

# THE STORY TELLER

## FEMINE FIGURES.

Arithmetic 'tis well to shun,  
Of puzzles it has plenty;  
For instance, I was twenty-one  
When Madge was sweet and twenty.

Old Time, as fast the seasons flow,  
Worked on me with his heaven;  
I felt the weight of thirty-two  
When Madge was twenty-seven.

The marvel grew to huge estate,  
Madge proved of time so thrifty,  
Remaining simple thirty-eight  
Long after I'd turned fifty.

My brain is plunged in awful whirls  
By mathematics' rigors,  
And who shall now maintain that girls  
Have no control of figures?  
—London Punch.

## Allen's Decision.

By S. RHETT ROMAN.

THE grinding season was over and Allen Duncan went back to his plowing.

He had gone pathetically up and down, back and forth, all day long, making furrows long and even, his strong young muscles and the brawn and strength of 22 years, confessed fatigue as the sun slowly dipped and disappeared behind a belt of forest which shut off the horizon behind a stretch of bare, brown cornfield, now being plowed and planted for another crop.

Of medium height, but athletic and finely developed, his face and hands, tanned by sun and wind several shades darker than nature had intended his gray eyes, keen and observant and with an air of self-reliance, decision stamped on his well-cut features, Allen Duncan was a figure not to be overlooked.

Reaching the end of the last furrow, he stopped his horse, reeled his plow on its side and began to unhitch the faded animal, whistling softly.

Whistling softly he turned towards a small cottage half a mile away, set among a clump of trees, from whose chimney a faint smoke was curling in the chill, cold air of the declining winter day.

A shade of repressed sadness or anxiety, which was an ordinary visitor to a face otherwise youthful and hopeful, gave Allen an air of matured gravity unusual for a man of his years.

Drawing his plow under the protection of a small shed, built for that purpose, by the roadside, Allen led his horse slowly towards the cottage.

A young girl stood waiting for him in the open doorway, watching his approach.

"Hurry up. How late you are. Supper has been ready for you the last half hour. Do come as soon as you have stabled Plowboy. Don't be long, there's a dear."

She ran indoors, singing gaily, and Allen, with an answering smile and a nod of acquiescence, passed by the little garden gate and went towards a small stable in the rear.

Aurore, his sister, was seven years younger than Allen, she had been favored with uncommon beauty, and had also a winsomeness which fascinated everybody, and particularly the old Acadian woman, Madame Francoise, who was the only servant of the small household.

Allen Duncan had been father and mother, brother and guardian to Aurore ever since the sad day they were left alone to face the world's hardships and cruelties, a forlorn youth and a beautiful child.

Fate was certainly most cruel to those two. Allen, resisting advice and suggestions (much cheaper commodities than help) packed a trunk with Aurore and his personal belongings and leaving the big house now no longer their's, took Aurore to a distant parish to live with a maiden aunt, whose temper left something to be desired and whose eccentricities were many.

Allen made arrangements with her by which his struggling work in the garden paid for Aurore's and his support.

But he kept on studying in the evenings under the direction of old Father Perrier, the gentle parish priest, who soon grew deeply attached to the brown-eyed, lovely child, and her determined hard-working brother, Allen Duncan.

A few years later Miss Hortense's ill-humors and crochets came to an end, as all things must, and her cottage and its furnishings were left by her to her nephew and niece.

Aurore missed her sorely, then came a busy little housekeeper and a clever dairy maid.

She began to sell butter and cream cheese to the Fordyce family, rich owners of the field Allen plowed and planted, and the nearest neighbors to the little gray cottage on the banks of the bayou.

Allen came in and sat down to supper and listened abstractedly to Aurore's gay chat of the day's doings.

Aurore had spent a very busy day which she had ended by preparing the particularly good battercakes Allen was just then enjoying.

Allen smiled fondly and commended Aurore's industry, then fell into a brown study and a dissatisfied longing hardened the lines of his face.

"Any reading, sis?" he asked, getting up and coming towards the fire.

"Reading? No, indeed, no time for reading, Al. Too busy. You suppose I'm going to sit down at home reading books, while you are plowing and laboring? Not much!"

Mme. Francoise, who was periodically afflicted with rheumatism, came in grumbling to clear away the supper things, and Aurore fell into a lively discussion while helping her, using Acadian patois with much fluency, certain intonations and inflections discovered with the mellow richness of her voice.

"How old are you, sis?" Allen asked suddenly, a question evolved by his gloomy reflections, evidently.

"Why, don't you know, Al? I'll be 15 next June. Do I look it? I'll be quite grown up soon, won't I?"

Allen suppressed a sigh as he got up and reached for an iron key hanging behind the door, the key of the mule stable. Taking the lantern from a closet set in the wall, he lit it and, telling Aurore the would be back soon, he went out to stable the mules and lock up the feedhouse, duties which devolved upon him nightly.

The daily grind of routine and manual work was absorbing, and the years were slipping by and Allen was startled to realize that Aurore, with all her sweet, fresh beauty, her energy and generous impulses, was growing up to lack an indefinitely something he remembered his mother had possessed, as he recalled her in those early years of his childhood in their far-away beautiful home, now in other hands.

Allen attended mechanically to the feeding of the stock, saw that the door was secure and the cattle housed, and all the while he was reproaching himself keenly that he could do so little for Aurore, that he could not give her advantages she ought to have and opportunities of education, and contact with other girls of her age and class in some big city.

Allen recalled with a pang, Aurore's French, and her absorbed interests in the daily cares of her life and her indifference to books and reading, and Allen foresaw how with all her beauty she would narrow down into peasant ways and peasant interests, and would drift away from all things intellectual.

What was he to do? Send her away to some big college, before a distaste for mental effort dulled her young mind? Allen knew by experience how arduous a task it was to plod over studies, when the mind and body were alike jaded by a hard day's labor.

How could he expect Aurore, sweet, bright, little Aurore, to have the stern energy of a man, and take up study and book learning as a pastime? No, Allen very plainly saw that unless he could find the means to send Aurore away from the restricted country life she was leading, one filled with sweet content and pleasant busy hours, but devoid of all ambitions, she would not be for all her beauty, what her mother had been, a woman of fastidious refinement, high education and polish.

How distinctly he remembered her. He himself was an uncouth fellow Allen thought. From the age of 14 he had done hard manual work. Had driven cattle, milked cows, hoed in the garden, chopped wood, done carpenter's work, plowed and worked in the blacksmith's shop shoeing horses and mending broken implements. As carpenter how many wagons had he repaired.

And during the grinding season he was cane weigher, or timekeeper for the plantation.

That he had studied hard, at night, with scholarly Father Perrier's help, and had acquired a certain amount of knowledge, a good deal of late and ancient literature, and had read the great authors of modern times, was good at mathematics, and was a French scholar, were not sufficient reasons, Allen said to himself, for him to have the air and polish his father had.

No, both he and Aurore would be at a disadvantage among college-bred men and women, and while Allen cared for knowledge for himself only in the hope of being able to utilize it some day to emerge from the slough of poverty into which cruel circumstances had plunged them, his heart burned within him at the thought of Aurore's growing up to womanhood shy, beautiful and unlettered, like Heloise, old Mme. Francoise's granddaughter.

Allen came back, Aurore was in the kitchen preparing the bread for the next day. Then she and Francoise disappeared.

"Where have you been, Sis?" Allen asked putting down his book, when she came in with her work basket and began to sew diligently.

"We went to see if the turkey had gone to roost in the oak tree," she said brightly, then ran on about corn for the chickens and seed for the garden.

"You incorrigible little worker. Do take a novel or poetry, or a newspaper, and put down that needle," Allen said.

But Aurore laughed gaily and declared she was too busy to read anything.

The next day a letter came to Allen. It was from a distant parish and said: "Dear Sir: The old family tomb of the deBeaupre's has fallen completely to decay, and will soon be a heap of bricks and stone. The site it now occupies, however, is desirable, it being near the church, and the present owner of your grandfather's estate is anxious to buy the plot of ground, of course transferring the remains, which are in the tomb to that of one of your relatives still living in the parish.

"As I learn that you have decided not to return here, I suggest that you authorize me to sell the plot of ground and what remains of the tomb to Mr. Bolton.

"If you consent, I will negotiate a price with him, and will inform you of the result. With much esteem, yours very truly,  
F. L. SANDERS,  
"Notary Public."

In going far away from their old home Allen knew that no one would connect them with that of their grandfather, Honore de Beauvre, or with the old escutcheoned tomb, where so many of his ancestors rested.

How everything appertaining to the ancient race from which he and Aurore were descended had crumbled and gone to decay.

Ruin and oblivion had swept over existence fortune and the old homestead—and even the ancient tomb, which was now a pile of broken rubbish, brick and marble.

Well and escutcheoned and a crumbling tomb are worthless possessions for a man who makes his daily bread by the sweat of his brow, at least the sale of the green sod under it could serve to give Aurore the education she ought to have.

Allen wrote with a curious mixture of sorrow and at parting with the last link binding them to former days and gladness, that a chance was given him to do for Aurore what he so longed to accomplish.

So he wrote "sell the tomb" and felt that his father and mother would approve.

He was destined to a life of arduous toil, in a remote parish, but at least Aurore, on whom he had lavished such care and devotion could be sent to some fine college. She would make friends and learn what life is in great cities.

The old tomb breathed a sigh of sorrow when the workmen came to demolish it, and the sweet wild rose growing over it and clinging so tenaciously to its side wept many a tear, and dropped and withered as the work went on.

"Courage, courage, little Rose," whispered the old Tomb as it lay dismantled of its marble shield and coat-of-arms. "Be not too sorrowful. My destruction will mean happiness for the last descendants of the old race, who, from what I gathered by the talk of those who have come groundless of late, are in sore distress and poverty. So I am willing to pass out of existence.

"The chevalier's jewels in the casket I have so long guarded will go to relieve their sorrows and will bring them joy. So I do not repine, sweet Rose, and you—they will not harm you. They will surely care for you and tend you, and you will grow luxuriant and blossoms will bloom under the sunshine and dews, the gentle rain and soft chill mists of winter.

"Adieu, little Rose, my mission is over. I am only an empty shell, a crumbling mockery, and I obey the dictate of ruthless man and majestic time. Adieu."

The old tomb fell apart with a crash.

"Why, look at that box! How strange. I wonder what it contains?" said the lawyer to Mr. Bolton, picking up the little casket.

Two days later Allen was notified that jewels and most precious stones had been discovered in the old tomb when the debris was being cleared away.

"Sis, dear, our old ancestor, the chevalier has left us a legacy. We will go abroad for a year or two," Allen said, kissing Aurore, who gave a sigh of bewildered joy.

The rose vine in its grief fell prostrate over the shattered remnants of the once solemn and beautiful old tomb, and would not be comforted.—N. O. Times-Democrat.

## Other Half in Front.

They had finished the parish tea and the curate stood up to say a few words to the recipients before they dispersed. He spoke in eloquent terms of the impecuniosity of curates in general and then went on to say in apparently touching tones: "Why, even as I stand before you now I have only half a shirt to my back." A few days later the reverend gentleman received a parcel containing half a dozen new shirts, accompanied by a card bearing the name of one of his fair parishioners. At the earliest opportunity he called upon the lady and thanked her for her gift and then proceeded to ask what had prompted the kind action. "Why," she replied, "you told us the other night that you only had half a shirt to your back." "True," answered he, "but the other half was in front."—Chicago Daily News.

## A "Tramp" Geyser.

Everybody has heard of the famous geysers of the Yellowstone region, and many know their peculiarities. A guide was showing one of these geysers to a party of travelers.

"This," he said, "is what we call a 'tramp' geyser."

"Why 'tramp' geyser?" asked a member of the party.

"If you should offer it a cake of soap," he rejoined, with a grim smile, "you would find out."

The visitor followed the guide's suggestion, and found the point of the joke in the violent ebullition which followed. It is a peculiarity of some of these geysers that throwing a cake of soap into them causes them to burst at once into a fit of ungovernable fury.—Youth's Companion.

## Charitable Criticism.

He (at the reception)—That girl standing under the arch makes a pretty picture.

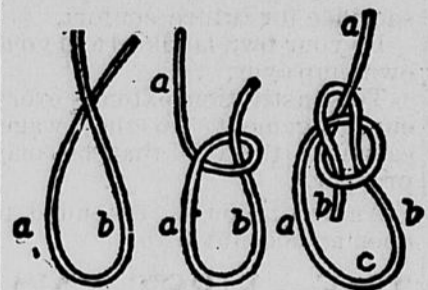
She—Yes, the painting is excellent.—Chicago Daily News.

# ROAD AND FARM IMPROVEMENT

## THE USEFUL BOWLINE.

How a Simple But Effective Knot May Be Tied—A Trick the Farmer Should Know.

The bow and knot is one of the most useful knots we have, and one comparatively few can tie. It is a knot sailors use constantly. The illustration will show exactly how it is tied, says the American Agriculturist. Lay the parts together as in the first figure.



HOW TO TIE THE KNOTS.

ure, b crossing over a. Then bring a over b, bringing the end up through the loop as in the next figure. Now carry b around and under a, passing it down through the loop as in the final figure. It is impossible for this knot to slip when properly tied. It is useful in all sorts of emergencies. In a loop thus made a man can safely be hoisted to any height with no danger of the knot slipping. It is especially useful for the farmer. An animal can be led by means of it with no danger of the knots slipping and choking the animal, no matter how much it may plunge or pull.

## DISEASE OF LETTUCE.

Plants in the South Being Attacked by a Peculiar Disease Known as "Damping-Off."

Much lettuce in the south and under glass in northern states is suffering from a peculiar disease known as "damping off." In the Carolinas and Florida it is particularly bad this winter. One correspondent from Florida says the Ohio Farmer reports that 25 per cent of his crop is affected, while others have lost their entire planting. Our present knowledge of methods for treating this disease in field, cold frame or hot-house culture is very unsatisfactory. The latest information, by Dr. A. F. Woods, chief of the division of pathology, United States department of agriculture, is given below.

The damping-off or rot of lettuce is very hard to control. We can only recommend that you take all possible precautions to stop the spreading of the disease, which is only accomplished by the direct growth of the fungus through the soil and by means of bits of the fungus carried on plows or cultivators, or by the feet of men from one part of the field to another. Remove all diseased plants in the early stages of the trouble, together with the surface soil underneath them. These plants and the earth around them should be carried from the field and burned.

When lettuce is grown in cold frames or greenhouses, the return of the disease can be effectually prevented by sterilizing the soil, which is usually accomplished by means of live steam taken from a high-pressure boiler. Unless some similar method can be adopted to field culture, the only means that can be employed to prevent a recurrence of the disease in the next crop is to use fresh land not previously planted to lettuce and to take much care that the seed-bed is free from the trouble, as well as to avoid infection from old fields. The disease requires further study, especially with respect to practical methods of control.

## BELGIAN HARES.

The Low Prices of the Animals Points an Important Lesson.

Passing a Chicago meat market recently, the writer noticed a sign that read: "Two Belgian Hares for 25 Cents." It was above a great pile of the animals. This points a lesson. A few years ago the exploiters of the Belgian hares at fancy prices were declaring that the time would not come when Belgian hares would not bring several dollars each. Multitudes of people went into the raising of the animals with the belief that all they produced could be sold at high figures. In vain their friends warned them that in the natural course of events Belgian hare meat would come down to the level of other edible meat. At that time no argument was effective. Millions of the animals were raised and little by little appeared on the markets, where the producers found that they had to sell them at about the price of "rabbit."

No boom of any kind of stock can last indefinitely. The high prices themselves stimulate the producing of enough animals to bring down the prices to the level prevailing in other lines. This fact should be remembered in the producing of any kind of live stock.—Farmers' Review.

## Side Ditches for Roads.

Side ditches carry off surface water and should be so constructed as to perform this work as rapidly as possible. They need not necessarily be deep, but should have broad, flaring sides, so they will not fill up rapidly. Sometimes it is necessary in passing that a vehicle be driven bodily into a ditch. If this is flat and shallow, there will be no difficulty.—Orange Judd Farmer.

# HAD CATARRH THIRTY YEARS.

## Congressman Meekison Gives Praise to Pe-ru-na For His Recovery.



CONGRESSMAN MEEKISON PRAISES PE-RU-NA.  
Hon. David Meekison, Napoleon, Ohio, ex-member of Congress, Fifty-fifth District, writes:

"I have used several bottles of Peruna and I feel greatly benefited thereby from my catarrh of the head. I feel encouraged to believe that if I use it a short time longer I will be fully able to eradicate the disease of thirty years' standing."—David Meekison.

ANOTHER SENSATIONAL CURE: Mr. Jacob L. Davis, Galena, Stone county, Mo., writes: "I have been in bad health for thirty-seven years, and after taking twelve bottles of your Peruna I am cured."—Jacob L. Davis. If you do not derive prompt and satisfactory results from the use of Peruna, write at once to Dr. Hartman, giving a full statement of your case, and he will be pleased to give you his valuable advice gratis. Address Dr. Hartman, President of The Hartman Sanitarium, Columbus, O.

## YOU'RE NEEDED

The section traversed by the Missouri, Kansas & Texas Ry. is very comprehensive. From St. Louis, Hannibal or Kansas City to Galveston or San Antonio is a stretch of over one thousand miles of territory, capable of sustaining a population many times that of the present. A thousand industries, soil of various degrees of fertility, a wonderful produce of plants and crops, oil, gas and minerals are to be found. Peopled by eager, pushing, wide-awake citizens who believe in the future of the Southwest and see the virtue of encouraging enterprises of every description and of getting more and better facilities, the opportunity is apparent.

The Southwest is really in need of nothing save people. More men are needed—*you're needed!* There are vast areas of unimproved land—land not yielding the crops of which it is capable. The same thing in a different way is true of the towns. Few lines of business are adequately represented. There are openings for mills and manufacturing plants, small stores, banks, newspapers and lumber yards. The oil and gas fields of Kansas, Indian Territory and Oklahoma are practically new and offer wonderful opportunities for development along commercial lines.

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## All in the Family.

"Have you any dog biscuits?" asked the man who had recently invested in a canine.

"No," answered the groceryman, "but I haf some fine sissages."—Chicago Daily News.

### If You Are Going East

and want up-to-date service at lower rates than via other lines, take the Nickel Plate Road. No excess fares charged on any train. Excellent Dining and Sleeping Car Service. All trains leave from LaSalle Street Station, Chicago. For particulars address J. Y. Calahan, Gen. Agent, No. 111 Adams Street, Chicago, Ill.

The Pulajones are on the war path in Samar. This is the first outbreak that has occurred in the Jones family for over 40 years.—Minneapolis Times.

### TORTURING PAIN.

Half This Man's Sufferings Would Have Killed Many a Person, But Doan's Kidney Pills Cured Him.

A. C. Sprague, stock dealer, of Normal, Ill., writes: "For two whole years I was doing nothing but buying medicines to cure my kidneys. I do not think that any man ever suffered as I did and lived. The pain in my back was so bad that I could not sleep at night. I could not ride a horse, and sometimes was unable even to ride in a car. My condition was critical when I sent for Doan's Kidney Pills. I used three boxes and they cured me. Now I can go anywhere and do as much as anybody. I sleep well and feel no discomfort at all."

A TRIAL, FREE—Address Foster-Milburn Co., Buffalo, N. Y. For sale by all dealers. Price, 50 cents.

## Strawberry and Vegetable Dealers

The Patronizer Department of the Illinois Central Railroad Company has recently issued a publication known as Circular No. 12, in which is described the best territory in this country for the growing of early strawberries and early vegetables. Every dealer in such products should address a postcard to the undersigned at HUBBARD, IOWA, requesting a copy of "Circular No. 12."

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