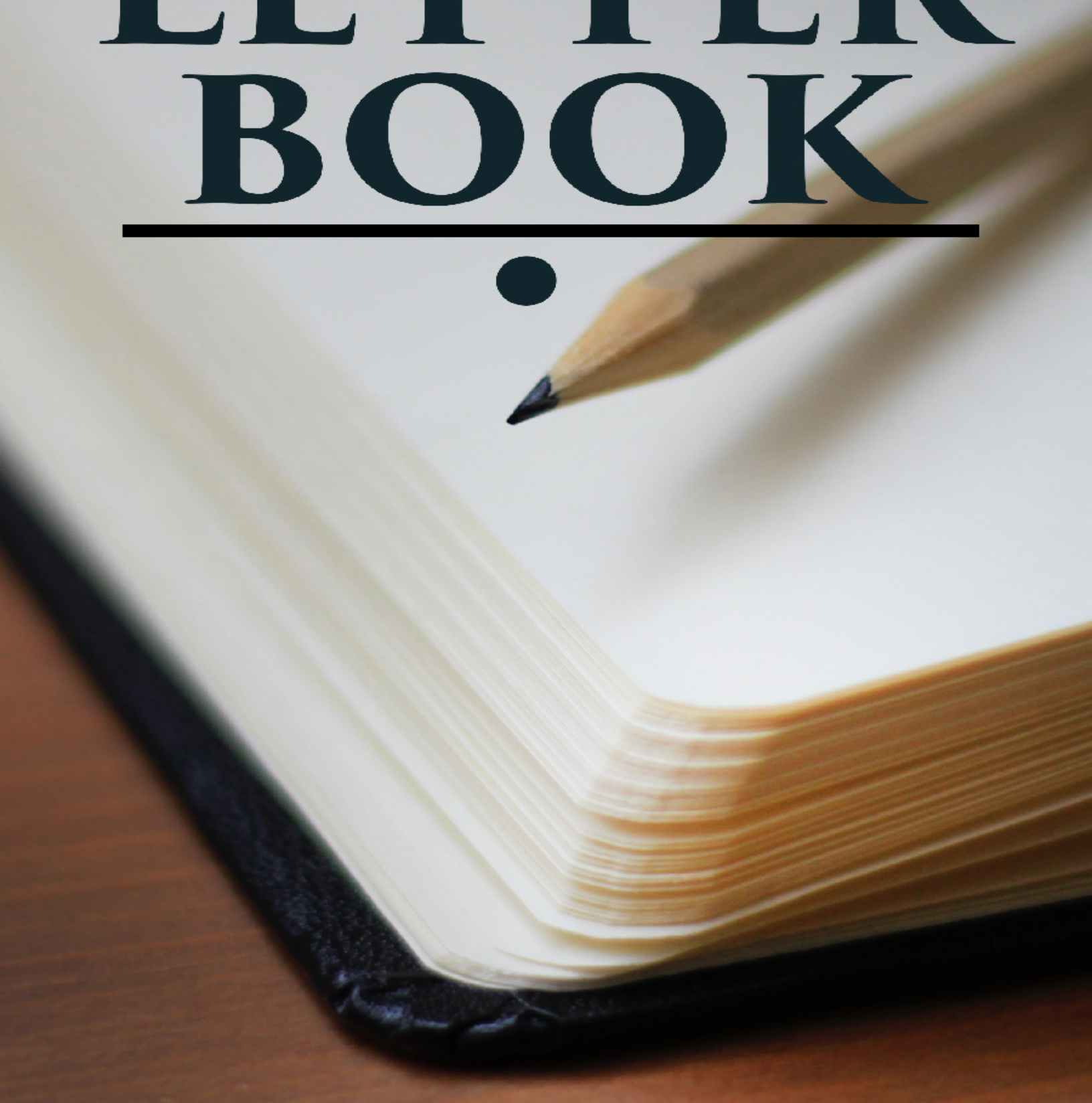


THE ROBERT COLLIER
**LETTER
BOOK**



Robert Collier

The Robert Collier Letter Book

The Ultimate Guide for Copywriting

e-artnow, 2021

Contact: info@e-artnow.org

EAN: 4064066498870

Table of Contents

Preface

Chapter 1. What is it that Makes Some Letters Pay?

Chapter 2. How to Arouse that Acquisitive Feeling

Chapter 3. Getting News Interest Into Your Letter

Chapter 4. Word Pictures that Make People Want Your Product

Chapter 5. Motives that Make People Buy

Chapter 6. The Proof of the Pudding

Chapter 7. Supplying that Impulse

Chapter 8. How to Put a Hook Into Your Letters

Chapter 9. The Six Essentials

Chapter 10. How It All Began

Chapter 11. The First Olive

Chapter 12. Selling \$2,000,000 Worth of O. Henry Stories

Chapter 13. A War History that Sold

Chapter 14. Books that Many People Know

Chapter 15. How Wells' "Outline" was Sold

Chapter 16. How the Bookbuyers Saved a Campaign

Chapter 17. A Giant of the Mails

Chapter 18. The Third Fifty Thousand

Chapter 19. Will You Accept This Little Gift?

Chapter 20. One Million Dollars' Worth of Orders in the First Six Months

Chapter 21. How Closely Can You Follow Up Leads?

Chapter 22. We Help to Start a Store

Chapter 23. How to Reach the Leaders

Chapter 24. Collecting with a Smile

Chapter 25. The Ideal Sales Letter

Chapter 26. How to Raise Money by Mail

PREFACE

Table of Contents

This is not a textbook, calculated to show the beginner how to take his pen or typewriter in hand and indite a masterly epistle to some fancied customer.

It is for the business man who already knows the theory of letter writing but is looking for more effective ways of putting it into practice.

It covers all the necessary rules, of course, but it does this informally. Primarily, it is the log book of a long and varied experience.

It shows successful ways of selling all manner of products, from coal and coke right on down to socks and dresses. But through all the differences in products and appeals, runs this one connecting thread—that while products and reasons for buying may vary, human nature remains much the same; that familiarity with the thing you are selling is an advantage, but the one essential without which success is impossible in selling, by mail or selling in person, is a thorough understanding of human reactions.

Study your reader first—your product second. If you understand his reactions, and present those phases of your product that relate to his needs, then you cannot help but write a good letter.

It may be said of this book that it does not give enough examples of unsuccessful letters. But most of us can find plenty of these in our own files. And isn't it true that we are far less concerned with why a letter failed than in finding out what it is that makes a letter successful?

The first book on business letter writing I ever read was the "Business Correspondence Library" published by *System* a good many years ago. To it, and to "Applied Business Correspondence" and other books by Herbert Watson, I owe

most of my theoretical knowledge of letter writing. Those familiar with Watson's writings will recognize many of his theories in the early chapters of this book. I gladly give acknowledgment to him as the one on whose writings the groundwork of my own education in direct mail was laid.

To John Blair, President of the New Process Company of Warren, Pennsylvania, I am indebted for numberless opportunities to test my pet ideas in the only crucible that gives dependable results—actual letters sent to prospective buyers—and for the perfect records that enabled me to see which theories were workable, which better forgotten.

For many of the short paragraphs used as examples of good starters, graphic descriptions, or proper closers, I am indebted to writers like Ad-Man Davison and Ben Sweetland and to such magazines as *Printers' Ink* and *System*.

To all of these I give acknowledgment and express sincere appreciation.

THE AUTHOR

NEW YORK, N. Y. May, 1931.

CHAPTER 1

WHAT IS IT THAT MAKES SOME LETTERS PAY?

Table of Contents

What is there about some letters that makes them so much more effective than others?

A letter may have perfect diction, a finished style; it may bristle with attention-getters and interest-arousers; it may follow every known rule; yet when it reaches the Hall of Judgment where the reader sits and decides its fate, it may find itself cast into the hell of wastebasketdom, while some screech lacking any pretense of polish or the finer arts of correspondence, blandly picks up the bacon and walks home with it. Why?

Because getting the results you set out to accomplish with a letter is no more a matter of rule of thumb than is landing a fish with a rod and hook. You know how often you have seen some ragged urchin pull in fish after fish with the crudest of lines, when a "sportsman" near by, though armed with every piscatorial lure known to man, could not raise even a bite!

It's a matter of bait, that's all. The youngster knew what the fish would bite on, and he gave it to them. Result? A mess of fine fish for dinner. The "sportsman" offered them what he had been led to believe fish ought to have—and they turned up their fishy noses at it.

Hundreds of books have doubtless been written about the fine art of fishing, but the whole idea is contained in that one sentence: "What bait will they bite on?" Thousands of articles have been written about the way to use letters to bring you what you want, but the meat of them all can be compressed into two sentences: "What is the bait that will

tempt your reader? How can you tie up the thing you have to offer with that bait?"

For the ultimate purpose of every business letter simmers down to this:

The reader of this letter wants certain things. The desire for them is, consciously or unconsciously, the dominant idea in his mind all the time.

You want him to do a certain definite thing for you. How can you tie this up to the thing he wants, in such a way that the doing of it will bring him a step nearer to his goal?

It matters not whether you are trying to sell him a rain-coat, making him a proposal of marriage, or asking him to pay a bill. In each case, you want him to do something for you. Why should he? Only because of the hope that the doing of it will bring him nearer his heart's desire, or the fear that his failure to do it will remove that heart's desire farther from him.

Put yourself in his place. If you were deep in discussion with a friend over some matter that meant a great deal to both of you, and a stranger came up, slapped you on the back and said: "See here, Mister, I have a fine coat I want to sell you!" What would you do? Examine the coat with interest, and thank him for the privilege, or kick him and the coat down the nearest stairs, and blister both with a few choice adjectives in the process?

Well, much the same thing happens when you approach a man by mail. He is deep in a discussion with himself over ways and means of getting certain things that mean a great deal to him. You butt in (that is the only term that describes it) and blandly tell him to forget those things that so deeply concern him and consider your proposition instead. Is it any wonder he promptly tells you where to head in, and lacking the ability to reach you, takes it out on your letter instead?

Then what is the right way to approach him? How would you do it if you were approaching him in person? If he were talking to someone, you'd listen for a while, wouldn't you,

and get the trend of the conversation? Then when you chimed in, it would be with a remark on some related subject, and from that you would bring the talk around logically to the point you wanted to discuss. It should not be much more difficult in a letter. There are certain prime human emotions with which the thoughts of all of us are occupied a goodly part of the time. Tune in on them, and you have your reader's attention. Tie it up to the thing you have to offer, and you are sure of his interest.

You see, your reader glancing over his mail is much like a man in a speeding train. Something catches his eye and he turns for a better look. You have his attention. But attention alone gets you nowhere. The something must stand closer inspection, it must win his interest, otherwise his attention is lost—and once lost, it is twice as hard to win the second time. Again it's a matter of bait—you may attract a fish's attention with a gaudily painted bauble, but if he once nibbles it and finds it made of tin, you will have a hard time reaching him again with anything else of the same kind.

Every mail brings your reader letters urging him to buy this or that, to pay a bill, to get behind some movement or to try a new device. Time was when the mere fact that an envelope looked like a personal letter addressed to him would have intrigued his interest. But that time has long since passed. Letters as letters are no longer objects of intense interest. They are bait neither more nor less—and to tempt him, they must look a bit different from bait he has nibbled at and been fooled by before. They must have something about them that stands out from the mass—that catches his eye and arouses his interest—or away they go into the wastebasket.

Your problem, then, is to find a point of contact with his interests, his desires, some feature that will flag his attention and make your letter stand out from all others the moment he reads the first line.

But it won't do to yell "Fire!" That will get you attention, yes of a kind but as far as your prospects of doing business are concerned, it will be of the kind a drunken miner got in the days when the West wore guns and used them on the slightest provocation. He stuck his head in the window of a crowded saloon and yelled "Fire!"—*and everybody did!*

Study your reader. Find out what interests him. Then study your proposition to see how it can be made to tie in with that interest. Take as an instance, the mother of a month-old baby. What is most in her thoughts? Imagine, then, how a letter starting like this would appeal to her:

After baby's food and baby's clothes, the most important thing you have to decide upon is the little cart baby is going to ride in—is going to be seen in is going to be admired in. Never a child came into the world but was worthy as good a cart, etc.

Or if you were the father of a six or eight-year-old boy, wouldn't this get under your skin?

Your boy is a little shaver now. He thinks you are the most wonderful man in the world. You can fix his boat, mend his velocipede, tell him wonderful stories.

But it will be only ten or twelve years until he goes to College. The fathers of the other boys—his chums—will go to see them. There will be a Railroad President, perhaps; a great Banker; a Governor.

And you will go; and your boy will say, "This is my father, boys."

How will he feel when he says it? Will he be proud of you?

Or take any one of the following starts. Can't you just see your reader nodding in interested agreement, can't you picture the way they would carry him along into a description of the thing offered, how they would make him want it, how they would lead him on to the final action?

To a Druggist

After you have run up front half a dozen times to sell a couple of stogies, a package of court plaster and a postage stamp; to change a five dollar bill for the barber, to answer the phone and inform Mrs. Smith that Castoria is 250 a bottle, and assure Mrs. Jones that you will have the doctor call her up as soon as he comes in, then take a minute for yourself and look over this proposition. It's worthwhile.

To a Householder

Doesn't it beat the Dutch the way thieves, pick-pockets, hold-up men and burglars are getting away with it these days?

There were over 1500 house burglaries last month in our dear old city; 92 business burglaries; 122 street hold-ups; 11 offices held up; 309 automobiles stolen, and the Lord only knows how many watches and purses taken on the streets. A good insurance policy against burglary and theft is a pretty cheap investment these days. Call me on the phone now, and I can have your valuables covered by noon.

To a Farmer

Any man who owns a cow loses a calf once in a while. If you own a herd of a dozen or more, you are probably losing one or two calves a year. We know of breeders who were losing every calf—some sixteen—some over thirty a year.

And these breeders stopped their losses short—just like that—through the information given by us.

To a Merchant

"She didn't buy anything."

How often is this little tragedy repeated in your store?

Your time is valuable your overhead expense runs on—and it costs you real money when a prospective customer walks out of your store without making a purchase.

To a Mother

About that boy of yours—

He is arriving at the age when his spirit of manliness asserts itself. You find him imitating his father's manners—he is using your embroidery scissors to shave with—he is no longer ambitious to be a policeman, but has his eye on the Presidency. Among the serious problems with him today is this: He is beginning to want manly, square-cut, "growing-up" clothes. He is no longer satisfied with ordinary boys' clothes, He wants something "like father's."

To a Motorist

If you have ever driven your car in a rainstorm, you know how annoying it is—dangerous, too—to have your wind shield clouded with water. How many times have you narrowly avoided accidents under these conditions? With the—Cleaner attached to your car, all you need to do is turn a button in front of you, and instantly every drop of water in your field of vision is swept from your wind shield. The glass is left clear and clean.

To a Doctor

What a clutter of books a doctor can get around him, and what a fearful outlay of money they will come to represent if he doesn't use great discrimination in their purchase. I don't suppose there is any class of people—and I have customers among every class you can think of—who appreciate more than my medical friends the marvelous savings I am able to make them on all standard sets, reference books, etc.

To a Housewife

After you have your breakfast dishes washed, your floors swept, and your beds made up, I should like to have a

moment of your time. You are an excellent judge of what is good to eat, and know when you are getting what you should from your grocer to be saving and yet to set your table with healthful and dainty dishes for your family...

To Any Man

Are you like Mr. Fuller in that you dislike to shave with cold or lukewarm water?

Mr. Fuller always grumbled when the water was cold. Usually it was cold. You know how the ordinary hot water system works early in the morning.

But the Fullers found a way out of their troubles. Now—nowadays, no matter how early they may arise, there's always steaming hot water the instant a faucet is turned.

To Insurance Agents

Did you ever, as a kid, sneak up alongside an old mill pond and heave what Penrod might call a "good old rock" far out into the middle of its placid surface—just for the fun of seeing all the mud turtles on all their sunny legs drop off into the water with one loud, individual PLUNK?

If the humble mud turtle formed no part of the backyard fauna of your youth, I reckon there was something mighty similar to engage your budding talents. Just as you find now, in your grown-up days, that the pursuit of your business aims often involve the same emotions that lent interest to your activities in the eyes of your early neighbors. For example: We want to point out to you a few of the prospects that are basking along the banks of the . . .

Bait—all of them. Find the thing your prospect is interested in and make it your point of contact, rather than rush in and try to tell him something about your proposition, *your* goods, *your* interests.

CHAPTER 2

HOW TO AROUSE THAT ACQUISITIVE FEELING

Table of Contents

To go back to the very beginning, what is the first thing to do in writing any business letter?

Before you put pen to paper, before you ring for your stenographer, decide in your own mind what effect you want to produce on your reader—what feeling you must arouse in him.

If you want your readers to say, as the crowds did of Demosthenes' famous rival: "What a clever speaker!"—then it is quite all right to start with catch-phrases and the like. But if you want to emulate Demosthenes, whose hearers forgot all about him in their interest in his message, then your whole effort must be centered on arousing the feeling in them: "*Let's go!*"

For back of every successful letter, as back of every sale, is a created feeling that impels the reader to act as you want him. It is the whole purpose of every business letter, whether it be sales, collection, adjustment or complaint, to make your reader *want* to do the thing you are urging upon him.

How are you to arouse that feeling in him? How would you have to feel yourself before you would place such an order as you have in mind, before you would grant such an extension, before you would send a payment to this man in preference to all others, at a time when it was an effort to send a dollar to anyone?

What would you want first to know? What about the proposition would interest you most? What would you feel

you had to gain by accepting? What would you lose by refusing?

They say the Parisians have a formula for love letters: "Begin without knowing what you are going to say, and end without knowing what you have said." That may be good medicine for love letters, but it was never meant for business. Though, to do the Frenchmen justice, such of their letters as appear in print indicate that while they may not know what they are going to say, they have a pretty clear idea of the emotion they want to arouse in their reader, and they leave no stone unturned in the doing of it.

And after all, isn't that the whole purpose of a letter? Books have been written about the importance of attention, and interest, and argument, and clinchers, but aren't these mere details? When you come down to it, isn't the prime requisite arousing the *feeling* in your reader that *he must have* the thing you are offering, or that he can not rest until he has done the thing you are urging him to?

Consider the two following letters, for instance. The first follows all the rules. It wins attention, it creates interest, it describes what it has to offer, it has argument, conviction, clincher, yet it was only moderately successful, whereas the second letter literally pulled its head off. Why the difference?

Because the first letter was aimed only at the intellect, whereas the second, while it tried to convince the intellect, aimed its real appeal at the emotions! And when it is action you want, go after the emotions every time!

The Finally Revised, Illustrated
Edition of WELLS' HISTORY in 4 vols.
At 1/4 less than the Original Price of Two!

DEAR READER:

At last H. G. Wells' famous "Outline of History" has been put into its finally revised form, illustrated with 100 famous

historical paintings, and brought out in four regular, library-size books. A million copies of the Outline were sold in the bulky one and two volume editions. A million more people wanted it, but they waited for a lighter, more easily handled volume. Here it is—a brand new edition, freshly revised, of four standard library-size books, *for 25% less than the price of the original two-volume set.*

And that isn't all.

For a long time Mr. Wells felt that parts of his history needed re-writing—that other parts should be clarified, and the whole thoroughly revised. This was his chance. Starting from the very beginning, he changed every single page of the text, re-wrote whole chapters, added page after page of additional matter. This is his final revision. In discussing this edition with a friend while in America, Mr. Wells said that the revisions would make the original English edition look like a Stone Age effort.

There are a hundred new illustrations, reproductions from historical paintings from the great art galleries of the world. Not only New York, but the Art Stores and Galleries of London and Paris were searched through for these. It is the finest edition of the "Outline of History" that has ever been brought out. Yet you may have it—if you mail the enclosed card at once—at an amazingly low price.

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Think of it! Finally revised, printed from brand new, clear, readable plates, with a hundred new pictures besides those that were in the discarded editions, and bound up into 4 beautiful, library-size volumes—all for *25% less than the original two-volume set would cost you even now in any book store!*

Here is our offer:

H.G. Wells' remarkable History, the most engrossing story ever told, being the complete romance of Mother Earth,

bound up into 4 regular library-size books, illustrated with a hundred famous paintings, and A year's subscription to *the Review of Reviews*,

Both Together for \$12

payable in easy, never missed payments of \$1 a month, or \$10.50 cash.

Wells begins with the dawn of time. Before there were men. Before there were even reptiles. In broad, magnificent strokes he paints the picture, bringing you straight down to today. In a few vivid pages, he brings the whole past back to life, and makes you live through it. More—he makes it all one connected story, shows you the thread of human purpose binding men together the world over from one age to another.

And the Review of Reviews makes the history of today as alive and interesting as Wells makes the years behind us. Without waste of time, it gives you the boiled-down sap of world events, equips you to discuss national and international affairs intelligently, enables you to read your daily paper with real interest and understandingly.

Only One Condition We Make.

There is only one condition—that you send in your card within ten days after you receive this letter. Such an unusual offer as this cannot be held open long. We can give you but the one chance.

Mail the enclosed card, without money, and we will send you, subject to a week's free examination, the new 4-volume Wells' "Outline of History" at 25% less than the original 2-volume price. At the same time, we will enter your subscription for one full year of *the Review of Reviews*.

Remember, you don't risk one penny. If for any reason you are dissatisfied with the History, if you don't feel that it

gives you the utmost of book value and satisfaction, return it at the end of the week at our expense, send 25 cents for the copy of the magazine delivered to you, and cancel the order.

The enclosed card obligates us only—*Not You!* Signing and mailing it puts the burden of Proof up to us.

May we hope you will *mail it today?*

Earnestly yours,

* * * * *

YOUR LAST CHANCE
to Get These 4 Volumes For 25% LESS
Than the Price of the First Two!

DEAR READER:

Do you know what is the really significant thing about all these pre-historic fossils and ancient civilizations that have been dug up in the past few years?—Not the fact that the Dinosaur eggs found in Mongolia may be 10,000,000 or 100,000,000 years old.—Nor whether the Temple of the Moon-God in Ur of the Chaldees was built before the Tower of Babel, or the Temple of the Sun-God in Mexico was more ancient still.—Not even whether mankind dates back to the primitive Ape-man of 500,000 years ago, or sprang full-grown from the mind of the Creator.

Not these things. They are, after all, of little consequence to us now. The really significant thing is that from them men are, for the first time, beginning to get an understanding of that infinite "life-principle" that moves the universe—and of the untold possibilities it opens up to them.

You read in Wells' "Outline of History" how for millions of years this "life-principle" was threatened by every kind of danger—sudden climactic changes, lack of food, floods, earthquakes, droughts, volcanic eruptions.

But to it each new danger was merely an incentive to finding a new resource. Pursued through water, it sought land. Pursued over land, it sought the air. To breath in the sea, it put forth gills. Stranded on land, it made lungs. To protect itself from glacial cold, it grew fur. In temperate climes, hair. Subject to alternate heat and cold, it produced feathers. To meet one danger it developed a shell. For another, fleetness of foot or wing. But ever, from the beginning, it showed its power to meet every creature need.

All through the history of life and mankind you see this same directing Intelligence—call it Nature, call it Providence, call it what you will—rising to meet every need of life.

No man can read Wells' without realizing that the whole purpose of existence is growth—that life is dynamic, not static. That it is ever moving forward—not standing still. That electricity, magnetism, gravitation, light, are all but different manifestations of the same infinite and eternal energy in which we ourselves live and move and have our being.

Wells' gives you an understanding of your own potentialities. You learn from it how to work with and take advantage of the infinite energy all about you. The terror of the man at the crossways, not knowing which road to take, is no terror to the reader of Wells. His future is of his own making. For the only law of infinite energy is the law of supply. The "life-principle" that formed the dinosaur to meet one set of needs and the butterfly to meet another is not going to fail in your case. You have but to understand it—to work in harmony with it—to get from it what you need.

Your Last Chance To Get Wells' At The Low Price

The low price we have been making on Wells' "Outline of History" was made possible only because we contracted for 100,000 sets at once.

Because we were willing to take the risk of paying the royalty on that vast quantity in advance, because we had previously sold over 150,000 copies of his one-volume edition, Wells reduced his royalties on these sets to a mere fraction of his usual amount.

But we can't hope to sell any such quantity again. We can't risk manufacturing on any such huge scale as to bring our costs down to anywhere near the present low figures.

Of the 100,000 sets we contracted for, 95,000 have been sold. Less than 5,000 are left. And if you had seen the orders streaming in at a 500-a-day clip last season, you would realize how quickly these 5,000 sets will melt away.

While we still have books left, we want them to go to our own old customers and friends. We cannot, of course, discriminate against outsiders; we must fill the orders as they come in. But we can urge you to speak for your set now.

Here Is Our Offer.

Send the enclosed card—without money—and we will forward to you, postpaid, a set of Wells' "Outline of History" for a week's *Free Examination*. Open it up anywhere. Read a few pages. Then try to lay it down! If you don't find, as the *New York Tribune* put it, that "It's the most exciting book ever written," *send it back*. Scarcely one man in twenty has been willing to part with his set, once he's opened it!

The payments?—You will laugh at them! \$1 a month for 12 months for this magnificent set of Wells', and a year's subscription to the *Review of Reviews* magazine.

You know the *Review of Reviews*. You know that it gives you the best that can be gotten in science, literature, drama, politics, philosophy and thought, in books, in international questions. In brief, it gives you all that is necessary to keep your mind alert and well-informed on the affairs of the day. It furnishes you the basis for sound

conversation and clear thinking. It places you and keeps you among America's "Intellectual Aristocracy."

Not tomorrow, nor after lunch—for things to be done after lunch are frequently not done at all—but now, while this letter is before you, pencil your name and address on the enclosed card and drop it in the mail.

Then the orders may come and the books may go—by the hundreds—but you will be sure of your set by immediate prepaid shipment.

"It's been worth more to me than a College course," wrote one reader.

"If you can read but one book during the year," said President Hopkins of Dartmouth, "that book should be Wells' "Outline of History."

The enclosed card brings it to you for a week—free.

* * * * *

Why is it a tabloid newspaper will outsell a clean, well-edited sheet by ten to one? Why? Because its appeal is to the sob sister, to the emotions. Why is it a Billy Sunday or an Aimee MacPherson can crowd great tabernacles, while your ordinary clergyman preaches to empty pews?

Emotion! The religion that brings masses of converts, that sweeps whole cities, is not an appeal to the intellect—but to the emotions! When Mohammed first preached his doctrines, they were sane and moderate—and they attracted few converts. He added the emotional features—*and swept over half the world!*

You may not be trying to start a new religion, but you do want action of some kind. And to get action, you need to arouse emotion on the part of your reader. You may convince his intellect that the thing you want him to do is right and is for his best advantage, but until you arouse in him an urgent desire to do it, until you make him feel that whatever effort it requires is of no account compared with

the satisfaction it will bring him, your letter is lacking in its most important essential. It may have everything else, but if it lacks that faculty of arousing the right feeling, you might as well throw it away. It will never make you money.

Fifteen years ago there was a young fellow in a small Connecticut town with a book—and an idea. The book had been written for serious-minded men, to help show them the way to success. But letters and advertising telling of this marvelous secret of power had left their readers cold—so cold that the original publisher had failed. The young fellow had been his bookkeeper, and had bought the plates and stock at the sale of the publisher's effects.

You see, this young fellow had an idea he could sell that book. He believed that a mere description of its contents, such as had been used in the letters and ads, was not enough, that the important thing was to arouse the reader's desire through an appeal to his ambition. He had only \$200 left, but he decided to gamble those \$200 on selling the book.

To make a long story short, he did it. He spent his \$200, and from them he got \$2,000 worth of direct orders by mail! That \$2,000 was the start of a small fortune. He promptly spent every cent of it in selling more books, pyramiding his receipts like a stock gambler does his winnings. In the fifteen years that have elapsed since then, that young man has sold more than \$2,000,000 worth of books. His name is A. L. Pelton. The book was "Power of Will." And he sold his two millions, as he did his two thousands, by making his appeal—not merely to the intellect, but to the emotions.

And his case is typical of every great mail success. What sold the "Book of Etiquette?" It had been gathering dust on the shelves of Doubleday, Page & Co.'s stock room for ten to fifteen years when Nelson Doubleday suddenly brought it to life and sold a million copies. What caused the sudden demand? Not, you may be sure, any wave of culture or

politeness sweeping over the nation, but simply the *fear* aroused in the readers of Doubleday's letters and advertisements that some unconscious gaucherie might cause them embarrassment.

Why do people buy reducing belts, face creams, hair tonics? Why do they diet and go through arduous exercises? Not because their reason tells them they need these things, still less because they like them—but *because their emotion of vanity impels them!*

Appeal to the reason, by all means. Give people a logical excuse for buying that they can tell to their friends and use to salve their own consciences. But if you want to sell goods, if you want action of any kind, *base your real urge upon some primary emotion!*

CHAPTER 3

GETTING NEWS INTEREST INTO YOUR LETTER

[Table of Contents](#)

What the world wants, and has wanted since the beginning, is news— something to flag its jaded interest, something to stir its emotions.

Tell a man something new and you have his attention. Give it a personal twist or show its relation to his business and you have his interest.

Do you know how Wells' "Outline of History" was first put across? On its news value! "The Oldest Man in the World," "Was This the Flood of the Biblical Story" "The Finding of Moses," and so on. Newspaper headlines, all of them. News interest in every one of them. Rich man, poor man, beggar man, thief—all stop to read if you can put news interest into your letters.

"When the Rattlesnake Struck!" Can't you see yourself reading on to see what happened? Well, that is what thousands of others did every time that headline was used. It sold hundreds of thousands of O. Henry books.

"Will a Yellow King Rule the World ?" Which one of us would not be startled enough by such a headline to read on and see if there was any reason to fear that such a thing might ever really happen?

"What is the Unpardonable Sin in all Nature?" Can you imagine any reader so biased as not to go on at least a few lines further to find the answer to that question? And if you can lead him on those few lines, it is your own fault if you can not make your story so interesting that it will carry him right down to the last line and the order blank or card that follows it.

A business man is no different from any other kind. Watch him on his way to the office. Compare the time he gives the financial and business news with the way he eagerly devours the details of the latest murder or scandal, or the attention he gives the "sports" page. He wants news interest. He will get it in his business as far as he can, but if it is not there, he will look outside his business for it.

So if you want his attention, go after it as the newspaper paragrapher does. He knows he has to compete with a thousand other distractions, so he studies his reader and then presents first that side of his story most likely to attract the reader's interest.

You have to compete in the same way for your reader's attention. He is not looking for your letter. He has a thousand and one other things more important to him to occupy his mind. Why should he divert his attention from them to plow through pages of type about you or your projects?

You have, we shall assume, decided upon the emotion your letter must arouse in your reader to get him to do as you want. You know that every man is constantly holding a mental conversation with himself, the burden of which is his own interests—his business, his loved ones, his advancement. And you have tried to chime in on that conversation with something that fits in with his thoughts. But some propositions do not lend themselves readily to this. What are you to do then? Look for news value! Look for something in or about your proposition of such news interest that it will divert the reader's mind temporarily from his own affairs, then bring it back by showing how your proposition fits in with those affairs or is necessary to their successful accomplishment. How are you to do it?

Perhaps the best way to explain that is to show a few examples of the way it has been successfully done. Here are some typical openings which get the reader's attention and lead logically on to a description of your proposition:

Do you know what was Socrates' chief characteristic? It was his pertinacious curiosity, his desire to know the why and the wherefore of everything, his questing for fundamental reasons.

It was this curiosity that helped make him represent the highest achievement of Greek civilization. It is that same questing for fundamentals that makes the Bland Advertising Agency so invaluable when a new product is to be introduced, a new field opened, and a new method tried.

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In the city of Baghdad lived Hakeem, the Wise One, and many there were who came to him for counsel, which he gave freely to all, asking nothing in return. One day there came to him a young man, who had spent much but got little, and asked: "Tell me, Wise One, what shall I do to receive the most for that which I spend?"

Hakeem answered: "A thing that is bought or sold has no value unless it contains that which cannot be bought or sold. Look for the Priceless Ingredient."

"But what is this Priceless Ingredient?" persisted the young man. Spoke then the Wise One. "My son, the Priceless Ingredient of every product in the market place is the honor and integrity of him who made it. Consider his name before you buy."

For 25 years, Squibbs has been making, etc.

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What is the eternal question which stands up and looks you and every sincere man squarely in the eye every morning?

"How can I better my condition?"

That is the real life question which confronts you, and will haunt you every day till you solve it. Read carefully the

enclosed booklet, and see if you don't find in it the answer to this important life question which you and every man must solve if he expects ever to have more each Monday morning after pay day than he had the week before.

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Your grandfather in his buggy traveled no faster than Caesar; in individual transportation he was almost as limited as a citizen of Rome.

Suddenly—the automobile—and our generation is unshackled! With a car, miles shrivel up into minutes, and the humblest family leaves its doorstep to own the continent.

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All day long, from the minute your mind takes the trail early in the morning, until you quit the game late at night—you are figuring on ways to sell more goods, to win more trade, to possess more executive ability, to be a bigger business builder.

This is the one great heart and soul aim of which you are ever conscious—the mastery of your business, the rising to supremacy in your line, the steady year in and year out increase of financial income. You'd willingly spend a few minutes to learn new ways of directing and developing your mental energies so as to cut out waste motion and make every move count for 100% progress.

Did you ever stop to think that the average man's brain wastes more energy than the worst old rattle-box that ever squandered good steam? It's the knowing how to apply your brain-power—how to think, how to reason, how to conserve mental energy, how to concentrate, that alone can make you a leader in your profession.

And it was to teach you how to think, how to concentrate, how to apply the basic fundamentals of all science to your own daily problems that the Blank Course was written. It shows you, etc.

* * * * *

It was payday in Connellsville, Pa., and I was sitting in a local store, talking with the owner—When a laborer came in. He said he wanted so-and-so, that he, etc.

So I thought this: You want more business—want your store recognized as the, etc.

* * * * *

If you are tired of a salaried job, if you want to get into a big-paying, independent business of your own, I have a proposition that will interest you.

* * * * *

Here's a little "inside information" that we're passing on to you, because you are a home-maker, and as such it concerns you.

We got a little low on summer stock the other day, so our buyer, Mr. Smith (he's full of ideas and enthusiasm) went to the source of supplies, and we just got a letter from him, thus: (Then give the news of some special buy that enables you to offer a wonderful bargain.)

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What is it worth to keep baby's milk sweet? By making your refrigerator measure up to that all-important job, you make it measure up to all other jobs.

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Some time today or tomorrow or next month, in practically every commercial office in the U.S., an important executive will sit back in his chair and study a list of names on a sheet of white paper before him.

Your name may be on it. A position of responsibility is open, and he is face to face with the old, old problem—"Where can I find the man?"

The faces, the words, the deeds, the possibilities of various employees pass through his mind in quick review, and he realizes once again how little an employer really knows about their hopes, their ambitions, their particular ability to handle more important work. That is where the Blank School can help him—and you.

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What has given the high values to Iowa farm land? Corn. What has given the rapid advance in farm values to all the central western states? Corn. What is the biggest factor in making the farm lands of lower Louisiana advance? Corn. Why? "Because they are in the corn belt."

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If your expenses were doubled tomorrow, could you meet them—without running heavily into debt? If you had to have more money on which to live—to support those dependent upon you—could you make it?

You could if you had the training afforded by our Course. It has doubled other men's salaries. It can do the same for you.

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For 20 years I was an exile, shunned by people on every hand, unwanted in the business world, impossible socially, a mental and physical wreck, a failure at everything. I was

despondent, almost devoid of hope. Life to me was a burden.

And then I learned to talk! (And so on with description of a course to cure stammering.)

* * * * *

Right around New Year's, most of us are somehow thinking about what we'll accomplish within the next twelve months. Often we get to figuring and planning and laying it all out beforehand.

So maybe it will mean a lot of inspiration to you, as it did to me, to read.

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I have come to look upon it as a pity that circumstances should ever combine to place men of much ability in a position where they are not obliged to begin with a struggle for existence. For most individuals are so constituted that they are obliged to do so. The saving event in many a man's life is the blow that takes away the props that have supported him, and leaves him to look out for himself.

Many persons have told me that this is true of their own lives, and we know it is true of ours. So instead of railing against the fate that makes it necessary for you to dig in and make something of yourself, thank God for it, and start now getting ready. The Blank Course will fit you, etc.

The old gentleman who resigned from the Patent Office in 1886 because, as he said, everything had been invented, had nothing on the most of us. There are times when we all begin to feel that mechanical equipment is about as perfect as man can make it.

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