

A TYPE-WRITER LETTER.

When a man has battled with poverty all his life, leaving it as he fought it, and yet dreading all the while the coming of the time when it would gain the mastery and throttle him—when such a man is told that he is rich it might be imagined he would receive the announcement with hilarity. When Richard Denham realized that he was wealthy he became even more sobered than usual, and drew a long breath as if he had been running a race and had won it. The man who brought him the news had no idea he had told Denham anything novel. He merely happened to say: "You are a rich man, Mr. Denham, and will never miss it."

Denham had never before been called a rich man, and up to that moment he had not thought of himself as wealthy. He wrote out the check asked of him, and his visitor departed gratefully, leaving the merchant with something to ponder over. He was as surprised with the suddenness of the thing as if some one had left him a legacy. Yet the money was all of his own accumulating, but his struggle had been so long, and he had been so hopeless about it, that from mere habit he exerted all his energies long after the enemy was overcome—just as the troops at New Orleans had fought a fierce battle, not knowing the war was over. He had sprung from such a hopelessly poor family. Poverty had been his inheritance from generation to generation. It was the inevitable legacy that father had left to son in the Denham family. All had accepted their lot with uncomplaining resignation, until Richard resolved he would at least have a fight for it. And now the fight had been won. Denham sat in his office staring at the dingy wall paper so long that Rogers, the chief clerk, put his head in and said in a deferential voice:

"Anything more to-night, Mr. Denham?"

Denham started as if that question in that tone had not been asked him every night for years.

"What's that, what's that?" he cried.

Rogers was astonished, but too well trained to show it.

"Anything more to-night, Mr. Denham?"

"Ah, quite so. No, Rogers; thank you, nothing more."

"Good night, Mr. Denham."

"Eh? Oh, yes. Good night, Rogers; good night."

When Mr. Denham left his office and went out into the street everything had an unusual appearance to him. He walked long, unheeding the direction. He looked at the fine residences and realized that he might have a fine residence if he wanted it. He saw handsome carriages; he too might set up an equipage. The satisfaction these thoughts produced was brief. Of what use would a fine house or an elegant carriage be to him? He knew no one to invite to the house or to ride with him in the carriage. He began to realize how utterly alone in the world he was. He had no friends, no acquaintances even. The running dog with its nose to the ground sees nothing of the surrounding scenery. He knew men in a business way, of course, and doubtless each of them had a home in the suburbs somewhere, but he could not take a business man by the shoulders and say to him, "Invite me to your house; I am lonesome; I want to know people."

He got such an invitation he would not know what to do with himself. He was familiar with the counting room and its language, but the drawing room was an unexplored country to him, where an unknown tongue was spoken. On the road to wealth he had missed something, and it was now too late to go back for it. Only the day before he had heard one of the clerks, who did not know he was within earshot, allude to him as "the old man." He felt as young as ever he did, but the phrase so lightly spoken made him catch his breath.

As he was now walking through the park and away from the busy streets he took off his hat, ran his fingers through his grizzled hair, and looking at his hand when he had done so as if the gray, like wet paint, had come off. He thought of a girl he knew once, who perhaps would have married him if he had asked her, as he was tempted to do. But that had always been a mistake of the Denhams. They had a married young couple except him, and so sunk deeper into the mire of poverty, pressed down by a rapidly increasing progeny. The girl had married a baker, he remembered. Yes, that was a long time ago. The clerk was not far wrong, when he called him an old man. Suddenly another girl arose before his mental vision—a modern girl—very different indeed from the one who had married the baker. She was the only woman in the world with whom he was speaking terms, and he knew her merely because her light and nimble fingers played the business sonata of one note on his office typewriter. Miss Gale was pretty, of course—all typewriter girls are—and it was generally understood in the office that she belonged to a good family who had come down in the world. Her somewhat independent air deepened this conviction and kept the clerks at a distance. She was a sensible girl who realized that the typewriter paid better than the piano, and accordingly turned the expertness of her white fingers to the former instrument. Richard Denham sat down upon a park bench. "Why not?" he asked himself. There was no reason against it except that he had not the courage. Nevertheless, he formed a desperate resolution.

Next day business went on as usual. Letters were answered, and the time arrived when Miss Gale came in to see if he had any further commands to day. Denham hesitated. He felt vaguely that a business office was not the proper place for a proposal; yet he knew he would be at a disadvantage anywhere else. In the first place he had no plausible excuse for calling upon the young woman at home, and in the second place, he knew if he once got there he would be stricken dumb. It must either be at his office or nowhere.

"Sit down a moment, Miss Gale," he said at last; "I wanted to consult you about a matter—about a business matter."

Miss Gale seated herself and automatically placed on her knee the shorthand writing pad ready to take down his instructions. She looked up at him expectantly. Denham, in an embarrassed manner, ran his fingers through his hair.

"I am thinking," he began, "of taking a partner. The business is very prosperous now. In fact, it has been for some time."

"Yes," said Miss Gale interrogatively.

"It is about that I wanted to speak to you."

"Don't you think it would be better to consult with Mr. Rogers? He knows more about business than I. But perhaps it is Mr. Rogers who is to be the partner?"

"No, it is not Rogers. Rogers is a good man. But—it is not Rogers."

"Then I think in an important matter like this Mr. Rogers or some one who knows the business as thoroughly as he does would be able to give advice that would be of some value."

"I don't want advice exactly. I have made up my mind to have a partner, if the partner is willing."

Denham mopped his brow. It was going to be even more difficult than he had imagined.

"Is it then, a question of the capital the partner is to bring in?" asked Miss Gale, anxious to help him.

"No, no. I don't wish any capital. I have enough for both. And the business is very prosperous, Miss Gale—and—and has been."

The young woman raised her eyebrows in surprise.

"You surely don't intend to share the profits with a partner that brings no capital into the business?"

"Yes—yes, I do. You see, as I said, I have no need for more capital."

"Oh, that is the case, I think you must consult Mr. Rogers before you commit yourself."

"But Rogers wouldn't understand."

"I'm afraid I don't understand either. It seems to me a foolish thing to do—that is, if you want my advice."

"Oh, yes, I would. But it isn't as foolish as you think. I should have had a partner long ago. That is where I made the mistake. I've made up my mind on that."

"Then I don't see that I can be of any use—if your mind is already made up."

"Oh, yes, you can. I'm a little afraid that my offer may not be accepted."

"It is sure to be, if a man has any sense. No fear of such an offer being refused. Others like that are not to be had every day. It will be accepted."

"Do you really think so, Miss Gale? I am glad that is your opinion. Now, what I wanted to consult you about is the form of the offer. I would like to put it—well—delicately, you know, so that it would not be refused, nor give offense."

"I see. You want me to write a letter to him?"

"Exactly, exactly," cried Denham, with some relief. He had not thought of sending a letter before. Now he wondered why he had not thought of it. It was evidently the best way out of a situation that was extremely disconcerting.

"Have you spoken to him about it?"

"To him? What him?"

"To your future partner, about the proposal?"

"No, no! Oh, no! That is—I have spoken to nobody but you."

"And you are determined not to speak to Mr. Rogers before you write?"

"Certainly not. It's none of Rogers' business."

"Oh, very well," said Miss Gale shortly bending over her writing pad.

It was evident that her opinion of Denham's wisdom was steadily lowering. Suddenly she looked up.

"How much shall I say the annual profits are? Or do you want that mentioned?"

"I—I don't think I would mention that. You see, I don't wish this arrangement to be carried out on a monetary basis—not altogether."

"On what basis then?"

"Well—I can hardly say. On a personal basis, perhaps. I rather hope that the person—that my partner—would, you know like to be associated with me."

"On a friendly basis, do you mean?" asked Miss Gale, mercilessly.

"Certainly. Friendly, of course—and perhaps more than that."

Miss Gale looked up at him with a certain hopefulness of expression.

"Why not write a note inviting your future partner to call upon you here, or anywhere else that would be convenient, and then discuss the matter?"

Denham looked frightened.

"I thought of that, but it wouldn't do. No; it wouldn't do. I would much rather settle everything by correspondence."

"I am afraid I shall not be able to compose a letter that will suit you. There seem to be so many difficulties. It is very unusual."

"That is true, and that is why I knew no one but you could help me, Miss Gale. If it pleases you, it will please me."

Miss Gale shook her head, but after a few moments she said: "How will this do?"

"Dear sir—"

"Wait a moment," cried Mr. Denham; "that seems rather a formal opening, doesn't it? How would it read if you put it 'Dear Friend'?"

"It you wish it so." She crossed out the "sir" and substituted the word suggested.

Then she read the letter:

"DEAR FRIEND: I have for some time past been desirous of taking a partner and would be glad if you would consider the question and consent to join me in this business. The business is and has been for several years very prosperous, and as I shall require no capital from you I think you will find me a very advantageous one. I will—"

"I—I don't think I would put it quite that way," said Denham, with some hesitation.

"It reads as if I were offering every thing, and that my partner—well, you see what I mean."

"It's the truth," said Miss Gale, defiantly.

"Better put it on the friendly basis as you suggested a moment ago."

"I didn't suggest anything, Mr. Denham. Perhaps it would be better if you would dictate the letter exactly as you want it. I knew I could not write one that would please you."

"It does please me, but I'm thinking of my future partner. You are doing first rate—better than I could do. But just put it on the friendly basis."

A moment later she read:

"I make you this offer entirely from a friendly and not from a financial standpoint, hoping that you like me well enough to be associated with me."

"Anything else, Mr. Denham?"

"No. I think that covers the whole ground. It will look rather short, typewritten, won't it? Perhaps you might add something to show that I shall be exceedingly disappointed if my offer is not accepted."

"No fear," said Miss Gale. "I'll add that though. Yours truly, or 'Yours very truly'?"

"You might end it 'Your Friend.'"

The rapid click of the typewriter was heard for a few moments in the next room, and then Miss Gale came out with the completed letter in her hand.

"Shall I have the boy copy it?" she asked.

"Oh, bless you, no," answered Mr. Denham, with evident trepidation.

The young woman said to herself, "He doesn't want Mr. Rogers to know, and no wonder. It's a most unbusiness like proposal."

Then she said aloud, "Shall you want me again to-day?"

"No, Miss Gale; and thank you very much." Next morning Miss Gale came in to Mr. Denham's office with a smile on her face.

"You made a funny mistake last night, Mr. Denham," she said, as she took off her wraps.

"Did I?" he asked in alarm.

"Yes. You sent that letter to my address. I got it this morning. I opened it, for I thought it was for me, and that perhaps you did not need me to-day. But I saw at once that you put it in the wrong envelope. Did you want me to-day?"

Every day, but he merely held out his hand for the letter, and looked at it as if he could not account for its having gone astray.

The next day Miss Gale came late, and she looked frightened. It was evident that Denham was losing his mind. She put the letter down before him and said:

"You addressed that to me the second time, Mr. Denham."

There was a look of haggard anxiety about Mr. Denham that gave color to her suspicions. He felt that it was now or never.

"Then why don't you answer it, Miss Gale?" he said gruffly.

She backed away from him.

"Answer it?" she repeated faintly.

"Certainly. If I got a letter twice I would answer it."

"What do you mean?" she cried, with her hand on the door knob.

"Exactly what the letter says. I want you for my partner. I want to marry you, and—financial considerations be—"

"Oh!" cried Miss Gale in a long drawn, quivering sigh. She was doubtless shocked at the word he had used and fled to her typewriter room, closing the door behind her.

Richard Denham paced up and down the floor for a few moments, then rapped lightly at her door, but there was no response.

He put on his hat and went out into the street. After a long and aimless walk he found himself again at his place of business.

When he went in Rogers said to him:

"Miss Gale has left, sir."

"Has she?"

"Yes, and she has given notice. Says she is not coming back, sir."

"Very well."

He went into his room and found a letter marked "personal" on his desk. He tore it open and read in neatly typewritten characters:

"I have resigned my place as typewriter girl, having been offered a better situation. I am offered a partnership in the house of Richard Denham. I have decided to accept the position, not so much on account of its financial attractions as because I shall be glad, on a friendly basis, to be associated with the gentlemen I have named. Why did you put me to all that worry writing that idiotic letter when a few words would have saved over so much bother? You evidently need a partner. My mother will be pleased to meet you any time you call. You have the address. Your friend,

MARGARET GALE.

"Rogers!" shouted Denham, joyfully.

"Yes, sir," answered the estimable man, putting his head into the room.

"Advise for another typewriter girl, Rogers."

"Yes, sir," said Rogers. "Detroit Free Press."

AN ENGLISHMAN IN AMERICA.

His Experience of the Pleasures of Poverty in a Western State.

The following, condensed from the Pall Mall Budget, bears the ear-mark of a true story of personal experience:

I am Louis Hall, graduate of King's College; ex-sub-inspector of Australian Native Police; ex-surveyor of the Indian Staff Corps; ex-political lecturer and organizer in Canada and the great United States of America; ex-cowboy, bar-tender, woodsman, teamster, editor, and log-driver; and am now lying in bed in a shack on the waterfront of one of the boom towns of Western Washington, and pen this essay on "The Pleasures of Poverty." For four days I have lived on two leaves of bread, and have each day walked the streets of this town in search of work, and found it not. My clothes are all sold, my credit at the restaurant is of the past, and I am a stranger and an Englishman.

And yet I am cheerful—cheerful even to hilarity. Weeks ago, when I saw abject poverty approaching with surely certain strides, I was nervous and depressed. Now that it has come I am bold and careless of the future. Last year my writings were read and favorably commented on as they appeared in the columns of the National Review. Last year I was an honored guest at the Windsor and Fifth Avenue Hotels—honored because my banker's balance was a good one. Last year I had huge audiences listening to and generously applauding my utterances on the question which was then convulsing Canada and British Columbia.

This year I am a tramp, a dead-beat, a hoo-oo! And here I fancy I hear my readers saying, "Poor fellow, another case of abilities destroyed by drink!"

No, nothing of the kind. Merely a victim of boom cities and hard times. It is a distinct pleasure to feel that you are utterly of no account to any one in your immediate vicinity, and that your coming and goings are of no interest to any one save yourself. To a man that has held a good position in life it is a distinct pleasure to feel that no one who has known him in his former prosperity knows him now in his poverty. Poverty, when it has to be faced in a strange land, is not nearly so desperate as when it has to be faced in one's own country.

Then what a pleasure it is to be able to enjoy a meal of dry bread and water! Think of it, ye habes of Delmonico's and Romano's! I have eaten in nearly all the most famous hotels and restaurants of both the Old and the New Worlds. I have

grumbled at the waiter when the devilled kidneys were a bit overdone, and I have soundly rated the khandamah when the curried duck was not highly flavoured enough, but I have never enjoyed a meal as well as I enjoyed my supper to-night—Pain blanc with sauce sucree and eau ordinaire.

And what a keen pleasure it is to gain the shelter of the "shack" you call home, and, nestling down under the coarse blanket, listen to the howling of the wind and the pattering of the rain, and reflect, with sorry satisfaction, that there are some poor devils worse off than yourself—in that they have no blanket to cover themselves with and no "shack" to keep off the wind and rain!

Then what a pleasure it is to get a job helping to unload a vessel or dray, and to know that when the job is over, you will be able to go to some cheap restaurant and have a fifteen-cent meal! And how carefully you eat everything that is put in front of you and drink every drop of the muddy concoction they call "coffee!"

And recollect that this is only modified poverty that I am describing. There is poverty more dire, more dreadful than even this. I am writing these lines in Western Washington, one of the best advertised and most overdone states in this great and glorious country of America. Let no young man who has a steady berth, however humble, in England dream of leaving it and coming to this great and glorious West.

Beauties of the Southern Girl.

Soft and graceful, the Southern girl looks best in the ballroom or on a horse. If any one were to presume to criticise them, it might be said that few of them walk well, and some of them have a tendency to powder before breakfast and to begin wearing diamond earrings at an early age. Their eyes and their voices are their strongest points. Their eyes can say more than the most accomplished orator, and their voices suggest more than the eyes ever say.

Their accents are soft and melodious, with vowels long prolonged and the consonants slurred over, and their choice of words admirable. Their English is the English of Walter Scott, Shakespeare and the Bible, mixed up curiously with phrases from current novels and the kind of mild argot which is put into the mouths of romantic modern heroines.

The Kentucky girls are the old English type, with the brown hair, blue or hazel eyes, and with slender figures, firm hands, well-poised heads, and the trim shoulders which come from riding across country. A few of them are tall, but hardly one of them is stout, and as a rule, they are below the height and considerably below the weight of the average Northern girl. Few of them are unbrowned or brown.

Out of doors they wear veils and gloves, and in full dress there is hardly a shade of difference between the tints of their hands, their faces and their shoulders. All of them ride and dance well. Southern girls rarely walk, except on the piazza or indoors. If there is a horse to ride, they will ride; if not they will drive. If neither of these means of getting about is conveniently at hand they sit down and wait.

He Built One of the Pyramids.

The British Museum, the great European storehouse of things out of the ordinary, has hundreds of Egyptian mummies of all dynasties carefully stored away within its walls. Some of these are comparatively recent efforts at embalming and others date back to the "wide revolving shades of Centuries past." The oldest of the entire collection is the mummy of Mykerinos. He was a king in Egypt in what is known to history as the "fourth dynasty," and wore his golden tiara and sat on the throne of thrones 4,000 years before the wise men followed the star of fate till it

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stopped over the lowly hovel in Bethlehem where the infant Jesus lay. Mykerinos was the builder of the third pyramid at Ghizeh, where his headless mummy was discovered in the year 1836. The stone coffin in which he was being transported to England was lost at sea and lay at the bottom of the ocean for two years before being recovered. It is seldom that a man's bones are subjected to such vicissitudes, especially 5,000 or 6,000 years after his