

THE WIDOW
By THOMAS B. MONTFORT

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THE widow was neither pretty, nor particularly attractive, and back East, where women were plentiful, she would have considered herself fortunate in the possession of a single lover. Yet, before she had been in Pigeon flat a month she had a dozen admirers at her feet, and had received at least half that many proposals of marriage. In the flat, woman was a rare article, and the men could not afford to be over-exacting in their tastes regarding female charms.

Among the widow's admirers was Blue Thompson. He was a big, burly chap, who had made his advent into the camp with a hurrah and a flourish. He was not at all averse to having the impression go abroad that he was a bad man from away back, and when it began to be whispered about that he had a record as a slayer of men he did not trouble himself to make a denial.

It was not long after Thompson's arrival at the flat until he had things pretty much his own way in the matter of making love to the widow. His rivals were only ordinary every-day citizens, who valued their lives as something worthy of preservation, and who, therefore, were inclined to be more or less timid in the face of danger. None of them possessed a desire to run counter to a man who had acquired the unpleasant habit of shooting his fellow-men on the slightest provocation. Moreover, the widow was rather taken with Thompson's bigness and boldness, and she showed a decided preference for his company. So the others reluctantly held aloof from her, giving Thompson a clear field.

In the saloons and gambling halls at the flat there had, from the first, been much betting on the result of the free-for-all contest for the widow's hand. Up to the time of Thompson's arrival the betting had been at even money, with nobody able to score as a favorite. After he came, however, there was a decided change. He soon became a favorite, and after a time bets were offered on him at odds of five to one, with no takers.

Then, one day, there was a new arrival in the camp. It was a little, sparely built man, who answered to the name of Bob George. He had a soft voice, a smiling face, and manners so gentle that they were almost childlike. He had the appearance of a harmless, inoffensive sort of being, who could be run over and trampled under foot with impunity. In the flat he was considered too insignificant to merit more than a passing notice.

Before Bob had been in the camp many days it became apparent to every one that he had been smitten by the widow's charms, and had joined her galaxy of admirers. Like the others, however, he evinced a wholesome regard for Blue Thompson's claims, and worshipped at a safe distance. He never presumed to seek her society, and if he ever addressed her at all, it was in the most distant manner. But the way his eyes followed her, and the way he spoke of her to others, was proof positive that he loved her.

Bob's admiration of the widow was the source of much amusement in the flat. People laughed at his presumption in daring to worship, even at a distance, a woman who had half the camp at her feet, and who could have Blue Thompson any day, by simply saying the word. Many jokes, regarding his love, were cracked at Bob's expense by the witty ones at the flat. Bob, himself, was not unaware of all these things, but he quietly went his way, keeping his own counsel, and saying nothing.

One night, about a month after Bob's arrival at the flat, there was a large crowd collected down at "Joe's Place." Bob was there, and so was Blue Thompson. There was a good deal of betting going on, in one way and another, and a good deal of drinking, too. Thompson was in the thick of it all, but Bob sat in a corner, taking no part in any of it.

After awhile, some one turned to Joe and said: "How is the betting on the widow, now?" "Nothing doing," Joe replied. "What's the odds on Thompson?" "The same old thing—five to one—but no takers."

"Thompson seems to have a sure cinch. Guess if it is ten to one there wouldn't be anybody fool enough to go against him."

Thompson, who had been standing with his back to the speakers, turned around and brought his fist down on the bar.

"Of course, I've got a sure cinch," he said, "and to prove that I know what I'm talking about, I'll tell you what I'll do. I've got \$5,000 that says I'll marry the widow, and I stand ready to put it up against any man's \$500 who says I won't."

He glared around on the crowd, as if inviting somebody to take him up, if any one dared. But everybody was silent. A minute passed, then Bob George arose and walked over to the bar.

"That's pretty big odds you're offering," he said to Thompson, "and it seems like somebody ought to take your bet."

"Why don't you take it, then?" Thompson asked, and a laugh went around the room.

"Me? Oh, I never gamble," Bob replied, in his soft, gentle voice. "Still, it seems like a shame to let a bet like that go by."

"Then, you'd better take it. Nobody else seems to want it."

some of the spectators stood about, making remarks. None of these were at all complimentary to Bob. One man went so far as to say: "Nobody but a durned fool would bet against a sure thing, no matter how great the odds in his favor. Any man of ordinary sense wouldn't take that bet at odds of 100 to one."

"Any man with a particle of sense at all wouldn't," another added.

Bob heard these remarks, but apparently, they did not disturb him in the least. He was as calm as a summer breeze, and on his face was that bland, pleasant smile. He was so childlike and trusting that it seemed almost like stealing milk from a baby to accept his offer to bet. A man more honorable than Blue Thompson would have hesitated to take advantage of his unsophisticated innocence.

When the bet was all arranged, and the stakes properly deposited, Joe said: "Now, how and when is this thing to be decided?"

Bob looked up at Thompson, trustingly, as if inviting him to answer. The latter, assuming an important, swaggering, arrogant air, and ignoring Bob entirely, said:

"A week is all the time I want for marrying the widow. You can prepare to hand over the stakes to me by that time."

"And if you don't marry her," Bob said, questioningly, "I get the money."

"Of course," Thompson answered, condescendingly. "But, if I were you, I would not lay awake of nights, planning out how to invest it."

"Oh, I won't," Bob replied. "I never lose sleep over things like that. But, why should we wait a week to decide this thing? Why not decide it right now?"

Thompson laughed and the crowd joined in. Bob was certainly very funny.

"Do you think a man can decide a thing like this in two minutes?" Thompson asked.

"I can," Bob replied. "You can? How?"

"I'll show you."

In a flash Bob had pulled his gun and held it pointed at Blue Thompson's head. The latter started back, with surprise, and the crowd began to move restlessly.

"Be quiet, gentlemen, everybody," Bob said, and the softness and gentleness was all gone out of his voice, and the smile had left his face. "This is a little matter of business, and it is all quite regular, I assure you."

"But, there shall be no murder here," Joe interposed. "You shall not resort to that to win your bet. Men, disarm him."

Several of the spectators started toward Bob, but before they could lay their hands on him he threw back the lappel of his coat and revealed a detective's badge. Those who had started to interfere fell back.

"There will be nobody hurt," Bob said, "unless some of you try to interfere with me in the discharge of my duty. As I said, this thing is all proper and regular."

There was a long and death-like silence. Bob, calm and cool, looked at Thompson, and the latter, gloomy and cowering, looked at Bob. The spectators, their faces pictures of astonishment, looked enquiringly from one to the other. Finally, Joe broke the silence by saying:

"What does it all mean?"

"It means, simply," Bob replied, "that Blue Thompson is not Blue Thompson at all, and that, instead of being a brave, 'bad man,' he is only a common murderer. He killed an old man, stole that \$5,000, and then ran away and changed his name. I have been looking for him for about a year, for he is badly wanted."

In the hearts of some of those who were admirers of the widow a glad feeling began to creep up. It would not be such a bad thing to have so formidable a rival as Blue Thompson out of the way. Some of them, who had felt their chances of winning the woman as hopeless, took fresh courage, and resolved to re-enter the contest. On the morrow, they told themselves, they would lay fresh siege to her heart.

Presently, the door opened and a man came in. Without a word he walked over to Blue Thompson, snapped a pair of handcuffs on him, and relieved him of his pistols.

To the men in the saloon there was something familiar looking about this man, although they could not remember ever having seen him. He was a stranger in the flat, beyond a doubt, yet somehow, they felt that it had not been long since they had looked on his features. "But, where?" they asked themselves, "and when?"

The man looked around on the crowd and saw the puzzled look on the faces. He understood and burst into a loud, hearty laugh.

"For shame, for shame!" he cried. "I'm disappointed in you all. To think that not one of you recognizes me, when you have seen me every day for weeks, and some of you have professed to admire me greatly! It seems cruel and disappointing that men should so soon forget the loved features of the one they profess to adore!"

There was a long and awkward pause, then some one said: "It is the widow."

The man looked up with a smile. "Yes," he said, "I was the widow, but now, I am a detective. I'm sorry if any of you feel disappointed, and I trust that I shall leave no broken hearts, here, when I go away. You have all made it very pleasant for me, and to show that I am not ungrateful I want you all to come up and have one with me."

At first there was some hesitation, for the disappointed lovers felt sore, but, presently, they thought better of it, and, treating the matter as a good joke, lined up at the bar and had, not only one, but several.

Steel is slowly but surely displacing hemp as the material of which all hawsers and ropes are made in the ships of the British fleet.

Passing of the Good Old American Silver Dollar

It is Probable That No More of Them Will Ever be Coined by the Government

THAT ponderous and more or less troubling coin, the silver dollar, has had its day, according to Mr. George T. Roberts, director of the United States mint. Mr. Roberts says the supply of silver bullion purchased under the Sherman act is exhausted, and that in all probability no more new silver dollars will be turned out by the government mint plants. Which, for old association's sake, seems regrettable.

Although the silver dollar has led to much heated 16 to 1 controversy, we should give it the respect due its long service. In a report of the United States monetary commission, this tribute is paid it: "The silver dollar has been



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longer known, is more widely used, and is more familiar to mankind than any other coin of either metal." The coin was in common use in 1785 when the American congress adopted it as the unit of account. To our great financier, Robert Morris, belongs the credit of our decimal money, but it was Thomas Jefferson that proposed the dollar as unit of account, reasoning that the Spanish silver dollar was "familiar to the minds of the people, and already as much referred to as a measure of value as the respective provincial pounds"—the provincial pounds of the recent ruling English.

Spain borrowed the dollar from Austria during her union with that country under Charles V, and as the "thaler" the dollar was coined from Bohemian silver mines. The Spaniards with their wonderful wealth of American mines supplied the world for centuries with silver, and made the silver dollar become very widely known. Being close neighbor to Spanish-America and carrying on with her much trade, we early be-

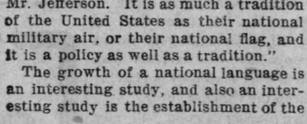


THE FIRST UNITED STATES DOLLAR.

came familiar with the silver dollar, and easily adopted it as the national coin when it became necessary to establish a currency of our own. And it was not only that we liked the silver coin, but also that we disliked the British to the extent of desiring to cut loose from all that savored of dependence on the enemy.

Gen. Washington indorsed Thomas Jefferson's memoir which led to the adoption of the silver dollar unit, and showed his final approval by his signature to the mint act of 1792. An enthusiast writes of the doughty coin in this fashion: "The silver dollar has thus the sanction of the solid and practical worth of George Washington added to the learning, genius and philosophy of Mr. Jefferson. It is as much a tradition of the United States as their national military air, or their national flag, and it is a policy as well as a tradition."

The growth of a national language is an interesting study, and also an interesting study is the establishment of the



THE WASHINGTON HALF DOLLAR.

currency of the country. Efforts have been made toward a universal system of coinage, but there seems small prospect that the nations will agree upon common coins. France finds most convenient the perfect decimal divisions of the franc; the widely-scattered British have proven the power of the English pound sterling; the Yankees' attachment to the dollar is proverbial.

Harper's Book of Facts gives in condensed form the story of American money. The first coin used in America was the "Hog Money," a coin issued for the Virginia company somewhere about 1615. It was issued in shillings and six-pences, and circulated in the Bermudas; the money got its name from the fact that a hog was stamped on the coin. In 1652, the general court of Massachusetts passed an act establishing, in Boston, the first mint in this country, and the

shilling, six-pence and three-pence that were coined here are known under the name of the "Pine Tree Money." John Hull, who was the contractor for the Massachusetts mint, received one shilling for every 20 coined, and as the pine tree coins were issued in great quantities, he got very wealthy. For almost a hundred years the pine tree coin was the chief coin in circulation in New England.

For Maryland's use, Lord Baltimore in 1661 had coined in England the shilling, six-pence and penny. France took the lead in sending to American possessions copper coinage, in 1721 giving Louisiana a small copper coin bearing the letter L, the initial of the king, Louis XV. The English colonies, which had been clamoring for copper, were at last heard, and in 1721 ten tons of copper coin were exported to Massachusetts. In 1773 England sent Virginia a copper coin that for long was one of the most beautiful of the coins in use in this country.

Among our early coins was the "Wood Money," or "Rosa Americana." In 1722 William Wood of Wolverhampton, England, obtained a monopoly for coining "tokens" to be used for currency in America. This coin, which was made of a mixed metal that resembled brass, obtained quite a wide circulation. In 1737, there was in circulation in Connecticut a private or unauthorized coinage known as the Granby or Higly token. There were various devices in the Higly token: a deer surrounded with this legend, "Value



A PINE TREE SHILLING.

Me As You Please;" a group of hammers and the words, "I Am Good Copper;" a broad ax and "I Cut My Way Through;" again a deer with the words "The Value of Three-Pence;" hammers and "Connecticut, 1737." In 1785 Vermont issued the copper one-cent, and the following year copper was coined in New Jersey. Massachusetts in 1786 established a mint to coin gold, silver and copper, but no gold or silver was coined in this mint and its coinage was shortly discontinued.

Immediately at the close of the revolutionary period need was felt for state coinage, and divers coins were issued by the respective commonwealths. What is known as the Georgia cent bore a figure representing Liberty standing behind a barrier of 13 bars; Vermont symbolized the spirit of the day in her coinage, one piece of money bearing the words "Independence and Liberty," another the sun rising over the mountains with, on the reverse, Latin words meaning "fourteenth star;" New York liked the combination "Virtue and Liberty," and another of her many coins bore a figure of Justice on the obverse and an eagle on the reverse.

The early coins and tokens showed the popular feeling toward Washington, innumerable ones having figures meant to be portraits of the Father of his Country; and in 1783 there were issued four varieties of the Washington Independence tokens, and following the European custom of placing a representation of the head of the country upon the nation's coins, the bust of Washington was used on the American mintage. There were coined the famous Washington



THE ROSA AMERICANA PENNY.

cents and Washington half-dollars and a great many less known coins.

In 1786 congress decided upon the following coins; the gold eagle, the half-eagle and quarter-eagle; the silver dollar, half-dollar, quarter-dollar, dime and half-dime; the copper cent and half-cent. The first United States mint was established in 1792, and 1793 is the date of the first United States coinage. The first issue from the national mint was the cent which bears the admonitory words "Mind Your Own Business," and, perhaps because of the advice, called the Franklin cent. The first silver coins of the American series were issued in 1794; a dollar, half-dollar and half dime.

One of the rare United States coins is the silver dollar of 1804. That the 1804 dollar should be so rare is something of a mystery, as 19,570 were coined. Two explanations are given: that part of this large issue was included in the mintage of 1805; that a vessel bound for China with almost the entire 1804 mintage, was lost at sea.

KATHERINE POPE.

Compulsory Faith.

Judge Parry, of the English judiciary, tells of a feeble-looking man, who was rebuked for supporting a ridiculous claim made by his wife. "I tell you candidly I don't believe a word of your wife's story," said Judge Parry. "Yet may do as yer like," replied the man, mournfully, "but I've got to."—Argonaut.

MODISH FANCIES IN DRESS.

Airy Bits of Feminine Finery That Lend Tone and Color to Seasonable Costumes.

The latest thing in neck lingerie is the turn-over plaiting of mull or China silk. These little collars are usually lace edged, and most of them are sold in a set with cuffs to match. Almost anyone who wears a turn-over or Eton collar finds these ruffles becoming, says the New York Post.

There are indications that the dainty pink and blue underwear is beginning to be worn. One shop displays a number of the pretty garments, and they are said to be selling well. Nightgowns in flowered muslin trimmed with Valenciennes are novelties on the lingerie counters. They are attractive.

For summer evenings the loveliest wraps are made of light-colored silks, only the softest varieties, like louisine, being used. These charming garments are made in three-quarter lengths, and are lined with chiffon matching the silk. Pongee in the pastel shades is a good fabric for these wraps, and a rough silk called burlington is also well suited for the purpose.

Old rose pongee was made into a Shaker wrap for summer trousseau. The shirring around the top was done on very heavy cords, and the entire wrap, including the hood, was lined with a white Liberty gauze. Another pongee wrap, an oyster-white shade, had a lining of pure white chiffon, the lining being put on in a series of loose puffs. Immense scarfs of the chiffon edged with lace hung from the collar in front.

A quaint fashion has been observed at recent evening functions, that of wearing a collar of colored velvet or satin trimmed with lace and jewels with a low-cut gown. Sometimes the collar matches the gown, but they are often black or white. For example, a rose-colored velvet collar was worn with a white lace gown, a black lace collar with a pale-green gown, and a turquoise blue velvet collar with a black lace dress made over a turquoise-blue slip. Perhaps they give a sort of sore-throat effect, but they are becoming and different—two good excuses for existing.

White is being worn more and more for summer mourning. It must be all white, of course, and white of a clear tone. Cream color or any of the becoming off shades are barred as strictly as colors. Black and white is not permissible for deep mourning. A white gown with a black belt or collar is half mourning. The plainest of white linen or lawn, made without a scrap of lace or embroidery, alone is deep mourning. White English crepe gowns with white crepe hats and veils are allowed for dress occasions. With all these white gowns are worn white shoes, stockings and gloves.

THE WHITE DINING ROOM.

Lends a Sense of Refreshment and Lowered Temperature in Warm Weather.

Coolness, the one thing above all others desirable during the summer days, is, after all, nearly as much a matter of appearances as of reality, says the Brooklyn Eagle. Consider how one's physical thermometer would involuntarily take a jump upward in a room furnished in red or some other warm color, and how, on the other hand, there is a sense of refreshment and lowered temperature upon entering a place where the appointments are of cool green or blue tones, or all is made a harmony of white. How the lagging appetite would be stimulated before a table set in a dainty white dining-room, such as was recently designed by a decorator to be carried out in a summer cottage. Walls and ceiling were papered with white French gloss paper; woodwork and furniture were also white; draperies of white net hung from white enameled poles; white embroidered linen decorated sideboard and table; relieving this whiteness were silver frames on delicate water color pictures; silver candle sconces, holding white-shaded candles, and a chandelier of frosted silver.

A white dining-room may be easily carried out by the homemaker herself, where it is not possible to put it in the hands of a decorator. It is well to remember in planning it, however, that as all the white surfaces will soil readily, they should be made washable. Burlap may be used in place of wall paper, and is comparatively inexpensive. It is put on in the same way, a strong glue size being used in the paste. After it is thoroughly dried it is given a coating of glue size and then two coats of white lead and oil. The surface can be washed the same as any other painted one.

For the floor, white matting may be used. As to furniture, an old set may be sandpapered, and then enameled white; or an unfinished set, bought at a factory, may be painted white. With trim white muslin draperies, picture frames painted white or silver, a white china cabinet in one corner and plate racks allowing a pretty touch of color to brighten the walls, the white dining-room is sure to be a delight to all visitors, as well as to its owner. As a finishing touch, there should be plenty of greenery, in the way of potted plants and ferns, which contribute in no small measure to the inviting coolness of the room.

Toasting Futile.

A man named Brown courted a lady unsuccessfully for many years and drank her health every day. On being observed to omit the custom, a gentleman said—"Come, Brown, your old toast!" "Excuse me," the other replied, "as I can't make her Brown, I'll toast her no longer!"—Smith's Weekly.

Laundry Hint.

When you wash small articles, such as collars, cuffs and handkerchiefs, put them in a clean flour sack or pillow slip, and it will save time in handling them.—Chicago Daily News.

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A Continual Strain.

Many men and women are constantly subjected to what they commonly term "a continual strain," because of some financial or family trouble. It wears and distresses them both mentally and physically, affecting their nerves badly and bringing on liver and kidney ailments, with the attendant evils of constipation, loss of appetite, sleeplessness, low vitality and despondency. They cannot, as a rule, get rid of this "continual strain," but they can remedy its health destroying effects by taking frequent doses of Green's August Flower. It tones up the liver, stimulates the kidneys, insures healthy bodily functions, gives vim and spirit to one's whole being, and eventually dispels the physical or mental distress caused by that "continual strain." Trial bottle of August Flower, 25c; regular size, 75c. At all druggists.—W. T. Brooks.

Healthy Mothers.

Mothers should always keep in good bodily health. They owe it to their children. Yet it is no unusual sight to see a mother, with babe in arms, cough and sneeze violently and exhibiting all the symptoms of a consumptive tendency. And why should this dangerous condition exist, dangerous alike to mother and child, when Dr. Bescher's German Syrup would put a stop to it at once? No mother should be without this old and tried remedy in the house—for its timely use will promptly cure any lung, throat or bronchial trouble in herself or her children. The worst cough or cold can be speedily cured by German Syrup; so can hoarseness and congestion of the bronchial tubes. It makes expectation easy, and gives instant relief and refreshing rest to the cough-racked consumptive. New trial bottles, 25c; large size 75c. At all druggists.—W. T. Brooks.

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