

**SIX OF ONE BY HALF A
DOZEN OF THE OTHER:
AN EVERY DAY NOVEL**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649259717

Six of one by half a dozen of the other: an every day novel by Various

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VARIOUS

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AN EVERY DAY NOVEL**

SIX OF ONE

BY

HALF A DOZEN OF THE OTHER.

AN EVERY DAY NOVEL.

BY

HARRIET BERCHER STOWE,
ADELINE D. T. WHITNEY,
LUCRETIA P. HALR,
FREDERIC W. LORING,
FREDERIC B. PERKINS,
EDWARD E. HALE.

BOSTON:
ROBERTS BROTHERS.
1872.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1872, by
ROBERTS BROTHERS,
In the Office of the Librarian of Congress at Washington.



CAMBRIDGE:
PRESS OF JOHN WILSON AND SON.

SIX PREFACES.

FIRST PREFACE.

THE history of this composition is precisely told in the November number of OLD AND NEW, in which it was first announced to the public.

“What is this,” said Anna Haliburton, “about a new serial in OLD AND NEW? ‘Six of One by Half a Dozen of the Other,’ — is that the name?”

The Editor of OLD AND NEW was not present; but Colonel Ingham answered for him, as, at a pinch, he does sometimes.

“What you saw was one of the unconscious prophecies which give the world a hint of its best blessings in advance.”

“Would it please you, dear *padre*, to abandon the method of the pulpit for a moment, and, in somewhat clearer language, to tell us what our chief does intend, in an enterprise in which he has not enlisted our endeavors?”

“He has not enlisted you,” said Ingham, “because, as it is, the Editor has enlisted our five best home story-writers, — Mr. McDonald being, alas! too far away, to unite their forces, — and it being, alas! evident that even in our seventeen hundred annual pages we cannot print a whole novel by each of them, and at the same time take care of all the world of literature, art, and religion beside.”

“Once more,” said Felix Carter again, “will you please to abandon the method of the bar, and state explicitly what the chief proposes?”

“He proposes this,” said Ingham. “It is impossible, as I said when I was interrupted, to print a serial novel by Mrs. Stowe, and one by Mr. Loring, and one by Mrs. Whitney, and one by Mr. Perkins, and one by Miss Hale, in the same volume which contains ‘The Vicar’s Daughter,’ and ‘Ups and Downs.’ The Editor sees this impossibility, and so do the distinguished writers I have named. Yet the readers of *OLD AND NEW* are to be considered also,—considered, indeed, first of all. And what has been determined on, in a high council of these writers of fiction, is that they, adding Mr. Hale to their number, shall unite in writing one novel, which will be a serial, and in which our readers will be able to enjoy them all together. Wishing a name which should give an idea of the method of the book, the chief consulted the Nomenclator; and the Nomenclator said the new serial should be called

‘SIX OF ONE BY HALF A DOZEN OF THE OTHER.’”

“And will you tell us how the plot is constructed?”

“No; nor will I tell you the plot. All I know is, that it grew, novel and plot, much as I remember to have seen Signor Blitz’s plates start from the table when he was spinning them. He announced that he would spin six earthen dinner-plates at one time. He began with one, spinning it as you spin a penny for a child; when that was well going, he started number two; and then, from a side-table started the third. If he saw one faint and weary he encouraged it by a touch of his finger at the point of revolution; and when these three were happily gyrating, like so many interior planets, he let loose in succession numbers four, five, and six. I think the chief started the novel in much the same way. He spoke to Mrs. Stowe first, and consulted Mr. Loring. Then he went to Mrs. Whitney, and sent a brief of the plot to Miss Hale. The four principals had what the Friends call ‘a solid sitting;’ and in the equally happy

phr ase of those charming people they were ‘baptized into each other’s spirit.’ They possessed themselves mutually of the best plot, the best moral, the locale, and the atmosphere of the story. They selected the names, — actually changed Mary Yates into Rachel Holley, after Mary had been tried and found wanting. Meanwhile, our philosophical Devil-Puzzling friend, Mr. Perkins, had come cordially into the combination, so that the story is to have the benefit of his universal information, and, I suppose, of his conferences with Apollo Lyon, Esq. Thus it is that we are to publish the first chapter of ‘Six of One’ in December.”

“Whose chapter is that?” said everybody, even the sluggish gentlemen taking out their cigars for the inquiry.

“I have told you that it is everybody’s chapter.”

“Do you mean to say,” said Haliburton, “that Mr. Hale locked all these people up, as if he were Ptolemy Philadelphus with the seventy translators, — that he shut them into five cells in the attic of 143 Washington Street, and himself retired into a sixth, and that at the end of six months they all came out, a little haggard, bearing six manuscripts, which on examination by Rand & Avery’s proof-reader, proved to be identical, even to the use of semi-colons instead of comma-dashes?”

This was a very long sentence for Haliburton, or for anybody.

Ingham said that he did not mean so. But he meant that the high contracting powers had come to no dead-locks in the management of the story. “The public will undoubtedly know better than the authors themselves do who wrote what or who contributed which. All I know is, that we are to have the critical period of the life of Six of Them by Half a Dozen of the Others.”

The plan having been once suggested, copies of the following sketch of a plot were submitted to each of the six contributors:—

SIX OF THEM BY SIX OF US.

CHAPTERS I. AND II.

John Bryant and Jane Gaylord grew up in District No. 1 of Marston, went to the same school, of course, &c., &c. Henry Eyre and Henrietta Silva grew up in District No. 2, &c., &c. Mark Hinsdale and Mary Yates grew up in District No. 3, &c., &c.

In all dances, frolics, sleigh-rides, &c., they paired off as above. The town supposed they were mated for life. Perhaps they supposed so themselves. But

CHAPTERS III. AND IV.

John Bryant went to Boston,
Henry Eyre to Norwich, and
Mark Hinsdale to New York to try their fortunes.
Henrietta Silva went to Boston,
Mary Yates to Norwich, and
Jane Gaylord to New York.

The law of "propinquities" affected them. The letter-writers of Marston concluded, perhaps they concluded themselves, that the old cast of parts had not been the right one, and that other destinies were over them, mating them again by residence; when

CHAPTER V.

Jane Gaylord being appointed teacher in a Chicago School, Henrietta Silva detained there in travelling, and Mary Yates on a visit there, it proved

CHAPTER VI.

That the fore-ordained mates were:
John and Mary.
Henry and Jane.
Mark and Henrietta. And so the story ends.

MEM. — Note as an *aide-mémoire*, — that the original initials are J. and J., H. and H., M. and M.

It is impossible to say whether the plan would ever have gone further, but that our dear friend Mr. Frederic Wadsworth Loring, who had enlisted joyfully in the scheme, and with fun ever new descanted on it, took it into his charge and keeping. No one who talked with him about it could resist him. He compelled the authors to their duty; and soon after he left Boston for that expedition to the Pacific slope which terminated so fatally,¹ they had their first "solid sitting," four out of the remaining five being present.

The ladies protested against the names. After great canvassing, they agreed on the respective characters to be maintained by the heroes and heroines. New names were then selected to match these characters, and the briefs were altered thus:—

1. JEFF FLEMING, *dashing fellow, go ahead*; begins with JANE BURGESS, *she a pattern*. He ends with RACHEL HOLLEY.

2. HORACE VANZANDT, *inventor*, begins with HENRIETTA SYLVA, called NETTIE, *attractive but coquettish*; but ends with JANE BURGESS.

3. MARK HINSDALE, *bookish, and given to clouds and scenery*; begins with RACHEL HOLLEY, *regular beauty and good*; ends with NETTIE SYLVA.

MEM.—They are to be common-place, not very high-flying, people.

On this agreement the four selected their parts, Mr. Loring's was assigned to him, and absent author num-

¹ Mr. Loring was killed by a body of outlaws, supposed to be Apache Indians, on his return toward San Francisco, from a summer of adventure with Lieutenant Wheeler's survey.