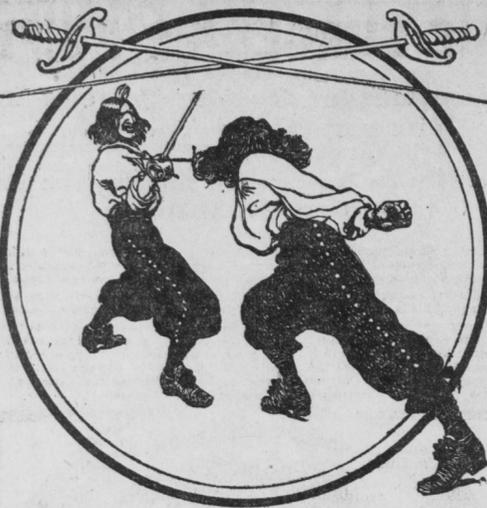


Has The Romance Inspired Modern Sows of The Sword?



of current romantic fiction will leave no lasting contribution to literature. However that may be, future historians looking back over this era can hardly fail to accord to present-day novelists the distinction of having again brought the noble art of fencing into popular favor.

Select a book at random from the novels which have "made a hit" during the last year or two, and what do you find? Two men in hose and doublets and flowing hair—not to speak of other equally scanty attire—having at each other with flashing blades of steel. You can't lose them; they are the dominant characters throughout the thread of the narrative. Open the book haphazard and read on; it is the same—the fighting man is still in the center of the stage. No matter where you turn, in peaceful sylvan scenes, beside the babbling brook, where least expected, you come suddenly on the field of honor.

The air is hot with "Gad's life," "odds bodkins," "sdeath," "gadzoaks," and other strange oaths.

No novel that pretends to deal with colonial times in our own country or runs glibly on about the brave days of old France or England is complete unless it hero runs the scheming villain through and succeeds in neatly spitting several more or less objectionable characters before the story's done. Turn to the index and you are sure to find the inevitable duel scene. The authors fairly revel in scenes of bloodshed, and justify indiscriminate murder so long as cold steel does the business.

Cavaliers come into the open and flip up a coin. The principals draw apart, throw aside their coats of many colors, and parry and thrust until the greensward is dyed a crimson hue. One of them being stretched limp and lifeless on the sod because of some real or fancied insult, the victor and his followers go back to court in triumph to bask in the smiles of fair women and "make good" at the gaming table.

It is an old familiar scene, and has left

an indelible impress on the public mind to-day. So, now all over the country fencing masters are working over-time teaching the young idea how to fence. Gymnasiums and athletic associations generally are cultivating fencing, and were it not for the fact that masks and breastplates were worn it is quite likely they would not all be bloodless duels.

Here in Minneapolis the romance and the fall are in such vogue that the book stores and the public library can hardly keep the books on their shelves, whose fencing teachers are all busy. Even the fair co-eds at the university have caught the spirit, and many of them engage in daily practice at the armory with their fells. Several are said to have become quite proficient in the use of the weapons intended for stronger hands than theirs.

Beaucaire 'Gainst the Field.

For all this—or a part of it—we must thank the romancers who have been setting our blood a-tingle with their stirring tales these days. In Monsieur Beaucaire, which is all the rage now, the man with the sword is most in evidence. Here you will find the hero after whom the book was named, valiantly defending himself against all comers and using his sword as an effective argument where words fail, whenever opportunity offers. Witness the following:

"On foot, his hat gone, his white coat sadly rent and gashed, Monsieur Beaucaire, wary, alert, brilliant, seemed to transform himself into a dozen fencing masters. Two of his adversaries were prostrate and more than one were groaning," etc.

"We learn of the hero, "Ramon Bell," in the very introduction of "D'ri" and which is also having a run now, that though "but a month in the army I have not seen a man before who could handle horse and sword as if a part of him."

"I am an old familiar scene, and has left

will be a dead man as soon as you grow a little weaker. If you try to run I will thrust you through the neck as I would a cur. Listen how you snort. I shall soon have you; you are almost gone. You would spare me, would you? I could preach a sermon or dance a hornpipe while I am killing you. I will not break my sword on your coat of mail, but will wait until you fall from weakness, and then—fight, you bloodhound!"

Isn't that enough to get you going? "At last by a dextrous twist of his blade Brandon sent Judson's sword flying thirty feet away. The fellow started to run, but turned and fell upon his knees to beg for life. Brandon's reply was a flashing circle of steel and his sword cut lengthwise through Judson's eyes and the bridge of his nose, leaving him sightless and hideous for life—a revenge compared to which death would have been merciful."

Think of it—on account of thirty cents lost at the gaming table because Judson cheated!

The Duke of Buckingham, who thought he was some as a swordsman had several encounters with Brandon which he greatly regretted. On one occasion when he barred Brandon's passage to Milady's chamber, "like a flash Brandon's sword was out of its sheath and Buckingham's sword was flying toward the ceiling. Brandon's sword was sheathed again so quickly that one could hardly believe it had been out at all, and picking up Buckingham's sword he said, with a haughty and scornful laugh:

"My lord has dropped his sword." He then broke its point with his heel against the hard floor, saying: "I will dull the point lest my lord, being unaccustomed to its use, wound himself."

In Good Old Colony Days.

Here's a bit from Richard Carvel in his duel with Lord Comyn:

"I had scarcely felt his lordship's wrist than I knew I had to do with a pupil of Angelo. At first his attacks were all simple without feint or trickery, as were mine. Comyn began to prick me, nor did I give back. And then, before it came over me that he had to do with life and death, he was upon me with a vote coupe, feinting in high carte and thrusting in low tierce, his point passing through a fold in my shirt, and I was not here to write these words had I not leaped out of his measure. . . .

"Once I thought I had him in the guard arm after a circular parry, but he was too quick for me. We were breathing freely by now and by reason of the buzz in my ears I could scarce hear the applause of the second. What unlucky chance it was I know not that impelled Comyn to essay the attack by which he had come so near to spitting me; but try it he did, this time in prime and seconde. I parried, circled and straightened my body in swift motion, my point at Comyn's heart."

That's fierce. "Passing on to "Sons of the Sword," we find Labourennaye and Vidal fighting fiercely with their lances locked on from an embowered portico.

"Steel clashed upon steel swifter and sharper than hammer on anvil," and it looked as if for the former when the women cut in and stopped the fight. In the "Seats of the Mighty," Captain Moray, telling "the story of his life," relates that he went to school in High street and learned Latin and other accomplishments, together with fencing from an excellent master.

Hamilton Tregnother was "too many" far Major Devinsky in "By Right of Sword." Hamilton Tregnother was completely he had been at his mercy. With consummate ease, Tregnother's sword point played around Devinsky like an electric spark about a magnet. Devinsky was like a child in his feeble efforts to follow its dazzling swiftness.

The Tallest Story of the Lot.

All other duels chronicled fade into insignificance and seem to be a mere play as compared with the performance of the lion-hearted, dare-devil "Captain Ralph Percy in "To Have and to Hold." All other swordsmen of the ancient or modern times must take off their chapeaux and bow very low to this fearless gentleman from Virginia.

Captain Percy had, in addition to his remarkable prowess with the sword, the qualities which would have made him suc-

cessful as a plunger or promoter in these degenerate days. He was a good "bluffer," and he never failed to make his bluff good.

Surrounded by a desperate, cursing pirate crew—bent on forcing them to acknowledge his leadership on condition that he could best the three cut-throats whose murderous bidding they had followed in the loot of many a ship—Percy successively backed his antagonists "off the boards" and forced the spectators to admit that he was indeed Kirby, the pirate king. The cutlass of Red Gil, the best blade of Lima and the sword of Paradise, were alike unavailing against the husband of the "king's ward."

"Am I Kirby?" demanded the gallant captain, his point at the other's breast. "Kirby, of course, senor," replied the other, not without wit, his eyes upon the gleaming blade.

It was a hard fight with Paradise, but slowly and surely the captain wore him out. He made the thrust of a boy of fifteen and the captain "smiled as he put it by."

"Why don't you end it?" he breathed. "Finish and be d—d to you!"

For answer Percy "sent his sword flying over the nearest hillock of sand."

"Am I Kirby?"

He fell back against the heaped-up sand



SOMEHOW THE COMBAT DOESN'T SEEM SO ROMANTIC WITHOUT THE JACK BOOTS AND THE CAVALIER PLUMES.

"I first!" roared Red Gil. "God's word! there will need no second!"

As he spoke he swung his cutlass and made an arc of blue flame. The weapon in his hands became a flail, terrible to look upon, making lightnings and whistling in the air, but in reality not so deadly as it seemed.

But Captain Percy "was ever master of his sword" and presently "ran him through with as little compunction and as great a desire to be quit of a dirty job as if he had been a mad dog."

The Spaniard was a more formidable antagonist. Percy wounded him slightly and presently succeeded in disarming him.

and leaned there, panting with his hand to his side.

"Kirby or devil," he replied. "Have it your own way."

That did the business. In the role of Captain Kirby, Percy at once took command of the pirate ship and sailed away with the "king's ward," escaping starvation on a lonely island.

This by no means exhausts the catalogue of earlier artists, but it is enough to show the general tendency of the romance.

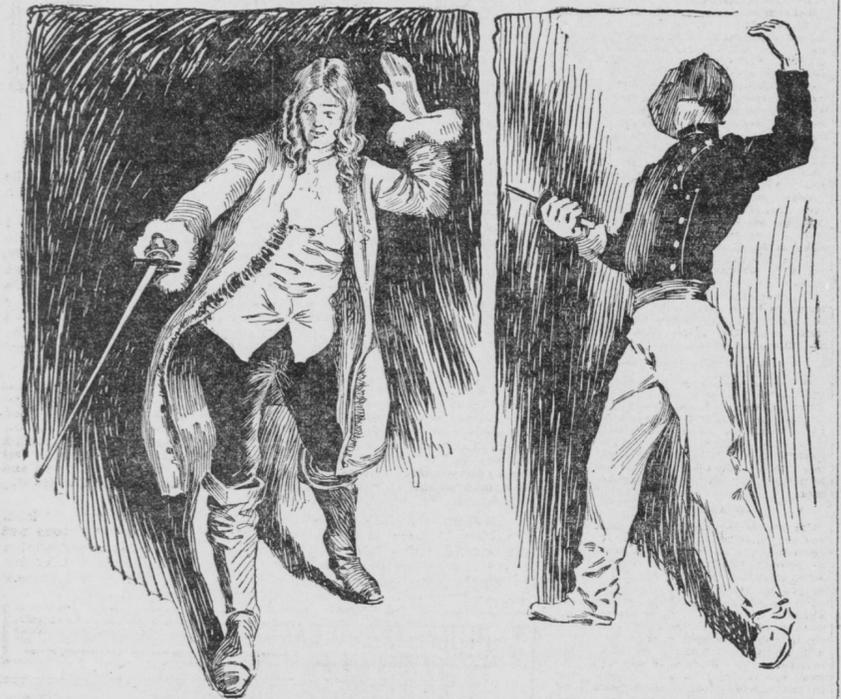
With what form of physical prowess will the romance of a hundred years hence deal? —H. L. K.

HISTORY repeats itself. Fencing, the knightly accomplishment, which, save in a limited circle, had become almost a lost art, again has the call. Gymnasiums all over the country have taken up the sport and it is particularly popular among society folk. Minneapolis "masters at arms" report that they have their hands full instructing pupils in fencing. If they had the time they could easily double their classes.

So with fencing, the causes for the revival may be naturally sought in literature and there they are quickly found. In the romantic school, revived a few years ago and still the center of public interest, the man with the sword is distinctly "it."

The small boy who devours the yellow back novel of the Red Ike variety has been known to encumber himself with all kinds of sauntering hardware and start out on the warpath after aboriginal scalps. The sedate man of affairs who is thrilled by the passages at arms recited in any of the romantic novels, who suddenly discovers that he needs physical exercise and hires him off to a fencing teacher, would probably repudiate the insinuation that he was influenced by so trivial a thing as a novel but he is certainly as much open to suggestion as the storefront small boy.

Critics frequently predict that writers



SWORDSMEN NOW AND THEN

THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY FENCER—MONSIEUR BEAUCAIRE, THE DILETTANTE SWORDSMAN—HERO OF BOOTH TARKINGTON'S DAINTY TALE.

THE TWENTIETH CENTURY FENCER—THE MASTER-ARMS OF TO-DAY WITH FOIL AND MASK.

Chinamen Pass as Japs

Chicago, Dec. 14.—Chinese have a new scheme for getting into the United States in spite of the exclusion laws, according to a discovery which had been made by the Japanese consular office in Chicago. It is announced by Chancellor Komma of the Chicago Japanese consulate that several Chinese had clipped off their queues and represented themselves as Japanese.

MAY PAY RANSOM

U. S. to Give Up Whole Amount Asked or Miss Stone.

EIGHT-YEAR SENTENCE

Kimber of Montana Must Serve for Manslaughter.

ILLEGAL VOTING

Four Boston Men Are Convicted of Conspiracy.

M. E. CONFERENCE SOUTH

Adjourns at Helena to Meet Next Year at Stevensville.

ENGINES RUINED

Collision on N. P. in North Dakota—Three Trainmen Hurt.

HEAVY DEATH RATE

Over 250 Per 1,000 Per Year in Boer Concentration Camps.

FASTER MAIL SERVICE

Canadian and Imperial Governments Getting Together.

Birthday Gift of Fire

Shanghai, Dec. 14.—On the occasion of the Empress Dowager's birthday some members of a secret society set fire to the palace at Kaifeng-tu. Two buildings were destroyed.

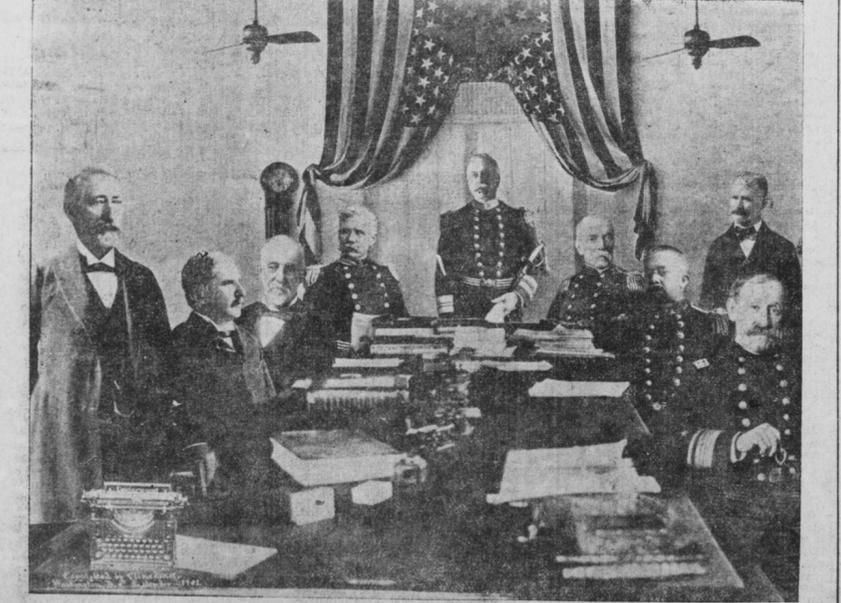
CHICAGO DEBATERS

Those Who Will Meet Minnesotans Are Chosen.

HUNGRY AND COLD

Elgin, Minn., Runaway Boys Taken From a Boxcar at Baraboo.

THE SCHLEY COURT OF INQUIRY



The three members of the court are at the head of the table, Dewey in the center, Benham on his right and Ramsay on his left. Next to Ramsay is Lemley, judge advocate general. Behind stands General Schley, Lemley's associate. Across the table stands Jere Wilson (now deceased) and next to him are Rayzor and Parker. Schley's counsel.

Healthy Old Age

Netherlands, Tenn., April 16, 1900.

I am 50 years old. My trouble was change of life. I truly sympathize with any woman who suffers as I have. After the torture and pain of two years I purchased two bottles of Wine of Cardui and took it according to directions. In a short time it began to relieve me. Now I feel like another woman. I cannot speak too highly of its merits. You may think I am exaggerating but I say I would not take \$1,000 for the good it has done me.

Whether to live to a healthy old age, the mother of strong sons and fair daughters, or to go down to a premature grave after a life saddened by misery and barrenness, is the choice a woman may make for herself. Mrs. Matthews' statement shows how a suffering woman can clearly make the right choice with

WINE OF CARDUI

at hand to regulate the declining function and keep her in perfect health. If this important functional change finds a woman in poor health, serious circumstances invariably follow. The shock aggravates any existing disorder and old age is full of suffering. How many women fade quickly after prime because the change of life overtakes them in ill health? To a healthy woman the change need have no terrors. It is necessary to women wishing to enjoy old age, to take the Wine of Cardui treatment before it is too late, to eradicate every kind of "female diseases" from the system. You can secure a dollar bottle of Wine of Cardui from your druggist and take it in your own home.

Owenby, N. C., February 23, 1900.

I have used Wine of Cardui and Theford's Black-Draught for the change of life and find them a great help to me. I thank you for your medicine and the good it has done me.

For advice and literature, address, giving symptoms, "The Ladies' Advisory Department," The Chastanooga Medicine Company, Chastanooga, Tenn.