushes, as they leaped down the bank of the creek and lapped noisily at the water. Next came a terrified voice from a neighboring hut.

"White man, we are going," he said, and the "boys" rushed pell-mell from their shelter, some passing in front of me, others behind me, making for a grove of trees.

Suddenly a yell rang out from the darkness, and I was convinced that one of my blacks was being devoured; but I was too weak to stand, and was powerless to act.

After some further noise and confusion, I heard a lion treading over the dead leaves near by. Then came a prolonged sniffling sound, half roar, half moan, uttered in a deep voice, which under the circumstances, I recognized as profoundly musical. Then there was a heavy but silent footfall as the beast walked to the back of my hut, and thrusting his nose among the thatched grass, sniffed loudly, till I could see the lighter stalks stirring with his breath and hear the rustling, when he endeavored to reach a paw between the interstices of the wattles.

Each instant I expected the whole structure to collapse, but luckily the beast forebore to take a mean advantage, which would have secured my destruction. I should have fired, had I not been afraid of setting fire to the hut.

At length the brutes cleared out, uttering deep growls. They had destroyed one hut and pretty much ruined two more, not to speak of smashing the hut next to mine, which contained all my stores. I could hear them there, making a terrific noise, snuffing, grunting and snarling, breaking sticks and clanking metal, while every now and then one would leap down the bank into the water and then come tearing back, breathing heavily and growling low. Yet not a whisker hair did one of them show in the freight in front of me.

ERA OF THE DIME NOVEL.

THE close of the century is witnessing the extinction of what has been popularly known as the "dime novel" (writes Firmin Dred, in the March Bookman). Very curiously, readers are coming back to the position they occupied about forty years ago, and the books which are commanding wide sales to-day are what are known as high-priced novels. And yet the dime novel has played so prominent a part in the general literature of this country that the story of its genesis, its development, its evolution and its final degeneration, is rich with interest. Little as it is generally realized, the dime novel has been a considerable factor in American literature.

The dime novel dates from the year 1850. Shortly before the firm of Beadle & Adams had begun a series of publications intended for lower middle-class consumption. This series was made up of books on etiquette, on letter-writing and other subjects of equal moment and importance. The dime book of etiquette, for instance, purported to be a guide to "true gentility and good breeding, and a complete directory to the usages and observances of society, including etiquette of the ball-room, of the evening-party, of the dinner-party, of the card and chess-table, of business, and of the home circle." It did not differ materially from the books of similar nature that are published to-day. These books had an enormous circulation, and despite the ridicule which one humorously inclined may see fit to heap upon them, undoubtedly had a serious and real educational value.

Early in the spring of 1850 Mr. Orville J. Victor conceived the idea of the dime novel. At his suggestion the Beadle series was begun, and Mrs. Ann S. Stephens, then one of the most popular and widely known of American writers, was asked to contribute the inaugural story. For "Maleska, the Indian Wife of the White Hunter," she received two hundred and fifty dollars, a considerable sum for a work of its length at that time. "Maleska" was followed by "The Privateer," "Cruise," by Harry Cavendish; "Myra, the Child of Adoption," another of Mrs. Stephens' romances; and "Alice Wilde, the Ruffian's Daughter," by Mrs. M. V. Victor.

About the dime novel there speedily gathered a staff of writers who combined a knowledge of the popular taste, dexterity in the working out of conventional plots, and an industry that was simply amazing. With a few exceptions, one hundred dollars was the price paid for one of these novels, which contained on an average twenty-five thousand words, and which was produced by its author in a week or ten days. In addition to the professional novel-drawers of the time the dime library drew on a number of newspaper men, who found in this way a material to increase their first incomes. In the autumn of 1860 the first story ever written by Edward S. Ellis, afterward so popular as a writer for boys, found its way into the office of the dime library. It was called "Seth Jones, or, The Captive of the Frontier," and before it appeared as the eighth number in the series it had been advertised with a skill and ingenuity very rare at a time when the art of advertising was still, in a measure, in its infancy.

Several weeks before the day of publication, guttersnipes bearing the simple legend "Seth Jones" were placarded on walls and fences all over the city. A week later these were followed by other guttersnipes, on which was printed the query, "Who is Seth Jones?" A third guttersnipe answered the question, and proved remarkably effective in bringing about for the book an enormous sale.

Despite the literary inadequacy of these pioneers among the cheap popular novels, they were entirely wholesome and far removed from the viciousness and the brutality which mark their successors in the later 'seventies and early 'eighties. These romances were often extravagant in plot and crude in treatment, but they were primarily designed for household reading. Probably none of the writers of these books was more successful in commanding a wide circle of readers than Mrs. M. V. Victor. The fourth of the stories which she contributed to this series attained a sale which makes most of the records of book sales of the present day appear insignificant in comparison. This was "Uncle Ezekiel," the story of an alleged typical Yankee and his exploits at home and abroad. In the United States the book within a short time reached a total sale of two hundred and seventy thousand. In England the sales reached two hundred and eleven thousand, a total of four hundred and eighty-one thousand. This, however, was surpassed by "The Backwoods Bride," of which five hundred and fifty thousand were sold, and "Maum' Guinea." The last named was a story of negro life, which, appearing at the time of the war, actually rivaled in popularity Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe's "Uncle Tom's Cabin."

The success of this series in a few years brought many rivals into the field. George Munro, who had been a bookkeeper in the employ of Beadle & Adams, began publishing himself books along the same line about 1865. A few years later the staid orange-covers of the original dime novels were replaced by covers of gaudily colored design. The typical dime novel of 1870 is very interesting as showing the crudity of the color prints of the time.

THE RISE AND FALL OF BLOOD AND THUNDER LITERATURE.

Little as it is generally realized, the Dime Novel has had a considerable influence on American Letters—Dates Back to the Year 1850.

There is dew in one flower and not in another because one opens its cup and takes it in, while the other closes itself and the drop runs off. Beecher.

Debt makes everything a temptation. It turns a man into a tradesman and a servant. He cannot call himself his own master, and it is difficult for him to be truthful.—Smiles.

Let the millionaire take his millions to the slums and say: "There is a wrong distribution of the wealth of the world. You have not got your share. I give to each of you my share of my millions."—Andrew Carnegie.

The one serviceable, safe, certain, remunerative, attainable quality in every study and every pursuit, is the quality of attention. My own invention of imagination, such as it is, I can most truthfully assure you, would never have served me as it has, but for the habit of common place, humble, patient, toiling, drudging attention.—Charles Dickens.

Dangerous Pitfalls in Arizona. Curious but dangerous freaks of nature frequently found in the deserts of Arizona are called *Sumideros* by the Mexicans and Indians. They are masked pitfalls of quicksand that occur in the dry plains and are covered with a treacherous crust of clay that has been spread over them in fine particles by the wind and baked dry by the sun.

The peculiar properties of the soil retain all the moisture drained into them after the infrequent rains, and allow it to be filtered to unknown depths, so that a man or a horse or a cow or a sheep that once steps upon that deceptive crust instantly sinks out of sight beyond hope of rescue. The *Sumideros* are on a level with the surface of the desert. There is no danger signal to mark them and their surface cannot be distinguished by the ordinary eye from the hard clay that surrounds them. They occur most frequently in the alkali-covered flats, and are often fifteen or twenty feet in diameter. Sometimes they are only little pockets or wells that a man can leap across, but the longest pole has never found their bottom. A stone thrown through the crust sinks to unknown depths and no man who ever fell into one of them was rescued. They account for the mysterious disappearance of many men and cattle.—Chicago Record.

WISE WORDS.

The borrower runs into his own debt.—Emerson.

A slight debt produces a debtor; a heavy one, an enemy.—Publius Syrus.

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THE MERRY SIDE OF LIFE.

STORIES THAT ARE TOLD BY THE FUNNY MEN OF THE PRESS.

The Point of View—Never Neglects a Social Duty—A Plain Distinction—Well, What is a Flame For?—Germs of Old Age—Detained at Home, Etc., Etc.

When on the curb you're waiting stand
And see the gripman wave his hand,
And pass you by, you rage in vain
In anger at his rude disdain.

But when you're safely fixed inside
And some outsider wants to ride,
You smile and hear his pleading call,
And somehow do not care at all.

Never Neglects a Social Duty.
"Don't you observe any social duties whatever?"
"Certainly, I decline all my invitations."—Chicago Record.

Well, What is a Flame For?
Willie Lightcoat—"I hear that Mr. Perry married an old flame."
Maud Smith—"Yes, and now that flame has to light the fire every morning."—Judge.

Germs of Old Age.
"Doctor, I wonder if I'm not getting old?"
"Quite possibly. The bacillus of old age is very prevalent just now."—Detroit Journal.

Detained at Home.
Mrs. Muggins—"Are you going to the Paris Exposition this summer?"
Mrs. Buggins—"No; I can't get away. The cook wants to go."—Philadelphia Record.

Easy Method.
Johnson—"Jackson, how would you get into society?"
Jackson—"Oh, if I felt like it, and had the clothes, and was invited, I'd go."—Indianapolis Journal.

Rushed.
"You seem to be very busy, Miss Dorothy?"
"I should think so. I'm doing so many things for so many people that I can't do anything for anybody."

Mysteries of Life.
Dibbs—"A man ought to know when he's got enough."
Jibbs—"Well, how now when I've got enough?"

"Why She Threw Him Down."
"Gladys was silent, but Harold could read her answer in her face."—Extract from an up-to-date novel, chapter xii, page 144.—Judge.

Slow Methods.
He—"If there could be any slower amusement than playing chess by mail, I should like to know what could be."
Him—"They might use a messenger boy instead of the mails."—Indianapolis Press.

A Trade in Itself.
Citizen—"See here, I'll give you a dime, but I believe you asked me for money only yesterday. Why don't you learn some good business?"
Able-Bodied Beggar—"I have learned one, sir; I'm a re-toucher."—Life.

Withdrawn.
"Where is your 'big gun'?" asked the powdered matron who had come late to the military ball.
"He went away a little while ago in a disappearing carriage," explained the master of ceremonies.—Chicago Tribune.

A Wonderful Woman.
Mr. Moon—"Your aunt Almira is a remarkable woman."
Mrs. Moon—"How so?"
Mr. Moon—"Why, haven't you noticed that when she hears that a widow is to be married she doesn't count on her fingers and then wag her head solemnly? Most remarkable old lady I have ever seen."—Judge.

A Quick Choice.
"How did you like those two poems I sent you?" asked Willie Washington.
"There was a long one and a short one, wasn't there?" asked Miss Coyenne.
"Yes, which did you prefer?"
"I haven't read them yet. But I am sure I shall like the short one."—Washington Star.

Her Retort.
"A lot of women love to get together and talk over a great mass of impractical subjects," said Mr. Blykins, "and then go home and leave the world a better no wiser than it was before."
"Yes," answered his wife, with serene amiability, "sometimes women do so. But they didn't get up that peace conference at The Hague some time ago."—Washington Star.

Hard to Understand.
"Did you say he had studied music?" said the gentleman with the long hair, when the soloist had concluded.
"Oh, yes, indeed!"
"It's very remarkable!"
"His voice?"
"Yes. If he has studied music I can't understand why he should persist in trying to sing."—Washington Star.

Workman Stuck to His Post.
Albert Murphy, a young man, employed as iron molder by the Goulds at Seneca Falls, N. Y., came near being burned to death on a recent afternoon. Murphy, having a quantity of bell metal in his ladle, poured it into a kettle under a scaffold, above which the men washed up at quitting time. A quantity of water had leaked from above into the kettle which Murphy did not see. As the metal went into the kettle there was an explosion, and the liquid metal was thrown upon him, setting his shirt and hat on fire and burning him terribly from the hips to the crown of his head.

Although suffering untold agonies, Murphy stuck to his post and handled the ladle despite his burns until the entire casting, which was a valuable one, had been distributed in the molds. He then fell over unconscious and was carefully picked up by his fellow-workmen and carried to the office, where medical aid was summoned.

His eyes escaped injury, but his face, arms, and body will be disfigured for life. The burns at first were thought to be fatal, but his recovery is now regarded as certain. The hero of the foundry.

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