

dealers can sell them for less than their price on their own territory? If they *do* have them they must be reprints, *fac-similes* or something of that kind; and no stamp connoisseur cares to have a doubt thrown upon the individuality of his treasure. You understand me Guy, every stamp has its own separate character, as it were, and when doubt of its genuineness arises, it is like some old history—Rollin for example—which we read with a relish, but even the boy just emerging from Mother Hubbard, can't quite swallow it all.

After some further observations he concluded with a personal warning. "You will wonder, my dear fellow why I urge so trivial an amusement on you; you will perhaps doubt the soundness of my advice; but there is one thing you will not question, and that is my friendship, you will believe that when I take up the office of Mentor it is because, wishing you well, I think it necessary. Therefore I urge a change in your life—mark me, Guy, this is the turning point in your history, throw away for a time at least, your lexicons and substitute a stamp album—leave abstruse problems to those whose business it is to use them, and read Harper and Chambers if you will, don't let Mr. Frost interfere with you; he is a good man but he is a moral bat. I respect his sincerity—but discard his dim views of men's social obligations—I distrust the old routine that requires a physical giant to master it. It makes one think of the unfortunate horse doomed to work one of those old fashioned bark mills. But you are no giant, Guy; your constitution could never have been more than passable, and it has been worn down by study and want of exercise, till it will take an effort nearly equal to the one Mrs. Chicks describes, to clear you of the pulmonary evil which so many young Americans founder. As for the stamp album, you promised you know, and I'm not afraid you will forget to keep your word—neither do I doubt but what you will find an interest in what you have undertaken out of friendship for— Ellis Blair."

Guy, was deeply affected with the earnestness of this appeal—a film seemed to have been resting over his life, and was now breaking away, leaving him more aimless and desolate than before. He felt like a man lost on a desert with no reprieve from the burning sky nor the burning sand, with no shadow of an oasis in view. He glanced at the guide and his companion of his youth, still buried among the folios of a past age; still dreaming over improbable fictions, and the desert grew hotter—the heat more intense. He wondered feebly who was Mrs. Chicks and what the effort he advised was about. He had never read Dickens's, for Mr. Frost would have considered an hour spent in that great man's company, as so much lost time. The words, "mark me Guy, this is the turning point in your history," seemed to take form and glared at him from out every pattern on the wall paper—peeped from behind vases and

chimney ornaments, and over the tops of pictures and mirrors. Ellis Blair had not even imagined how near was the crisis in his young friend's life, when he penned that earnest warning—nor could Guy for one moment understand what it had cost his self-constituted mentor to send it. True his mental sight was widely distended, but it takes something more than even mental vision to unlock a strong man's heart. Those who knew this young barrister best, and esteemed him most wondered at the lustrous light on his face at this time—a light that might have hovered round the head of a martyr on his way to the stake, but Guy could know nothing of it. But his singular urgency affected him strangely, it may be dangerously, for after the enervating effects of seasickness, he was ill able to bear excitement of any kind, still less excitement of such a morbid character.

As his father had done years ago, so Guy groped blindly for he knew not what—unlike the former he found a talisman that helped to dispel the blackness that was settling around him. It was a trifle—nothing but a postage stamp—it was the Connell he had found in Broadway—and it lay carelessly in the bottom of his desk. You may smile incredulous reader, but if I should tell you half I mean about the potency of trifles you would look at them reverently as Guy did when he lifted his stamp. It was as a devotee handles his most valued relic, and he felt it to be

"A talisman of hope and memory."

at this moment, for the fresh young face and lithe, graceful figure of the girl he had seen but for a moment came to him like the first faint breath from the far off oasis, with its cool, shady fountain. His oppressed breathing grew regular—his wild imaginations vanished. There was no longer a weird meaning attached to the warning of Ellis Blair, the patterns on the wall looked dull and expressionless, and he ceased to inquire about Mrs. Chicks and her effort, for the effort was made unconsciously. "*She* must be a collector, he thought, *I* will be one too; for your sake Ellis, because I promised, but also, because it is a link that may one day draw me like a magnetized needle towards *her*."

The young man's unsophisticated habits had not led him to inquire how much of the oppressiveness of his voyage was attributable to the sudden passion he had conceived for the fair owner of the "Lost," stamp. He registered a resolve in the most secret corner of his heart—glancing as he did so at the unconscious tutor: it was the glance of a gladiator and not that of a dutiful pupil. But Mr. Frost though essentially wrong, had discharged his trust with faithful punctiliousness: his simple instincts did not warn him against over-burdening the growing intellect; he was proud of his pupil—proud of the progress he had made, and he loved him in his own undemonstrative fashion. Guy, partly comprehending the pressure of old habits, felt the emergency of his case, and called in an unne-