

COLLECTOR'S MISCELLANY

A PAPER FOR ANYONE INTERESTED IN OLD BOYS' BOOKS
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Fourth Series, No. 5

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REVIVALS of ANDREWS & CO.

By CHARLES D. WILLIAMS

IT may be opportune now to mention that for his dates the writer is indebted to his own researches, and among the more accessible of his discoveries are Genest, Nicoll, and the Stage Cyclopædia, to which any acknowledgments due are here made. The Andrews plays he possesses were obtained from Mr E. P. Prior.

It must be conjectured that the above firm was publishing in 1903, and it sold Skelt's and one of Park's plays in penny packets, with adapted books of words—quite good—sold separately, also at one penny.

Take the start of Shakespeare's Richard III (two packets), 1594, 'an entrancing historical drama,' 'Now is the winter of our discontent made glorious summer by this sun . . .' and the finish, which was the Battle of Bosworth Field.

The plays, like Mathew's, were printed on one

FOUNDED IN 1917 BY JOSEPH PARKS

large sheet, but mostly of extremely coarse paper, one large sheet to each packet. As many unaltered original plates of Skelt's as it would hold—usually twelve—were printed upon it. Thus the plays were slipshod and incomplete, though it was possible to perform them.

One only appears as an original, not a revival, in Amy Robsart, 1870, 'a stirring romance of the Elizabethan era,' presumably taken from Sir Walter Scott's Kenilworth.

All the firm's other titles were revivals. There was Captain Ross or the Hero of the Arctic Regions, 1833, 'as performed at the Royal Pavilion Theatre, a story of the search for the North Pole, being of great interest as bearing on the voyage of "The Discovery",' 1903. Boz's reference in Horatio Sparkins was that 'Miss Teresa had as much chance

The Mixture (as Before)

was a tonic provided recently by Dr David Low for jaded book and printed-curio collectors. The more we see of Dr Low's gloom-chasers the better we feel. Collectors in need of a pick-me-up should get on the doctor's panel. Consultations (by appointment) at 17 Cecil Court, Charing Cross Road, London, WC2. [Unfortunately, it is rather late to quote from Mr Low's catalogue. American readers, however, will be interested in *Epicedia Academiae Oxoniensis in Obitum Celsissimi Principis Henrici Ducis Glocestrensis (Oxoniae Typis Lichfieldianis, 1660)*, £5 5s, William Penn's first appearance in print and very rare.]

of a husband as Captain Ross had of the North-West Passage!' Quite good for characters and scenery, this.

Lillo's *George Barnwell or the London Apprentice*, 1731, a milestone in dramatic history, dealt with an ingrate nephew, and was very popular in several countries. Among others, Kemble and Siddons acted in it. And F. J. Harvey Darton has commented on it. 'Interrupted Sam, "Everybody knows vot sort of a case his was!"' (*Pickwick*). [Ref. Pollock, C.M. 4th Series, No. 4.]

In the horrific class was *On the Stroke of One (One o'Clock or the Knight & the Wood Dæmon)*, 1811, 'an entrancing drama of the period of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark,' by 'Monk' Lewis, who amused Scott and knew both Goethe and Byron.

One of Fitzball's contributions was *Walter Brand or the Duel in the Mist* (two packets) 1833, 'the fascinating story of a gambler's adventures.'

Well drawn and having good scenery was Thompson's *The Dumb Boy and His Monkey*, 1830, 'an absorbing romance of the Tyrol.'

Then there was witty Jerrold's famous *Black-Eyed Susan* (apparently in two packets), 'a nautical drama of Nelson's time,' which included a court-martial.

Lastly, *Pantomime or Tommy Tucker*, 1839, 'a screaming farce,' which consisted of a harlequinade only and probably the least comprehensive of the lot.

The firm appears to have published in all twelve distinct titles, of which eight have been mentioned above. Versions of the other four, namely, *Miller & His Men*, *Robinson Crusoe*, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, and *Floating Beacon*, had already been done by Webb, Pollock, and Mathews.

CONTINUED FROM No. 4

The ALDINE PUBLISHING CO

By J. MEDCRAFT

WHATEVER publications of the Aldine Co. may be forgotten, at least Burrage's famous *Lambs of Littlecote* and *The Island School* will live. The former, in 39 penny numbers, appeared first in 1895, followed by *The Island School* in 38 numbers, each number consisting of 24 large pages in a coloured wrapper, to outward appearance in no wise different from the complete libraries. H. W. Maguire illustrated the covers of the first thirteen numbers of the *Lambs*; the remainder and all the covers of *The Island School* were drawn by Prowse.

In effect, these stories were Burrage's swan-song, for he wrote little of note afterwards and severed his connection with the Aldine Co. in an atmosphere of dispute. He sued the company for money which he alleged was due to him.

Both *The Lambs of Littlecote* and *The Island School* were reissued serially in Volumes 21-23 of the Half-Holiday Library and abridged versions also appeared in the Boys' Own Library.

The Half-Holiday Library, which first appeared in 1892, was a journal-sized paper consisting of 24 large pages, containing one complete story weekly, both the story and many of the illustrations being of American origin. The American reprints ran without a break until Volume 28, when they were superseded by stories from British authors.

The first series ran to Volume 31, ending at No. 801 (Jan., 1908), and a new series, incorporating

the Detective Tales, carried on without a break in the numbering. Considerably smaller in size, but with the number of pages increased to 48, the new Half-Holidays, subtitled The Great Detective Weekly, now carried detective stories exclusively—both British and American—and ran for a further two years, ending at No. 904 (Jan., 1910), when it was incorporated with the last series of True Blue.

The first series of the Cheerful Library, slightly smaller than the Half-Holiday, commenced in 1894 and ran to 27 numbers, each containing one long complete story weekly. No. 1 was Bob Brass the Weekly Boarder, by Burrage, illustrated by Prowse. Others by the former appeared in this series, but the majority of the stories were reprints of dime novels and included tales of Jack Wright, second-string American fictional inventor. With the new series, which commenced again at No. 1, the size of the pages was increased but the number reduced to 24, to bring the Cheerful into line with the Half-Holiday. This series had a long run, ending at No. 822, Volume 32 (May, 1911), and was followed by a third series of smaller dimensions and published at a halfpenny, with title changed to the Cheerful Adventure Library and carrying reprints of the Jack Wright stories. With No. 8 was incorporated the final series of True Blue, and I

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ESTABLISHED 1917

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think the end followed shortly after, although I am uncertain of the exact finishing date.

The majority of the earlier stories in the main series of the Half-Holidays and Cheertuls were reprinted in later numbers and in the Land and Sea Library under different titles.

The Detective Tales, another series of all-American reprints, started around 1894 and ran to 344 numbers. Smaller than the First Rates, measuring seven inches by five and containing 96 pages, price twopence, the Detectives carried bright blue covers with ominous red patches where necessary. A second series of similar construction, containing 64 pages, price one penny, called the Tip-Top Detective Tales then followed. Majority of the stories were British, but an occasional American detective yarn was included.

This series only ran to 36 numbers and was followed by a third series of even shorter duration, which included a few Frank Reade reprints in a short run of 16 numbers.

The Tip-Top Tales, yet another series of dime novel reprints, commenced around 1894 and ran to 324 numbers. Even smaller than the Detectives, measuring only six inches by four and a half, the Tip-Tops carried a highly-coloured cover and ran similar stories to the First Rates, chiefly Western American, featuring, amongst others, Broadway Billy, Diamond Dick, and, later, Deadwood Dick stories. The popularity of the Detectives and Tip-Tops was probably stimulated by the ease with which they could be camouflaged within the covers of more austere books when such reading was taboo. From personal experience I have no doubt that

this subterfuge was exploited to the full by ingenious youth.

With Brett's *Surprise* and the *Halfpenny Marvel*, *Pluck* and *Union Jack* proving so successful, the Aldine Co. entered the lists of halfpenny fiction in 1896 with *True Blue*, 16 pages, with several inside illustrations, and in a cover of the obvious hue.

In 1900 the *True Blue War Library*, price one penny, commenced. For the first three numbers it was an uninspiring little 40-page booklet, but with No. 4 it blossomed into a large 24-page paper in a fine coloured cover with a *Union Jack* heading and featuring stories of the Boer War. These stories dealt with the hair-raising adventures of an elusive individual known as the Boy Scout, and little did we dream then of the great youth movement synonymous with this name which was to sweep the world in future years,

With No. 26 of the *War Library*, the two series of *True Blue* were merged, embracing the best features of both and the word 'War' deleted from the title. From No. 66 the number of pages was increased to 32, and additional features, including a serial, were introduced. All the stories were of British origin, and many new authors made their bow, including A. M. Burrage, Escott Lynn, Philpot Wright, and Alec G. Pearson, while a writer with the picturesque nom de plume of Marston Moor contributed, appropriately, stories of the Civil War. Bracebridge Hemyng's final stories were published in this paper, the very last being *Sam Sawft or a Green Hand Afloat*, which appeared in No. 93.

The notice of Hemyng's death through paralysis

in September, 1901, at the comparatively early age of 61, appeared in the Editorial Page of True Blue No. 87. A subscription to provide a suitable memorial was started in later numbers of the paper, but whether anything practical resulted therefrom I am unable to say.

This, the second and best series of True Blue, came to an end at No. 288, and thereafter the publishers reverted to the old blue covers for the third series, which followed on without a break in the numbering. This series ran to a further 43 numbers, ending at No. 330 (May, 1906), whereupon the paper was merged with the Half-Holiday Library.

In January, 1910, True Blue was revived as a smaller sized paper containing 32 pages, price one penny, and incorporated the defunct Half-Holiday Library. After about No. 26 the Deadwood Dick tales were reprinted with more modern illustrations, and these carried on without a break until the finish. Towards the end, the colour of the paper used was changed to a bilious pink, foreshadowing the closure which was duly applied at No. 75. The paper was then incorporated with the last series of the Cheerful Library.

The Home Library of Powerful Dramatic Tales and the Masterpieces of Modern Fiction were primarily intended for adults, both were published at sixpence. The former carried coloured covers and ran to 64 numbers, while the latter had blue covers and ran to 40 numbers. The second series of the Garfield Library, previously mentioned, had a very short life, only 8 numbers being issued.

(To be continued.)

The Printer to the Reader

HAD the rare privilege the other day of seeing the title page of A. Crowley's 'Jezebel,' which Mr W. R. Brace is reprinting for the Magical Link Society from the rare original edition privately printed in Saxon type, 1898. BEN WINSKILL tells me that The Sloperies have gone entirely, also the original office in Paternoster Sq., where he bought the first number of 'Answers' from Alfred Harmsworth himself. The shield of Red Lion House still is there after all, says Ben. MR HARRIS'S 'Interesting Items' still comes my way occasionally (although not a little out of date!). Those a.j. reminiscences are most enjoyable. Keep it up, Arthur! C.M. readers who haven't seen 'Floyd's Label Review' are missing a treat. MEMBERSHIP of the British Match Label Exchange Club is now nearly thirty; a recent exchange packet contained 884 specimens. My old friend Joe Parks is secretary. Address: 2 Irvin Avenue, Saltburn-by-the-Sea, Yorkshire. CLEEVE SCULTHORPE tells me that among replies to an ad. in C.M. were some from Texas, Indiana, New York, Canada, and Mexico. 'C.M. certainly gets round a lot,' adds Cleeve. IT'S a long time since I had a copy of 'Dime Novel Mart' from Newportville, Pa. I SHOULD like to receive copies of American small town weekly newspapers, particularly those emanating from small shops. THOSE British readers who would like friend Cummings's 'Dime Novel Round-Up' might like to send five bobs' worth of old boys' books in exchange. THANKS to those enlightened publishers and booksellers who have sent their papers and catalogues. ROSS CRAUFURD has a good many original water-colour drawings made by Robert Cruikshank for the Juvenile Drama. JAMES MADISON'S 'Collector's Guide' for April-June, 1942, contains the first instalment of Charles Bragin's 'Dime Novel Aeronautica.' 'Guide' is undergoing a transformation in name, format, and contents, I believe. I WAS delighted to receive several copies of Ye Occasional Idler from John J. Corell, The Careless Press, Mt. Washington, Mass. Quaintly printed, they are an amazing repository of 19th century decorated types, ornaments, and cuts. PLEASE add 'without consulting a banker' to my note concerning sending money out of the country, which appears on the back page.

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ROSS CRAUFURD

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Gerald Floyd's Notes

I WOULD like to bring to your attention the wrapper labels ENGLAND'S GLORY and MORELAND'S SAFETY which carry positive messages concerning Britain's war effort. Readers should endeavour achieve a good representation in their collections of these war slogans. For instance, 'Dig for Victory,' 'Wanted—Paper, Metal, Bones, for Munitions of All Kinds,' 'Don't Talk About Your Work—Get On With It!' and so on.

Matchbox labels are also being used in other countries. S. Africa, for instance, with PROTEA brand saying 'Don't Talk About Ships!' This is also issued in Afrikaans.

From India, the WIMCO factory issued a label showing a British soldier smoking a cigarette, with the words, 'We're All Lit Up—Let Battle Commence!'

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