



ST. VALENTINE'S day came on a Thursday that year, Tuesday, the 12th, was very warm, almost spring-like; people listened involuntarily for bluebirds and robins and looked at the elm branches against the sky as if they expected to see leaves. That morning Serena Ann Wells had found two ladies' delights blooming in a sheltered spot and carried them to school to give the teacher. The scholars crowded up to the desk to see them, and the teacher said she would call them her valentine. That set Serena Ann to thinking. After school began she wrote a little note on her slate and held it under cover of her desk so Tabitha Green, who sat next, could read. "Did you ever have a valentin?" she inquired, in plain, round characters. Tabitha nodded. Serena Ann looked impressed. The teacher, Miss Cornelia Little, had come softly to her other side. "Communicating, Serena Ann?" inquired Miss Little, gently. Serena Ann gave a little sigh, which was almost a sob, of assent. The scholars craned their necks to see. Serena Ann's writing was so large and plain that those who sat near could read easily. There was a chuckle, which Miss Little quieted instantly with a look. "Were you communicating also?" she said to Tabitha Green. "Yes, ma'am," replied Tabitha, disconsolately. Then the two little girls were bidden to go out in front of the school, and there they stood for a half hour with their slates suspended from their necks by twine strings hanging over their pinafores like breast plates. Tabitha did not mind the punishment half as much as Serena Ann did. It was the first time she had ever been punished

handsomest there, a beautiful combination of lace paper, embossed doors, roses and angels. "How much is this one?" inquired Grandfather Judd. "Marked on back," mumbled Lonzo, sucking his lemon drop. "Fifty cents." Grandfather Judd bought it, gave Lonzo five cents; told him to buy a one-cent stamp for the valentine and put it in the postoffice the next day, and he might keep the remaining four cents for himself. As for Lonzo, he put Grandfather Judd's five cents in his pocket. As for the valentine, he had taken that out of the envelope and placed it back in stock. It was about half past 7 o'clock when Miss Little, the school teacher, came in with the young man who was paying her attention. She had been telling him how she had punished that dear little Serena for whispering about a valentine; how sorry she was, and how she had wished to send her a valentine, to atone—and the young man had been thinking how sweet and tender-hearted she must be. Miss Little at once selected the same valentine which had pleased Grandfather Judd. "This is the prettiest," said she. "I will take this." She furthermore decided she would leave it at the store and have it sent from there. The school teacher carefully directed the envelope which was to hold the valentine to Miss Serena Ann Dodd, Riggsville, N. Y. Dodd was the name of the young man who was waiting upon the school teacher, and when she married him she was to go to Riggsville, N. Y., to live. After the envelope was directed Miss Little gave Solomon Badger a penny to



BIDDEN TO GO OUT IN FRONT OF THE SCHOOL.

in school, and she had given two ladies' delights to the teacher that very morning. Somehow, that last stung her worst of all. It was to her the first prick of the serpent's tooth of ingratitude. Then there was another reason for Serena Ann's grief; her grandfather, Judd, had promised her a book if she were not punished in school all that year. She quieted her sobs with a convulsive effort. After a while she peered pitifully over her pinafore, and her tearful eyes met Johnny Starr's compassionate ones. Johnny Starr was a pretty, quiet boy, and Serena Ann's mother had told his mother that she had just as soon have him come over to see Serena Ann as a girl. Recross came soon after the girls were released from their position in the door, and everybody went out, the weather was so warm. Johnny Starr followed Serena Ann into the school yard. "It's mean," he declared. Serena Ann smiled gratefully at him. Ben Miranda Bell, the doctor's daughter, joined Serena Ann. Miranda was one of the big girls, very bright-eyed and self-assertive. "Don't you feel had one bit," said she. "I had stood in the foot dozens of times before I was as old as you. Didn't you ever have a valentine, Serena Ann?" Serena Ann shook her head and looked up gratefully into the girl's handsome, glowing face. "Well, maybe you'll get one this year—stranger things have happened," Miranda remarked, meaningly, as she turned away. Serena Ann had, during all the rest of that day, a vague impression of a kindly intent toward her from everybody. Her grandfather, of his own accord, proposed giving her another trial to win his offered reward, and Serena Ann was radiant. Then her father asked if she didn't want a sleigh ride with him. Grandfather Judd turned to his daughter, when the sleigh bells had jingled out the yard. "Tell you one thing, Maria," said he, "that child's going to have a valentine to pay for havin' so much trouble." "Now, father, I don't know. I'm afraid I'm kind of foolish—" "No, it ain't foolish, either. Child's got cryin' her eyes out. She's goin' to see the handsomest valentine in Solomon Badger's store," declared Grandfather Judd, rising as he spoke. There was quite a score of valentines in the boxes on the counter, and Solomon Badger's grandson, Lonzo, was waiting to sell them. The trade had been quite brisk since morning, though it was the day before Valentine's day. Grandfather Judd went over to look at the valentines. One immediately caught his eye. It was much the largest and

buy a stamp. After they had gone Solomon Badger spied the envelope; discovered that the valentine was not inclosed, and began to search for the one she had chosen. It was quite another valentine than the one Miss Little had purchased, which was posted next day. It went to Riggsville, N. Y., and finally brought up in the dead letter office, where it must be now. It was 8 o'clock when the valentine was sold for the third time to Miranda Bell. She gave it to Lottie Goodwin to post, because her way home lay past the office. The next morning Serena Ann's cousin, Sam Wells, drove over from the east village, and passing the postoffice saw something white on the snow bank. He stopped, got out and investigated. "I declare, it's a valentine," cried Sam Wells. He tried to pick it up, but it was frozen down. There had been quite a thaw the day before, and the weather had grown colder during the night. Sam was very careful, but he had to leave the addressed part of the envelope in the snow. Sam went to Solomon Badger's about fifteen minutes before school time and found Sophia in attendance. "Hello, Sophia," said he, "ever see this before?" Sophia bent her pink face over the valentine, then raised it. "No, I guess not," said she, looking up in Sam's face. "Well, then, I want to buy an envelope, and I wish you'd address it. Sophia, my hands are cold, and I can't write fine enough to go on a valentine." Sam left the valentine and a penny for postage. Sophia took up the envelope to post, and then a sleigh stopped at the door and a young man from the east village came in and asked her to go a little way for a drive. And that was the last she thought of Sam Wells and Serena Ann's valentine. It was not sold again until after school that night, and then Johnny Starr was the purchaser. He had shaken the iron savings bank in which he had deposited his money, earned by selling berries the summer before, until he got 52 cents, all in pennies. He gave them to Solomon Badger for the valentine and an envelope. Johnny had not shaken enough pennies to buy a stamp. He gave it to Serena Ann the next morning before school, slipping it into her hands when nobody was looking. Serena Ann looked at it, colored high, then turned white. She was almost ready to cry. To think she had a valentine, and such a valentine! She showed it to one, then another; by noon everybody in school had seen that valentine, teacher and all. "Who did you give it to you, Serena Ann?" asked Sam Wells.

"Johnny Starr," Sam Wells whistled. At noon Miss Little called her up to the desk and questioned her. The sleigh called up Johnny Starr and asked where he got the valentine. "At Mr. Solomon Badger's," replied Johnny, stoutly. Serena Ann did not know what it all meant. She was bewildered when they came to her at the afternoon recess and told her that Miranda gave her the valentine and not Johnny Starr. She was more bewildered when she got home and found that her Grandfather Judd had given it to her. It began to seem to poor little Serena Ann as if everything was out of proportion and topsy-turvy, and people were behaving like fairy stories. For several days the whole village was in a turmoil over Serena Ann's valentine. Everybody questioned wildly, who had or had not bought it. Lonzo Badger was discovered to be guilty of petty dishonesty and whipped with a birch stick, but he did not go far toward the solution of the whole mystery. Some of it was always dark in the minds of the village. It seemed unquestionable that one valentine had been sold several times. At all events, Serena Ann had her valentine, her first one. And she never had any doubt as to who had given it to her. It was Johnny Starr, and he had bought it with his huckleberry money which he had shaken out of his iron bank.

THE STORY.

T was in the war times' early days, When eyes looked forth with anxious gaze, A young lad had been doomed to die, And would at that time know the reason why? He had been placed as sentinel, And at his post asleep he fell, Was stung by himself against that closing of his eyes Before him dreamless slumber lies.

The President read the sentence through, And murmured, "The act I cannot do, Brought up on farm, at work late kept— Poor boy! No wonder that he slept."

And over the paper he drew his pen, And signed his pardon there and then. Great-hearted man! Shall I unfold What later on the sequel told?

At Fredericksburg, among the slain, A lad, beyond all mortal pain, Was stung by himself against that closing of his eyes, A picture next his youthful heart.

'Twas Lincoln's picture that he wore, And just beneath the words it bore— "God bless Abraham Lincoln." Thus he showed The debt of love to him he owed.

THE LINCOLN CABIN.

Humble Abode in Which the Great Emancipator First Saw the Light.

The house in which Abraham Lincoln was born still stands near Nolen Creek, in Larue (formerly Hardin) County, three miles south of Hodgenville and two miles north of Buffalo, Ky. It is situated near the top of a hill, a full half mile from the roadway. A corn field surrounds the little house, which was built by Lincoln's father when he first attempted to do some farming on his own account. The soil round about the cabin is rough, unproductive and next to valueless, and there is no doubt that Abraham's father determined the site for his little homestead by the freely flowing spring that bubbles up from the limestone formation at the bottom of the hill. The flow of water is 1 1/2 inches in diameter and runs as freely as it did a century ago, giving a plentiful supply of water the year round.

The elder Lincoln was a carpenter, and he settled in that spot soon after his marriage for the purpose of trying agriculture. If Mr. Lincoln, the father, was a good carpenter he was certainly a poor builder, for the architecture of the cabin is anything but an evidence of art or skill. The sides are constructed of very small logs that were not properly squared. The rafters are mere poles, and the chimney was made of sticks. The cabin was lighted and ventilated with one door and one window. The door was built of rough boards, and above the hinges of the door were of roughly hewn wood. This house in which the future statesman and President spent the days of his childhood had but one room. One-half of one wall of this is taken up with the great fireplace. When the patriot's father built it he lined its inside with rough stones taken from the field. But at the present time not one of these remains in its place. When "Abe" was 7 years old his parents removed from this place to Indiana. It was an odd coincidence that 120 miles from this



THE LINCOLN CABIN.

spot a few months before Lincoln's birth Jefferson Davis was born in a three-room log house.

LINCOLN AND SOCIETY.

Introduced Himself and Wife as the "Long and Short of the Presidency."

In an article recalling the incidents of "When Lincoln Was First Inaugurated," in the Ladies' Home Journal, Stephen Fiske gives a graphic account of Mr. and Mrs. Lincoln's presentation to Washington society. There were a large number of the best-known of Washington's society people assembled in the parlors of the hotel where Mr. Lincoln and his wife were stopping, nearly all moved by curiosity to see the "rail-splitter" President. "Presently, from a side door that suggested a scene on the stage, emerged the face of Mr. Lincoln, smiling nervously; then his tall, thin, awkward body; then a long arm, and finally, at the end of this arm a dumpy, little woman. He was dressed in a new suit of shiny black that had been presented to him as an advertisement by an enterprising tailor. She was wrapped in a white shawl. Mr. Lincoln looked at the fashionable assembly and said, in his clear, distinct voice: "Ladies and gentlemen, permit me to present to you the long and short of the Presidency."

"As he said 'the long,' he bowed; as he said 'the short,' he looked down at Mrs. Lincoln and smiled. A shudder ran through the parlors. The ladies stared at the strange couple; the gentlemen bent their heads. That man the President of the United States! That woman the first lady of the land! All the etiquette of the Republican court that had been established since the days of the Etiquette Washington was violated."

REACTION HAS SET IN.

GREAT CHANGE IN PUBLIC SENTIMENT SINCE 1896.

General Weaver Sees Promise of Overwhelming Victory in Approaching Struggles—Warning to the Official Thieves—Prosperity is All a Myth.

Roasts the Administration.

General James B. Weaver, once candidate for President on the People's party ticket, in reviewing the political situation, says that the reaction in public sentiment since the campaign of 1896 is somewhat marvelous, and gives promise of overwhelming victory in approaching struggles. The people who were misled in the whirl of that memorable conflict began to comprehend the real situation before the smoke of battle had fairly cleared away. Their indignation is now rising like an ocean tide. It is a dangerous thing for party leaders to attempt to secure power by false pretenses. When the party of the second part finally learn of the delusion, they smite back as with a thunderbolt hurled by the gods, and the refuge of lies is swept away. It is one thing to win upon the strength of lavish promises, re-enforced at the critical juncture by the corrupt use of money, fraud and intimidation, but quite another to retain power in the midst of a sullen and indignant people after those promises have all been broken. Every man who was intimidated is filled with resentment and every broken pledge gives birth to an avenger. The first end of their promises looked well; but it was the view from the other end that has filled the people with wrath. Time and events have proven, and will continue to demonstrate, that every substantial assertion uttered by the gold advocates was incorrect, and every promise made basely false and made to conceal bad ulterior purposes. Look at the subterfuge of international bimetalism and its humiliating spectacle. And again at the explicit promise of McKinley in his letter of acceptance that the party would "keep in circulation and as good as gold all the silver and paper money now included in the currency of the country." That this was an insincere promise is shown, three times over, by the treacherous platitudes concerning our currency embodied in the inaugural address, by the currency message sent to the extra session of Congress, and by the pitiable annual message of Dec. 6. They constitute a substantial and reiterated plea of guilty on the part of the President to the charge of duplicity. Every sane man knows and will readily admit that McKinley would have been overwhelmingly defeated had he given expression to those views in his letter of acceptance. We charged at the time that he intended to do these very things, but the charge was bitterly denied. Why was this avowal of their real purposes withheld? Simply to lead the people into a trap. The wily hunter was luring a lion into a concealed pit. The Indianapolis junta and its proteges, the bankers' commission, which has lately been in session behind closed doors at Washington, and even Secretary Gage, of the President's official family, have all given us their estimate of the sanctity of these ante-election promises by boldly proceeding to outline a currency scheme for the administration and for Congress in utter disregard of the pledge. They have coolly outlined a project, and are now urging it upon the country, involving gold bonds, destruction of greenbacks, contraction and bank domination, which is so infamous that had it been disclosed before election as it has been since, it would have been rejected by the people in a whirlwind of disapproval. No power on earth could have saved them.

What was it that caused the overwhelming popular revolt against Cleveland? It was not against the person, but the policy of the administration. It was his gold bonds and bank schemes, his attempt to retire the greenbacks, the revenue deficits under the Wilson tariff law, and his pro-Spanish-Cuban policy. Concealing all these essential points, McKinley's administration is an exact duplicate of Cleveland's, minus the latter's backbone. With this one minus quantity, the parallel is complete. The same evil counselors who thronged the White House when Cleveland was there are all powerful within its walls and the chamber of every Cabinet official to-day. If there is any difference the trust magnates are more potential there to-day than ever before. McKinley is as completely within the power of his vicious advisers as was the weak and vacillating Louis XVI. When the catastrophe of 1789 fell upon him like a bolt from the sky. The thunderclap will come in our era from the ballot box.

Suppose!

Our present outstanding national liabilities amount to something over a billion and a quarter dollars' worth. Now, suppose we wipe all this out—the greenbacks, all the treasury notes, all the national bank notes, all the silver dollars, and all the silver certificates, and permit the banks to issue in lieu thereof one and a quarter million dollars' worth of bank notes redeemable in gold!

Would not we then be squarely, safely and permanently on a gold basis? Would we not have a stable currency, good in any part of the world for its face value?

Do you ask how this can be accomplished? Listen! Let Congress at once authorize the issuance and sale of one and a quarter billion dollars of gold bonds, drawing, say, 3 per cent, pay in 100 years hence, and thus secure the gold.

These bonds could easily be disposed of to our home money kings. The interest would only be about ten million

Indiana Populists.

The Indiana Populists held a State conference at Indianapolis, Dec. 31st. The regular State Committee also met at same time and place. The conference requested the State Committee to call a State convention which the committee did. Feb. 22, '98, was the date chosen, and Indianapolis the place. The conference adopted strong resolutions against fusion, "union" or "combination" with either of the old parties.

Should Charge Interest.

The deposits in national banks by the government as disbursing officers' balances on Jan. 1st, amounted to \$4,293,022. In addition to this, there was a deposit with such banks on that date as a free loan the stupendous sum of \$44,979,694. This is more than three times the amount of free deposits at the time McKinley was inaugurated. The increase, we presume, grows out of the sale of the Union Pacific Railroad, the government leaving the pur-

chase money with the banks until such time as it can be withdrawn without embarrassing the banks. It is a fact thing, this free loan. It is worth to the banks, say, two million profit a year. The government should charge interest on those deposits. When the people borrow money to avoid embarrassment, they must pay big interest—Missouri World.

Ohio Prosperity.

The American Nonconformist, of Indianapolis, refers to the mortgage record of Ohio for last year as reported by the Secretary of State. It appears that there were 71,568 mortgages given, aggregating \$78,744,598, and only 51,323 were released, representing \$89,255,923. This shows that 20,000 more mortgages were recorded than were released, representing \$20,000,000 because of indebtedness.

The Big Legal Robberies.

The amount of money or property lost to all the people of the United States by means of burglary since the government was formed does not equal the extortion in one year that they suffer from either of half a dozen combines and monopolies. It is not the little fellows whose depredations are hurting the people, but the big legal robberies.—Appeal to Reason.

Will They Do It?

If the common people don't revolutionize against existing conditions they will continue to suffer. Very few outside of their own circle are disposed to help the producers now, and those few get more disgusted every day. A smart man or woman in each school house could soon get up a revolution. Will they do it or go on suffering imposition?

What It Means.

A state and government based on the power of wealth in the hands of the few cannot be democratic, however boastful it may be about its (nominally) democratic and republican institutions. Wealth and the means of existence in the hands of the few always mean subjection and bondage for the many.—Coming Nation.

Time for Politicians.

The indifference and inertia of the common people is fun for the politicians who rejoice in it like unto a buzzard over a dead carcass. The lawyers and town people think very little about economic questions, and many newspapers think as their advertisers say. It is the cool deliberation and discussion in the school houses that will bring about reform.

Should Be \$2 a Bushel.

With all the talk about \$1 wheat that cereal is, with the aid of the greatest shortage of fifty years, but 12 cents higher than it was on the date a year ago, when there was an abundant crop and a big surplus. Comment is unnecessary.—Great Falls News.

Missouri World Comment.

Push the fight.

Insist on the practice of the referendum.

Populism will not mix with old party promises.

The party which had so much to say about an honest dollar is in power.

Piece of Stock Jobbery.

It is not surprising to read that the Nicaragua Canal scheme is, in reality, a gigantic piece of stock jobbery, says the Cleveland Recorder. The surprising thing would be to find out that it isn't. It will be remembered that Warner Miller, the chief promoter of the Nicaragua grab, is a close friend of Hanna, visited him during the presidential campaign, and was, in fact, the Senator's guest but a few weeks ago. This circumstance establishes the connection of the administration with the project in such a way as to lead to the inevitable inference that another campaign debt will be liquidated when the Nicaragua jobbers are satisfied. It is true that the Republican party is committed, by its platform, to the Nicaragua Canal scheme, but it is also true that the Republican party is not above trading off paragraphs in its platforms for substantial equivalents. That this has been done in the Nicaragua Canal matter is only too evident.

Subsidized Newspapers.

Newspapers, no matter what their political faith, which won't expose either extravagance, corruption or neglect in government, ought not to be allowed in the house of any farmer. When the reader has to go somewhere else to find out these things he ought to stop his paper. Newspapers which belong to adverse economic or political interests ought not to be paid for by producers of any political faith. Merchants who advertise in papers which are either subsidized or negligent ought to be notified by producers that the advertisement is no good. This would make an independent country press, no matter what the editor's party politics may be. Discuss this with your neighbors.—Exchange.

Will We Have a "Bird Day?"

A Missouri editor who has conceived the idea of a "bird day" titly remarks: "We have 'arbor days,' 'flag days,' and all kinds of days in our public schools now. Why not have a bird day, and let the exercises of the day relate entirely to birds? If the destruction of birds is stopped it must be through education and the education must commence with the children, for there is where the damage is done. When a boy reaches a certain age his proud father places a cheap shotgun in his hands, and with a yellow cur at his heels he starts out to sprinkle with shot every feathered creature on God's footstool. Teach him that this is wrong, that there is more pleasure and satisfaction in watching the graceful flight and in listening to the cheery note of the bird, than in seeing it flutter with blood-stained plumage on the ground."

A Valuable Find.

"Have you heard from your brother who went to the Klondike?" asked one Boston man of his neighbor. "Oh, yes," was the reply. "He's just struck luck." "Gold?" "Not yet; but he's discovered a place to get baked beans."