

What Became of Mary Ellen

By SAMUEL MINTURN PECK

CHAPTER I.

WHEN Jim Evans bought the Okaville Chronicle and paid \$200 for it, he called it a "fine deal." At first Jim congratulated himself, deeming the purchase a tribute to his shrewdness, but when he came to view his journalistic property it occurred to him that possibly the compliment had been misappropriated.

His misgiving grew when the Argus, the rival sheet, came out with the following paragraph:

"Old Brown of the Chronicle has finally sold his moribund paper. It is perhaps unnecessary to state that his victim is a stranger. He hails from Mississippi and is rehellated. Let us hope that his devil locks may throw at least a hectic glow on the dullness of our expiring contemporary."

"I'm not rehellated; my hair is Auburn," said Evans indignantly. "I'll make the Chronicle a big success if I have to work day and night. Hang the Argus!"

"Amen!"

Evans had supposed himself alone in the ransacked office, and, turning abruptly, his glance fell upon a boy of sixteen, who met his eye with a smile half fearful, half impudent.

To Evans' startled inquiry the boy explained that he was Tom Wilson, the Chronicle devil, and upon his insisting that he "went with the paper" and could set type Evans re-engaged him, and, with his staff of one, the young editor settled down to work.

The item most lauded by Brown had been the Chronicle's "good will." Experience proved that this intangible thing represented the right to solicit advertisements and the doubtful pleasure of entertaining Colonel Biddham, a devoted politician, who dropped in daily with a bottle of cough mixture to read the exchanges.

"Does he go with the paper, too?" asked Evans of Tom at the end of a week.

"Who, the colonel?"

"I don't know," laughed the boy. "He's a chronic cough. That bottle of cough mixture is his only eye, and he sometimes has the blues. They say he thinks to forget a man he once killed. But he's been to the legislature, and when they else runs up with him, and I suppose we'll have to yes. I reckon the colonel goes with the paper."

Jim and his bright-eyed staff soon became comrades, for there was but eight years difference in their ages, a space that youth and sympathy find small difficulty in spanning. Otherwise, however, time was an item in the little country office, and it excited the boy's admiration to see his chief setting unwritten editorials to save it. But it was when the clean limbed, muscular young editor did the giant swing on the horizontal bar in the rear of the office that the lad would have died for him.

However, this bit of hero worship not being required of him, Tom did something that pleased his chief far better. He introduced Evans to his pretty cousin, Jennie Hamlin, and ere long Jim had another incentive to spur him on in the race for journalistic success.

The Chronicle office faced Okaville's principal street. Evans put his case and stood at one window, and Tom Wilson placed his by the other. The editor could look up Mulberry street and the staff down. This arrangement saved the expense of a reporter, for nothing, from a dog fight to a shooting scrape, could happen in the heart of the town but the eagle eye of the Chronicle was upon it, and the editor or staff swooped down, notebook in hand.

But there were days and weeks when nothing would happen. The editor and the dog would fight—days when the rain fell and the wind sobbed through the old southern town and the ox wagons creaked drives, while the wet street, littered with sodden locks of cotton and bedazzled corn husks, presented a vista of desolation. These were trying times.

"It's disgusting," cried Tom one day in despair. "Nobody's died, nobody's married, and nobody's been born in three weeks. Now's the time for the editor to take the blues. If the editor would only get the monkeys off his mind and hang himself, just think how we might sweep the Argus!"

Next week a circus struck the town—Hindfoot's Great Show, "nine circuses combined," and Tom was in ecstasy.

"Now we'll have plenty of copy," said the boy gleefully. "There's always a setup in Okaville after the night's performance. Somebody always gets staked or shot or scuffling, and then there's the trial. This circus will last us almost till Christmas."

The circus had been billed for weeks. Immense posters flared up and down Mulberry street from billboards of un-dressed plank; countrymen and negroes stared open mouthed at the mammoth jaws of huge hippopotami swallowing lip-clashed lions and elephants brandishing Hindoo battles in their gyrating trunks. But the picture that excited most horror was a lurid representation of the female anaconda, Mary Ellen, a specimen of this poster had made a free copy of the Laocoon in blue, yellow and green, and the effect was blood curdling.

"It's dead," said the clown, and a tear rolled down his chalk white face, made up in a perpetual smile. Recognizing by Tom's notebook that he was a representative of the press, the grief-stricken man added: "It was my mother, and that needn't have happened. Anacondas eat only once in three months. The snake should have been fast week at Gainesville. She was hungry, that was all."

When Tom regained the searching party it had left the tent. Some one

shivered over the paragraph, strange to relate they found the sensation rather pleasant than otherwise, never dreaming that Okaville would ever have more than a spectacular acquaintance with the fateful Mary Ellen; yet so it was, and this was the manner of it:

It was 11 o'clock. The night performance had ended, and Evans was leaving the tent with Jennie Hamlin on his arm when a horrible shriek rang from the tent into the glaring torch illumined night. Simultaneously came a confused chorus of voices: "Shoot her!" "Shoot her! No, cut her, cut her!" "Too late, she's lettin' go!" followed by a babel of curses and screams from men and women fleeing in all directions.

Evans drew Jennie to one side to guard her from the crush, and, with vague guesses at the cause of the panic, they paused for the excitement to subside before resuming their way. As they stood waiting Tom dashed up.

"It's Mary Ellen, the big snake! She's got out and crushed the living skeleton," cried the boy in one breath, and he dashed back under the swaying tent which trembled and shook in the gusty light, suggestive of an antediluvian mammoth in mortal pain.

Jim feared that Jennie would faint, or at least scream as the other women were doing, when she heard Tom's dreadful announcement, but she did neither. She merely clung to his arm and trembled.

That no one knoweth when his hour cometh is true of other things than death. It is equally true of love, and quite as veracious in the matter of the avowal, for what man knoweth when he is going to propose? Evans certainly did not. He had planned it many times, and had even selected the words he intended to say, but at each occasion the word and the moment never seemed to fit, though every day his love kept growing stronger and stronger and bolder and bolder, till it seemed to him he would have to get a larger body to hold his heart. And now all suddenly, as he felt the arm of the little woman he loved quivering in his own, he told his love almost before he was aware.

As for Jennie, she had long known that Evans loved her, her only doubt had been in regard to her own feelings. But when in her fright she

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A PARISIAN BEAUTY.

MME. TALLIEN, WHO, IT IS ASSERTED, SNUBBED NAPOLEON.

A Woman Whose Extraneous Lovellness Bazzled Even the Women of the French Capital—The Mild and Inoffensive Young Bonaparte.

During the directorie Marie de Medici's palace became the center of government and Barras reigned there under the inspiration of Mme. Tallien. It was she who organized all the fetes and ceremonies which enlivened Paris after the Terror. In 1796 the beautiful Spaniard was twenty-three and had already had an eventful post. The daughter of a financier named Cabarrus, she had married at the age of sixteen the Marquis de Fontenay, been divorced from him in 1793 and had remarried, a few months after, Tallien, the conventionist.

Arrested May 22, 1794, she was imprisoned in Les Carmes, and it was from here that she wrote the stinging epistles to her husband which induced that wavering spirit to dare all in the attempt to set her free. Armed with a dagger in case of failure and all the courage he could muster, Tallien on the famous 9th Thermidor attacked Robespierre in a debate which brought about the fall of the "sea green monster."

The reign of terror came to an end, the prisons disgorged their victims, and Mme. Tallien received from the people the title of Notre Dame de Thermidor. The world was at her feet, and she dazzled it by her beauty and her charm, her lovers and her luxury. Even women forgot to be jealous and acknowledged what all men proclaimed. The following description is from the pen of one of her own sex, Mme. de Chastelay:

"Mme. Tallien came every day to visit Barras. I do not think it possible to be lovelier than this woman was then. I shall always see her like a forty year old woman among the rest, her beautiful black hair coiled simply on her head without any ornament, round her neck a single string of large pearls. She wore a white underdress and tunic of ink crepe, and, sitting on the ground playing with a child of three, the son of one of Barras' friends, they made a group which no classic sculpture could surpass."

Barras tells us with great naïveté, in his memoirs, that the "Little Corsican" continually after a fruitless attempt to obtain favor with Mme. Tallien, and that this lady had treated him with great abashment, telling him "she could do better for herself." This account of the affair coming from any other quarter would be more credible.

A considerable event was now to take place at the Luxembourg—namely, the reception given to General Bonaparte after the campaign of Italy. For this ceremony (Dec. 10, 1795) the courtyard of the palace was transformed into a sort of temple, and an altar to Paris erected in the grand entrance hall. The five directors, with Barras at their head, attired themselves as Romans, while Tallien, the minister of foreign affairs, was prepared with an elaborate harangue.

The scene was made additionally brilliant by the presence of many ladies, whose splendid jewels and rich dresses did honor to the occasion, while their eager faces and murmured conversation betrayed their interest in the young hero. Among these women, the best noticeable were Mme. de Stael and Mme. de Camille—"wit and beauty," as Napoleon himself named them.

None of all the assembly the future emperor had assumed no imposing costume. His uniform, that of a general of the Revolution, suggested a character of republican simplicity, while his pale, his gravity and quiet demeanor seemed to deprecate the ceremony of which he was the object. The tone of his speech was equally modest, his thought the pride he felt in his country's scientific conquests and her progress in the paths of peace.

Surely no government could suspect a rival in so well disposed a young man. Two years later the coup d'état of Brumaire drove Barras from the Luxembourg, and the first assembly, which in France has borne the title of senate, began its sittings in the palace.

Tom Wilson, who had been raised especially to allow this slip to pass. To the foreign sailor it seems a miracle, and they tell of it for the rest of their lives.—New York Press.

"What is the blame fool skipper trying to do?" growls an old English sail. Meanwhile the old timers are leaning against the bulwarks, smoking and chuckling. What was once anxiety to them is now a huge joke.

The other sailors are getting bewildered. Apparently the bridge will strike the foremast just below the cross-trees. In alarm they hurry aft, as though to appeal to the pilot and the officers, but those men are complacently tranquil on the poop.

"Look out! Stand from under!" yells one sailor. The bridge is apparently about to sweep through the fore rigging, when suddenly it shoots upward and curves gracefully over the fore truck, fifty feet above. In a minute it is all over. The bridge drops again. It actually seems as if it had been raised especially to allow this slip to pass. To the foreign sailor it seems a miracle, and they tell of it for the rest of their lives.—New York Press.

Old saying: Those who can, do; those who can't, teach.

Tom had no doubt have tried many "trickeries." Ever and one that was a remedy.

When there is talk of a duel both parties are very free in the hope that the other will back out.

We have noticed that the weather is either too wet, too dry, too cool or too warm. It is very seldom just right.

Don't ever give to death if you can help it. Such a death is very unsatisfactory to the doctors, as it affords them nothing to cut out.

When they were married they had two umbrellas and needed only one. Later on, when one umbrella was all they had, they needed two.

We wonder if the author of that saying, "It is never too late to mend," was a mother who had to wait till her children were in bed before she could get hold of their clothes?—Acheson Globe.

From the Doctor's View Point.
An old illustration once given Emerson, the philosopher, of the fact that the laws of disease are as beautiful as the laws of health is reported in his lecture on "The Comic."
"It was hastening," he says, "to visit an old and honored friend, who I was informed was in a dying condition, when I met his physician, who accosted me in great spirits."
"And how is my friend, the reverend doctor?" I inquired.
"Oh, I saw him this morning. It is the most correct apoplexy I have ever seen. Face and hands livid, breathing stertorous, all the symptoms perfect." And he rubbed his hands with delight, for in the country we cannot find every day a case that agrees with the diagnosis of the books."

OLD BAVARIAN TOWNS.

Many of the Smaller Ones Are Merely Walled Farm Villages.

In old Bavarian districts many of the smaller towns are merely walled farm villages. These settlements of agriculturists reproduce the ancient laager for all its life. Each is built in the form of a parallelogram, the shorter sides having each a gateway, with double gates, over which rise central square watch-towers capped with conical red roofs. A narrow road or street runs from gate to gate, with old half timbered houses set back close to the enclosing wall. The ground floor of these houses affords stabling for cattle, and from these stables the cows are driven out through the town gates in the morning and brought in at night. Townships like this are merely clusters of houses intimately connected with the farm lands that lie beyond their gates. The peasantry, whether peasant proprietors or allotment leaseholders, go in and out to their work.

In eastern Bavaria, toward the Danube, where the better class farms are to be seen, one finds farmhouses of wood, a great shingled roof covering—as in Holland—not only the large living apartment, with many bedrooms, but also the stables for the horses and cow. On such farms much of the farm work is done by girls, who usually wear short petticoats, tight bodices and kerchiefs on their heads. Most of the men are either in the army or working at trades.

SMOKING A CIGAR.

Some Things That Every User of Tobacco Does Not Know.

It's really remarkable, considering the 12,000,000,000 cigars smoked in the United States every year, how few men really know how to smoke," said a prominent tobacco dealer. "There is one mistake in particular that even experienced smokers sometimes make—that is in not keeping the tobacco burning properly."

"About 90 per cent, I should say, of all the cigars sold are better on the outside than the inside. This isn't wholly to deceive the prospective buyer. It requires a good quality of leaf to shape the outside of a cigar, while the filler may be more readily composed of inferior tobacco. The smoker who permits his cigar to burn inside the wrapper loses the best part of it. Practically any cigar is rank when smoked through the center. The aroma is lost and the smoke is bitter and acrid."

"Pulling on a cigar that is not burning properly only increases the difficulty. The smoker gets more of the smoke of the inside leaves, and the whole cigar becomes hot from the effects of the increased combustion in the center of it. The proper thing is the only thing to do under the circumstances is to flip the cigar again, taking care that the wrapper and all are included in the lighting. If this plan were followed a good many smokers wouldn't change their brand of cigars so often."

FEAT OF A MACGREGOR.

Wonderful Physical Strength That Was Used to Good Purpose.

Sir William MacGregor was the hero of such an adventure as one expects ordinarily to read about only in fiction of a certain kind.

The steamship Syria, with a lot of Indian coolies on board, struck on a rock about twelve hours from Suva, the capital of Fiji.

Dr. MacGregor, then acting colonial secretary, organized a relief expedition, clambered over a broken mast that was the only path to the emigrants and again and again returned with a man or woman on his back and sometimes a child, held by its clothes between his feet.

A man of vast physical strength, MacGregor wanted it all for his final feat. Down below on the deck a woman who had fallen overboard, had got at the spirits and was mad with drink. The captain of the ship and a police officer who had gone after her were being swept out to sea. MacGregor slid down a rope, caught the knot of the woman's hair in his teeth and with his hands seized the two men and dragged them both into safety. He went back to Suva in a borrowed suit of pajamas, having left all his clothes and a good deal of his skin on the coral reef.

Tom, Mrs. E. Stuart Wortley in National Review.

THE WORD BOGUS.

There Are Several Plausible Theories as to Its Origin.

The word "bogus" is said by Dr. Ogilvie to be derived from Boghese, the name of a notorious American swindler who about the year 1835 flooded the western and southwestern states with counterfeit bills, sham mortgages and such like. Others connect the word with "boggy," a seaworthy or goblin, and so applied to anything fictitious or chimerical.

Lovell in the "Blow Papers" says, "I more than suspect the word to be a corruption of the French bagasse." This bagasse was the sugar cane as delivered in its dry, crushed state from the mill, called also cane trash, and fit only for burning, being thus synonymous with useless rubbish.

Again, according to Brewer, there is a French argot, or thieves' slang, a word, bogne, which signifies the rind of a green chestnut or the case of a watch, and this also brings us to the idea of an outward seeming without any solid and reputable foundation.—Pearson's Weekly.

Donkeys in Egypt.

In Egypt the women still follow the best custom of riding on donkeys. The animals are small and well trained, and carry their burdens about with ease and endurance. The riding under these conditions demands no special skill of horsemanship. The women make a great convenience of these little steeds, riding them to market or to their shopping, as well as on considerable journeys.

Offering Her a Hand.

The Post Office would you consider to be the best time to offer a girl your hand? Practical Cuss—When she's getting out of a bus. I should say.—New Yorker.

The Proud Pap.

"Baby carriages? Yes, sir," said the dealer. "What sort of one did you want?"

"Well," said Nuppon proudly, "you'd better give me a six months' size. He's only six weeks old, but large for his age."—Philadelphia Press.

WOMAN AND FASHION.

Smart Linen Suit.

Walking costumes made of linen in severe tailor style are among the smartest of the season and are as comfortable and as satisfactory to wear as they are fashionable. This one is white of the sort known as butcher's, but linen

MONEY SLANG.

Terms Applied to Coins and Bank Notes in England.

"We may think there is a great deal of slang in English as we commonly use it in this country," Mr. J. E. Soraghan observes, "but in at least one respect the colloquial tongue of England surpasses the wealth of terms we possess in this regard, and that is the slang relating to money. The American uses astonishingly few slang words in speaking of pieces of money, perhaps because he has a greater respect for it. A five cent piece is usually referred to as a nickel, but this is practically the only slang term applied to any of our money in general use. A dime is officially a dime, and so is a quarter.

"But turn to the English appellations for their money and hardly a bit of it is referred to under its authorized and official designation. A shilling is seldom called such in London. They call it a 'bob' and a 'quid,' which means a piece of tobacco in this country, is what they term a pound. Sixpence they call a 'tanner,' fourpence a 'joey' and a penny more often than it is unknown to the street gamins save as a 'ming.' A cabman will not tell you a ride will cost 5 shillings, but that it will require a 'half' to pay for it, and a half crown is 'half a bull.' These are prevailing expressions for the pieces of money widely handled, but proper terms for higher amounts are kicked aside and colloquial terms substituted for them."

"At a race track if a bettor says he has ventured a 'pony' on the probable outcome of a race he does not mean that as it would appear to us, but simply that he has wagered £25 on the result. Where money is handled in large amounts it is not an infrequent thing to hear one say of another that he has a 'monkey' of money, meaning that the individual referred to is the proud possessor of £200. So you see in comparison with this plethora of riches our lone nickel is a poor crop of monetary slang indeed."—St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

AFGHAN FEUDS.

Towers of Refuge From Which the Warfare is Conducted.

In Afghanistan the people are good haters. The blood feud exists in all Afghan tribes. Then a murder occurs the avenger does not limit his reprisal to the murderer, but kills any relative that comes handy. This, in turn, calls for a counter attack, and in time matters become so complicated that whole families are wiped out. When the tribe is called upon to meet a common enemy the heads of the families who have had a quarrel bury two stones side by side in the presence of the mullah as symbolic of the feud being put out of sight during the public dance. When affairs revert to their normal state the stones are solemnly disinterred and the two parties are free to go on shooting at each other again.

Every Afghan villager of moderate means owns a tower of refuge standing at the corner of his courtyard. These towers, made of stone and mud, are perfectly solid for the lower twenty feet or so, the top being surrounded by a loopholed wall and covered over to make it habitable. The base is protected by a gallery, and the only means of ascent is by a rope and a hole just large enough for one man to crawl through. Whenever a man has made things too hot for himself he takes refuge in his tower, and by the unwritten law of the country he can never be starved out so long as food and water are brought to him by a woman.

A traveler in Afghanistan tells of seeing one tower of refuge whose occupant had not stirred outside for ten years. His only amusement was taking shots at the occupant of another tower, which were duly returned. In the meantime his wives visited each other and gossiped and were on terms of perfect amity.

Looming Mirages.

In what are called "looming mirages" distant objects show an apparent extravagant increase in height without alteration in breadth. Distant pinnecks of ice are thus magnified into immense towers or tall, jagged mountains, and a ship thus reflected from far out at sea may appear to be twelve or fifteen times as tall as it is long. Rocks and trees are also shown in abnormal shapes and positions, while houses, animals and human beings appear in like exaggerated shapes. Before the sandy plains of our southwestern states and territories were converted into verdant fields by the ingenuity and tireless energy of man mirages were very common in those regions. The Indians regarding the phenomenon as being the work of evil spirits.

Reflecting Lighthouses' Origin.

Accident, not necessity, was the parent of the invention of reflecting light-houses. During a meeting of a mathematical society at Liverpool some years ago one of the members laid a wager that he could read a newspaper paragraph at ten yards distance by the light of a fatling candle. This he succeeded in doing by covering the inside of an earthen dish with putty and sticking bits of looking glass on it and then placing his reflector behind the candle. Captain Hutchinson, a dock master, was present, and from this experiment gained the idea from which he evolved the reflecting light-houses as built in Liverpool.

Cheeping.

In parts of Switzerland the baker's wife carries round the bread in a sort of hamper, and she has not a fixed, immutable charge, but charges for a price with the customers. The old English word for this process was "cheeping," which in many places in England has been corrupted into clipping. Clipping Norton, for instance, is really Cheeping Norton, or the place where goods were cheapened—that is, sold by chauffer.

Never a Lot Up.

"Poor pa's just working himself to death."

"Why, I thought he had a political job."

"He has, but it seems as if he no sooner got reappointed than it is necessary for him to get out and work again so that somebody else won't get next time."—Chicago Record-Herald.

Box Coat and Five Gored Skirt.

Estimates, crash and the like are suitable, and various colors are worn, white and the natural tan, however, taking precedence of almost everything else. The coat is in box style and can be made either with or without the collar, while the skirt is cut in five gores and closes at the center back in habit style. To make the costume for a woman of medium size will be required for coat 37, yards 27, 29, yards 44 or 2 yards 52, inches wide; for skirt, 57, yards 27, 44, yards 44 or 3 yards 52, inches wide.

The Smart Stock.

The newest and neatest little stock to be worn with the tailor costume is composed of an upright linen collar with a turnover embroidery edge fastened in front with three tiny long shaped bows of black velvet. You may trust a Frenchwoman implicitly where the details of the toilet are concerned, her sense of the fitness of things enabling her to distinguish between the addition to be made to a gown of one material and that intended for another. For instance, she would never wear with a tailor gown a high lace collar with a large chiffon rose in front, from which depends a shower of little chiffon buds, yet these airy confections are often seen on the sartorially unregenerate.

Pumps the Fashionable Shoe.

The adaptation of men's dancing pumps for women's wear last winter proved them to be such smart looking shoes that they have grown to be immensely popular. One of the chief reasons for this is that the shoes have to be worn in the smallest possible sizes to enable them to be kept on the feet in comfort, and any excuse for wearing small shoes is eagerly seized upon by women. The pumps are made in tan, white, green, brown and the new shade that matches linen gowns.

An Ideal Summer Wrap.

Little jackets of all sorts are greatly in vogue and make ideal summer wraps. This one is worn over a waist of point d'esprit and is of antique green

Blouse Waist and Bolero.

Trifling matching the waist, the trimming being folds of velvet. The waist is simply full, with wide sleeves that are finished with graceful frills of lace, but is eminently becoming and suits lace, net and all thin materials to a nicety. The bolero is cut with front bucks and wide sleeves and is held in place over the shoulders that give the drooping effect. The quantity of material required for the medium size is for waist 4 1/2, yards 21, 4 yards 27 or 23, yards 44 inches wide; for bolero, 23, yards 21, 2 yards 27 or 18, yards 44 inches wide.

Trimnings for Gowns.

Points and scallops appear on many gowns; even in some cases the horizontal trimmings have scalloped or pointed edges. Ruffles are arranged in scallops, and new laces and embroidery insertions have wavy edges.

Still In Doubt.

Bookie—So, y'see, if the horse starts at fifteen to one you get fifteen quid, ten to one you get ten quid, five to one five. D'y'see? The innocent Oh, yes. I see perfectly. But what do I get if the horse starts at 1 o'clock exactly?—London Illustrated Bits.

A Deduction.

"He declares his wife made him all that he is."

"Quite likely. And I should judge that she didn't waste more than half an hour on thysab."—Harper's Bazar.



"It's Mary Ellen, the big snake!"



Blouse waist and bolero.