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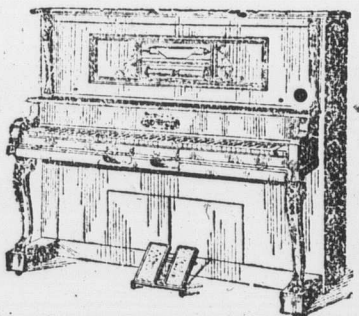
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By Dictation

By S. Paquin

There come moments in the life of every man when he stops and thinks. This does not mean merely that he gives careful attention to some problem of the hour, but that he takes a serious view of life as a whole; surveys it; analyzes it; tries to riddle its meaning.

Such a moment had come to Harry Merton. Really there was cause for him to view life with satisfaction, but a close study of his face would have told any keen observer that he was not altogether satisfied.

But as he viewed his progress in retrospect, his mind ran on something like this:

"Yes, I have done it. I have reaped the success I set out to win, but what does it amount to after all? It has been a long fight, and I have sacrificed a great deal to win it. Perhaps I have sacrificed too much. When I began as a messenger boy Jim Perkins had the start of me by a year. I have often smiled up my sleeves at Jim since I began to climb up past him. First special agent, then general agent, and now general manager, and poor old Jim is still at his desk as a clerk. But I reckon Jim is happier than I am for all that. I thought so yesterday when his wife came in with that pretty boy of theirs, just to see papa's new desk in the new office. Somehow, it made me feel as if I were missing something that a man needs to make his life complete."

Then Merton's line of thought was interrupted. He had been standing beside his desk with his hands crossed under his coat-tails, watching the sign-writer who was putting gold letters on the windows of the company's handsome new offices. The sign-writer was marking the glass in letters bigger than those that spelled the company's name—"Henry Merton, General Manager."

"Here, my good fellow, that won't do," said Merton, stepping forward to the man's side.

"How will you have it, sir?" "Just put that name in small letters and a little off at one side," said Merton quietly. "It will look better."

That was just like Henry Merton. Few men in the business had more reason to pride themselves on the attainment of marked success, for he had made his way in the world unaided. But there wasn't a grain of vanity in him. He was a modest, subdued, unassuming sort of a man. One would guess it by looking at him. He was tall, shapely, handsome; but it was plainly to be seen that he was oblivious to his own comeliness as a man. Vanity can be seen more readily in a man than in a woman.

This over, Merton began thinking again, his thoughts taking a new tangent, and one that surprised him.

"I wonder if ambition is a selfish thing? I've done well enough in a business way, and have no one to thank for it but myself; but how many people are there who have anything to thank me for? There's Miss Travers, who is the best stenographer I ever had in my office. She does more good in a month than I've done in fourteen years. She doesn't know that I know it, but the reason I raised her salary last month was because I overheard one of the other stenographers say she was supporting her younger brother in college. She's a fine girl, too. It's a wonder some man doesn't marry that girl."

Then Henry Merton whistled as if to himself—a long, low whistle. The very thought of some other man marrying Alice Travers had made him clench his fists, but till that minute he had never thought of marrying her himself, or of marrying any other woman, for that matter.

In the next room Alice Travers, who had just finished transcribing a lot of letters Mr. Merton had dictated to her in the morning, was writing a letter to her brother in college. Strangely enough, it was full of Henry Merton. It said:

"Dear Ted: You'll excuse me, I know, for writing to you on a typewriter; I can do it so much quicker and easier this way. We have just moved into the new offices and I am finely fixed. Mr. Merton has given me a nice little room to work in, all to myself, and I have nothing to do now but attend to his correspondence, which is quite enough, since he came to be general manager. Really, he doesn't seem to have the swelled head a bit on account of it, and he's quite a young man, too; not more than twenty-nine or thirty, I should say. He hardly looks happy, even."

"He has been very kind to me, and raised my salary last month, though I didn't ask him to. That's why I send \$30 this month instead of \$25, and now I can do it every month. I like to

work for him. He treats me more courteously than any man I ever worked for before. He has never called me by my first name, but always Miss Travers, and instead of telling me to do this and to do that, he always acts as if he were asking a favor when he has work for me to do.

"He seems a lonesome sort of man. I often wonder how he lives and what he does to enjoy himself—if he ever does enjoy himself. He is a hard worker and men admire him. I don't know whether he's married or not, but I don't believe he is, for no woman ever comes to see him at the office."

"But there; you'll know him probably some day. At least I want you to, when you get ready to go into business, for there's no man I would rather have you take for a pattern than Mr. Merton."

"Let me know how you are getting along, save what you can, for you will need a little to go on when you get through college in June. Write soon."

"Lovingly, Alice." Henry Merton was not a man to delay matters. With him, a problem ne sooner presented itself than he set about to solve it, and a decision to do a certain thing was always followed at once with the doing. While he listened to the click of Miss Travers' typewriter, which to him was music for a reason he had not realized before, he had reached an important decision—the most important of his life thus far—and he set about putting it into effect in a way that was thoroughly characteristic of the man.

He went into Miss Travers' room and seated himself in a chair he always occupied when dictating letters. He did not as some business men would have done, call her to his desk to take notes on a sliding shelf with no place to rest her arm.

"Miss Travers," he said, and she noticed a queer sound in his voice, "will you please take a letter for me—a letter to my mother."

"At last," thought Miss Travers, "I am to know something about Mr. Merton. I never knew before whether he had a mother."

"You need not mind to take notes," said Mr. Merton. "Just take it on the machine, for I shall not dictate rapidly. Are you ready?" "Dear Mother: I have been so busy lately that I have had little time to write you, and now that I have to say will surprise you; perhaps pain you a little at first. Ever since I left home and came to this smoky, noisy town, you have been the only woman in the world who has really known me, or anything about me; and now I am going to get married."

"Pardon me," said Miss Travers, with a slight blush. She had written the last word "married" and had stopped to erase the last three letters and write them over. It was an unheard-of thing for Alice Travers to make a mistake. With no sign of annoyance Merton went on:

"Though no woman knows me, I know a woman, and one whom I am sure you will approve as a daughter. First of all, she is a lady. I do not know her people, but I am sure from her manner and character that they must be most admirable persons. I am not a judge of woman's beauty, but I do not think you would call her a pretty girl. She is something better than that. There is a womanly dignity and sweetness about her that gives her a charm far greater than mere beauty. She is not a girl, really, but a woman—a gentle, true, sweet woman."

"One thing I know you will like about her. She has a younger brother in college, and every month she sends him a generous part of her earnings, so that he may educate himself. But you shall know her soon. As soon as we are married you must come and visit us. There will be no occasion for you to be jealous, mother. She will welcome you, I am sure."

"Her name, I have forgotten to tell you. Her name is Alice Travers—" There was another pause here; but this time Alice Travers did not blush, but trembled slightly and turned a little pale. Then Merton went on:

"I have just asked her to be my wife, and she has answered—" Here Merton rose quietly and stood beside the woman he had loved for weeks, but had not known it. She sat with fingers posed over the keys, as if waiting for him to finish the dictation.

"When you have finished the letter, Miss Travers," he said, "please bring it to me and I will sign it."

The minutes of silence seemed to Henry Merton like hours, as he waited in the next room for an answer. When it came—four sharp clicks on the typewriter—y—e—s and a period.

There was a suspicion of moisture in his eyes and a warmth of something more than courtesy in his voice, when a moment later he looked up and said for the first time, "I thank you, Alice." Before it had always been: "I thank you, Miss Travers."

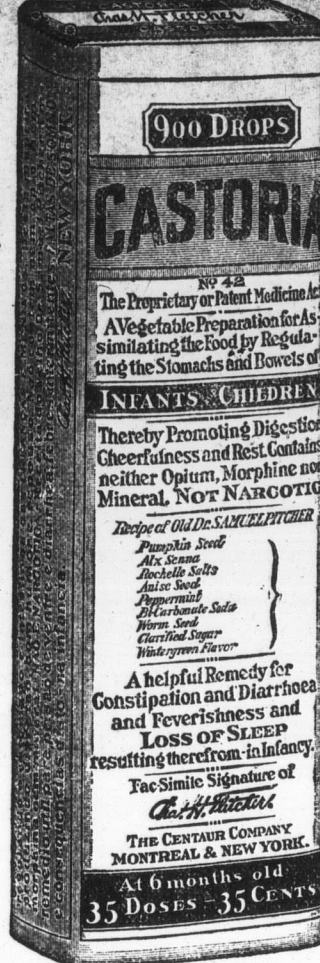
Three weeks later the men who had been accustomed to dine with Merton and play billiards with him at his club, after trying in vain for days to account for his absence, found the solution in a line in the list of marriage licenses in an afternoon paper. It read:

Henry Merton-Alice Travers, 29-24.

Answering Her.

"Dear me, that was terrible. Man fell overboard in midocean the other day, and never was seen again!" said Hicks.

"Drowned?" asked Mrs. Hicks hysterically. "Oh, no, of course not!" said Hicks irritably. "Sprained his ankle probably!"



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WEEKLY BULLETIN

Spring term opens April 2nd. Miss Theresa Beecher has been transferred from the naval branch of the Civil Service, and is now stenographer in the Dept. of Interior. Miss Blanche Whiting is now stenographer in local branch of Bank of Nova Scotia. W. R. Kelly, superintendent C.N. Ry. at Capreol, near Sudbury, has forwarded railway pass, and one of our graduates is already on her way to act as his stenographer. Miss Ray Magill has been notified to report at Ottawa where a Civil Service appointment awaits her. J. A. McKenzie, G. A. Traill, J. Bedlow and J. E. Cleland, returned veterans under the Military Hospitals Comm., are now enrolled as students at our college. Miss V. Fitzpatrick is now stenographer and office assistant in local office of Mutual Insurance Co. Morley Freeman has asked us to

vouch for his educational standing as he has signed up with the Flying Corps.

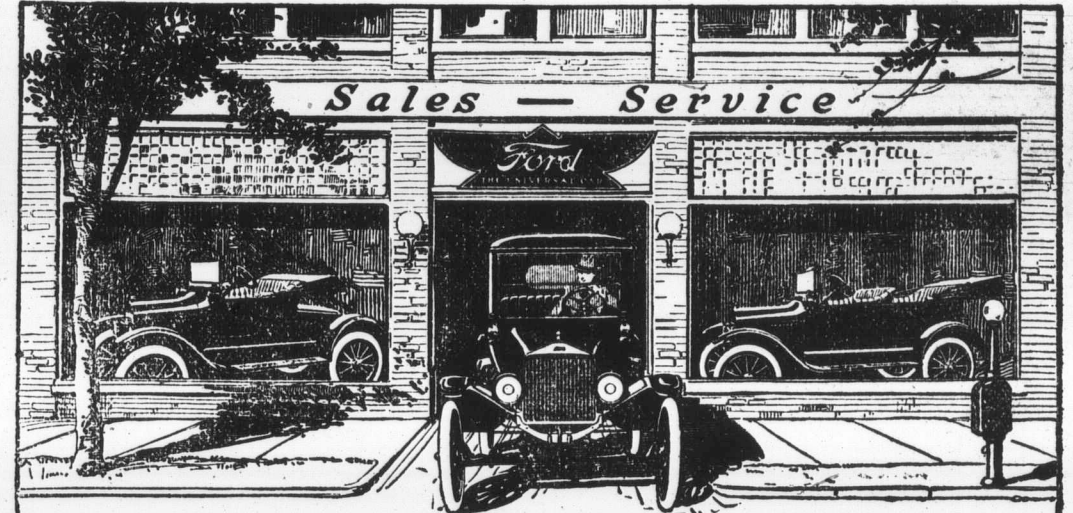
One of the greatest difficulties the Government has to-day is to get competent stenographers and clerks. The examinations for permanent appointments are held in May and November of each year, but the demand is now so great that examinations are held weekly. The salary now paid is a minimum of \$600 a year.

Those who passed our 80 word a minute shorthand test this week were Miss Evelyn Fox and Miss Ruby Bowen.

Our fees are: For three months, \$41.00 which includes cost of all text books.

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