

# Polly and the Death Trap

By CHAS. SLONA REID.

Polly Blake was sitting on a punch-stool, milking a one-horned cow. A man stood a few feet behind her with his back against the fence. He was quite different from Polly's kind, as any stranger might have guessed. He was a town man—Polly was a mountain girl.

Polly kept busy with her milking and the man talked volubly, as he usually did. It was sunset and the shadow of night already had fallen upon the valley below, giving a dusky hue to the foliage of the distant trees. It was the hour when Polly usually milked the one-horned cow in the evening; and it was not by accident that the man was there, talking to her. Polly wore no bonnet and the mass of curling brown hair which hung about her neck and shoulders was ravishing in the richness of its effect. Obviously she was glad of the man's presence, for a certain happiness and a certain amount of embarrassment, when he was near, invariably set her heart to thumping in a way that caused the color in her cheeks to come and go like the gleam of a red ripe cherry in a fitful sunlight.

"Polly," said the man, as he rattled on from one subject to another, without taking the trouble to round his periods, "that cow worries me. I think, since she cannot have a uniform pair of horns, it would be much better if she had none at all. What do you think about it?"

"Yes, I think she'd look better without any, less'n she had two. But I reckon she couldn't help losin' the other one."

"How did she lose it, anyway?"

"She fell into a blind ditch and broke it off tryin' to get out."

"What is a blind ditch, Polly?"

"It's a gully that has been kivered over with bresh an' sich like."

"That's a pretty dangerous sort of thing to have about the place isn't it?"

"Yes, reckon it is. Never know where ye're goin' to land, sometimes, if ye break through the bresh."

"I guess it would be well for a chap to be careful in climbing about these hills, then?"

"As I've hinted to ye once or twice already, it's a good idea to be keeful in several ways, Mr. Gordon."

"Oh, don't call me Mr. Gordon, Polly, say Maxey. It would sound more like you cared a little, you know. And you do, don't you, Polly? There's no one listening, won't you tell me yes?"

But Polly was silent and her very silence assured the man that she did care.

Her task was soon finished, and Polly arose from the milking stool. Gordon advanced to take the pail. This little gallantry he had paid regularly every evening for a fortnight; and Polly had come to accept it as a matter of course. So they walked along together, she in her simple nature unable to conceal her heart's growing fondness for this stranger; and he apparently pleased with her manifested liking.

Later, when the evening meal was finished, and Gordon, with the Blake family, sat near the fireplace, he entertaining the rest with stories of travel and incidental anecdotes, the apparition of a head and shoulders at an open window near where Polly sat caused the narrator to pause in one of his stories. The head and shoulders were those of a stout young mountaineer, and the face would have been one marvelously handsome with the added expression of a cultivated mind.

At the pause in Gordon's story, Polly turned her head; and when her gaze alighted upon the man at the window she lowered her eyebrows.

Ben Martin had been her acknowledged lover for a long time; and now as she thought of how her heart had gone away from him, a little pang of something like remorse troubled her bosom.

Ben stood silently gazing in the window for several minutes, then he spoke in a tone of voice more that of command than of entreaty.

"Polly, I want ye to come out here a minute," he said; "there's something I got to say to you."

The girl glanced at Gordon, then arose. Gordon chuckled to himself. He knew how matters had stood between the two and he suspected that this was to be one more appeal on Martin's part.

When Polly came up to where Ben stood at the edge of the road, the man took her hand.

"Polly," he began and his voice was fully of emotion, "I can see I'm a losin' ye, an' it's a breakin' my heart, girl."

"What do ye mean, Ben?"

"I guess ye know, what I mean, Polly. But I want to tell ye, that chap's a skunk, jest a plain skunk. He pertends to be prospectin' round here for gold—but we all have calclated he's prospectin' for somethin' else. He keeps a nosin' round the cove; and today he bumped right up agin our still on Soco. Jim Turpin an' Lee Hooper was a watchin' him; an' the way he sneaked away from there an' took his hearin's as he went was a site too plain. So we've laid a trap for him, Polly—a trap that will get him if he's what ye think she is, but won't get him if he's all right, little girl. So, if we're wrong, Polly, why—I—jest wanted

to tell ye, girl, that arter all's over 'll still be comin' back to ye—an' maybe yer love will come back to me."

Ben squeezed her hand once and released it. There was silence a moment, then the girl said:

"I think ye're wrong, Ben."

"Maybe so, Polly, maybe so. We'll soon find out. Good-bye."

Ben strode away and left the girl to return slowly toward the house, wondering what manner of trap the boys had set, though stoutly resisting the fear it might capture Gordon.

The evening waned, Gordon's stories grew uninteresting, Blake nodded by the hearth corner and Polly waited for the opportunity to give the prospector one more warning. So when Gordon arose to go to his room, a low shed room at one end of the veranda, Polly stole to the doorway and slipped into the darkness outside.

"I want to tell ye agin to be keeful," she whispered, as Gordon paused near her. "Ye've raised suspicions, an'—but I can't tell ye any more. Only be powerful keeful."

Gordon laughed softly. "Oh, I'll be careful, little Polly," he said; "never fear about that."

He attempted to take her hand, but the girl dodged back into the main room and was gone.

The next morning Gordon failed to respond when called to an early breakfast.

"Pears to me the prospector's sleepin' mighty sound this mornin'," said Blake, as he returned to the waiting family in the main room.

Polly's heart took fright at once. A hundred things might have happened to Gordon during the night—the methods of the moonshiners were inscrutable.

"Pap, I reckon ye'd better go in an' wake him," she suggested, "for the meat on the table's a gettin' cold."

With candle in hand Blake went back to Gordon's door, opened it and peered inside.

"Why, by the livin'!" he exclaimed, "this bed ain't been teched."

At this moment, Polly's knees quaked, and her fingers clinched together impulsively. And at this moment, too, she hated all her race, all her kind among the mountains, her brothers and their co-partners, Ben Martin and all the rest. She turned her eyes toward the rafters and allowed a thought of revenge to take shape in her brain.

"Well, he's not here," said Blake, returning; "so that's no use to wait for him. Let's eat."

Polly minced her breakfast, hurriedly milked the one-horned cow, cleaned the kitchen things, then stole out over the mountain toward the Horse-Shoe Cove on Soco. She knew well the spot where the still stood and she knew the narrow defile through which alone the cove was accessible. The trail wound like a snake round over the mountain, down into the valley, then along up the creek between the cliffs. Where the trail ascended, Polly climbed feverishly; where it descended, she ran. In this manner the three miles to the neck of the cove were covered and she was speeding along the path to where it crossed the Devil's Sink Hole. This was a narrow fissure whose mouth was not over six feet wide, and whose greatest length was not over twenty feet, yet it opened away into the earth to a depth of forty feet. A narrow bridge, just the width of the trail had spanned the opening and when Polly reached the spot this morning she saw that the bridge was no longer there. She ran to the edge of the hole and dropped to her knees. It required some moments for her gaze to pierce the gloom down there, but presently she saw the prospector, with disheveled hair and torn clothing, seated at the bottom of the fissure.

Silence reigned throughout the wood and the low sound of Polly's voice when she spoke seemed to echo a mile away. But Gordon had caught the call and he looked up.

"Ah, is it you, Polly?" he exclaimed.

"Yes, an' ye didn't listen when I warned ye last night, though I didn't think about this place when I told ye."

"I am a conceited sort of fellow, Polly, and thought I could take care of myself. But I've learned a lesson this time sure."

"Do ye know what was meant for ye when ye fell into this hole?"

"Why it was meant for ye to perish to death down there, for nobody ever comes this trail but them that laid the trap for ye."

"But you have come to help me out, sweetheart?"

Polly's heart thrilled at this title of endearment and once more an impulse of hatred for her race welled up in her bosom.

"There's a grape vine back here I think long enough."

She sprang away from the hole and soon returned, bringing with her a long stout vine, one end of which she lowered into the hole. When Gordon could reach the lower end, the girl made the other end fast to the roots of a stout shrub near by, and the prospector found it an easy matter to climb out of the hole by means of the vine and its branches. And when he stood by the side of Polly on the trail above he took her hand and looking into her eyes, said:

"Little girl, you have saved my life and when I tell her all about it, my wife will love and praise you to the skies."

A flash of sudden fire leaped from Polly's eyes. She jerked her hand from Gordon's clasp and the next

instant had given him a shove that sent him reeling backward toward the Devil's Sink Hole.

The prospector was unable to recover his balance, and was poised for a single instant at the edge of the opening, ready to shoot downward again, when a strong hand suddenly reached out, caught him by the clothing and pulled him back to safety once more.

"If ye've got a wife, ye skunk, go to her! An' don't ye be nosin' round these hills agin, d'ye hear that?"

The speaker was Ben Martin. Gordon looked from Ben to the girl, then turned and hurried along the trail that led out of the cove. And long after he was gone from view, silence reigned between Ben and the girl. But at last Polly took a step toward Ben, and the mountaineer, with a full heart, sprang to meet her.

"Ben," declared Polly, "yer little finger's worth a world of 'em like him; an' I've jest found out how much I love ye."

Ben caught her in his arms and kissed her.

"Then let's have the weddin', Polly; an' I'll finish the cabin down on Luffy."—New Orleans Picayune.

**Humorously Worded Rebuke.**

Theodore P. Roberts had a fluent command of language, both in speaking and writing, and was well liked by everybody. He could secure the attention of a negligent publisher if need be. To one such, who was remiss about sending vouchers, he once closed up a long letter with the sentence: "And, finally, my dear sir, permit me to say that it would be easier for a camel to ride into the kingdom of heaven on a velocipede than for anyone to find a late copy of your paper in the city of New York."

**London's Beggars.**

It is calculated that four thousand persons make a living in London by begging, and that their average income amounts to about 30s. a week, or more than 300,000 pounds a year. Last year 1,925 persons were arrested for begging in the streets, of whom more than fifteen hundred were sentenced to terms of imprisonment varying from one week to three months. Many of these objects of charity were found in possession of sums of money, and even of bank-books showing very handsome deposits.—Tit-Bits.

**Lost Land in England.**

Great Britain, between 1867 and 1880, lost 148,906 acres by encroachment of the sea. Even this loss is small compared with others in times past. Thus, according to a survey in the time of Edward I, the duchy of Cornwall had 1,500,000 acres, but a survey in recent years gives it only 829,500 acres. Whole villages in some cases have been slowly undermined and swept away, as in the case of Dunwich, whereof only a ruined church on the edge of a cliff remains.

**Livingstone's Teacher Alive.**

One of the boyhood teachers of David Livingstone, the African missionary, is still alive and on active service. He is the Rev. F. B. Coldwell, a member of the Lancashire and Chelsea presbytery in England, 88 years of age. When a young man he was a teacher at a school in the neighborhood of Blantyre, Lanarkshire, and among his pupils was young David Livingstone who used to walk a distance of 11 miles daily to and from school.

**Estimate of Chemist.**

Berzellus, the Swedish chemist, made most of his experiments in the kitchen with his cook as his only assistant. "What is your master?" asked one of his neighbors. "Oh, he is a chemist." "What's that? What does he do?" "Well, I will tell you. He has something in a big bottle, then he pours it into a smaller one, and then again into quite a tiny bottle." "Well, and what then happens to it?" "Oh, then I throw it away."

**Much Kissed Book.**

For swearing a jury at an inquest at High Wycombe, Mr. Charsley, the coroner for South Bucks (England) recently used a New Testament printed in the year 1798. The book, which has been constantly used by himself, his father and grandfather, is still in good condition, and originally cost the modest sum of 18 cents. At the lowest computation it must have been the recipient of a hundred thousand formal kisses.

**English Common Law.**

The Common Law of England is an ancient collection of unwritten maxims and customs of British, Saxon and Danish origin, which, by long use and approval, have become fundamental in English jurisprudence. Many of the principles of the English Common Law hold in this country, and throughout the English-speaking world as well.

**Novel Zoological Park.**

Kansas City is creating a novel zoological park. Sixty acres have been set aside in Swupe Park, and dens are to be excavated in rocky cliffs for den living animals, with inclosures in front. A creek will be divided into basins, and in each basin will be planted aquatic plants, animals and fish.

**China's Camphor Trade.**

Parsee merchants have a monopoly of the manufacture of camphor oil at Poochow, China, controlling seventeen distilleries, and export most of the product to India.

# OUR BOYS AND GIRLS

## The Malay Mutiny

"Talk about trouble," said Sandy Hopkins as he stroked his whiskers and gazed across the Hudson at a fine bark that was being towed up stream, "why, man, we had a lot of it on the Farragut. The Farragut was a fine three skysail yarder, and she's among the list of missing ships. But that's since my time on her, for I made the voyage on the old ship twenty years ago from Calcutta to Anjer Point, in Java.

"We had a cargo of jute and a crew of Malays, and we hailed from Newburyport. There had been trouble between the old man meanin' the skipper and the Lascars of the crew because the old man had walloped one of the dusky sailors over the head with a length of knotted rope. The black fellows were in ugly mood when we left Calcutta, and one night when it was my trick on deck I noticed that they were rather more



JIU JITSUING A MAD MALAY.

active than is usual for a Malay seaman at such a late hour.

"As we came out from the after cabin again we were just in time to see one of the Lascars coming from the fore's'le hiding something behind a screen he carried, and which seemed to be flaring up now and then.

With a shout the skipper and the second mate and I rushed out upon those brown devils. The skipper and I fired at the same time and two of the Malays dropped, one of them being the fellow with the screen, from whose hands fell a burning torch, which he had brought to drop into the oil soaked cargo of jute under the forward hatch.

"As we ran forward some of the Malays came up from behind with clubs, which they had evidently brought aboard with them or fashioned from lumber taken on at Calcutta. There was a hand to hand fight, and while we were fighting another Malay brought another torch and started to stick it into the half open hatch.

"I caught that fellow round the waist and tossed him clear of the rail and into the sea. The others rushed at me and I threw them overboard one after the other, until I had tossed a half dozen of the screeching, chattering scoundrels into the Indian Ocean.

"It was a mighty close shave for all of us, especially since we had run out of ammunition, and there were still fifteen mutinous, half crazed Malays to deal with in the fo-cs-le.

"With drawl revolvers which were empty and without a hope of reloading them, we managed to keep that crowd of sailors forward while the skipper, second mate, ship's carpenter and I worked the ship. The native cook was among the mutineers and, besides, we would not have trusted ourselves to eat the stuff he might have fixed up for us after the trouble. So we four white men lived as best we could on dry biscuit and some coffee that the carpenter built. The dead Malays were tossed over board without any ceremony. On any other occasion this would have meant a mutiny in itself.

We made Anjer Point and delivered a precious lot of natives over to the authorities. I am rather afraid that perhaps the same fate met the Farragut on her next voyage, for she sailed out of Calcutta with a Malay crew and was never heard from again."

**A Boy and a Calf.**

A boy named Henry Billings, whose parents live in Brunswick O., armed himself with a rope about 40 feet long and climbed to the roof of a shed in the barnyard to lasso any calf that might pass that way. It was not long before he had a chance to cast his noose over the head of a yearling, but the animal had only been made fast when it started off with such a jerk that Henry was brought down off the roof and had both legs broken.

It is sometimes hard to tell the difference between a boy and a calf, but in this case it is easy to see that the calf had the most wisdom.

**Universal Language.**

"I've got to make a speech at the club to-night. Can you give me a hint?"

"Yes; just say 'Fillemupagain!'"

A caterpillar devours six times its own weight in food in a single month.

## PICKLED BEETS IN CAMP.

Laugh Was On the Bachelors When They Told Their Story.

"When you take the ox team up to Emporia after the mail and provisions, see if you can't get some vegetables," said Warren. "The cows got into my garden and cleaned up what the coons, bugs and other things had left, and we want some green stuff. See if you can't get some onions, beets, cucumbers, or anything."

We were bachelors, pioneering in Kansas, says Mr. Fred Mather, the author of "Men I Have Fished With," and among the things I brought back from Emporia was a fine bunch of early beets. We promised ourselves a treat.

We peeled and sliced them and put them in vinegar. Next day they were set out for their evening meal and we talked about them.

"Them beets must be more than a hundred years old," said Warren. "I've seen lots o' beets, but they was all tender and good."

"They can't be old. They don't keep beets over a year, like dried beans; besides that, didn't you see the tops were green? I think they're a new kind or else the soil here is not good for beets."

"They ain't cut thin enough for the vinegar to soften them," said he. "These cukes are all right; they're cut thin and the vinegar goes right through them and they're tender."

"Yes, the cucumbers are good; but what alls the beets I don't know. I've often eaten 'em at home when mother cut 'em up in vinegar. Perhaps they want to be soaked in it longer to make 'em tender. I don't know how long they have to stay in before they're fit to eat."

"Let 'em soak a while, then, and try it. Beets is a mighty good relish. They're good for what ails you; for a man can't live on salt pork, ham and all that stuff—salt codfish an' mackerel and sich stuff—without a little vegetable food. Put them beets away till they get tender; that's all they want."

The beets were set aside in vinegar until such time as they were fit to eat. We sampled them daily but there was no susceptible improvement. On Sunday, we cleaned up the house, brushed ourselves, and walked up to Serrine's ranch, where Mrs. S. and Mrs. Judge Howell were discussing some abstruse question.

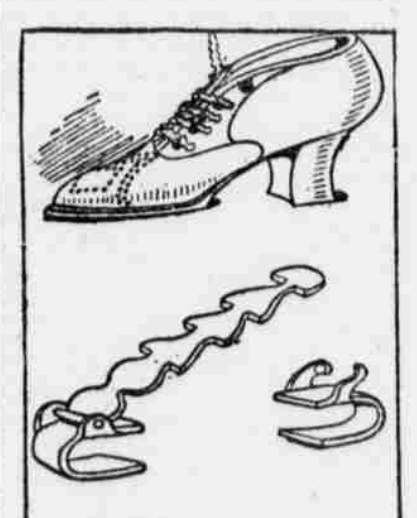
They wanted to know how "baching" went. Warren went into details and finally mentioned the beets. There was an instantaneous duet of soprano and contralto:

"Didn't you boil 'em first?"

I sneaked outside, and left Warren to settle things with the two women.

**Adjustable Shoe Fastener.**

Numerous attempts have been made to design a fastener for shoes which will overcome the faults of the button shoe and yet be as serviceable and practical as the laced shoe. Everybody is familiar with the one objection to the button fastening—



the shoe seldom fits the foot properly until the buttons are pttrectly readjusted. This fault is, of course, overcome in the laced shoe, but the latter requires more labor to fasten. A shoe fastener patented by a New Jersey man and shown in the illustration appears to be a good substitute for either although it lacks beauty. This fastener is of metal, consisting of a tongue which is fastened to the shoe on one side of the opening and the clamp on the opposite side. The tongue is formed of several wedge-shaped hooks. The tongues can thus be connected to the clamps at any desired point, and the flaps of the shoe drawn together to any desired extent. The fastener can be employed also on other articles of apparel, such as corsets, gloves, etc.

**Lost Her Engagement Finger.**

Miss Emma Collins, 18 years old, the daughter of B. L. Collins, a Boone county (Mo.) farmer, can never wear a ring on her engagement finger. While ascending the cellar steps she lost her balance and fell. In the fall her ring caught on a nail and her finger was lacerated. The finger was amputated.

**Productive Maple.**

From a single maple tree on the farm of Charles Hulslander, Tioga County, Pa., a yield of one hundred gallons of sap was obtained, from which was made about twenty-three pounds of sugar. The tree was about two feet in diameter and was tapped in five places.

## Do You Suffer from Piles or Hemorrhoids?

Hemorrhoids, commonly called Piles, cause untold agony to the victim. If neglected, the condition always grows worse with every attack, until the only recourse is an operation. You may think that you are predisposed to piles, and that nothing you can do will prevent them, but this is not true. The one certain cause of Piles is constipation, and if you will keep your bowels open and regular by taking Smith's Pineapple and Butternut Pills, you will not only avoid this painful and dangerous disease, but your whole general health will greatly improve.

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The Delaware & Hudson Co. is now collating information for the 1910 edition of "A Summer Paradise," the D. & H. Summer-hotel and boarding-house directory that has done so much to advertise and develop the resorts in this section. It offers opportunity for every summer hotel or boarding house proprietor to advertise his place by representation in this book. The information desired is, as follows: Name of house; P. O. Address; Name of Manager; Altitude; Nearest D. & H. R. R. station; Distance from station; how reached from station; Capacity of house; Terms per week and per day; Date of opening and closing house; what modern improvements; Sports and other entertainments. This information should be sent at once to Mr. A. A. Heard, General Passenger Agent, Albany, N. Y. Blanks may be obtained from the nearest ticket agent, if desired. No charge is made for a card notice; a pictorial advertisement will cost \$15.00 for a full-page or \$7.50 a half-page. Our hotel people should get busy at once and take advantage of this. Don't make the mistake of thinking that your house will be represented because it was in last year, but make sure that you receive the benefit of this offer by forwarding the needed information without delay. Owners of cottages to rent are also given the same rates for pictorial advertisements, but, for a card notice, a minimum charge of \$3.00 will be made.

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