WHITE HEAT LOVE

Is the Kind Which Flared Up in Steiner, Then Died.

HAD OPTION ON MISS GIBNEY

Love Letters Which Rich Pittsburger Wrote to St. Louis Put Burning Sappho in the Shade for Fierceness of Passion.

For concentrated essence of passion, the love letters which Klauss J. Steiner, of Pittsburg, wrote to Edith Gibney, of St. Louis, would take the prize in a world's competition of such missives. When Miss Gibney's suit against Mr. Steiner, in which she was given a verdict for $12,925 damages for breach of promise, was on trial in Pittsburg, the plaintiff's lawyers read about 5000 words of these letters, but these were only about one-tenth of the total. Here is a sample, dated September 15, 1902:

It is 2 A. M., dearest. I cannot sleep. Have gentle compassion on me. Do not judge me ill. Hear my story. Your letters that come to me each day, bringing with them undisguised proof of your unutterable belief in me, and exhaling the very incarnation of love, together with my thoughts of you, have brought me to a perfect chaos of emotion and to a fierce conflict in my mind. I am like one possessed, and I know neither rest of body nor of spirit. Good God, that I should come to love a woman with the passion and with the depth of my soul as I love you. If this be love, dearest, it is akin to pain. Pain finds us revolting against ill that is and the cause thereof indiscriminately. I am burning to possess you with a desire that calm, rational argument cannot assuage. And though reason says it cannot be, love demands, "Why not?" and refuses to be comforted.

Why should you be so far away from me that the very distance mocks me and stirs me to impotent rage? Why should I, like a caged animal, knowing only its longing for freedom, beat my body, every bone and sinew of which cries out in want against the rockbound bars of present impossibility?

Encircle Her in His Arms.

Why cannot I fly to you, and, casting around you the spell of my visions, encircle you in my arms and carry you off to that castle in Spain existing now only in imagination, but which some day shall find a place in reality and that shall prove a very haven to our troubled longing, and, like a fortress, shall bristle with the arms of love, the very strength of which shall serve to repel aught but the contentment of a perfect satisfaction? Why does the time that knows not your presence with me drag out its existence with its leaden feet and palsied joints of tottering old age? Why—but I might demand of the air why, and expect reply out of its thinness.

Sweetheart, it avails nothing my love for you must undergo this trial of separation and this inexpressible longing that it may be the fitter when the hour arrives in which we shall be one, body and spirit. Would that it were the morrow, but it may not be. Shall I bid you to the feast ere the viands are prepared? Oh, I adore you. And I look to you with the same eager hope that men look for salvation. Am in agony of impatience and angry with the love in my heart that it can't perform miracles. The trouble and the longing in me are almost more than I can bear. It is not the future I fear, but the present.

Heaven Not In It.

My love for you is so strong and the conviction of it so firm that I know we shall be united in a bondage so everlastingly happy that the millennium of heaven will not compare, and just as surely as the sun rises this day and God gives us light. The present, however, I fear; the everlasting present that hangs on with the length of a geologic age and torments with its hopes and its desires and its aspirations, all borrowed without leave from that time to come, and in the possession of which it finds itself uneasy and restless as the thief with that which is not his.

You know that the knowledge that you long to greet me makes it all the harder for me to abstain from that which would be unjustified under the circumstances. My darling, what a burden of love I have in my heart. I want you to do something for me. When you happen to be near a jeweler's get him to give you the size of the ring that will exactly fit your delicate fingers. (No, not the little finger, but the finger, ha, ha, ha.)

Same Day, 3 P. M.—Your sweet envoy of the 13th inst. found me in a great state of perturbation. I must tell you all about it. The girls here think it is a subject of much wonder that you and I should write each other daily. They say to me: "What in the world can you ever find to write so much about?" I tell them you are interested in the political crisis in Kamchatka, and that you love nothing better than to argue on the theories of the nebular hypothesis and like subjects, which they, of course, swallow.

Going to Be Her Czar.

Speaking in reference to a letter that had been lost, he writes further:

Really, with the awful thought that one of your precious messages was perhaps lost to me forever, I felt that the bottom had dropped out of things and had one of my most valued possessions disappeared I would not have felt nearly so chagrined.

Ah, dearest, how I treasure them! I could do without three meals a day; I could do without sleep, and I could do without the love of my family, great as it is, but I cannot miss your daily assurance that you love me with all your heart. If you will make a czar out of me, then a czar I shall be, and I shall exact tribute of you such as the Czar of Russia with all the fabulous wealth of his empire could not purchase. Edith, I love you.

How ardent a lover was Mr. Steiner was told on the witness stand by Miss Gibney's sister, Marguerite, who said:

When Mr. Steiner came to our home in St. Louis we took him in as one of the family, so that he might live as one of us to see and know just how we lived and who we were. Before he had been in the house a day one would think Prince Boumiful was our guest. He turned the house into a conservatory and spent a great part of his time on his knees before my mother thanking her for having brought into the world such a girl as Edith for his wife.

The Human Option.

But in the trial Mr. Steiner claimed that he had a string to all this love. He admitted that he had a six months' option on the girl, which caused her lawyers to afterwards refer to her as "the human option." This she denied, though she admitted that, at the request of his family, she had extended the time for their marriage six months. Whatever the facts, he followed up all the outpourings of his heart by sending her the following business take note:

August 3, 1904.—Edith I. Gibney—My Dear Miss: I have exercised my right under our agreement and the engagement is terminated herewith. Yours very truly,

KLAUS J. STEINER.

Most of Teachers Dropped.

ABERDEEN, Wash., May 15.—(Special.)—The Board of School Directors has reelected only eight of its last year's corps of teachers and dropped 22. This is the result of trouble in the teaching force for some time, and caused the resignation of Superintendent Harris. M. H. Cook, of Colfax, has been elected superintendent and P. A. Williams, ex-County Superintendent of Schools, will be the principal of the Market-Street School.