



THE HORATIO ALGER SOCIETY

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION

NEWSBOY



Horatio Alger, Jr.

1832 - 1899

A magazine devoted to the study of Horatio Alger, Jr., his life, works, and influence on the culture of America.

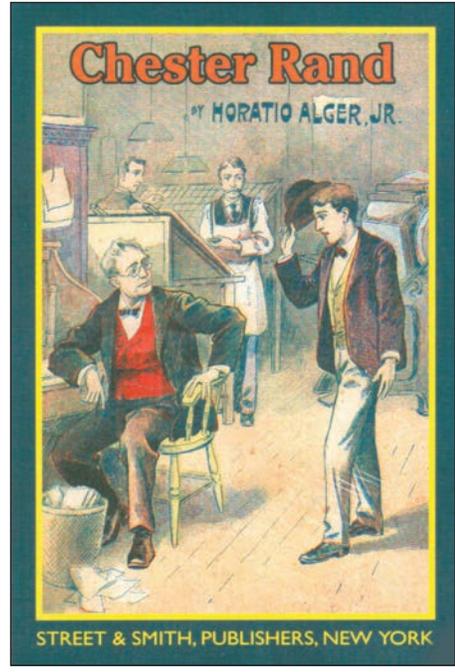
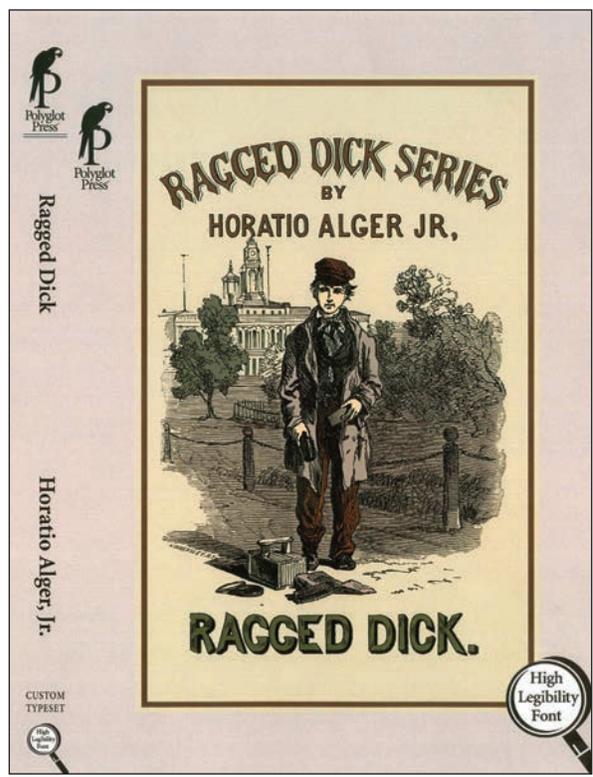
VOLUME XL

NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2002

NUMBER 6

Polyglot Press releases Alger's works

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A first look at H.A.S. Houston 2003

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President's column

The holidays are over, the new year is here, the Green Bay Packers got booted out of the playoffs, and we finally have a little bit of snow in Wisconsin.

It's time to face the long winter and read some of the books that we hopefully found last year. Of course, some children's books aren't worth reading under any circumstances, but we will never admit that. Alger certainly isn't in that category. And speaking of Alger, please read Marc Williams' glance at the 2003 Horatio Alger Society Convention on Page 3. The first weekend of May is not very far away, although in the winter it certainly seems like it. I hope to see each and every one of you in Houston. Marc will have a complete preview of the convention, agenda and registration form in the January-February issue. If you desire to make your hotel reservation early, the Holiday Inn NASA's 800 number is included in his article.

Like many members, I scan eBay for Alger material, although I am usually too cheap to bid on anything. It is amazing how much "first edition" Alger material can be found on eBay. Hursts, Donohues, Whitmans, and many other "first editions" are available for the discriminating (or indiscriminate) collector. Every once in awhile, if the description is particularly irksome or flagrant, I will e-mail the seller and describe the first edition and estimate how many decades later their book was printed. I usually get an appreciative, or at least polite, e-mail in return and a promise to correct the description, which rarely happens.

We are very, very fortunate to have reference material available for the true first editions. Many thanks again to Ralph Gardner and Bob Bennett for their extensive research and detailed descriptions about books over 100 years old produced by publishers long since gone.

However, not all Alger publishers are out of business. Be sure to check out the article on Page 5 from Polyglot Press, which is in the process of reprinting virtually all of Alger's books. This is a very ambitious project, and we wish them all the success in the world. Hopefully, in another 100 years (or less), Alger fans will be diligently collecting this publisher as well.

Best of luck in your book collecting endeavors in the New Year!

Your Partic'lar Friend,
Bob Huber
205 Ozark Trail
Madison, WI 53705
(608) 238-1298

HORATIO ALGER SOCIETY

To further the philosophy of Horatio Alger, Jr. and to encourage the spirit of Strive and Succeed that for half a century guided Alger's undaunted heroes — youngsters whose struggles epitomized the Great American Dream and inspired hero ideals in countless millions of young Americans for generations to come.

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Newsboy, the official newsletter of the Horatio Alger Society, is published bi-monthly (six issues per year). Membership fee for any 12-month period is \$25 (\$20 for seniors), with single issues of **Newsboy** \$4.00. Please make remittance payable to the Horatio Alger Society.

Membership applications, renewals, changes of address and other correspondence should be sent to **Horatio Alger Society, P.O. Box 70361, Richmond, VA 23255**.

Newsboy is indexed in the Modern Language Association's International Bibliography. You can visit the Horatio Alger Society's official Internet site at www.ihot.com/~has/

Newsboy ad rates: Full page, \$32.00; one-half page, \$17.00; one-quarter page, \$9.00; per column inch (1 inch deep by approx. 3 1/2 inches wide), \$2.00. Send ads, with check payable to Horatio Alger Society, P.O. Box 70361, Richmond, VA 23255.

The above rates apply to all want ads, along with ads offering non-Alger books for sale. However, it is the policy of the Horatio Alger Society to promote the exchange of Alger books and related Alger materials by providing space **free of charge** to our members for the **sale only** of such material. Send ads or "Letters to the Editor" to **Newsboy** editor William R. Gowen (PF-706) at 23726 N. Overhill Dr., Lake Zurich, IL 60047.

Convention time is getting nearer!

H.A.S. will be 'Adrift in Space City'

By Marc C. Williams (PF-958)

We've been in the process of preparing for the upcoming convention — "Adrift in Space City". The 2003 convention will be located in Houston in the Clear Lake area Thursday, May 1 through Sunday, May 4. We have lined up a full-service hotel, along with the banquet and meeting rooms. We are reviewing several locations for our Friday night dinner and other event options.

The Clear Lake area is on the outer edges of Southeast Houston and is made up of several small towns along this costal pocket of this bay area.

The cornerstone of this community is NASA/Johnson Space Center and it's much-heralded visitors' center. This is a perfect time of year in Houston with average high temperatures around 80 degrees and low humidity, which will help thaw out those remaining winter chills. Imagine having a nice dinner out on the restaurant veranda, with a warm breeze from the gulf and watching the sailboats along the waterfront from Clear Lake to Galveston Bay.

There are many things to do while you're in the Clear Lake area. The NASA visitors' center is the only place in the world where you can see astronauts as they train for missions, touch a moon rock, watch IMAX films, live demonstrations and behind-the-scenes tram tours throughout the Space Center. There is also a great display of aeronautical history.

Other things to do include, visits to the bay area's local fishing and bedroom communities (which are all within a short drive from the hotel), such as the Kemah

Boardwalk. The town of Kemah rests right on Galveston Bay and includes quaint and interesting shops, water gardens, an Aquarium-themed restaurant and other waterfront restaurants.

Right across a short channel is Old Seabrook, where you can stroll among antique and specialty shops while the shrimp and fishing boats dock right along the shore. Another location area is the Historic League City, where you can walk and shop under huge oak trees for gifts, antiques, books and collectibles. Various water sports

abound, from jet skiing and sailing to a sunset cruise along the bay.

In addition, 30 minutes further south takes you to Galveston Island, where you can explore the Island's East End and Silk Stocking Historic Districts. Stroll grand avenues and quite lanes dressed with oleanders and palm trees.

The Victorian-era Strand boasts scores of shops, art gal-

leries, museums, antiques and restaurants.

Also, one of Galveston's jewels is Moody Gardens. This multi-faceted attraction includes a giant aquarium representing the oceans of the world; a tropical rainforest, IMAX theatre, and other gardens and beaches.

This doesn't even include the many things you can do in Houston and other Texas cities such as San Antonio (three hours' drive away).

And for you avid book-hunters, don't worry, we will provide a list of the local bookstores throughout Houston and the Bay Area.

We've been able to negotiate a rate of \$69 with the Holiday Inn NASA, which is just a moon rock's throw away from the Johnson Space Center Visitors' Center, so at this rate, plan on adding additional time on the

(Continued on Page 4)



The Holiday Inn NASA in Clear Lake, Texas, will be the location of the 2003 Horatio Alger Society Convention, "Adrift in Space City," on May 1-4.

Editor's notebook

Many months of hard work have resulted in the most comprehensive reprint series of Horatio Alger's books ever undertaken, and Polyglot Press of Philadelphia deserves kudos from all Partic'lar Friends for this unique publishing venture.

Details of the Polyglot Press Alger edition can be found in the article on Page 5. A few of the books' cover designs are included, but if you want to see all of the Alger series book covers (in full color), simply go to www.polyglotpress.com, and click on "Horatio Alger" on the left side of the home page.

One of the unique features of this series is that instead of simply scanning the original text and reprinting them as facsimile editions, a word-scanning program was used, which allowed Polyglot's editorial staff to fix typos, and clean up sections where the original plates (used countless times over the years) had been damaged. On its Web site, Polyglot provides a side-by-side visual comparison between the original first page of *Ragged Dick* and that of the new edition.

Another reason for retypesetting is that it allows Polyglot Press to offer the books in large-typeface editions for vision-impaired readers.

One question many of you are likely to ask is "How were the more than 120 cover or dust jacket designs chosen?" This was one of the most interesting and complex aspects of the project, with great appreciation to former H.A.S. President Art Young and Executive Director Rob Kasper and others. Over the past six months, literally hundreds of full-color scans were e-mailed back and forth between them and the Polyglot Press editorial offices in Philadelphia before final decisions were made.

Several criteria drove the decision as to which cover to use for which book. First and foremost, the cover had to have a thematic connection with that particular title. Because this was not conceived as a facsimile edition, the A.K. Loring titles (which account for about half Alger's books for young people), provided a particular challenge because of their plain covers. For *Ragged Dick*, the first edition's decorative title page illustrating Ragged Dick and his shoeshine box in City Hall Park was chosen because this is the most famous illustration of the classic Horatio Alger hero.

Other Loring editions used cover illustrations from their interior illustrations or covers of later reprint editions. Many of Polyglot's books use cover illustrations from Street & Smith's **Medal Library** or later **Alger Series**

because of their thematic relationship to the story. *Adrift in New York*, for example, utilizes the cover from Street & Smith's **Brave and Bold Weekly**.

When the first edition had an attractive cover design appropriate to the story, it was used in many instances, including *The Western Boy*, *From Canal Boy To President*, *Farm Boy to Senator*, *The Young Boatman of Pine Point*, *Joe the Hotel Boy* and *Ben Logan's Triumph*. For the extremely scarce *Timothy Crump's Ward*, Loring's **Railway Companions** paper cover was reproduced.

Ordering the books: Polyglot Press's Internet site includes the familiar e-commerce "shopping basket" feature. Just put the books you want into the basket and place your order with a major credit card.

This is very important: Horatio Alger Society members receive a 30 percent discount on any Polyglot Press book. When you visit www.polyglotpress.com, go to the "Member login" icon on the left side of the home page and use the password **algersociety** (one word, all lower case letters). Your 30 percent discount will automatically be applied during the checkout process.

Convention time is getting near-

(Continued from Page 3)

beginning or end of the visit.

The hotel is now taking reservations. Just mention the Horatio Alger Society, and they will reserve you at this rate for as many days as you wish. The toll-free number is 1-800-682-3193. This is a full-service hotel, where we have arranged our meeting rooms and will have our banquet. They also can help with transportation and help arrange shuttle services throughout the Clear Lake area.

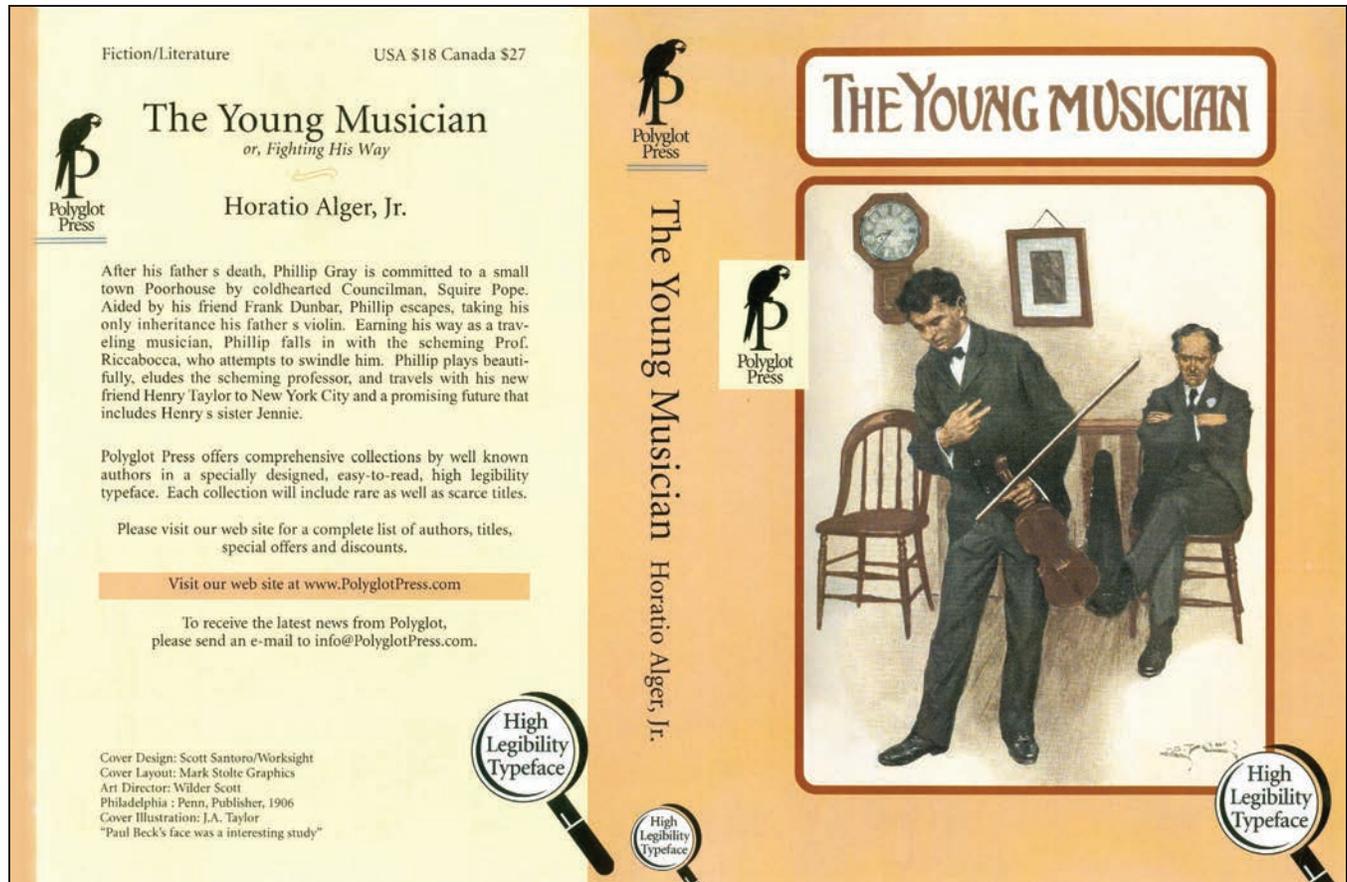
Getting here: For those flying, there are a couple options, with the most convenient being the Houston Hobby regional airport. It's a small convenient airport that is approximately 20 minutes (15 miles) northwest of Clear Lake. Hobby serves many airlines, including American Eagle, Continental Express, Delta, Northwest, Southwest, and AirTran. If you fly Continental, you can also take the free 25 minute air shuttle from Houston Bush Intercontinental Airport to Ellington Field, which is only a few minutes from Clear Lake.

In the January-February 2003 issue of **Newsboy**, we will include the registration form and tentative agenda for the convention and complete hotel reservation information, along with a schedule of events and additional information on the many things to see and do in the Houston/Clear Lake area.

Plan now on attending the 2003 Horatio Alger Society convention, and don't miss out on this opportunity to have a wonderful time and renew acquaintances with all your Partic'lar Friends.

We look forward to seeing you!

Polyglot Press releases Alger's works



The Polyglot Press cover design for its new paperback edition of Alger's *The Young Musician*. The color illustration is reproduced from artist J.A. Taylor's original illustration, "Paul Beck's face was an interesting study," which faced page 186 of the 1906 first edition by Penn Publishing Co.

David A. Scott, President of Polyglot Press in Philadelphia, has announced the release of an historic series of books by Horatio Alger, Jr., which includes an astounding 129 titles. Although many publishers have participated in partial editions of Alger, none ever attempted a complete set of his novels and other major works.

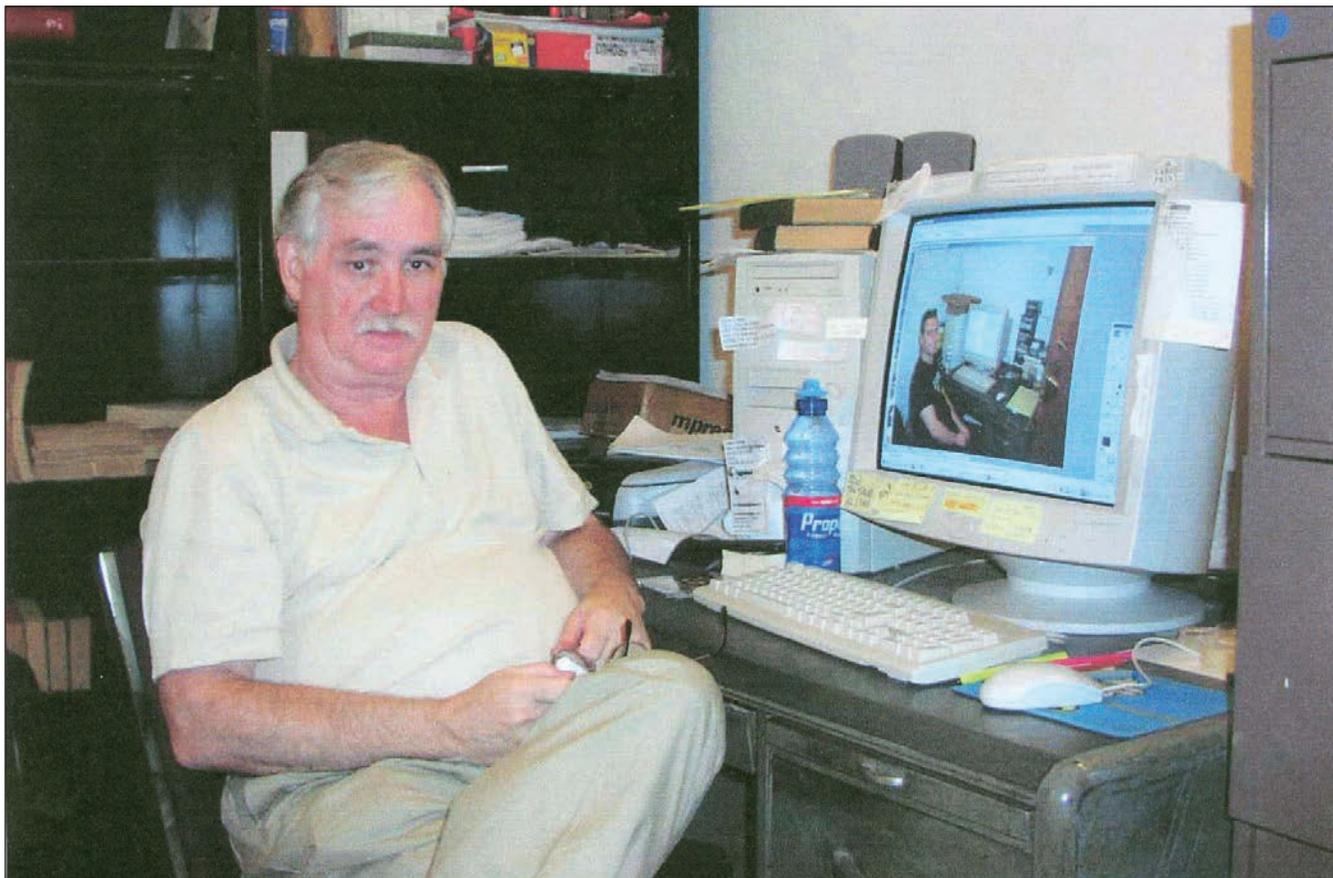
The Polyglot Alger library includes the 123 previously published novels (with the *Life of Edwin Forrest* biography in two volumes); five short novels never commercially available, known as the "Sun Series" after the serializing newspaper; and one book of cover art and illustrations. The collection also contains a sixth "Sun Series" title.

Ever since Polyglot representative Stephen Crane introduced the Alger project at the annual Horatio Alger Society meeting in Salt Lake City, Utah, in May 2002, Polyglot's staff has worked diligently along with Society

members Art Young, Rob Kasper, and others to faithfully reproduce the best possible rendering of Alger's writing. An extensive search for Alger material included acquisitions by Polyglot Press and use of several private and public collections, including those of Art Young, Rob Kasper, Murray Levin, NIU, and The Free Library of Philadelphia.

The effort did not stop at careful digital recovery and custom re-typesetting of all the original texts. A broad search of covers and illustrations yielded a wealth of artwork included in past Alger publications and an appreciation of the extraordinarily large reprint production, a century ago, of as many as 40,000 distinct cover and illustration permutations. Almost all of the often faded, smudged or torn covers and illustrations required computer restoration by Polyglot's art department. This effort resulted in a select, but representative

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David A. Scott, President of Polyglot Press, which is publishing new editions of virtually all of Alger's books in paperback, hardcover and special collector's editions.

(Continued from Page 5)

group of colorful, stunning covers, frontispieces and dust jackets.

In addition, each reissued title contains a selection of original black and white illustrations. A grand summation of Alger artwork is being prepared for the 1,000-image collection companion volume, *Horatio Alger Jr.: A Century of Covers and Illustrations*.

Polyglot's custom re-typeset, high legibility font Alger reprints are available individually, in subsets and as a complete collection in paperback, hardcover, and special collector's editions. All titles are available in regular and Large Print formats. Each purchaser of a complete hardbound or collector's set may request a free customized dedication page in the front of each book. The dedication page might say "This book has been privately produced for the library of Mark Manning," or "This book has been contributed to (your local community) library by the Phineas Taylor Barnum (insert Philanthropist name here) Foundation."

Horatio Alger Society members will recognize titles from Alger's many novels and biographies. Polyglot's custom typeset "Sun" series reprints contain five first

trade editions: *The Secret Drawer*, *Marie Bertrand*, *Madeline The Temptress*, *The Mad Heiress*, and *Herbert Selden*. *Hugo the Deformed* constitutes the sixth book of the mini-series. The four other "Sun" series titles, rewritten by Alger and published by A. K. Loring in the 1860s, are reissued here with the original book title.

There were many interesting moments during production of the new series. With artwork completed, the staff prepared to send the covers to the print division of the company. They paused to send "mock-ups" to Art Young and Rob Kasper. Art and Rob's suggestions for several dozen improvements sent Polyglot's graphic designers back to their drawing boards for another week — a refinement process repeated twice again.

The series moved ahead steadily through many long hours, nights and weekend meetings. Internet lines hummed as images and text flowed across thousands of miles. Borrowed and purchased renditions of Alger's works survived the mails and other forms of transportation.

In matters of accuracy, Polyglot personnel deferred to the expertise of Society members, with "Semper Bennett" the watchword. Rob Kasper wrote a superb

biographical sketch included in each book. Art Young offered extremely rare covers and illustrations that will excite readers and collectors. Art unselfishly contributed hundreds of hours of R&D and consultation time. Rob visited Philadelphia regularly to provide critically important feedback. Those involved estimate the completed series has entailed almost 10,000 production hours.

Polyglot graphic designers used subtle colorization processes to enhance selected black and white illustrations. The colorized cover of *Making His Mark* comes from a rare first edition frontispiece showing firemen scrambling up a staircase of a burning house. The cover of *The Young Musician* is derived from an original chiaroscuro illustration of a young man playing a violin. An authentic period illustration of a New York telegraph boy (kudos to Brad Chase) serves as a double frontispiece in *The Telegraph Boy*. The Polyglot Press editions of *A New York Boy* and *The Young Circus Rider* also utilize rare first edition frontispieces for the covers. Detailed coordination produced covers that match and enhance the actual themes and content of each title — a sharp contrast to many of the unimaginative covers of the more than 100 Alger publishers and reprinters.

Polyglot Press considers the Alger Series a groundbreaking accomplishment paving the way for similar comprehensive collections. Soon to be released authors include G.A. Henty, Jane Austen and F. Marion Crawford, followed by Arthur Conan Doyle, Bret Harte, Edith Wharton, H.G. Wells, James Fenimore Cooper, John Galsworthy, Jules Verne, L. Frank Baum, Louisa May Alcott, Mark Twain, Owen Wister, Rafael

Sabatini, Robert Louis Stevenson, Rudyard Kipling and Zane Grey.

The full Alger series can be perused and purchased at the Polyglot Web site, www.polyglotpress.com. It will also be available on popular retail Internet sites such as Amazon, Abebooks, Half.com, Alibris, and Barnes and Noble, as well as through Ingram and Baker and Taylor.

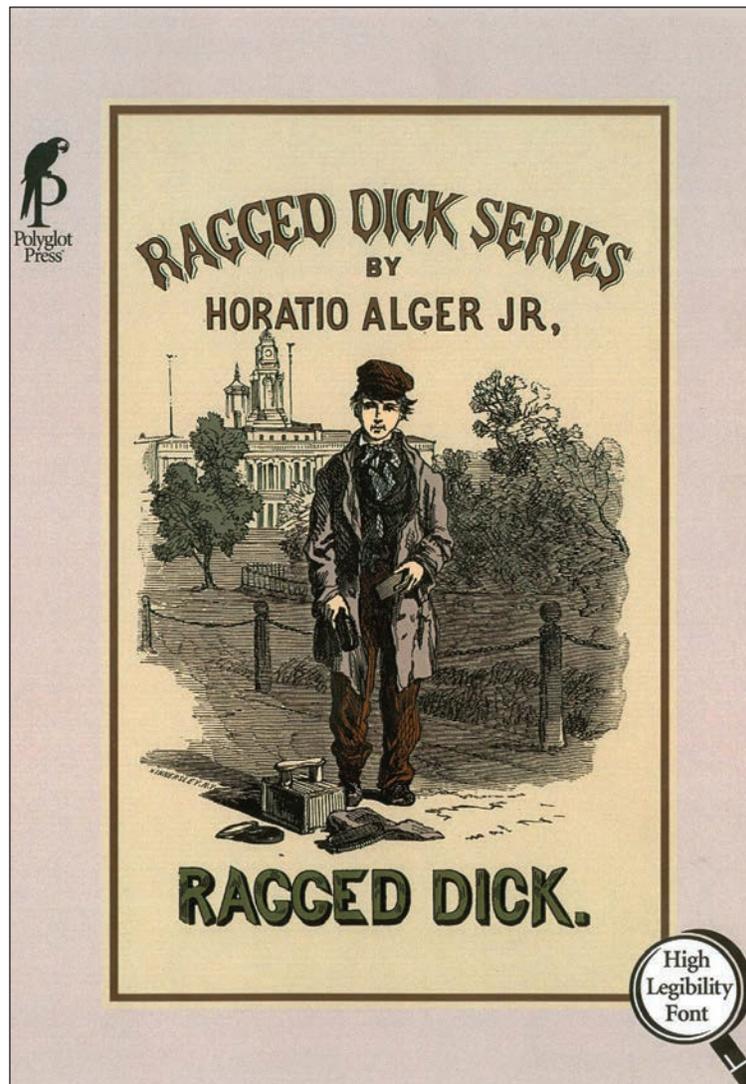
All polyglotpress.com Web purchasers will receive a 20 percent discount from industry standard “suggested retail” pricing. Alger Society members will receive a special discount totaling 30 percent when they utilize the pre-assigned login of “algersociety.” Moreover, the Society will receive a donation for each purchase conducted in this manner.

After taking the Alger Society membership 30% discount, an average paperback will cost about \$12.56; hardbound, \$18.16; large print paperback, \$14.00; and collector’s, \$27.23. The discount for H.A.S. members applies not only to the Alger books, but to all books offered by Polyglot. Likewise, the Alger Society receives a donation for all items purchased in this manner.

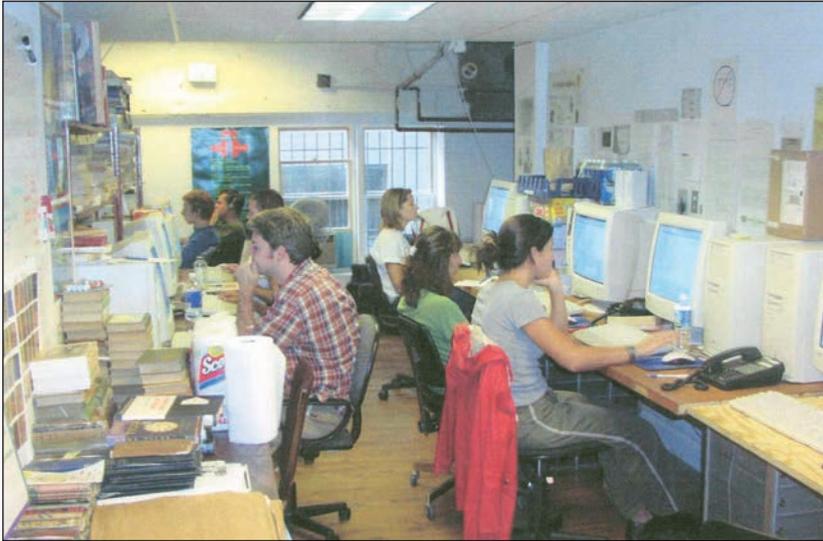
During the first part of the New Year, Polyglot will add several additional titles to the Alger series, including newly recovered short stories and an edited

book by Alger scholars that will feature a biography, several articles and other commentary of interest. The illustrations and book covers will also be available as posters and greeting cards.

Editor’s note: Additional photos from Polyglot Press’s offices in Philadelphia, as well as more examples of book-cover illustrations, can be found on the following two pages.

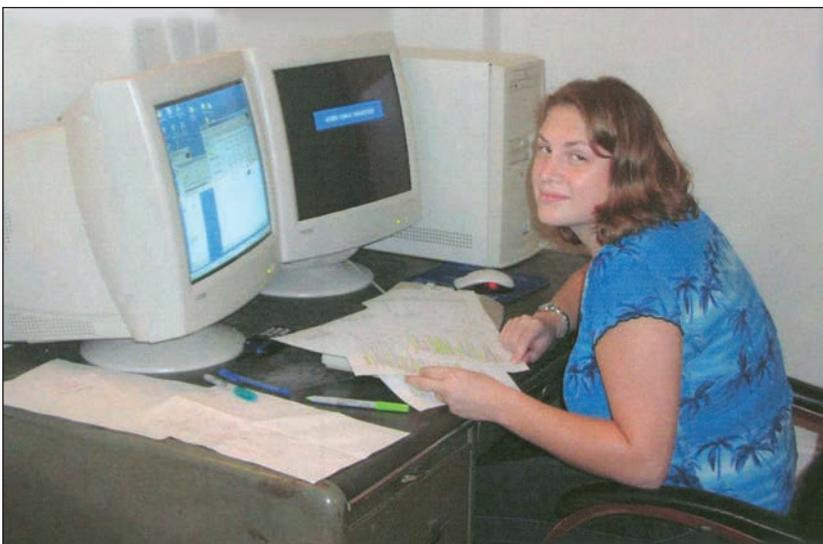


For *Ragged Dick*, Polyglot Press has illustrated the cover with the well-known steel engraving of the title character and his shoeshine box in New York’s City Hall Park. It was the decorative title page for the 1868 Loring first edition.

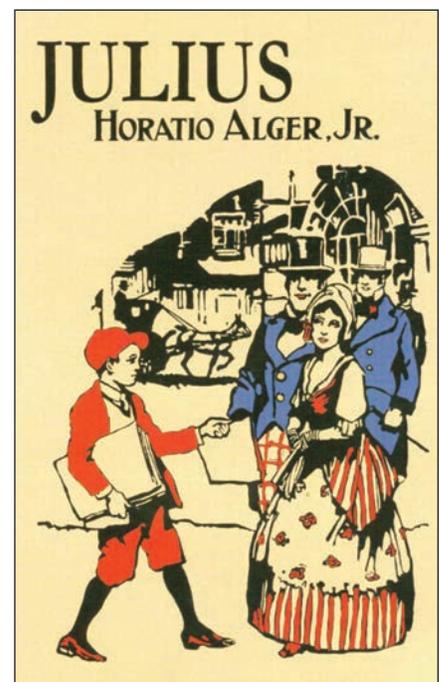
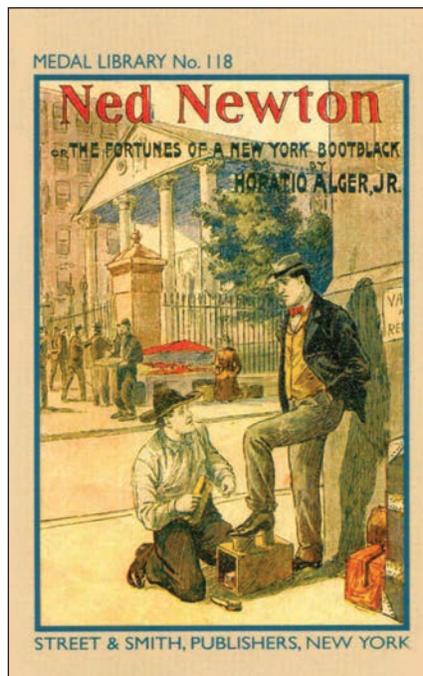
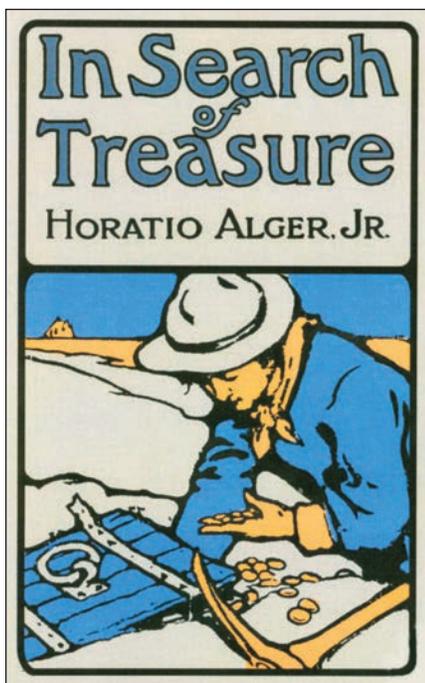
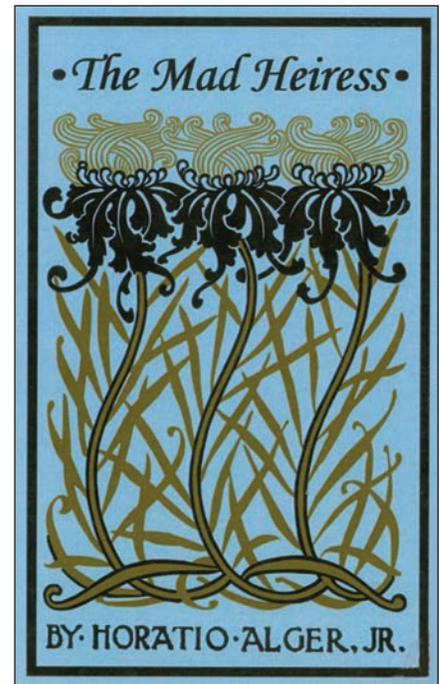
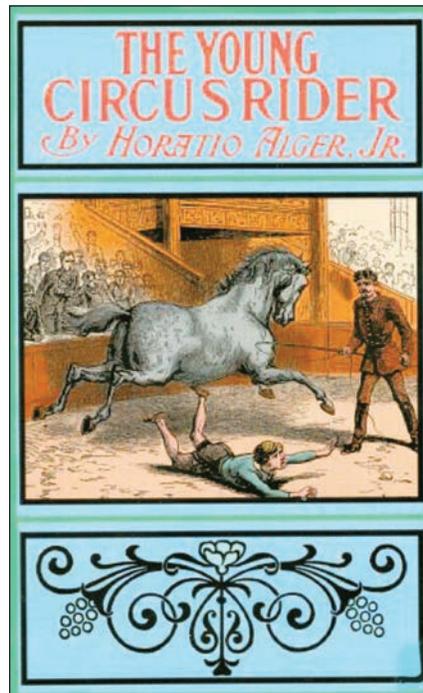
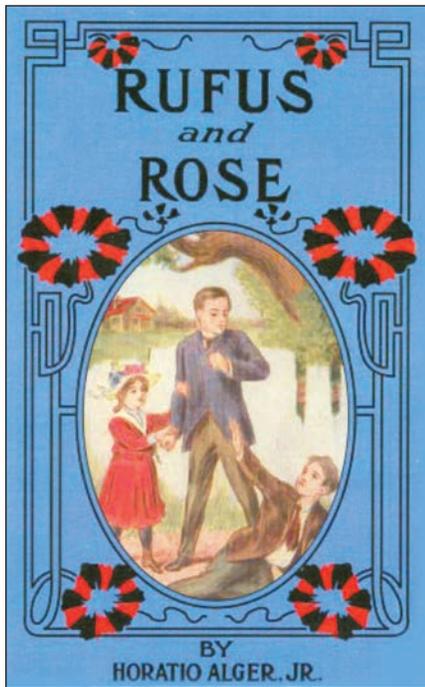


Polyglot Press proofreaders check the scanned texts of Horatio Alger's books during the production of Polyglot's new virtually complete Alger edition.

Ann Yu, head of Polyglot Press's scanning department, reproduces the vintage illustrations selected for the new Polyglot Alger edition.



Master proofreader Karen Berkovitz verifies the accuracy of Alger texts at Polyglot Press's Philadelphia offices.



Strive and Succeed Award

The Horatio Alger Society appreciates the generosity of its members in donating to the H.A.S. **Strive and Succeed Award** fund. The below Particular Friends made contributions during 2002:

John D. Arnold (PF-1042)	Robert E. Kasper (PF-327)	E.M. Sanchez-Saavedra (PF-788)
Robert J. Banks (PF-253)	Robert L. Kersch (PF-946)	Peter A. Scollo (PF-222)
Bernard A. Biberdorf (PF-524)	Thomas P. Kline (PF-1054)	Dean C. Steele (PF-661)
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Gordon W. Huber (PF-843)	Martin Mueller (PF-1020)	Arthur P. Young (PF-941)
Samuel T. Huang (PF-963)	Carol Nackenoff (PF-921)	

MEMBERSHIP

Change of address

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E-mail: Bobluc3@cs.com

Ralph W. Anderson (PF-144)
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Creston, IA 50801

New e-mail address:

Henri Achee (PF-922)
henry.achee@hccs.edu

Moving?

Please send your new address, phone number
or e-mail address to:

Horatio Alger Society
P.O. Box 70361
Richmond, VA 23255

A New Book by Brad Chase!

*Horatio Alger Books Published
by Twelve Small Alger Publishers*

Paperback, 8 1/2 x 5 1/2, Blue, 166 Pages
\$15, if purchased alone



I have also produced a gold-stamped blue slipcase to hold all five of my books. Its cost is \$5 if purchased with the new book, \$10 if purchased separately.

If you are missing any of the other four books on other publishers, *i.e.*, A.L. Burt, M.A. Donohue, Whitman or N.Y. Book Company, the cost is \$12 each as part of this promotion. The cost of the entire set of five books, plus slipcase, is only \$60.

*I will pay the postage
Connecticut residents please add 6% tax*

Brad Chase (PF-412)
6 Sandpiper Road
Enfield, CT 06082

Old Simon, the Miser

A STORY OF THE NEW YEAR

BY CARL CANTAB

CHAPTER I

What is here?

Gold! yellow, glittering, precious gold!

Timon of Athens.

Hoarded, bartered, bought and sold,

Stolen, borrowed, squandered, doled;

Spurned by the young, but hugged by the old,

To the very verge of the churchyard mould;

Price of many a crime untold;

Gold! gold! gold! gold!

Good or bad a thousand fold!

Hood.

It was a cold, chilly night; the wind blew fitfully through the almost deserted streets. Ten o'clock had just struck, and the sound, as it pealed from the tower of the Old South Church, quickened the steps of the few wayfarers whom business or pleasure kept out thus late.

Ten o'clock! Let us count the strokes as they ring out upon the night. Two hours more, and the New Year will have commenced. New Year's day! ushered in by the ringing of bells, by merry greetings, and the interchange of gifts, how joyfully it is welcomed by childhood, more soberly yet still gladly by those to whom it has come many times, and who may not live to see it again.

In one of the by-streets of Boston there stood, at the date of my story, an old wooden building, whose dark, weather-stained appearance, and general air of dilapidation, did not promise much of comfort or convenience within. Nevertheless, we must enter. Let us mount the rickety stairs — cautiously, for they creak beneath the weight; another flight is before us; these, too, we must ascend, and our journey is completed.

Small, dark, and cheerless is the haunt — home we cannot

call it — of Simon Morris. A rickety bed, with a coarse pallet, stands in the corner; beside it is a chair with a broken back. The centre of the floor is occupied by a pine-table, on which burns faintly a fragment of a tallow candle. A few coals are burning in the grate, emitting a feeble warmth; an old man is seated before the fire, if it deserves the name; his shrivelled hands are stretched over the scanty flame, striving to catch what little warmth it may afford. The old man's form is bent, partly with age, but more with care and wasting anxiety. The pinched features, the restless eye, the tremulous hands, half-enclosed, as if on the point of clutching some object — all these clearly indicate the character of Simon Morris. For years — few could remember how long — he had lived in that same cheerless room, submitting to privations without number, grudging himself even the necessities of life. His bent form had become familiar to all who lived nearby. The very school-boys pointed him out, as he passed by, as "Old Simon, the Miser."

But by dint of scraping and delving, Simon had succeeded in his purpose — he was rich. he owned a number of tenements in various parts of the city, which he rented to poor families at exorbitant prices. But we must return to him, seated before the scanty fire in his room. For a long time he sat motionless; but at length, as if a sudden thought had struck him, he rises, and lifting a plank from the floor, raises a heavy iron box. With difficulty he places it on the table, and then, taking a key from his pocket, proceeds to open it. Before lifting the lid, he gazes anxiously around the room. Gaining courage, he lifts the lid at length, and displays it as the old man bends in ecstasy over his hoard, and counts and re-counts it, for the thousandth time.

"It is mine, all mine," chuckled old Simon, gleefully; "who shall say that the old man starves and pinches himself for nought! This — this is a reward for all — for hunger and thirst, and cold. They that look on me scornfully, little know what I have to support me against their taunts in my strong box. Aha, and they never shall know! Let me see — the half-eagle I put in yesterday makes just four thousand eight hundred and thirty dollars, all in gold. Tomorrow is quarter-day, and I shall get enough more to make over five thousand. There's the

(Continued on Page 12)

Editor's note: This story, written by Horatio Alger, Jr., under his "Carl Cantab" pseudonym, originally was published in the Dec. 31, 1853, edition of the Boston *American Union*. The story is listed in Victor Berch and Edward T. LeBlanc's invaluable 1990 bibliography, *The Alger Short Stories, with a notation "Story not actually seen."* Berch and LeBlanc's knowledge of the existence of "Old Simon, the Miser" came from advertisements appearing in other issues of the *American Union*.

It was during ongoing research by Peter C. Walther (PF-548) on author William T. Adams that this actual story came to light, with acknowledgement accorded to Ms. Meribeth Dunhouse of the Boston Public Library, who provided photocopies of the original. As best as researchers can determine, there were nine Alger/Cantab stories in this group, seven of which have been located. Six have appeared in *Newsboy* in recent years, starting with "Old Simon,

the Miser" in the November-December 1994 issue. We feel this is one of Alger's finest early stories, and de-merits to run again because of the many Partic'lar Friends joining the Horatio Alger Society since 1994 who have not read it.

Six other *American Union* stories (five of them reprinted in *Newsboy*) were retyped from microfilm of the originals provided by the American Antiquarian Society in Worcester, Mass.

We plan to run the seventh extant Alger/Cantab *American Union* story, "Love in Disguise; An Old Face in a New Phase," in the January-February 2003 issue, which means all but the missing two stories in this group, "A Boarding House Flirtation!" (*American Union* Vol. X, No. 28, Oct. 1, 1853) and "Who Rung the Bell?" (*American Union* Vol. XI, No. 7, Dec. 10, 1853), will have been republished. We hope this elusive pair will eventually turn up in a library or private collection.

Old Simon, the Miser

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widow Benson — I wonder whether she'll have the rent ready; last time I had to wait two days; but I won't wait now. They say he's got a sick child, and hasn't been able to work for some time; but what is that to me? If she can't get along, she can go to the poor-house, that's all. There's the bedstead, and feather bed, and the bureau — I can take them, if she hasn't got the money. She'll find it hard to cheat Simon out of his just dues."

The miser's reflections were interrupted by a loud knock at the door. With trembling hands he strove to close the lid, but his fear and agitation were so great that he did not at once succeed. The knock was repeated with greater violence. The knock was repeated with greater violence.

A ghastly paleness came over the miser's countenance, and the lock snapped. Giving up all hope of being able to shut it, old Simon took the box in his arms, carried it to the plank, and, lifting it up, dropped the box into its old place.

Meanwhile the unseasonable visitor, tired, as it seems, of knocking, called out —

"Open the door, Simon Morris, or it will be the worse for you! Open the door, I say, or I will beat it off the hinges."

"Who are you?" said Simon, trembling, "that break into my house at the dead of night? Leave me; if you would steal, go somewhere else, for I, heaven help me, am but a poor man, and have hardly enough to live upon."

"That is false," said the man outside; "but no matter, open the door, I tell you again, or I will find a way to open it."

Finding remonstrance unavailing, Simon drew the bolt, and admitted the intruder. he was a stout-built man, of middle age, with an air of resolution on his countenance, but softened by an expression of good humor, which relieved its severity.

The visitor, whoever he was, strode carelessly in, and seated himself in the broken chair by the bedside. Casting a scrutinizing glance round the apartment, he at length broke silence.

"I can't say much about your accommodations, Simon. It seems to me that a man of your wealth might afford something better."

"A man of my wealth?" answered Simon, hurriedly; "truly, you are mistaken, much mistaken, good sir. All that I gain with these feeble hands will hardly provide the necessities of life."

"Pooh!" laughed the stranger, incredulously, "say that to others, my good friend; me you cannot deceive; but if indeed you are as poor as you say, I might tell you where there is a treasure concealed."

"Where, where?" ejaculated the miser, eagerly, the habitual expression of cupidity driving away for a moment the terror excited by the stranger's entrance.

"Not very far off; all you need do is lift up that plank, and you will, I warrant me, find that underneath which would make a poor man rich, and whose loss might make a rich man exceedingly poor."

Following with his eye the direction of his visitor's finger,

Simon, who was seized with fresh dismay, on finding that he had, through inadvertence, left the end of the plank projecting, so as to expose through the crevice the indistinct outline of an iron chest.

"O, no, you are wrong, quite wrong," said Simon, hurriedly, placing his chair on the plank; "there is nothing there, save — save a change of clothing, which is all I have, and would not be taking, indeed."

"If it is no better than what you have on, Simon" and the stranger glanced curiously at the ragged and threadbare garments which the miser wore, "I can easily believe you; but tell me, is it the custom here to lock up clothing in an iron box?"

Perceiving the look of dismay which overspread the miser's countenance, he continued —

"But I won't ask any more questions which you seem to find it troublesome to answer. Only I happen to know that there is something more valuable in that box than old clothes; nay, I might venture a pretty shrewd guess as to the amount of money it contains. I couldn't help listening while you kept me waiting at the door. But don't be frightened, for I don't intend to take any of it without your permission."

"And that you shall never have," said Simon, hurriedly, "that is," he added, for he feared he had betrayed himself, "if there were any there, as you say."

"Enough, enough," said the stranger, waving his hand, "we have already had too much unprofitable discussion, and now to business — for I have business with you, Simon Morris, weighty and important business, as you may find before we have finished. But it will take long, and your candle is almost out; bring another, and we will begin."

Perhaps the miser's economical habits might have led him to dispute this order, but the stranger's tone was imperative, and beside he did not care to be left alone with him in the dark. Slowly, therefore, and reluctantly, he arose, and going to a sort of cupboard, which contained, among other things, a cracked teacup, a saucer, and a plate of common delf, all of different patterns, and a rusty knife, he selected a candle, and bringing it to the table, lighted it. The fragment which remained of the other he carefully extinguished and placed in the cupboard, probably to serve for another occasion.

These preparations completed, and the miser having resumed his seat, the stranger commenced.

"Before I tell you on what business I have come, it will be necessary for me to enter into some particulars well known to yourself, but which you probably deem forgotten by all else. Were you ever in the West Indies, Simon?"

At this abrupt question, the miser started and turned pale.

Without waiting for an answer, the visitor resumed —

"Many years ago, a boy, miserably clad, applied for employment to the head of one of the principal firms in Havana. His features were sharpened by privation and suffering, which, perhaps, contributed to give him an appearance of being older than he really was. His general appearance was far from prepossessing, for, independently of the air of general neglect

which surrounded him, it was not difficult to read in his face an expression of cunning, which in the young is especially repulsive. It chanced that the merchant was then in want of an errand-boy, and Samuel Morton, as the boy called himself, was engaged in that capacity.”

At the mention of his name, Simon started visibly, but testified to no other sign of emotion. The stranger went on.

“Years passed. The errand-boy was still employed as at first. As he was found to be faithful and trustworthy, his salary was somewhat increased, so as to afford him the means of living in comfort, had he been so inclined; yet his appearance was scarcely better than at first. The rags which he had on when taken into employment had given place to a suit but little better. No one knew where or how he lived. To judge by his pinched features and attenuated form, he was not in the habit of faring very sumptuously. Already he had taken his first lesson in avarice, and the love of gain was fast acquiring an ascendancy over every other passion in the mind of the errand-boy.

“But, after all, notwithstanding the severest economy and the most pinching privations, the hoard of the young miser increased but slowly. The necessaries of life, reduced as they were in his case, to the narrowest possible compass, swallowed up more than half his salary. Whatever might be his other deficiencies, Samuel was not wanting in acuteness; he knew that the youngest of the numerous clerks in his master’s employ received more than double what he did. He determined to become a clerk himself; but to succeed in his purpose, he must learn to write and cast up accounts. ‘Knowledge is power’ said an old maxim; to Samuel knowledge would be wealth, and wealth was everything.

“At a bookstall he purchased a few second-hand books at a small price, and henceforth his hours of leisure were spent in endeavoring to master their contents. At first the work went on slowly; but Samuel had an object in view.

“He persevered, and perseverance, from whatever cause it proceeds, is sure of meeting with some recompense. Thus it was, that at the end of a year Samuel, aided only by the books which he had purchased, acquired a good knowledge of accounts, and could write a good business hand. About this time a vacancy occurred among the clerks employed by the firm, and they received with no small astonishment an application for the vacant post from Samuel, the errand-boy. Their surprise was still greater to find him competent to fill the situation. Struck by his perseverance, and willing to reward it, they granted his request.

“Behold him now at the summit of his hopes; and yet not so, for he means to climb still higher. It is unnecessary for me to detail Morton’s further progress — to show by what means he contrived to ingratiate himself into the favor of his employers. His fidelity and devotion to business were such, that, before many years, from the errand-boy he had become the chief clerk in the establishment. Meanwhile his habits remained nearly as penurious as ever, and his clothing, constantly shabby, made him the butt of his fellow-clerks.

“Mr. Mellen had a daughter — an only child — whose beauty excited universal admiration, and whose virtues secured the esteem

of all. She had barely reached the age of seventeen, and already her many recommendations had surrounded her with a crowd of suitors, some of whom doubtless were influenced solely by love; but the majority by a variety of motives, of which her father’s supposed wealth was not the least prominent. The influence of beauty has always been powerful from the time of the Trojan Helen to the present time. It certainly was so in this case.

“Samuel Morton — the ragged errand boy and the miserly clerk — what he had in common with Mary Mellen, the young and beautiful, the gifted and caressed? And yet he dared to lift his eyes and gaze upon her. he dared to ask her hand. Can it be that Love, the bright and sunny spirit of Love, had for a moment entered the contracted mind of Morton, narrowed down to the compass of dollars and cents, and deeply encrusted with avarice? Oh no! never for a moment had love quickened the pulsations of *his* heart. Avarice still reigned pre-eminent, and Mary Mellen was rich. I need not say that his suit was rejected — rejected perhaps with a little pardonable contempt. Cold and passive to all appearance. Samuel left the room where his schemes of gain had been so disastrously frustrated, but hatred and the desire of revenge from that moment found a place in his heart.

“A few months passed, and there came a period of commercial depression. The smaller firms succumbed, but the house of Mellen & Co. was of long standing, and its credit was high. This would have enabled it to weather the storm, had nothing unusual intervened. One day the firm had made unusual exertions to meet a heavy payment which fell due the following morning. They were successful, and retired to bed with a consciousness of security which was most unhappily dissipated with the coming day. It was discovered that the chief clerk was missing, and with him the money which had been laid by for meeting the demand. The intelligence fell like a thunderbolt upon Mr. Mellen, whose last hope of sustaining the long-established credit of the firm was thus removed. Bankruptcy ensued, as had been foreseen by Morton, who had contrived at one and the same time to gratify his thirst for revenge, and add to his hoards. No traces could be discovered of the fugitive, though every means were taken to secure his arrest.”

The stranger paused for a moment.

Simon, whose face had been turned to the wall during the narration, suddenly aroused himself, and in a trembling voice inquired — “What has your story to do with me, that you should break in upon me at this hour of the night?”

“Much, Simon Morris, or rather let me call you by your real name of Samuel Morton. Punishment is sometimes slow but it is always sure. Through the changes which time and avarice have wrought upon you, I still know you — what is more to the purpose, I can prove your identity with the absconding clerk, and then of what advantage will the hoards of Simon the miser be to Simon the convicted criminal and the tenant of a jail?”

“You would extort money from me,” said the old man, desperately, “and so you have trumped up this story. But I will not yield. No, no, you are deceiving me.”

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Old Simon, the Miser

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“As you please,” said the visitor. “I will go, but it is to the police office. Perhaps I may find means there to satisfy you that I am in earnest.”

“Stay, stay,” said the miser, tremulously, “tell me what you would have. I am a poor man, but it — if five dollars could induce you to let me remain in quiet, I will give them to you.”

The stranger smiled scornfully. “And do you think I have come here tonight for the sake of a few paltry dollars? Think you to conceal your crime forever from the eyes of men for this insignificant sum? No, Simon Morris, I have not come here to enrich myself at your expense. Nay, look not so joyful; you may yet find that your safety requires the surrender of a portion of your gains. You don’t remember me. Let me refresh your recollection. Does the name of George Seymour recall me to your mind? Like yourself, I was a suitor of Mary Mellen. I was too late. Her heart was already given to another. Edward Benson, my successful rival, was a young merchant in good business. He possessed many estimable qualities, and was, even I was obliged to exhibit, worthy of his good fortune.

“A few years slipped away, and Benson, in the hope of advancing his fortunes, removed to the United States, but to what part I am unable to say. Soon after rumors reached us that he was dead, and his wife and children left destitute. I was in good circumstances, and the memory of my early love has impelled me to come in search of her that I may relieve her necessities. On arriving in Boston I heard of you. Though you had changed your name, I did not find much difficulty in detecting your identity with the clerk Morton. You are anxious to know with what views I have sought you. I will tell you. I might denounce you to the authorities, but you are an old man, and I have compassion on you. You are a hard man, Simon; for years you have been enriching yourself at the expense of honest poverty. And all for what! That your gold may be hoarded up, useless to all, even to yourself. That box of yours might tell many a tale of misery endured, of hard and pinching poverty, made harder and more burdensome, could it but speak. It shall be my office to redeem it from its uselessness — to make it minister to the wants of the needy and the comfort of the distressed. Then shall your money prove to you a blessing and not a curse.”

The miser groaned.

“I don’t mean to impoverish you. The money in that box is but a small part of your possessions. It is not quite equal to the sum of which you defrauded your employer. Tomorrow is your quarter-day; it is also New Year’s day, a fitting time to commence your charities. Tomorrow you must reduce one half the exorbitant rents you have been in the habit of demanding, and you shall pay the first installment of your debt by distributing two hundred dollars among your tenants.”

“Spare me, spare me,” groaned the old man. “You would reduce me to destitution. Take fifty — nay, an hundred dollars — only let me remain in quiet.”

“Old man, this is vain trifling; you cannot move me from my purpose. But I do not constrain you; the choice is open — the gaol or compliance of my demands. There is no other alternative. Decide, and at once.”

“I will obey you, though I am despoiled of all.”

“You have decided well. Early tomorrow I will be with you to see that you do not fail me. And now, good night and pleasant dreams.”

The stranger departed. As he left the room, twelve o’clock rang solemnly from the church tower, proclaiming the advent of the New Year. And the sound mingled with the dreams of happy children, and a smile of welcome overspread their unconscious faces.

May it indeed prove to them a Happy New Year!

The sound reached Simon’s garret, but it aroused him not from his stupor. His heart was filled with bitter sorrow, not for his crime, but for its retribution.

CHAPTER II

*“Or wade with one through snows,
Drifted in loose fantastic curves aside,
From humble doors where Love and Faith abide,
And no rough winter blows,
Chilling the beauty of affections fair,
Cabined securely there.”*

Alice Carey.

The morning sun gilds with its first rays the towers and steeples of Boston. Again has the hum of business awakened in the crowded streets.

The chill and frosty air quickens the flow of the blood and lends a briskness to the step. Merrily the sleighs, freighted with smiling faces and happy hearts, dash through the streets. All seems joy and gladness in this birthday of the year.

Yet not all. There are some to whom this season comes with no friendly greetings. There are those to whom it brings no legacy but cold, and suffering and privation, who find in it no relief for the present, and no hope for the Future.

Let us look in upon one of the miser’s tenants. It was a small room — that of the widow Benson. From the articles of furniture scattered about the apartment, it was evident that she had once known better days. A small fire burnt in the grate, sparingly fed, for coals were expensive, yet shedding a cheerful glow around the room, and upon the still handsome, though careworn features of Mrs. Benson. Upon the bed lay a boy of twelve years, who was sick of a fever.

“Charles,” said the mother as she smoothed his pillow, “how do you feel now?”

“Better, mother,” said the sick boy. “I think I could relish a piece of chicken if I had it.”

“I wish I could afford it,” said Mrs. Benson, mournfully, “but today is quarter-day, and Mr. Morris will call for the rent. Fifteen dollars, and I have but ten. If he could only wait a little while. But he is a hard man, and I fear the worst.”

Just then a peal of bells rang joyfully out upon the morning

air. The sick boy raised himself in bed. "It is New Year's Day, isn't it, mother? Or why do the bells ring so gladly?"

"Yes, my dear, it is."

"I remember how glad I used to be to have it come. That was when we were rich, mother. Don't you remember, five years ago, father brought me home a book filled with pictures, and told me it was my New Year's present. I wonder whether I shall ever have another."

Mrs. Benson sighed mournfully, for her son's words brought vividly to mind the loss she had suffered.

"No," said she, "those days were too bright and happy to last. They will never come again."

As she spoke, she resumed the sewing which her care for the sick boy had for a moment interrupted.

"How I wish I were a man," said Charles, as he watched his mother plying her needle busily. "I would not let you work so hard. Put down your work for a moment; you have been working so steadily that you need rest."

"I cannot indeed, Charles, for Mr. Grip was very particular to have his work done today, and if I should fail I am afraid he won't give me any more. I wonder why Mr. Morris does not come after his rent. He is usually very punctual. If he will not wait a few days till I can make up the whole of the rent, we must sell something to supply the deficiency."

His eyes wandered sadly over the few articles that yet remained to remind them of better days in the past, but they were all equally dear to her, and she could not resign herself to part with any.

At this moment a loud knock was heard at the door.

Mrs. Benson rose hastily, and opened it, expecting to give admittance to old Simon her landlord. George Seymour stood before her.

"I have come," he said, "by direction of your landlord, who is unable to appear in person."

"I am very sorry, sir, but I have had sickness, and in spite of all my efforts, I have been unable to lay out a sufficient sum to pay for my quarter's rent. What I have I will pay at once, and I hope Mr. Morris will be willing to wait a little while for the remainder."

"You mistake my purpose, madam," replied Seymour. "I came indeed by your landlord's direction, but it is on a pleasanter errand. He has resolved to present a New Year's gift to each of his tenants, and deeming that something substantial and useful would be most acceptable, he has directed to be brought to you in common with the rest of his tenants a barrel of flour and a few groceries, which will be here in a few moments. I give you notice beforehand that you may be prepared to receive them, and not consider it a mistake."

The mingled surprise and gratitude with which Mrs. Benson listened to this address may be imagined. Such an act of generosity was so utterly contradictory of every idea she had formed of her landlord's character that she could hardly believe in its reality.

"Excuse me," she said, at length recovering herself, "but my surprise is so great that I may appear slow in expressing my gratitude. I beg you to give my warmest thanks to Mr. Morris for

his truly generous behaviour. I see that I have done him injustice. Hereafter I shall regard him as a generous benefactor."

Seymour bowed and continued,

"My errand is not yet finished. You need feel under no concern about your rent, Mr. Morris has determined from henceforth to reduce his rents to one half their present amount. Those already due for the last quarter he will remit wholly."

Mrs. Benson renewed her expressions of gratitude, and more light-hearted than she had been for many months, led the way into her room, followed by the stranger whom she had invited to enter. Seymour entered partly out of curiosity, partly because Mrs. Benson (with whose name he was not yet acquainted) had awakened in his mind a strange feeling of interest for which he found himself unable to account. Se seated himself and glanced curiously round the room, so perfectly neat amid all the evidences of poverty which it exhibited.

Mrs. Benson had begun to busy herself in attending to the wants of her son, when another knock was heard at the door, preceded by a confused noise as of heavy articles brought upstairs.

Mrs. Benson went to the door. A man stood before her in the dress of a laborer. "If you please, ma'am, I have been directed to bring these articles to one Mrs. Benson, and if you are the person as is meant, I will bring them in."

He pointed as he spoke to a barrel of flour which stood in the passage, and a large closed hamper.

"I am the person you seek," said the widow. "You may bring them in, and put them in this closet, if you please."

This was accordingly done.

"What shall I pay you for your trouble?"

"Nothing, ma'am," said the man, touching his hat. "The man as told me to bring the things here, paid me."

George Seymour had watched this scene with an expression of interest and benevolence. When the man had departed, he said,

"If you will permit me, madam, I will open this hamper to make sure that it contains all the articles I ordered."

The hamper being opened, displayed parcels of tea, sugar, butter and other needful groceries, besides a pair of chickens.

"Charles," said she. "Your wish has been granted; some fairy must have heard you wishing for a piece of chicken, and sent it to you through our benevolent landlord."

George Seymour smiled at the idea of old Simon's benevolence, but did not see fit to express any doubt about this point. By way of passing the time, he took up a book from the table; it was a small pocket edition of the Bible, and he read on the fly leaf, "Edward Benson to his beloved wife, Jan. 1, 183—"

He rose in great agitation.

"Is this yours, madam?" said he.

"It is; it was a gift from my late husband."

"Do not deem me influenced by an idle curiosity if I ask you one question more. Were you not born in Havana, and was not your maiden name Mary Mellen?"

"You are right," said Mrs. Benson, "but I did not know there was anyone in this city who had known me by that name."

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Old Simon, the Miser

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"I knew it," said Seymour. "From the moment that my eyes rested upon you, I recognized something familiar in your countenance, an indefinable expression which recalled the past to my mind. I have been trying to recollect where I had seen you before, but without success."

"I am not surprised at it," said Mrs. Benson. "Time and sorrow have changed me much; but you, now that I examine you closely, you are, unless my eyes deceive me —"

"George Seymour."

The widow's cheek flushed faintly; she had not forgotten that George Seymour once sued for her hand.

Seymour hastily related his object in visiting the United States, by what means he had discovered the identity of old Simon the miser with Samuel Morton, the absconding clerk, and the motives which had led him to such an extraordinary act of liberality.

Mrs. Benson in return related her own story.

"You remember, she said, "that a few years after our marriage Mr. Benson removed to New York, thinking that city presented greater business facilities than Havana. Disappointed there he removed to Boston. Fortune smiled on him for a short time, but at length the tide turned. A ship in which he had ventured nearly all his property was lost at sea. The ruin of his hopes brought on a settled melancholy which terminated in his death. For me and my son Charles, then a lad of eleven, little or nothing remained. I was obliged to depend on my needle for a livelihood, and for the last five years have lived as you see."

"But why did you not write to Havana for assistance?"

"I did so, but received no answer. Shortly after I heard that my father was dead, and henceforth gave up all hope of any aid save that which my needle afforded."

After a little more conversation, Seymour departed, promising to call again at an early day.

It would be a pleasant task to follow him on his errand of mercy — to describe how many hearts were gladdened, and how their sorrow was turned into joy by involuntary bounty of old Simon, upon this first day of the year. Who that has once known the joy of giving would consent to relinquish it? Who that has known the exquisite pleasure of relieving misery and lightening care, of awakening hope in the hearts of the desponding and smoothing the rugged path of poverty, will not subscribe to that truly divine maxim — "that it is better to give than to receive."

Many were the hearts made happy on that day. Many were the blessings invoked on the head of Simon Morris. But where, meanwhile, was the donor of all these gifts? Why did he not come forth to witness the effect of his liberality?

He had not the heart to do it. Shut up in his lonely room, he was pondering over disappointed hopes and frustrated purposes. Through the long vista of a life corroded by avarice, embittered by privation, and lighted up by no smile of affection, he looked back. It was a dreary interval. Happiness! He had never known what it was. Day by day his hoards had increased, yet every day

his thirst for gain became more and more restless and unsatisfied. And this was his reward. Of all his tenants, poor and worn down with heavy cares as many of them were, there was not one so miserable as himself. His had been the mistake of a lifetime, and now the paltry satisfaction of seeing and counting his hoards daily was to be snatched from him. The shadow of his early crime like a grim phantom stretched out before him in terrible relief, and every effort to free himself from it would be useless. Day-by-day to see his gains diminishing — this was the fate reserved for him. To him it was death — more than death, for it was extinguishing the hope which had buoyed him up for years, sustaining him through years of privation and scorn.

Towards evening he walked out to drive away the fancies which were perpetually goading him. As he walked on slowly and without any definite purpose, he was met by one of the recipients of his bounty. She stopped him and poured forth warm expressions of gratitude. He listened vacantly until at length her meaning dawned upon him. Without a word he pushed on, regardless of everything but that. It was evening and the shadows gathered darkly around him. But what were these to the shadows that darkened his mind?

All at once in the depth of his despair he formed a resolution. Giving no time for reflection, he turned down a by-street and made his way to a wharf. For a moment he stood gazing at the sluggish current beneath, and then plunged recklessly in. A splash — ripple upon the stream — and all was over.

The miser was dead!

That evening George Seymour visited the miser's apartment, but he was not within. Somewhat surprised, he departed and called again the next morning. Hearing no tidings of him except that he was seen to go out the previous evening, and had not yet returned, he became apprehensive for his safety. By his direction a search was instituted and the body discovered.

Old Simon left no will, and there were no heirs to succeed to his considerable property. Seymour took the necessary measures to establish his identity with Samuel Morton. Having done this, he communicated the facts which have been detailed above to the authorities, who decided that, in default of other heirs, the miser's wealth should be transferred to Mrs. Benson.

Need I relate the sequel? How the disinterested conduct of George Seymour won, first the esteem, and next the love of Mrs. Benson. A year had not elapsed before a gay bridal train was seen issuing from one of the principal churches of Boston. Again a bride, Mrs. Seymour, who had trodden so uncomplainingly the path of adversity withstood no less successfully the peculiar trials which attend prosperity. With her husband's consent she has laid aside all the miser's property except the amount of which he defrauded her father, and the income of this sum she annually devotes to charitable purposes.

Thus the gold which in the miser's lifetime lay useless, has become a fountain of good influence. and as every New Year's Day brings with it the anniversary of his death, many are the hearts which are gladdened — many the necessities that are relieved from the long treasured hoards of Old Simon the Miser.