

TRICK OF THE BOOK TRADE.

Low Prices Do Not Necessarily Mean a Loss to the Publisher.

Did it ever occur to you what a reproach to some publishers and some of their methods the book store bargain counter is? says the Rochester Democrat and Chronicle. Somebody is losing money on these "dollar books for ten cents," and it is not the publisher. Retailers in the book trade buy by list, not by sample, and a publishing house in a fair way of business can count on selling to the trade a pretty large edition of pretty nearly anything it chooses to publish. It is to be feared that once in a while they take advantage of this fact to the loss of the booksellers. They have been known to take, for instance, an advertisement for some well-known summer resort, that, having been written by a somewhat famous author in the guise of a short story, has been presented to the public as literature by a first-rate magazine, possibly by virtue of a pecuniary arrangement with the publishers thereof, and make a reasonably sizeable book of it by using big type, double leads, wide margins and many cheap process illustrations. They gild the edges of the leaves, disguise the cheap muslins of the cover with a sprawling design in gold, wherein a quotation from Shakespeare and the writer's well-known name figure prominently and announce to the trade, "Blue, Unclouded Weather, a Romance of Old Point Comfort, by Popular Author, Esq. Edition de luxe: \$3.50; 75 off 100; 60 off 75; 50 off 50; 35 and 10 on smaller orders. No returns." And every bookseller in the land on the strength of the author's name and the expected Christmas trade, orders from five to 100 copies, according to the size of his establishment, and uses bad language as soon as he receives them. He knows they will not sell. Even their outside is unattractive.

They cost the publishers, exclusive of royalty, from twenty-five cents to fifty cents apiece, according to the size of the edition issued, and they have an unmistakable air of cheapness about them. To put such books on his counter marked \$3.50 is almost an insult to the intelligence of his customers, but he does so. And there the never diminishing pile stays, for the public can protect itself against this sort of imposition, although the bookseller cannot, until it comes to the bargain counter, and "Blue, Unclouded Weather" finds a few purchasers at seventeen cents a volume. And the bookseller figures up how much he has lost on it and goes on ordering by list without knowing what he is going to get. Such is one of the reasons all booksellers do not retire on princely fortunes within five years or so after starting in business.

ANOTHER CURTIN STORY.

He Tells of a Prisoner Who Couldn't Appreciate Kindness.

No anecdotic recollections of Governor Curtin would be complete which did not include some of his own stories, for he was the prince of yarn spinners. A group of friends were talking one day about the reformatory influence of kindness in prison discipline, says Kate Field's Washington. "I've heard a good deal about kind prison keepers," said Mr. Curtin, when the others had finished, "but I never met one myself who was the equal of an old fellow who kept the county jail in the village where I began practicing law. He fed the convicts so well and housed them so comfortably that they became greatly attached to him, and he could trust them to go about at will. He used to hire them out to the farmers in the neighborhood during the harvest season and turn an honest penny for the taxpayers in that way. Early one morning, while I was sweeping out my office, I was approached by one of the convicts. "Young man," said he, "are you the lawyer?" "I am," said I. "I want you to get me out of jail on a writ of habeas corpus, and I want it right away."

"Well, hold on, my friend," said I. "We have got to have a reason to show to the court before we can ask for a writ."

"I've reason enough," he exclaimed. "The cruelty of the keeper there makes life unbearable."

"Oh, pshaw," said I, "don't tell me such nonsense as that. There never was a kinder keeper in charge of a jail."

"Judge for yourself," he insisted. "Yesterday I was working out to Mr. Walkinshaw's, and we had a big lot of hay to get in, for the sky was full of rain clouds. So when the jail horn blew for bedtime I stayed and helped get the hay under cover. It was after dark when I got back and—would you believe it?—that hard-hearted cuss of a keeper had locked me out! I had to sleep in the street and caught rheumatism in my bones. It settled things in my mind. I'll not stay another night under the roof of a man who'll treat me like that, says I to myself. So, Mr. Lawyer, I want you to get me out before sundown, do you hear?"

Opportune. The train robber shot the roof off the baggage car as he spoke. "I'm going to hold you up," he remarked. The express messenger bowed. "How fortunate," he exclaimed, "I was ready to sink into the earth when I saw you coming."

Saying which he withdrew into the woods while the outlaw discharged seven sticks of dynamite in rapid succession.—Detroit Tribune.

Class in Journalism. Teacher—What can you tell us of the power of the press? Clara, studying for society work—Nothing, miss. I promised Charlie I wouldn't tell.

FETISH WORSHIP IS COMMON.

Educated and Refined People Often Believe in Charms and Talismans.

"Fetish worship is not confined to the ignorant as exclusively as most people imagine," said Walter Carlton, of Atlanta to a Washington Star reporter. "For several years I have made more or less steady inquiry into the superstitions cherished by intelligent, cultured people, and you can scarcely believe how widespread is the belief in charms and talismans. At the Ponce de Leon ni, St. Augustine, last winter I met a young woman from away up in the frozen North. She was one of those superior girls who go to the roots of things, and her learning was something wonderful. She invariably wore a queer-looking locket at her neck, and one day, I asked her why she wore such an incongruous thing when dressed in evening costume. She coolly told me that it contained a charm that had preserved her from impending danger a number of times, and recited several hair-breadth escapes she had made. Upon my inquiring what the charm was she told me it was an African mooka stone that her grandfather, who was a seafaring man, had brought home from one of his voyages, and that had exerted a protecting influence on her mother's life, as it had on her own. That woman was one of the few really thoroughly educated women I have ever known, and yet she firmly believed in the supernatural properties of that pebble she wore in a locket around her neck. There are hundreds of men all over the country, college men, too, who would as soon leave their collars and cravats at home as to go without a rabbit foot in their pockets, or who will not talk over a business proposition without touching their precious talismans. And speaking of rabbits' feet, I have been credibly informed that the great Henry Irving once changed the bill from 'Hamlet' to 'The Bells' because the rabbit foot he has always used in making up for the part of the melancholy Dane was mislaid, and he felt a presentiment that something dreadful would happen to him if he used anything else to give the proper lines to his stage complexion. I'll bet there are a dozen otherwise sensible men in this hotel this minute who would wear their stockings inside out all day if they accidentally happened to get them on that way in the morning. The more I look into the interesting matter the more I discover to prove that superstition is as strong among the educated as it is among the ignorant."

EMBARRASSED THE BURGLAR.

The Man Was Suffering From Nightmare and Might Wake Somebody.

"Once" said the retired burglar to a writer for the New York Sun, "I looked from the upper hall of a house that I was in into a room that was so dark that you literally couldn't see into it at all. It seemed as if they must have the windows closed, the blinds shut and the shades all down. It was blacker'n a cave. I turned my light in around on the floor to get the lay of things and fix 'em in my mind so as not to stumble over anything. Over by a bed I saw a chair, and hanging down from it a pair of trousers legs. Then, of course, I knew there was a man in the bed, and that it was his clothes that were stacked up on the chair there. I shut off my light and started. I knew the way, and I went very quickly, but when I got about half way across the room the man in the bed began to holler. How he could see me I couldn't understand. I couldn't see him at all, but I just halted and waited. He didn't holler very loud, though he was trying to hard; but he was so scared that I was surprised to hear him holler at all; it sounded as though it was all he could do to catch his breath. I was afraid he would scare himself to death right on the spot. I didn't dare back out of the room for fear I'd meet somebody coming in. I thought I could dodge 'em better after they got in; so I just stood there in the middle of that dark room with the man hollerin' the best he could, and wishing I was somewhere else, and wondering what was going to turn up next. Well, sir, in about half a minute he stopped hollerin' altogether and for a minute or two he did not breathe. Then I was scared; but in about a minute more he began to snore. You see? He wasn't scared at me; what he was scared at was a nightmare; he didn't know I was there at all. But it was a mighty uncomfortable position to be in all the same, because, of course, he was just as likely to wake up somebody hollerin' in his sleep as he would have been if he'd been wide awake; he might have waked himself up as far's that's concerned. But he didn't, nor anybody else, apparently, and when he'd got to snoring again and everything seemed quiet, why I just went ahead and collared his trousers."

Fashionable's Then. Spectacles were fashionable in the sixteenth century. They were costly, the usual price being an equivalent of \$5. It was believed that the larger the lenses and the heavier the rims the greater the dignity added to the wearer's appearance.

A Vital Difference. Mrs. Secondwed—You are so unlike my first husband, Mr. S.—I hope the difference is in my favor, my dear. Mrs. S.—Oh, it is—very much. Mr. S.—Thanks. What is it? Mrs. S.—You're alive.—Newport Mercury.

Most Doctors Could Remedy That. Doctor, shaking his head—Well, my dear sir, I can do nothing more for you. Patient—W-h-a-t! Good gracious, doctor! Doctor—No; really, my friend, you are in perfect health.—Der Schalk.

COSSACK HORSEMEN.

Their Most Daring Feats Equalled by West Point Cadets.

The principal exercises in which the Cossacks excel reminded me very much of what I was familiar with at West Point when the boys were free to indulge their taste for gymnastics on horseback. Our cadets, at least a large proportion of every class, are quite as clever with their horses as the average Cossack. I have seen them stand on the horse's back and gallop in that position, vault in and out of the saddle while the horse is galloping, reach down and pick objects from the ground, leap hurdles with the horse, alighting from the animal just before the hurdle is touched, and vaulting into the saddle as the horse clears the obstacle. I have also seen our West Pointers change horses while at full gallop, or one take the other behind him. All these exercises I have seen done not merely with the saddle, but without; and not merely in the riding school, but while riding out on country roads.

These are the exercises in which the Cossack chiefly excels, writes Poulteney Bigelow in the Century, and it may be added in parenthesis that the horse of the average Cossack resembles in many respects the degenerate beast which the government places at the disposition of the United States military academy. The Cossack learns these tricks as a boy when he is allowed with his mates to ride the horses bareback to water, and incidentally is encouraged to indulge in every manner of sport on the way. He is encouraged also to persevere in exercises of this kind, and to be prepared to make an exhibition of himself when as a soldier he is garrisoned in towns, where such exercises smack of the circus rather than of the barrack-yard. The Cossack is so often pictured in the act of doing daring things with his horse that it has become common to think that all Cossacks are up to this work. As a matter of fact it is only a small and select portion that keep up these exercises, and these are embodied in a special section of the cavalry regiment, designated "Dshights." The Russian regulations of war order the encouragement of these acrobatic cavalries, particularly when they indulge in any exercises which may be turned to practical account in war, as, for instance, leaping over an obstacle and firing at the same time, or compelling the horse to stop suddenly and fall to the ground, so that its body may be a breastwork behind which the trooper may shelter himself.

Joe and Tom Jefferson.

George J. Obermann, the Milwaukee brewer, tells the following story: "I was in Washington last year for a few days, and one morning I fell in with Joseph Jefferson's son Tom. He suggested that we go to call on the president, and the proposition just suited me to a T. We didn't have long to wait at the White house. Mr. Cleveland received us very cordially. 'And what are you doing now, Tom,' he asked. 'I'm making more money than ever before,' says Tom. 'I'm in a new line of business altogether, and it brings me in large profits.' 'What under the sun can it be?' asked the president. 'Why, wherever I go,' says Tom, 'I snoop around the old second-hand shops and art stores and pick up old pictures for about \$4 apiece and then I sell 'em to father for \$400 apiece.' Mr. Cleveland laughed heartily, but he didn't believe the yarn at all. 'Tom,' says he, 'you'll have to sit up very late at night and get up very early in the morning if ever you really expect to get the better of your father in a business deal.'"

Caught the Drummer Napping.

A group of commercial travelers was seated in the smoking compartment of a sleeping car discussing business, expense accounts and the various lines of merchandise sold by them. After awhile they were joined by a quiet individual, who listened to the conversation, but took no part in it. He smiled, however, at the jokes and sallies, and appeared to be thoroughly in sympathy with the company. The attitude of the newcomer was such that at last one of the party turned to him and said, "May I enquire what line you represent?" "Certainly," he replied, "I am a drummer. I travel for the house of the Lord." "Well, that's a new one on me," responded the drummer, and then, not at all abashed, he asked, "Are the expense allowances liberal?"

Picked the Body in Brandy.

The body of Joachim Infante, a wealthy wholesale cigar dealer and manufacturer of New Orleans, and a member of an old and highly respected Castilian family, arrived there on the steamship California a few days ago. Mr. Infante died suddenly from apoplexy when the vessel was four days out from Gibraltar. The captain of the ship desired to bury him at sea, but the wife and daughter of the dead man pleaded so hard that he finally decided to bring the body to port. The ship's carpenter made a rough coffin and lined it with tin. Then twenty-four cases of brandy were poured in, and the coffin sealed with cement. The remains were in a good state of preservation when the coffin was opened at the undertaker's.

Very Advanced.

Chelholm Robertson, one of the foremost leaders of the great Scottish coal miners' strike, speaks French with an unimpeachable accent, is acquainted to some extent with German, writes two systems of shorthand and reads Carlyle and Schopenhauer. He wears a velvet jacket cut a la whistler, effects a stove pipe hat of the pattern worn ten years ago, and is profuse in his display of jewelry. He carries a cane which is said to weigh seven pounds.

Pamphlet.

Extracts from United States Congressional Record, containing address of Hon. W. S. Linton and discussion in congress upon sectarian appropriations of national money to Indian education, and the vote thereon; also remarks made respecting a requirement to teach the English language in New Mexico after admission to statehood, and two separate votes rejecting such a requirement.

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