

Cupid and the Cash Carrier

By BENNET MUSSON

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Through the great dry goods house of Chase, Remington, Bentley & Co. ranged the usual throng of shoppers—eager faced women and bewildered looking men. In the rear of the store Mr. William L. Remington, the sole survivor of the original firm, sat at a roll top desk in his private office.

Dignified, gray haired and sedate was Mr. Remington, and he looked thoughtful as he leaned back in his revolving chair and tapped the edge of his desk with a square envelope of rough blue paper. The envelope contained an invitation to a reception to be given by Mrs. Eleanor Chase, the widow of one of the former partners of the house and a society woman.

Mr. Remington looked on approvingly as his handsome son concluded negotiations with the woman, took a bill from her and, inclosing it in a little nickel plated case, placed it in the receptacle of the cash carrier. He pulled a cord, and the box shot up till it reached the narrow lines of metal, whence it was whisked with businesslike precision to the eye of the cashier.

As Jack turned to another customer his father waited, then, recognizing the purchaser of the silk, he stepped forward and engaged her in conversation.

Presently the nickel plated case shot back over the carrier and dropped with an assertive click into its receptacle. Mr. Remington released it, relieved it of its contents and, with a brief "I'll give Mrs. W. Chase your bill, Jack," which received an answering nod from the young man, handed the money to the woman.

But Remington senior did not give her all that the case contained. He withheld a small piece of folded white paper, which he regarded highly for a moment, then opened. Written across it in hastily formed characters were the words:

"It is an age till tomorrow night, dearest!"

The old gentleman held the paper nearer to his eyes and read the message again. Then he looked at his son, who was talking animatedly. Then he refolded the paper carefully, placed it in his vest pocket and walked slowly away. He went to another part of the store, from which he could get a view of the cashier's post, and looked up.

There among the converging wires of the cash carrier was a high desk, and over its top protruded a head of wavy brown hair, and occasionally as its owner reached for the metal cases Mr. Remington caught sight of the pretty, refined face of Gertrude Terry, his cashier.

The old gentleman watched the girl for awhile, then went to his private office and again seated himself at his desk. He drew the piece of white paper from his pocket and looked at it thoughtfully. Then he turned his attention to the square, blue envelope which contained Mrs. Chase's invitation and glanced from one to the other, as though weighing in his mind the value of each.

Perhaps the memory of his own married life, spent with a woman of society, whose tastes and temperament were at variance with his own, passed in mental review. The many nights he had sat at his lonely fireside while his wife was waiting functions to which he had little inclination to follow her may have intruded themselves on his reflections. Whatever his thoughts—and they contained no bitterness for the woman who was gone—he kept them to himself.

He did not say anything to Jack when they left the store together except to tell him that he had some private business to attend to and might be late for their 7 o'clock dinner. Then he gave the driver of his coupe an address and presently alighted at a small frame house.

His ring was answered by a gray haired old man who walked with difficulty. He seemed greatly surprised to see Mr. Remington. When the latter was seated in the little parlor he regarded the invalid with kindly interest.

"Well, Max, I am sorry that time has not dealt better with you," he said at last. "It's a long cry back to our college days, isn't it?"

Old Max Terry sank painfully into a chair. "The last time you were in this house," he answered slowly, "was to attend my wife's funeral. No time has not been over good to me, but I don't complain."

"I want you to tell me of her," said Remington, and he drew his cashier's father on to talk of the mother and wife.

The rich old merchant listened thoughtfully while Max Terry told of years spent in perfect companionship, years during which his ambition to become a great musician had slowly suffered collapse, but which had been

lightened and heartened by the sympathy of a devoted, loving woman whose soul was attuned to his.

When he had finished Mr. Remington was leaning forward in his chair. "And now that she is gone you have your daughter left," he said gently.

"Yes, she's just like her mother, think heaven?" responded Max Terry, sinking back with a sigh.

At that moment the front door was opened, briskly, steps sounded along the hall, and Gertrude Terry entered the parlor. She stopped abruptly when she saw the visitor.

"I have been telling Mr. Remington about your mother," Max Terry said, smiling at the girl.

"Did he call to ask about her?" she inquired.

"I called for a purpose of my own," said Remington, advancing toward her. "I accidentally received this note from the cash carrier this afternoon." And he produced the bit of white paper.

The girl was pale, but she regarded him unflinchingly. "I suppose you think it is very wrong of me to love Jack," she said.

"No, but I think it would have been better for him to have told me about the affair."

"I would not let him, and I have been trying to tell him that he must not see me again."

Mr. Remington smiled. "You took it for granted that I should not want an unofficial partner in my family who was brave and womanly merely because she happened to be poor," he said softly, taking her hand.

The next morning Chase, Remington, Bentley & Co. was crowded with people from the metal messenger of the cash carrier. The message, which was in his father's handwriting, was as follows:

"Miss Terry will soon leave the employ of this firm."

Jack leaped over the silk counter and hurried to his father's private office. The room was empty, but in a moment Gertrude and Mr. Remington entered.

Jack angrily handed the note to his father. "What is the meaning of this?" he demanded.

Mr. Remington looked at the paper couplet. "It means," he said, "that I think my future daughter-in-law should have time to prepare for her wedding."

Jack leaned against the roll top desk in wonderment, while Gertrude read the note.

"If I had known what was in it I should not have sent it," she said, with a reproachful smile at the elder Remington. "Is that your idea of breaking the news properly?"

"No," answered the old gentleman, "but I did not like to spoil the record that cash carrier has for revealing the unexpected."

Traveling by Map.

The experience of Captain Joseph La Barge, as told in "The History of Early Steamboat Navigation on the Missouri River," includes this story:

Captain La Barge was a pilot and Indian trader for fifty eventful years, and on one of his trips up the river he had a party of Englishmen aboard. They had a map and applied themselves industriously to the business of identifying the various places on it with those along their route. They were in the pilot house a good deal, and one of them was inclined to instruct in the geography of the country the veteran pilot, who had spent all his life on or near the river.

"What place is this that we are approaching, Mr. Pilot?" he asked.

"St. Charles, sir," La Barge replied.

"You are mistaken, sir. According to the map, it is."

La Barge made no reply. He stopped as usual at St. Charles and then went his way. Presently they came to another village.

"What place, captain?" inquired the Englishman.

"Washington, Mo., sir."

"Wrong again. The map gives this place as."

This experience was repeated several times, the captain's temper becoming more ruffled with each repetition. Presently a flock of wild geese passed over the river. The Englishmen were staring on the burlesque roof of the pilot house.

"What kind of birds are those, captain?" asked one of them in eager haste.

The captain, whose language still showed something of his French origin, replied: "Look at your map. He tell you."

Bought Art to Destroy It.

The attendants in the art gallery of a department store in Brooklyn were startled the other day to see a man deliberately destroy two pictures that he had just purchased at a cost of \$47.

The man is wealthy and aims to have a collection of art objects that have no duplicates. He had purchased in the art gallery that was the scene of his vandalism a painting for which he paid \$1,000. After it was sent home he was showing it to a friend, who, knowing the collector's weakness, told him he had seen two reproductions of the painting in the same gallery, one priced at \$35, the other at \$12.

"Go and buy them for me," said the collector, "and when you get them break them up. I'll give you a check for \$47 before you go home."

The friend declined the task; so the collector went to the store himself, pointed out the two pictures, and after he had paid for them destroyed them on the spot.

This same man ordered a table with a carved top for which he paid \$900, and the artist who had designed it and stood by him while he destroyed the original drawing for the table. That was a part of the contract, and he meant to see it carried out.—New York Press.

WHEN PEGGY TOOK THE KEY

By MARJORIE STEVENS

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Donald Murray was not thinking about the strike.

In fact, it made precious little difference to him at just this moment whether any trains ran on the D. R. and G. tracks at all. His engagement with Miriam Bentley had been suddenly derailed, and that was trouble enough for him. He had appointed himself a wrecking crew of one to act that very night at the church fair and possibly to undo the mischief wrought by too much steam in the form of hasty words. And then had come the orders from headquarters to stand by his instrument until relieved.

Brownsville was an unimportant station in the center of a thriving farming section. Its stockyards and grain elevator dwarfed the passenger station, and there wasn't enough business in the town to support a night telegraph station. In fact, Donald, with his lusty helper and messenger boy, Andy Johnson, constituted the entire D. R. and G. force.

Young Murray was not afraid of work, and at any other time the order to remain at his post for twenty-four hours would have affected him not at all. But tonight he thought of Wilson, Graham, Donaldson and the rest all clustered about the table where Miriam was selling fudge and other homemade sweetmeats, and his hands were plunged into his pockets, even as his soul was plunged deeper in gloom.

The idea of disobeying orders, however, never entered his head, though he did not fully realize the danger which beset the road. This strike through the great wild west was not the ordinary seething turmoil of sudden dissatisfaction which yields quickly to pacific treatment. It had been a prolonged, quiet struggle between capital and labor, with no apparent gain on either side, but an attempt to install a yard force of "scabs" at Midford Junction had precipitated active demonstrations. Seeds of trouble had been sown with reckless hands in the shops and yards, where the stolid Swedes, seeing their jobs and comfortable home lives threatened, had set their teeth hard. And when a Swede says nothing, but draws his eyelids down to a narrow slit, railroad authorities know that trouble is brewing in the brain behind that stolid face.

Andy Johnson stuck his head into the door. Murray caught sight of a vivid red necktie and knew what was coming.

"You won't need me, will you? I want to take in the fair again."

Andy's long, lank body, clad in a wonderful store suit of gray, green and brown checks, followed his good natured face. He closed the door, and his wife took on a wheedling tone.

"There's no sense in the doin's, honest there is, Mr. Murray! That there fish pond just takes my eye, and you get the funniest things what you ain't expectin' to get. Then there's goin' to be a votin' contest tonight. That silver toilet set cost so much no one won't buy it, so they're goin' to vote it off to the most popular lady present."

Murray's face was suddenly illumined.

"Of course you can go, Andy. There won't be much doing here tonight. Besides, I want you to do some voting for me." He laid a five dollar bill on the table. "Miss Bentley must have that prize."

"Of course she will. Everybody likes Miss Miriam," assented Andy, with eyes fairly devouring the bank note.

"But we want her to be so far ahead of the other girls that they won't be in the running. See? Now, you vote that money slow. Have it changed and vote it a quarter at a time."

Andy nodded and then, filled with importance, turned to go.

"Wait a minute."

Murray drew a pad toward him and bit his pencil nervously. But at last the note was finished and carried away by the elated Andy. It read:

My Dear Miriam—I am sorry that I cannot be with you tonight when you win the prize, for of course you will win it. And I will vote for you as much as I can. I want you to win word how many votes you received? I ask very little, and it is so lonely down here. I must stay here. There is trouble of some sort up the line. I know it can't be as bad as the trouble that has been in my heart since we quarreled. Yours, DONALD.

Murray went out into the passenger room and stared up the street where the lights from the town hall shone gayly. Then, with a sigh, he returned to his little office, locked the door and threw himself on the carpet covered sofa for a nap. He was roused by a sharp call at his keyboard.

"Trouble brewing along the line," sang the little clerk. "Al Reeves, with a gang of Swedes, has slipped out of town. Keep sharp lookout for No. 3."

No. 3 was the D. R. and G.'s crack train. It carried the mail and the bulk of the cross continent passengers.

Murray was wide awake now. He went the rounds of his little station, making sure that all was secure. Then he examined his revolver and laid it within easy reach on the table and he stared at the instrument while he reviewed the dangerous points between Brownsville and the stations east and west. There was the cent seventeen miles east. It had once been a favorite spot with train robbers, but little harm could come there from a demilitarized zone. The dangerous spot was the Jamison arroyo, below the town by three miles at least. If No. 3 was

stalled there and the fast freight happened to whirr after it round the curve, as it usually did now that the time card was demoralized by weak service, there might—

Murray closed a nervous hand over his revolver. Nothing must happen. He sat thus with straining ears for half an hour. To him it seemed as if hours had passed when suddenly he heard a faint tap at the outside door. Very cautiously and with revolver in hand he stepped to the door and asked in a firm, clear voice, "Who's there?"

"It's me—Miriam."

Almost dropping his revolver, Murray threw open the door and drew the girl inside.

"Miriam!" he gasped and led her into his little den.

"Yes," she replied, with the calmness of the feminine mind which chooses to rise above them. "I wanted to thank you for helping me to win that lovely prize, and I—well—I didn't think Andy—could thank you quite as well as I could."

It was full ten minutes before Donald Murray came back to earth and the realization that No. 3 was four minutes overdue. Just as he reached his hand toward the instrument to communicate with the junction the door of the outside room creaked, and a bulky form, followed by another and another, pressed into the waiting room and jerked down the small gate leading into the agent's room. Murray did not wait for a second glance at the intruders. One hand stretched toward the receiver, the other toward the revolver.

"No messages goes out of this office tonight, young fellow."

For answer Murray's finger sent the first word over the wire. With an oath the leader sprang forward, and something cracked with a sickening sound in Murray's right arm. He turned white, and the left hand loosened its grip on the revolver. A bulky fist shot forth, but a small, white one closed over the weapon first. Miriam stood beside Murray, the revolver leveled at the group of men.

"Send it, Donald. I'll shoot the first man that moves!"

Her voice trembled, but not with fear. Murray felt his brain reeling.

"I don't know what happened," he murmured, "but I don't know what happened."

The men were edging away.

"Tell him," cried Miriam. "What have you done to that train?"

Down at the junction they caught the words and wondered why Murray had such a jerky, uncertain tone.

"No. 3 derailed Jamison arroyo. Hold No. 3 and send help."

Above the mantle in the Murray home there hangs an out of date revolver. When Master Donald Murray, aged six, discovered it and asked where it came from his father replied:

"That is your mother's. She once used it to bring down big game."

"Why did she shoot it now?" persisted the boy.

"Because she doesn't know how," was the answer as Donald Murray, Sr., gave a laughing glance in his wife's direction.

Moving in a Mysterious Way.

While spending an afternoon at Fendleton's game the year before the war, by one of those wonderful streaks of luck which touch a gamester not twice in a lifetime Stevens won \$1,000 on a fifty dollar stake," says James Matlock Sevel, writing in the National Magazine, about Thaddeus Stevens. "At midnight, as he left the fare palace, after a terrapin supper and a bottle of Roederer, he was accosted by a plethoric negro preacher, who had come all the way from Lancaster to solicit subscriptions to put a roof on the Zion Macedonia church, near old Thad's home. The negro preacher approached him timidly, saying:

"Boss Stevens, kaint yer gib something to de Lawd and our church?"

"Yes," said old Thad. "I like the security and will down with the scab."

"He handed him a \$100 bill and slowly walked toward the carriage which was to convey him to Capitol hill. The colored dome hardly glanced at the bill under the gas lamp and saw it was a \$100 greenback."

"Fore de Lawd, boss," he said as he plucked him by the coat, "you hab made a mistake and gib me a \$100 bill for a ten dollar."

"Take it, my friend," said Stevens sentimentally. "I have heard it said that God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform."

The Ugly White Man.

A traveler in the interior of Africa thus describes the effect which his presence had upon the natives: "My appearance on this occasion, as on many others, excited a universal shock of surprise and horror, especially among the women, who were not a little terrified at seeing such a white man of nature as they consider a white man to be peeping into their huts and asking a little water or milk. The chief feeling that my appearance inspired I could easily perceive to be disgust, for they were firmly persuaded that the whiteness of the skin is the effect of disease and a sign of weakness, and there is not the least doubt that the white man is looked upon by them as being greatly inferior to themselves. One day, after bargaining for some onions with a country girl, who told me that if I would take off my turban and show her my head she would give me five more onions. I insisted upon having eight, which she gave me. When I removed my turban she started back at the sight of my shaven crown, and when I jokingly asked her whether she should like to have a husband with such a head she expressed the greatest surprise and disgust and declared that she would rather have the ugliest black slave for a husband."

THE LABOR PROBLEM

By W. B. PRESCOTT, in The Island Printer, Chicago.

"With all the discussion of the 'labor question' that has been going on during the last few years, one has seldom seen co-operation mentioned as a means of ameliorating the condition of the working classes. During no previous era of trade union activity has this subject been so ignored. It would seem that the once much-talked-of system whereby the employee would be his own employer has been relegated to the junk pile of social and economic panaceas. About twenty years ago co-operation was a pet theme with the owners of the Knights of Labor, and at one time during the eighties it was a poor town that did not possess several co-operative enterprises fostered by that comely organization. But long before the days of the Knights the idea had appealed to American workingmen, for fifty years or so ago, when the National (now International) Typographical Union was instituted, the worthy founders specifically appraised the desirability of a government printing office because they thought a co-operative society composed of journeymen printers might be organized to do the work. This declaration of opposition was supplemented by the well known arguments relative to the dangers that lurk in a system which makes the government an employer on a large scale. After a few years the union became a powerful government body, and advocated the establishment of what is now the government printing office.

This back-draw, was not made complete, however, by the failure of the great majority of the co-operative enterprises in America—in fact, the few successful ones may be taken as the proverbial exceptions which prove the rule of almost invariable disaster. The general acceptance of co-operation in this country is a business success. This is not wholly true, for in Europe, and especially in Great Britain, this form of co-operation has achieved wonderful success. There may be something in the allegation that British workingmen, collectively, show better business sense than their transatlantic fellows. At all events, the British unions seem to be more businesslike in their methods than ours are. There is an absence of the unwholesome sentimentality and penny politics which are such burdens to the American trade union movement. But the main cause for lack of success is probably found in the fact that the true underlying principles of co-operation were not well understood, and were not adhered to even when understood. In Great Britain co-operative societies are by law inhibited from suing or being sued; other words, they can neither contract nor collect debts. This compels them to do business on a strictly cash basis, which not only insulates them from the usual co-operators, but gives their stores and factories an immense advantage over concerns which buy on time and sell on credit. Such institutions catering to working people must suffer heavy losses, especially during periods of depression, from which the co-operators are free to escape. Another characteristic of British co-operative societies is that votes are apportioned on a democratic basis each member having one vote, irrespective of the number of shares he may hold. In America most of the co-operative ventures did not survive the credit system but rather incurred indebtedness and gave credit from the beginning, and were wrecked by the number of such dollars invested, which opened the door to the capitalistic practice of swallowing the small ones as soon as a possibility of success became apparent. They were in reality joint stock companies with extremely limited capital that labeled themselves "co-operative" in the hope that it might attract philanthropically inclined investors or sympathetic customers.

Not only are the laws of Britain superior to ours in that they are designed to preserve the essentials of co-operation, but the American yearning for "big" things militates against success in co-operation in the humble manner that many of the now successful British organizations did. This contempt for small beginnings is especially evident in the American workingman, as is evidenced by the manner in which he says "to go into politics." When that subject is being discussed the orator speaks of deserting his place in the legislature to enter the executive and at least one other branch of the government at the next election. To suggest that the working people endeavor to control school boards and municipal councils—in which they are mightily interested, by the by—would be scouted as frivolous. Yet that is what the plodding Briton has been doing for some time, and now is building up a respectable and influential reputation in Parliament, composed largely of men who have had some training as legislators and public servants in the capacity of school trustees and aldermen.

To whatever cause may be attributed the failure of co-operation in America, there is little likelihood of its being revived or resorted to, if you prefer—a comprehensive scale. The necessity for costly machinery in manufacturing precludes the establishment of business with limited capital. If it was possible to secure the financial aid to successfully conduct, say, newspapers or printing offices, ten or twenty years ago, how much more difficult it would be in these days of expensive equipment, keen competition and costly franchises! But these conditions do not portend a decline of the system in Britain. There many of the societies are well supplied with funds and able to keep abreast of the times. Some idea of the immensity of the industry carried on by these workmen's societies is suggested by the statement made in the British Trade Union Congress that they employ about ninety thousand persons and pay out wages \$15,000,000 a year. In some of the industrial centers co-operation is the economic creed of the people, and the mass of figures showing the trade of distributive and the output of productive societies assumes the proportions of a statistical showing of a third or fourth rate nation. To illustrate the extent to which the co-operative principle is engrafted on English working-class life, an American workingman who has toured England mentions the town of Oldham, which has a world-wide reputation in the cotton spinning industry. It also enjoys an enviable reputation among co-operators, and well it may, if the following picture does not put outside the best efforts of a Kansas landowner. The

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gentleman mentioned, in a letter to a labor paper, says: "Many years ago the workers of Oldham thought out the problem and resolved to co-operate to gether for their mutual advantage. The result is that there are seventy-five co-operative spinning mills in that one city and the capital invested in these mills is \$25,000,000. They are not only owned by the workers, but entirely managed by them. The shares are issued at \$25 each, and workers are allowed to pay for one or more shares on the installment plan. These mills have been very successful, in fact, the most successful cotton mills in England. They have paid as high as forty-six per cent dividends in one year, though this, of course, was an exception. There are one thousand operatives in these mills that are worth from \$5,000 to \$10,000 each, and there are many more worth from \$1,000 to \$5,000. But this is not all. In this same city there are many co-operative stores, both retail and wholesale, and several building societies, with a capital of about \$18,000,000, together with the workers in this one city have nearly \$45,000,000 invested in productive industry. Besides this, Oldham is one of the largest home-owning towns in England, due, no doubt, to the good sense the workers had to co-operate for their mutual advantage."

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