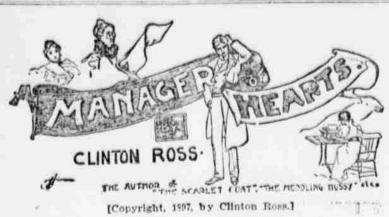
usually have about thirty letters at crous person, who flung her in a heap

Che Home Reading Circle



PART I.

I had been away, and I had not heard what had happened to him; but it was not long before that ceaseless, tircless gossip brought it to my cars. When I met him, and after we had exchanged greetings, he bimself began: "We never have had many secrets, Tom. I will tell you," and he told me.

My good mother, you know, Tom, was always assuring me that I was a great catch; ever warning me that there were endless numbers of scheming mammas looking after my money In fact, she finally put me into a sort of nervous terror of women; I was sure I never should find one who would care for me myself; I was Jeremiah Merrivale's son; I was the head of the great Merrivale mills; I was an object of envy among men and women; I was suppose to be a fellow with infinite leisure. As matter-of-fact I have or had no rest. You can't be the employer of some three thousand persons without feeling a responsibility; so my dear father brought me up; and I am glad now that I never shirked. Save for two or three vacations-and all the employes have these as well-there is no hearder-worked man in New York than the head of Merrivale & Co. I am not inclined to self-pity. Rather I pity dawdlers, and God has given us no greater blessing than this same work.

But my mother took another view of it. She insisted that I was not able to protect myself against fortune huntresses; and she declared, with her usual superiority, that she would arrange my marriage.

You must marry, you know, Bob. It's the best thing for a man. But you must so marry that you will not be miserable afterward. "Oh, bother marriage," said ; "I

haven't time for that.' 'You've been in love several times," "I got over it both times in a couple of months," said I.

"You might have been caught," said my mother, putting on her glasses and looking me over critically-she looks like Justice with those glasses on. "You are not in love now, Robert?"
"Let me consider," said I. "No;

don't think I am." "I have decided on the girl," she said. "What have I to say about it?" said

"You will be pleased, of course. It's Sallie Pentland. She has beauty, distinction, money."
"Oh, money be hanged!" I cried.

"Robert," my dear mother said, severely, "you forget yourself." "Oh, I'm sorry," said I, "but I'm getting tired of being considered a

kind of wild animal with a lot of hunters-or rather huntresses-at my such maternal management never turns out well in the stories and novels." "The stories and novels are not life.

They are responsible for a lot of delusions. Now Sallie-She has beauty, distinction, money.

What do we want of money?"
"She is a very nice girl. I never found that money made a girl any worse. Bob. On the contrary, to give a girl who never her known money some all at once, she likely loses her head. Those are usually the unfortunnate marriages.'

"Yes, they may be," said I; "and I grant you Sallie is a nice girl."
"Oh, well, what's the use of talking about it, Robert, I have decided to have you out of danger's way before I die. While I live it's my duty to you-to your poor, dear father-to look

after your fortune." Bless me! the was always looking after my fortune. Such dear, good mothers-with the best intentionsoften turn fellows to viciousness. But I never had any strong inclination that

Sallie and I were thrown together constantly. And she is a tremendously nice girl, you know. You rarely meet a nicer. It's not so easy after all to



"IT'S MY DUTY TO YOU TO LOOK AFTER YOUR FORTUNE.

find a tremendously nice girl; they are usually when nice, only just nice. But you don't care for girls, Tom; you make a mistake, old man, I can tell you, Yet when a girl's thrown at a fellow's head he doesn't often fall in love with her; nor did Sallie care so much for me, as I found out. For one day she went straight to the point. "It seems, Bob, that our families are

trying to marry us."
"Now, I don't know that I shall object." said I. She did look very pretty

that moment. "Well, I do," said Sallie.

"I think we might get on very well together," I retorted.
"Yes, we might," she said, tapping

her boot heel on the floor reflectively. "It might be worse-

"I hope you think so, Sallie-for my vanity's sake," said I. "I like horses. You like horses. I know what a man should wear, and I declare no woman New York is ever better gowned than you. You know how to entertain. You would, in short, make a fellow very, very proud, Sallie."

"Is this a proposal, Bobble?"
"Yes," said I, looking her over. Bobbie, I refuse you, d'ye

hear? and I hope it will break your Now, that isn't nice-to refuse me.

Sallie.' "But they'll keep on throwing us together," said she. "You can help me out a bit. The fact is-I can't tell you.

tending, that you are refused by m

"What's the game, Sallie-another "Oh, bother; do you suppose I would

we kept on pretending, and I getting ent." all the time rather interested in Sallie.

ne as I sat over the mail.

She's recommended by the pastor of

ish. I declare I never felt more foolish in my life. She said nothing. "Now, here's the first letter," I betell you if there was? It's because I gan. The words went on; I rattled off want it so." "All right," said I, "its a go." And a dozen. "That will do for the pres-

A half hour passed. She returned Now one morning when I reached the with the letters, which were very well office, Jobson, the head clerk, said to done.

over my shoulder.

rupted, irritably.

feel uncomfortable.

prettiness was no objection?

"An objection, of course, Jobson," I

The next morning I found Miss Hen-

low awaiting, pencil and notebook in

"Please don't say 'sir,' " I inter-

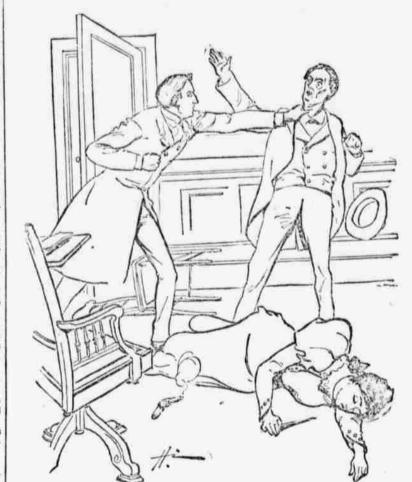
Ch, I beg your pardon," she began

with a little blush, which made me

'You know I'm not your superior-

ocially," I went on feeling very fool-

"I meant," said I, wheeling around "Miss Ralph goes today, sir," Miss in my chair, "that of course I am your Ralph was the stenographer. employer—that is, Merrivale & Co. are, "Got another?" said L but—that's all. But you see I'm not so very old." The explanation ended applicants. I've about decided on one. "Are they correct, Mr. Merrivale?"



THE SMOKING PISTOL LAY ON THE FLOOR.

elderly man, an invalual The only trouble, Mr. Merrivale, is that she's rather pretty."

I looked up. "Now didn't I tell you, Jobson, that I didn't want her to be pretty. It distracts one's attention—" in the accent," she said. "Are there in municipal improvements. Modern Pretiness in a stenographer sometimes spoils the continuity of an important letter,"

Yes, I would, in fact, dictate to a phonograph, if the dictation would be

corrected. But corrections bring in the stenographer again." "Oh, there are others," said Jobson. "Only I want to please Mr. Smythe, who recommended her, and she's very

quiet-and ladylike." "Is she out there?" "Yes, sir."

Show her in. I'll look her over and decide." And I buried myself in the mail again. The door shut, an I owned.

"Take a chair," said I. Ten minutes must have passed before I remembered -that was a very important letter; but still studying it, and without looking up, I remembered, and said:

"What's your name?"
"Clarissa Henlow," said one of the prettiest voices I ever have heard. I looked up in some surprise-the voice so expresses a woman, and this seemed to me the voice of one of the manor born. She was still standing: a young girl, not more than eighteen, with a thin, pigpuant face, framed with dark, brown hair, and expressed by large, dark eyes, which se med to have that moment an expression of merrio ent that suddenly turned to serious-

"I beg your pardon; I was so busy with the mail." I stammered. "Do take a chair. Mr. Johson says your are highly becommended." "It was very good of Mr. Smythe; ne is our minister."

'You know about copying?" "I have had three months' experie with Wolf & Stern." "Ah, they failed; that threw you out

a position. "Yes, sir."

"I shall be very glad to have you ry it. Miss Henlow," I said. What in the world had become of my objection a pretty girl? What would Jobson think? But then if she were efficient, that, after all, wasn't a reasonable ob-Jobson thought she would do; his opinion should be sufficient. "If you will be here tomorrow at nine-thirty, we will begin," I said. "I

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EVERY HUMOR From Pinciples to Servicials

my church." Johson is a very serious "Quite so," I said. "H'm, you are

"No, a Virginian."

"I thought you spoke differently from "I believe there is a slight difference Mr. Jobson-

"Yes, there are more. Let Mr. Jobson wait."
As I went uptown that night I re flected that the new stenographer had a certain admirable reserve. "She will

io," said I . I was the more impressed with the fact that she would do the next day. and still more the next. In fact, I became quite curious about her, and, being unable to direct her talk in any direction but purely business channels, inquired of Jobson. He told me that she lived with her mother in a boarding house on Eighth street; that her father had been a Confederate colonel,

killed at Appomattox.
"Oh, I see," said I; but I found myself looking on Miss Henlow with some renewed interest.

"Ah." said I, one day. "you find copying entirely congenial?" "I can make more money at it than anything else."

"You've tried something else, perhaps?" "Am I not satisfactory, sir?" she be-

gan, teers in her eyes.
"Oh, quite, quite," I hastened to say.
"I was just curious you know. I think

it fine for a woman to be able to earn money. Some of them do so much better than the men.' "Any more letters, Mr. Merrivale?" she said, looking down. You know I

was as If she were correcting me,

One Sunday I passed her on lower Fifth avenue. She made a pretty little bow, while a tall, rather gawky, redhaired young man stared savagely. "That fellow has no business to be walking with her," said 1; "she's his superior." And then I fell to laughing over my vagaries. I thought I would tell them to Saliie Pentland, but I didn't, which was queer; Sallie so appreciated a joke. But the next day I said to Miss Henlow: "I saw you yesterday on the avenue."
"Yes, Mr. Merrivale; yes."

"Now, I thought I knew the gentleman. I like to place people, you know." "Oh, he's on the Street-in a banking He's a Mr. Samuel Sladding.

He's in our boarding house."
"Ah, yes," said I, "in your boarding house. We will begin, Miss Henlow." She looked at me quickly, and I fan-cied her face flushed. "Yes," she said. I made no more personal inquiries after that, and some months passed; she was always there; always demure and interesting, and now gowned with certain deft simplicity; for 1 had told Jobson to increase her salary.

Then that happened which changed the whole situation One morning about eleven, I think, I was dictating to Miss Henlow, when "He's here again, sir. He won't go

away.' 'What does he say he wants?" "Something about Arizona property. Griffith is his name, if you don't re-

"Show him in." The door opened. My back was turned. I heard Miss Henlow rise, and then suddenly a voice rang out like a

"You won't ruin any more corpora-Before I could turn-it all must have teen in an instant-a pistol shot deaf-ened me. Springing up, I saw Miss

that hour." on the floor. The smoking pistol lay on "Thank you much, Mr. Merrivale." the floor. I noted these details as I she said, rising. "Good morning, sir."
"Good morning, Miss Henlow."
"Now." said I to myself, "I don't threw myself on the gibbering creature. But almost as soon as I was on him the clerks from the outer office ille the way she says 'sir.' It sounds too servile for her." And I went into my mail again, to hear Johson's voice "A crank!" cried Johnson, shrilly. But I was leaning over the girl on the 'It's all right, Mr. Merrivale? Her

floor. She looked very silent, and very beautiful, too, at that moment. I lifted her up and bore her to the couch said, severely. "But you recommended her so highly that I overlooked that"

"She saved your life," said Johson; she knocked down the man's hand just "I know, I know," I said; "and -she's

hand. She looked abominably pretty But at that moment her eyes opened; and now that her hat was off, her hair a slight color flew over her face; she straightened herself up. was remarkably fine, and her hands very pretty and slender. "You are prompt," I remarked. "I think I fainted; it was very fool-

ish of me," she said. All the clerks but Jobson had folowed the prisoner. "Bring some water, Jobson. And or-

er a cab for Miss Henlow." "I thought of the water," he said. tepping forward. "It's very good of you; thank you

"You saved my life," I said. "Anybody would have done it," she said. "The water makes me feel better. But—ah, thank you, Mr. Merrivale. I will take the cab, I believe." To be Continued.

FOR WOMAN CYCLISTS. Here Is a Bit of Advice That May

Save a Doctar's Bill. An authority on the subject gives a uantity of good advice to the female yelists, regarding the feet, by which he claims the effect is even worse when pedaling than when walking. He says that pointed toes give rise to much suffering, and also make the carriage inelegant. Too high heels cause spinal trouble, and many very painful internal complaints. The ideal heel is a low, flat one, that is a support to the foot and not a hindrance to walking. Where the ankles are weak, boots should be worn rather than shoes, as the forme give much more support. Great care must be taken that the heels of the shoes do not run down at the side, the wearer will walk ungracefully, and

injury may follow to the spine. To keep the feet in perfect health, they must be well washed every day with soap and water-at night as well as in the morning. They must be perfeetly dried or the skin may become gore and cause blisters. The under part of the feet naturally will become hardened in time unless they are properly attended to. They must be carefully rubbed with pumicestone, and if this is done the skin will remain smooth and soft. If the skin is apt to be tender you must rub in damp salt at night.

After very much walking, riding standing, the feet are very apt to feel sore and tired. When this is the case, they must be bathed in water in which charcoal has been boiled. To rub the feet with very common whisky is also an excellent thing; it not only remove the tired feeling, but hardens the skin and makes the feet less tender. You should never let your toenalls grow too long. They should be cut at regular in-tervals, and kept quite short. You should cut the nails after your feet have been washed with warm water, as otherwise they will be found to be very brittle and hard to manage. The fect should never be kept too warm, as this makes them very tender, and apt

MEXICO UNDER DIAZ. Surprising Gait of Mexican Cities in Municipal Improvement.

From Harper's Magazine Even to one as familiar with the swift development of parts of our west as with the more conservative growth | Valuables, in the water works to replace the fine old Spanish aqueducts; modern sewerage to replace the street sinks of centuries; modern lighting, modern transit, modern health departments; public buildings better than our average town of the like population think they can afford: splendid prisons, markets, hospitals, asylums, training schools-these are some of the things the "despotism" of Diaz is planting through the length and breadth of the country. As for schools, it sometimes made me smile, but oftener turned my eyes moist, to note the perfect mania to have them-

and to have them of the best. Every state capital has its free publie "model schools," on which it lavishes a wealth of love and money, and the state earnestly follows its lead. In every state there are normal schools, generously endowed by the government for the fit training of these teachers and the attendance is encouragingly large. There are also countless industrial schools, art schools, professional schools and the like, not to mention the host of private schools, of which some are entirely admirable. The teaching of religion in public schools is absolutely prohibited. "That," President Diaz said to me, "is for the family to



ing it, as much responsible for her child's death, as the mad woman who slays her babe after its birth. Thou-sands of babes are still-born every year because women innocently and ignorantly neglect, during the expectant period, to take proper care of the delicate and important organs that bear the ourdens of maternity.

There is just one known medicine that prepares a woman for capable motherhood. It is Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription. It It is Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription. It acts directly and only on the organs concerned in motherhood making them strong and healthy. It imparts to them vigor and elasticity. It allays inflammation, heals ulceration, soothes pain and gives rest to the tortured nerves. It does away with the discomforts of the expectant period, and makes the coming of baby casy and almost painless. It insures the health of baby. Over 90,000 have testified to its virtues. All good druggists sell it.

"In the fall of 1835," writes Mrs. N. A. Thomas,

All good druggists sell it.

"In the fail of 1833," writes Mrs. N. A. Thomas, of 400 Pulaski St., Little Rock, Ark., "while on a visit to Texarkana, Ark., I was taken with a severe pain in my head and was hardly able to get home. I was prostrated for four weeks, not being able to sit up. During that time the doctors falled to give me any religf whatever. At length I was induced to try Dr. Pierce's Pavorite Prescription. One bottle curved me entirely. I felt relieved after the first three doses, and have never felt the pain since. I send this testimonial that others may be benefited by it. Yours with a thousands thanks."

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a thousands thanks."

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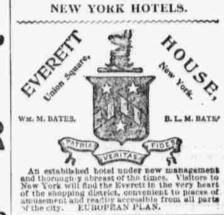
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