

Official publication of the HORATIO ALGER SOCIETY, a magazine devoted to the study of Horatio Alger, Jr., his life, works, and influence on the culture of America.

Newsboy



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Belmont
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Horatio Alger, Jr.

1832 - 1899



Founded 1961 by Forrest Campbell & Kenneth B. Butler

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HORATIO ALGER SOCIETY

To further the philosophy of Horatio Alger, Jr., and to encourage the spirit of Strive and Succeed that for half a century guided Alger's undaunted heroes -- lads whose struggles epitomized the Great American Dream and flamed hero ideals in countless millions of young Americans.

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CHANGES OF ADDRESS

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* * *

RANDOM REPORTS FROM ALGERLAND

Roy Wendell continually sends me little items of interest to Alger collectors. He recently enclosed with his latest letter an old photograph of Ken Butler laying a wreath on Alger's tombstone. Roy writes, "I went out to Natick that day with Stew McLeish. Don't know when the photo was taken---maybe 1969?"

Louis Bodnar notes his new address-- make a note of it: Louis Bodnar, Jr., 3125 Hungarian Rd., Virginia Beach, VA 23457. Louis writes: "I was in the hospital for about 10 days, when the doctor said that I should go into a nursing home, where they would take care of me, because my sister might not be able to take care of her husband and me at the same time. I'm writing this letter in the nursing home. They give me three meals a day, check my blood pressure, pulse, give me medicine, pills, give me a bath. I have a private room and bathroom. I decided to sell my old house that I built in 1951 with the help of my two brothers. I lived in that house ever since 1951." I'm sure that Louis would like to hear from any members. Why not drop him a line?

Donald Dowling writes that his roster entry is incorrect--it is R R 1, Box 740, New Hampton, N.Y. 10958.

James Maxwell's roster should also be changed--his spouse's name is Trudy, he has 20 Algers including 1 first edition, and his phone number is 408-353-2094.

Mark Preston says that "I will be leaving England in January and will let you know what the new address is as soon as I find out myself." Mark has been

(continued on page 6)

DINING WITH THE WAIFS

The Chicago Tribune
October 28, 1889

Scenes About Mr. Daniels' "Festive Board"
At Battery D

The Superintendent of The Mission Believes That The Gamins Can Better Worship God On a Full Stomach Than On an Empty One—A Great Work Productive of Much Good—No Harshness in The Discipline.

"O, Mr. Dan'ls, get on tu de six buns an' t'ree cups o' coffee 'Big Greasy' has coppered wid his flippers!" exclaimed "Smoky John," a 12-year-old lad, at the dinner given the street gamins at the Waifs' Mission Sunday-School yesterday.

Among the hundreds of boys and girls that gather there Sunday after Sunday will be found such a state of mind and morals as will convince the optimist even that much is yet to be done in the crowded cities before it will be possible for citizenship to reach that point of intelligence Americans try to insist on telling the world they have already reached. Much will be seen and heard to convince the thoughtful that auxiliary means of enlightenment have yet to be devised as supplemental to the grand public free school system in order to make the great mass of common people keep pace with the universal progress of the century in moral, mental, and physical advancement.

Few people outside of those taking part in conducting this school know what a great work it is accomplishing. It is held in Battery D because of the ample room. The school was organized Jan. 1, 1885, and sprang at once into popularity. Into it at once flocked the bootblacks, the newsboys, and every species of street arab, male and female children from the lowest strata of human existence, showing hunger, poverty, ignorance, crime, uncleanliness, and immorality to such a degree that it had to be seen to be believed. Kind hearted Christian men and women volunteered their services as

teachers and helpers in carrying on the school.

"Does it meet with the appreciation it deserves on the part of those for whose benefit it was inaugurated?" asked a well-known orthodox minister. A visit to the school any Sunday afternoon would answer this question in the affirmative so emphatically as to leave no room for doubt.

The teachers and officers know that a full stomach is more conducive to godliness than an empty one. They seem to feel that no person, especially a girl or a boy, is in such a condition to thank God and to learn about religion and morality as when carrying around with them as evidences of the above blessings a stomachful of good things. So the waifs are filled full of bread, ham, beef, mutton, pies, cakes, custards, tea, coffee, milk, and good things generally before they are asked to step down into the audience room and swell out with praises and thanks to the Lord.

It is a sight to see those youngsters eat. Mr. T. E. Daniels and his assistants marshal the crowds upstairs, where there are six tables running the full length of the building and filled with good things. The boys and girls are arranged, standing, at different tables, and told to eat as much as they can. This latter superfluous command is repeated every Sunday—as a kind of courtesy, probably. The youngsters eat, anyway. And most of them eat as if it is the only day in the week on which they get enough—and it is, too.

CHARACTERS FROM THE SLUMS.

Yesterday there were gathered at those tables, and afterwards down in the classes, all the celebrities of the slums and the alleys among the newsboys and the bootblacks, as well as from the ragpickers and junk peddlers of both sexes. They ranged in age from 3 to 18 years—some of them already sunk as low in the moral scale as it is possible for such youths to reach. They give to each other



WAIFS.

names indicative of some mental or moral trait, or of some physical peculiarity. "Big Greasy," "Johnny Smokey" (always soot-begrimed), "Limpey" (a poor, little cripple), "Big Foot Tom" (the most appropriate name of all), "Short-and-Dirty," "Piggy Pete" (who always cleaned the table as far as he could reach), "Kinkey Sam," "Coon Charlie," were among the titles given the boys, the two last being colored boys. Among the girls were: "Slick Sal," "Mokey Mame," "Jumping Jennie," "Pansy Blossom," "Rag Alley Mag." And these were the only names their teachers ever knew for them, since the owners themselves had never known any other.

"Coon Charlie" was enjoying his first visit to the school; and, after having filled himself, began to throw slices of ham and pieces of bread at the others. Dr. J. W. Norton, one of the Assistant Superintendents, rebuked the boy for this, which interference he considered an infringement of his rights under the fourteenth amendment, and he hit the doctor on the head with a heavy cup.

"That's the first disturbance I ever saw here," said Mr. Daniels.

"It would do that boy good to thrash him," said a visitor.

"No," answered Mr. Daniels. "We never allow one of them to be struck here. We are trying to curb this savegery in them, for which they are to be pitied more than blamed, and we do not wish in any way to raise resentment in their minds against reformatory measures. If we were to strike them, there would be rebellion in the minds of many and we should have more trouble than if we treated all such acts with kindness. If a refractory boy fails to reform under such treatment hundreds of others who see it, and know our intentions, will be benefited, and thus more good will be accomplished. This is our method, and that it works to a charm is proven by the large number of gamins who have been reformed and fill good positions through the influence of this school, short as has been its existence."

IN THE SCHOOL-ROOM.

Immediately after dinner Sunday-School begins. One girl was pointed out by her teacher as "Angel Aggie," a name given



her by her companions "because she never swore or stole, always had a smile for others, and never did wrong if she knew it." She is an orphan, and says her mother told her before she died never to lie, steal, use bad language, or be angry at any one. Then there was "Big Mouth Jane," an appropriately named little Irish maiden, "Long Sal," "Little Jigs," a dancing girl, and "Skipping Becky."

Prof. Nickel conducts the singing and Lyon's orchestra plays the music. During prayers there is about as much looking around and giggling as there is in the average Sunday-School, and no more. A lady who had a class of six colored boys had to keep a close watch over them while the Superintendent was asking them to cast their souls' eyes on the Lord. She had an especially hard time with "Coon Charlie," of Sullivanic proclivities, and had to ask three other teachers to assist her keep order while they all petitioned "forgive us our trespasses," and "lead us not into temptation." The teachers seem devoted to their work, and the children are not unappreciative, as is shown by their quick obedience, attention, and ready responses. And most of them know their lessons, too.

Miss Lucy Mann is the secretary, and she conducts the office ably and conscientiously. From her some valuable statistics were obtained. During last year the attendance averaged 697, over 1,100 children being enrolled—a higher average attendance than can be shown by the best Sunday-Schools among the churches.

"Our great need is more teachers," she said. "It is the best opportunity for teachers, especially women, who really wish to do good that can be found. This kind of work will not show its results rapidly, but it is the most unselfish and disinterested way to show that one really regards others in this world."

"One thing should make it popular—you don't pass around the hat," ventured the reporter.

"O, that's where you're mistaken," and Miss Mann exhibited four huge collection baskets.

The reporter asked what such a crowd contributed.

"O, we get more than any other church—pennies, nickels, dimes, beer-checks, buttons, poker-chips, toothpicks, teeth with strings tied to them to swing them by, and—and—those tickets for horse races—what do you call them? Yes, pool-checks.

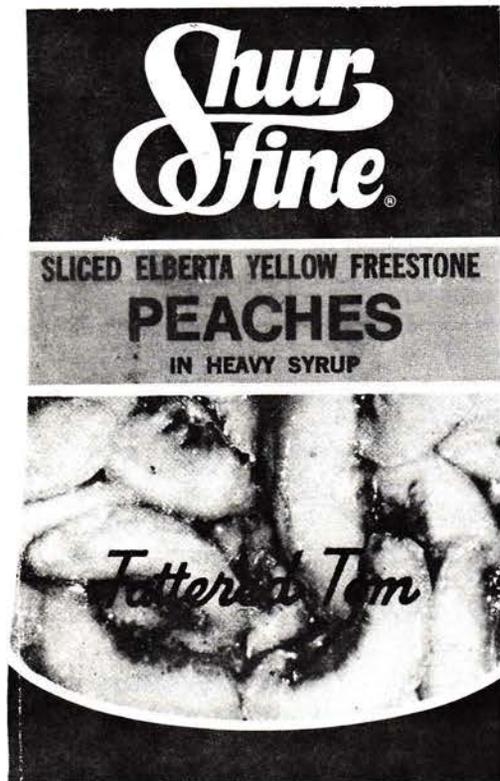
"The officers are: T. E. Daniels, Superintendent, with Dr. Norton, William Ambridge, J. A. Burreson, Mr. Schmeddy, and Mrs. M. J. Neladore as assistants. Miss Ella H. Wade is Assistant Secretary. Besides these, the teachers are: Mrs. William Ambridge, Miss Mary Spencer, Mrs. Meriam, Miss Jennie Gilleland, Mrs. Smales, and the Misses Emma and Bessie Smales, Mrs. Wade, Miss M. Harrison, Miss Nellie Lord, Miss H. W. Hinckley, Mrs. S. Jacques, Miss Christine Scully, Miss Elien Schilling, Mrs. W. H. Bender, Miss Johnston, Miss McPatrick, Miss Gallula, Miss Jennie Paul, Miss Pangboren, Miss Helen Walker, Miss Emma Southwick, Mrs. D. W. Norris, Mrs. J. W. Norton, Mrs. J. F. Wilder, Miss Lewis, Mrs. Virginia Wal-laster, and Mrs. William McKenzie."

The public is cordially invited to attend. The dinner is spread at 2 p.m. every Sunday and school begins half an hour afterwards.



a member of HAS for many years, and I'm sure quite a few old timers remember his first convention when Gene Hafner bought a dozen or so Algers at the auction simply so he could give them to Mark. I've never forgotten that!

Del Brandt writes an interesting letter: "I am enclosing a label from a can of Shur-Fine peaches which features a 'Tattered Tom' peach. I wonder if the inspiration came from the Alger novel of the same name? I tasted the contents and they weren't bad.



Perhaps the 'Tattered Toms' could be served as a dessert or in a salad at a future convention.

"Also, Joseph McCulley, 'the voice of Horatio Alger' on a tape I presented at the 1980 convention in Windsor, Conn., has died at his home in Bridgeton, N.J. Joe never met any of the members but he often asked about the group and gave me much valuable assistance in my writing of the one-man play, 'The Man Who Invented Success', based on the life of Horatio Alger, Jr. Brad Chase, the 1980 convention host, kindly allowed a

place on the program for the playing of the tape narrated by Joseph McCulley.

"As a matter of updating, since then the play's title has been changed to 'Strong and Steady Be,' and has been tried out by the theatre department of the Atlantic Community College near Atlantic City. It was a 'work in progress' in 1980 and is still a work in progress now."

I regret to inform readers of Newsboy that Gilbert K. Westgard's mother recently passed away. She was PF-476, and joined in 1976. She was last listed in the 1980 roster. She followed the Society's activities closely, and attended all four conventions from 1976-1980. At Gil's recent convention, she was too ill to attend any of the activities, but did see Bill Leitner when he stopped by to see Gil during the pre-convention activities. She died on September 13, 1985. Our thoughts are with you and your father, Gil.

* * *
NEW MEMBERS REPORTED

PF-766 Lawrence Doorley
748 Coral Drive
Cape Coral, FLA 33904

Lawrence sent Carl Hartmann a long letter. He writes: "I am 73--retired eight years ago from a less than auspicious career in several fields. (I once managed a large dynamite plant in the state of Washington--that's merely a small example of my checkered career.) Of course, I was an ardent, a devoted, a manical reader of all the Alger stories when I was growing up in western Pennsylvania where my father was a coal mine superintendent and a stunning example of starting from far down and making it almost to the top (he never became president of the company, H. C. Frick Coal and Coke). Dad started in the mines when he was 9 years old, the dear boy. Educated himself via the International Correspondence School--he was a great man." Glad to have you with us, Lawrence.

Horatio Alger Novel For Adults to Be Issued

By EDWIN McDOWELL

An adult novel by Horatio Alger Jr., a sharp departure from his rags-to-riches stories that enthralled and inspired generations of young readers, will be published for the first time this summer, more than a century after Alger wrote it.

The new novel, "Mabel Parker; or, The Hidden Treasure," which for decades reposed in a warehouse and then in a special collection at Syracuse University, will be published in July by the Shoe String Press of Hamden, Conn.

Unlike Alger's 103 juvenile books, many of which enshrined the honest but singleminded pursuit of material wealth and position, this novel features a hero and heroine who refuse to equate wealth with happiness. And the only character who contrives to improve his station in life — which in his juvenile fiction was regarded as final proof of one's virtue — is the book's villain.

"Mabel Parker," like the several other Alger adult novels, corrects the popular notion "that the author was an unqualified proponent of business success," according to Prof. Gary Scharnhorst, an Alger biographer.

Publisher Went Bankrupt

Alger wrote "Mabel Parker" hoping to establish a career as a writer of adult fiction, so he could abandon writing juvenile books. But the publishing house went bankrupt while the novel was still in manuscript; thus Alger returned to the themes that made him one of the most widely read American authors of all time.

Invariably in an Alger novel, a ragged young newsboy or messenger stops runaway horses, rescues children from burning buildings, or saves the train of the president of the railroad from crossing the weakened bridge. And inevitably the young heroes — who bear such names as Luke Larkin, Frank Frost, Tom Thatcher or Ben Baker — are rewarded by influential benefactors. The books carry such titles as "Paul, the Peddler," "Mark, the Match Boy," "Tattered Tom" and "Struggling Upward."

Not only do the modest young men prove to be temperate, hardworking models of rectitude — Alger spent two years as a minister before abandoning the pulpit for writing — often they are also wise beyond their years.

For example, in the book "Helping Himself," the 15-year-old son of a poor minister asks the church deacon for an advance on his father's salary, and proceeds to engage him in a discussion of the cost of living and the legal rate of interest.

"He wrote about the poor boys who worked hard and made good, because

at the time he wrote those books, poor young boys were actually sold to adults who set them begging on New York streets," said Louisa Alger of Cambridge, Mass., an 85-year-old descendant of the author. "His books got the State Legislature to pass laws against those abuses."

"Mabel Parker" is set on the American frontier in New York State, and pits Dick Clarke, a greedy lawyer who wants to marry Squire Parker's beautiful daughter Mabel, against Henry Davenport, a genteel aristocrat who graduated from Harvard. Despite Mabel's declaration to her father that, "I care not for money. To me it is of no value compared with the happiness which I shall enjoy as Henry's wife," the selfish squire is tempted to accede to Clarke's demand in order to recover the lost half of his inheritance, some \$50,000 in gold.

A subplot involves a love triangle in the Indian village near the settlement where the Parkers live, wherein a stereotypical drunken Indian wants to wed the chief's daughter, who is in love with an upright brave.

Mr. Scharnhorst, who is an associate professor of humanities at the University of Texas at Dallas, describes the story as a "domestic melodrama." It is no lost lode of literary gold, he writes in the preface, "but neither is it adulterated pulp."

Alger had written other adult books, including biographies and a collection of Civil War ballads, and in 1877 he even published an adult romance. When a London reviewer praised it, Alger declared himself ready to abandon his lucrative juvenile fiction and devote himself to historical fiction for adults.

Version Published Posthumously

Many of his hopes were built around "Mabel Parker," which he completed in 1878. But A. K. Loring, his Boston publisher, declared bankruptcy with the novel still in manuscript. Alger subsequently submitted it to Street and Smith publishers of New York, but it was never published in its original form.

After Mr. Alger's death in 1899, Edward Stratemeyer, who created Tom Swift, the Hardy Boys and many other children's series, wrote and published 11 books under the name of Horatio Alger Jr. In 1904 he rewrote "Mabel Parker" for juvenile readers and published a version of it under the title "Jerry the Backwoods Boy."

But the 203-page "Mabel Parker" manuscript, in Alger's handwriting, with revisions by Stratemeyer, remained in the Street and Smith collection. Condé Nast acquired Street and Smith in 1959, and in 1967 donated the Alger manuscript and other material to the George Arents Research Library at Syracuse University.

"Scholars have known of 'Mabel Parker' for about 10 years, because Alger makes references to it in some of his correspondence," said Jack Bales, who wrote the Alger biography with Professor Scharnhorst. Mr. Bales, the reference librarian at Mary Washington College in Fredericksburg, Va., said that while the story is in the public domain, "Gary interested a publisher in it."

Despite Alger's clumsy handling of the material, Professor Scharnhorst writes in the preface, he "tapped in the novel the wellsprings of popular attitudes toward the West, in this sense less a place than a symbol." He has also dramatized, "however banally," the central themes in western American literature: "the irresistible progress of white settlers across the continent, the inevitable displacement of the native tribes."

Eighty-six years after his death, the name of **Horatio Alger Jr.** still conjures up unlikely memories of improbable dreams. In more than 100 of Alger's books for young readers, upstanding, hardworking poor boys reached sudden and unexpected success by saving rich benefactors from terrible fates. But it turns out that Alger had a dream of his own—to appeal to grown-ups. This July the Shoe String Press will publish for the first time Alger's

Mabel Parker; or, The Hidden Treasure, a story of true love triumphing over mere monetary pursuits. Now in the archives at Syracuse University, the manuscript originally had a fate most unbecoming to a Horatio Alger story. Just before it was scheduled to be printed in 1878, the publishing house, hard work and all, went bankrupt.

The brief article directly above is from the March 17 issue of TIME, while the longer article is from the March 6, 1985 NEW YORK TIMES. Both articles reprinted with permission. Alger scholar Gary Scharnhorst is responsible for the publication of MABEL PARKER, and he contributed the introduction to it.

PF-767 David Howell
1300 Augusta, #33
Houston, Texas 77057

David, owner of twenty-eight Algers, is a publisher, and is interested in "Alger himself and his times." Jim Ryberg told him of the Society.

PF-768 Gladys M. Lee
4020 45 Ave. South
Minneapolis, MN 55406

Gladys learned of HAS through a question and answer column in her newspaper. Forty-nine Algers are in her collection, and she enjoys oil painting, reading, and collecting colored pressed glass cream pitchers.

PF-769 Louis Peters
944 42nd St. S.W.
Wyoming, MI 49509

Louis is a sales representative, and received an application to join HAS from Milt Ehlard of Grand Rapids. He has 66 titles, and collects boys' books.

PF-770 Joan Olsen
3686 Rd 46
Yuma, Colorado 80759

Joan enjoys collecting Algers--of which she has 31--and is also interested in basketball, reading, and crocheting. A friend told her of the Society.

* * *
NEWSBOY BOOK REVIEW
by Peter Walther

Jones, Dolores Blythe. An "Oliver Optic" Checklist. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1985, \$29.95.

We have read this book not once but twice. Realizing that most every work of this nature has its faults we will attempt to be fair and impartial in our evaluation. In point of fact, the first recommendation is that one purchase it. Eighty-nine years after the author's death it is rewarding to have a book about him and his writings, the first such that we know of. Thank you, Ms.

Jones, for making the myriad of collectors and literary scholars more aware of a charming writer of stories for young people, and we use the adjective with some certainty after a careful perusal of much of the Optic canon.

The book is conveniently divided into the following main sections: Chronological List, Author Series, Publisher Series, Publishers and Serializations with smaller Appendixes and Indexes, and for the record we could probably not come up with a more efficient method. "Depending upon the particular title, an entry includes: the complete title, original series name, date of publication, original publisher, story description, review excerpts, illustrators or engravers, reprint publishers and their series, variant titles, and holdings" (p. ix).

However, a careful analysis of the facts reveal some glaring errors or possibly oversights. To Ms. Jones's credit she seems to have examined most of the copyright information as indeed she is most specific in those references to each individual item, but the biographical information leaves much to be desired. We realize that maybe it was not her intent to do this, yet caution must be exercised in peddling secondary source material as gospel. Example: on p. xvii, f. 1 we read "Biographical sources differ on the place of Adams's birth. Both Medway or Bellingham are often mentioned. Kilgour says they are one in the same." Consult a map and the answer becomes apparent; we can excuse the possible misunderstanding (for the record, it was Medway, not Bellingham) but not the intentional error of including Kilgour's puerile conclusion. Furthermore, we hesitate to cite Edwin P. Hoyt (Horatio's Boys) as an authority for an Adams-Alger friendship; Mr. Scharnhorst and Mr. Bales have dealt most effectively with that volume. (Editor's note: See Gary Scharnhorst and Jack Bales, HORATIO ALGER, JR., Scarecrow Press, 1981; THE LOST LIFE OF HORATIO ALGER, JR., Indiana University Press, 1985).

For each Oliver Optic item we are treated to such specifics as copyright information, illustrators, other printings, reviews, and locations in other libraries culled from the National Union Catalog. It is certainly helpful to have all these printed sources at one's fingertips, yet once again one is treated to misinformation. Concerning item 007 (The Student and Schoolmate) we read "There is a controversy concerning the year in which Adams's editorial duties ceased." What controversy? My former copy of the December 1866 issue stated quite clearly on the cover Mr. Adams' name as editor. The title page for the Schoolmate of January 1867 at the Boston Public Library quite clearly did not. Point settled. These uncertainties can easily be resolved if the sources were rechecked for accuracy. The printing history for item 017, "The Widow and Her Son," is not correct either: "appeared serially in The Student and Schoolmate, January 1862-?" when in actuality it was a short story self-contained in the January 1862 issue.

It should be noted that the final tally, 189 separate items, does not necessarily constitute the sum total of the Adams book-length works as some titles (e.g. In Doors and Out) receive double numbers. Incidentally, we mentioned earlier the inclusion of book reviews. Why incorporate them for all of the "Woodville Series" and none for any of the "Boat Club Series"? Why are there no reviews for Up and Down the Nile and five for Taken By the Enemy? This is not clear.

The use of Lee and Shepard advertisements/reviews for Fighting Joe, Brave Old Salt, etc. should have prompted some second thoughts for all those concerned. It's tantamount to having The New York Times publish a film review of "The Wizard of Oz" written by the publicity department of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer; impartiality is the yard stick for every review we feel. Using material from such periodicals as Chautauquan, Catholic World and American Literary Gazette, as

Ms Jones does on quite a number of occasions, makes a lot more journalistic sense.

We are glad to find the various Street and Smith paperbacks listed under "Other Printings," and the separate book formats of Our Boys and Girls (see nos. 54a-54l) are a welcome addition which we have never seen complete in any other source. The "references" heading is also helpful as is the knowledge of a number of Oliver Optic titles with which we are totally unfamiliar.

Yet there are also omissions. One finds the Dedicatory Hymn of 1875, written for the dedication of the Dorchester branch library, yet the readily available Masonic Hymn of 1871 is lacking. The famous 17 posthumous books of 1910-1912 published by Lothrop, Lee & Shepard are itemized in their original serial versions, yet only 6 are listed in the later hard cover formats. Why exclude the other 11? "A Trip Around the World" is not quite an unpublished 42 page story; more accurately it is an unpublished, printed 42 page travelogue. This we know as we have a xeroxed copy of the original in our files.

There is nothing new to be discovered in the "Author Series" section except for an item to be treated a little later on. The only criticism is that again Ms. Jones includes reviews under the "Series Description" heading rather than a brief paragraph describing the series and its characters which would have been more to the point. For those readers interested in reprints, the "Publisher Series" should be extremely helpful as all the Optic stories are listed by series in the various publishers' harum-scarum categories: Berekley Series, Fireside Series, American Boys' Series, etc. All of these items are effectively cross referenced in the Chronological List which makes it very convenient to use.

Although Appendix A (Special Collections Directory) is helpful for those who want to know where the major William

T. Adams collections are housed (we think the Medway Public Library should have been one of the first libraries contacted; a pity that the Oliver Optic books there, some of them autographed, could not be cited) we find it unacceptable to adopt information that is only half correct. Once again the serialization dates of "The Widow and Her Son" mentioned earlier (158.6) can easily be found in the January 1862 issue of the Student and Schoolmate.

Certainly the Secondary Bibliography is nice to have, but we are especially gratified to perceive the list of illustrators whose drawings heightened much of the textual material. It is also the first of its kind that we've seen relative to the Optic books and it is really one of the most valuable assets of the volume. We think that Appendix B is mistitled; instead of "Chronology of William Taylor Adams and His Publishers" it should read "Chronology of William Taylor Adams' Publishers." It might have been more effective to end with a General rather than a Specific Index as much of the information has, to my knowledge, never appeared before in any form.

And finally, once and forever, let us put to rest a myth that has no basis in fact. On p. ix Ms. Jones begins "An 'Oliver Optic' Checklist provides a detailed listing of titles authored by William Taylor Adams under his own name;" she will, I'm afraid find very few original Adams works written under William Taylor Adams. The author's name was William T. Adams not William Taylor Adams. We have this on rather good authority: in the card catalogue of the Boston Public Library there is a reference by Adams himself to a letter (now apparently unavailable) in which he states the "T" was added just "for looks," such as was done years later, we suspect, by Harry S. Truman. In all of his autographs (and I have seen many) never once has it appeared as "William Taylor Adams" although in an early letter to his sister Esther he signed himself under his given name, simply

"William Adams." We were told by his great-great-granddaughter that "Taylor" was added by his wife. Possibly. We do admit that in the Family Bible he is mentioned as "William Taylor Adams" but it is also found as William T. Adams. According to a review in the American Literary Gazette cited by Ms. Jones the author was referred to as William Taylor Adams, Esq. as early as 1866 (see p. 108) which surprised us mightily. We can't account for it other than to state it as questionable. Of course, Dolores Blythe Jones is not to be faulted for using "Taylor" as many of the printed sources assert it as such. But we readily and pointedly admit that even though in our article of April 1981 for the Dime Novel Round-Up he was represented as William Taylor Adams it is a mistake that is our intention not to repeat.

To summarize: it is the compiler's purpose to "offer a starting point for researchers interested in the literary achievements of William Taylor Adams, boys' series books, nineteenth century series fiction, and early American children's magazines. Students and specialists of children's literature, American literature, popular culture, and American studies, as well as librarians, teachers, book collectors, and booksellers will find this book very helpful." Short stories, sketches, poetry, and miscellaneous newspaper work does not come under the scope of the project and that is acceptable. Yet either because many of the printed sources consulted were not entirely factual or because careful checking for data on some items was not followed through to its logical conclusion we find this book somewhat flawed and scholastically suspect. It remains a useful reference tool to be sure, but upon careful, minute examination we can only concur with W. S. Gilbert: "Things are selcom what they seem; skim milk masquerades as cream."

* * *

Don't forget--Jim Ryberg's Alger Society convention in Houston is fast approaching. Make reservations now!

THE COOK'S PERPLEXITY

by

Horatio Alger, Jr.

The head cook of Signor Faliero, the representative of a noble Venetian family, was in much perplexity.

Let me explain how it happened. Signor Faliero passed the greater part of his time in the city, but never failed to spend a few weeks of the summer at a magnificent country villa, situated near the pleasant village of Posagno, amid the recesses of the Venetian hills. It might have been supposed that he would find little company that was congenial in this out-of-the-way place; but such a conclusion would be a mistaken one. The well-known hospitality of the family attracted to the villa many visitors from the city, as well as from families of corresponding station in the neighborhood. Time, therefore, hung by no means heavily upon their hands even here.

At least once during their summer residence, it was the custom of Signor Faliero to give a grand banquet to which the neighboring gentry were invited, and at which, as may readily be supposed, no expense was spared. These entertainments were invariably carried out with good taste and elegance, a fact of which I need scarcely have taken the trouble to assure you, if you had been acquainted with the reputation of Figlio, the head cook, who has already been introduced to the reader as laboring under some perplexity of mind.

It was just upon the eve of the grand entertainment of the season. Not only the villa, but the whole village had been in a stir for three days past, and all on account of the coming festival. The farmers had busily selected the best of their produce, sure of market at the villa. Their wives had been churning golden butter, emulous which should furnish the best, and had selected the largest eggs which they could find, and finally the young girls had been forming bouquets with admirable taste, destined to ornament the tables—all, indeed, seemed interested to have things go off well, and uphold the honor of Signor Faliero's hospitality.

A crowning ornament was wanting for the tables, and this had been ordered from Venice. A peasant had been despatched as a special messenger, and was hourly expected.

At last he made his appearance at the door of the kitchen.

"Well, Guido, hast thou succeeded in thy mission?" questioned the cook, eagerly.

"I obtained the ornament which you sent me for," said the peasant, slowly.

"And have it in that basket, doubtless. Show it to me at once. The tables are waiting, and Signor Faliero is impatient."

"I have it not," returned Guido, looking down in some embarrassment.

"Grant me patience," exclaimed the cook. "What does the fellow mean? Did you not just now tell me that you had obtained the ornament?"

"And I told you the truth," said the peasant.

"And where is it now?"

"That is more than I can tell, sir."

"Explain this enigma at once," said the cook, angrily, "or I will straightway tell Signor Faliero what a stupid blockhead you have been, if, indeed, you have not spent the money for your own use, and—"

"But that I did not do."

"How do I know? What you were sent after is not here, and you refuse to explain."

"Nay, master cook, I will explain, if you will give me a chance. I had accomplished, perhaps, one-half the distance when, feeling tired, I lay down by the roadside to rest. Before I fairly knew what had happened to me, I was fast asleep, and when I woke up my basket was empty."

"You must have been drinking," said the cook, indignantly.

"Nay, you wrong me there. I am very sorry—"

"Much good will your sorrow do," said Figlio, with an air of vexation. "I wonder what I am to say to Signor Faliero?"

"He will never miss it."

"On the contrary it is the first thing he will miss. He is very particular about the arrangement of the table."

"Is there not some substitute you can obtain?"

"I know of nothing in this out-of-the-way place. If I were only in Venice now,—but there is no time to go there. As I said the banquet is to be served almost immediately."

The cook went off with a troubled look. To some it might seem a mere trifle, but Signor Faliero was a man of taste, and as the cook had said, would be sure to note any deficiency in the arrangements.

Passing through the courtyard he met an elderly villager, by name Pisano.

The old man at once detected the air of trouble in the cook's face, and inquired the reason.

"That stupid Guido," explained Figlio, "was sent to Venice purposely to procure an ornament for the banquetting board, and what do you think he has just confessed? On the way home he lay down by the side of the road, regardless of his trust, and fell asleep. When he awoke the ornament was gone. Stolen, doubtless, by someone who took a fancy to it."

"That is unfortunate."

"Doubly so, because it is now too late to supply its place, and Signor Faliero will be sure to detect the absence of a centre-ornament."

"May I ask what it was?" inquired Pisano.

"It was a glass figure. I don't precisely know what, but intended for the centre of the table. Now we shall have to go without."

"Perhaps not," said Pisano, thoughtfully.

"How do you mean?" asked the cook, curiously.

"I mean that I have a little grandson—Antonio is his name—who perhaps may be able to design something to take its place."

"You mean the boy of twelve or thereabouts, who assists you in your labors?"

"Yes."

"I am afraid he can do no good," said the cook, shaking his head despondingly.

"Only try him. Though I say it, that ought not, being his grandfather, he is a smart lad, and has a vast deal of taste. Ha, there he is now, passing the gate. Shall I call him?"

"If you please," said the cook, indifferently.

"Antonio!" called out Pisano in a tone which arrested the steps of the boy, who was going by.

"Well, grandfather," answered Antonio, "do you want me for anything?"

The boy who has just been introduced to the reader was a bright, active lad, with a remarkably intelligent expression of countenance. As he stood looking up into his grandfather's face, you would own that you had seldom seen a more attractive lad.

Pisano explained rapidly the cook's perplexity, and said in conclusion—

"Now, Antonio, you are an ingenious lad. Can you devise nothing as a substitute for this glass ornament, which has so unfortunately been lost?"

"Perhaps so, grandfather," said the boy, slowly. "But tell me, how much time I can have for it?"

Pisano referred this question to the cook.

"Dinner ought to be on the table in fifteen minutes, but I can stretch a point, and make it half an hour."

"I think that will do," said Antonio, thoughtfully, "but I must be alone during that time."

"Very well," said the cook, "it shall be as you say. Not that I expect it will amount to anything, but it seems to be the only course that is left me."

"One thing more I shall want," said Antonio.

"And what is that?" asked Figlio, curiously.

"Half-a-dozen pounds of butter."

"The lad must have an appetite for butter," muttered the cook.

"Let him have what he wants," said his grandfather. "Depend upon it, he knows what he is about, and you will not regret it."

"Pisano worships that boy," muttered Figlio to himself. "I suppose it natural for grandfathers to think highly of their grandsons. However, I will humor him in this matter. It will cost but half-a-dozen pounds of butter, and that fortunately, is a loss easily to be borne even if he should fail."

Meanwhile the boy strips up the sleeve of his jacket, and dipping his hands in a basin of water, forthwith lays hands on the plastic butter, and with the air of one who understands what he is about, begins to mould it to his will.

At first it is not easy to comprehend what he is aiming at, but soon order begins to emerge from chaos, and we see beauty and proportion springing into birth beneath the fingers of the boy-sculptor.

It is the figure of a lion which he has undertaken to mould. A difficult task for a boy of twelve, who has never seen a lion, but is familiar with them only in the pictures which from time to time he has had an opportunity of seeing in the rude prints of the time.

The boy worked assiduously, for he felt that but little time was afforded him to complete his design.

The lion was represented with his head slightly bent forward as if on the point of making an attack. His proportions were perfect. The boy worked rapidly and with a flushed face. It was easy to see that his labor was not merely mechanical, but that his soul was in it. He felt stimulated by the emergency which

had called his talents into exercise, and he was determined to show the cook who, it was easy to see, expected little of him, that his abilities had not been overrated by the partiality natural to a grandfather.

"There, I think that will do," he at length said with satisfaction, desisting from his work, and removing some paces in order the better to observe his work. "I feel sure that will satisfy them."

At this moment a knock was heard at the door of the little room in which our young sculptor had been at work.

"Come in," said Antonio.

"Well, my lad," commenced the cook, then glancing at the symmetrical figure before him, he added, "Bless me, this is wonderful! You have a remarkable gift, my lad."

"Will it answer your purpose?" asked Antonio, a little proudly.

"Will it? Yes, a thousand times it will. It will be a better ornament than the glass one which Guido lost. Here, my lad, here is a ducat for thee."

"Never mind," said Antonio, drawing back. "Never mind the money. I did not undertake this with the hope of a reward, but to see what I could do. Since you are satisfied, and have thanked me, that is all I require."

"You are a strange boy, but nevertheless, I will accede to your request. But at all events remain here for the present. I may wish to speak to you again."

Meanwhile the tables were covered with all that tempt the sense or please the taste. It was a vast banquetting hall, richly furnished, and quite in keeping with the magnificence of the whole chateau.

At the signal the guests poured in and assumed their seats. Signor Faliero, of course, as the host, took the head of the table.

"By my faith, Signor Faliero, you have a most beautiful centre piece. What an exquisite lion! He seems in very truth to be alive!"

"To what do you refer?"

"There, don't you see?"

The guest pointed to the boy's chef d'oeuvre.

Signor Faliero was as much surprised as his guest, and his curiosity was excited, the more so since he perceived that the rest of the company had seen and were admiring the figure.

"Who did this?" he said, turning to the chief-cook.

"May it please you, signor," was the reply. "I had sent for a centre ornament of glass, which unluckily the messenger lost. In my perplexity a young lad of the neighborhood stepped forward and supplied its place with what you see."

"A young lad! Truly, he must be a young genius. Send for him, if he is near at hand."

A moment afterwards the boy Antonio, blushing and confused, entered the hall.

"Is this thy work, my lad?" asked Signor Faliero.

"It is, signor."

"And who taught thee?"

"No one, signor."

"What is your name?"

"Antonio Canova, signor."

"A name which, if I mistake not, will be heard of hereafter. Come to me tomorrow and I will see what can be done for you."

The boy kept the appointment, and arrangements were made for his instruction in the art which he had exhibited so great a talent. It is needless to record his progress. The man Canova redeemed the promise of the boy. When as a boy he moulded the lion for the banquet, he little dreamed that he was, at the same time, shaping his fortune.

