

THE BOY BROKER

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649377947

The boy broker by Frank A. Munsey

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Cover @ 2017

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FRANK A. MUNSEY

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BROKER**

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NEW YORK
FRANK A. MUNSEY

1898

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THE BOY BROKER.

I.

"GIVE me the best morning paper you have, please."

"The *Tribune* costs the most, if that is the one you want."

"The price will be no objection providing the paper contains what I wish to find."

"You want work, I s'pose."

"Yes, I am looking for employment."

"I knew it—just in from the country, too," said the newsboy comically. "Well, what you want is the *Herald* or *World*. They are just loaded with wants."

"Thank you. You may give me both."

"Both! Whew, you must be well fixed!" replied the young metropolitan, handing over the papers, as he regarded his new customer curiously.

"What does that mean?" asked the latter.

"You don't know what well fixed means? You must have come from way back! Why, it means—it means that you're solid, that you've got the stuff, don't you see?"

"I'm solid enough for a boy of my age, if that is the idea," replied the lad from the country rather sharply, as a tinge of color rose to his cheeks.

"Shucks! That ain't the idea at all," said the street boy, in a tone that seemed apologetic. "What I mean is that you're a kind of boodle alderman—you're rich. Do you see now?"

"Oh! That's it. Well, you see, I didn't know what you meant. I never heard those terms up in Vermont. No, I'm not rich; but, on the contrary, have so little money that I must commence work at once."

"And that is why you bought two papers, so you can take in the whole business. You've got a big head, Vermont, any way, and would do stunnin' on mornin' papers."

"Thank you. Do you mean at selling them?"

"Yes, of course. You wouldn't give 'em away, would you?"

"Well, no, I should not be inclined to do so."

"That sounds more like it. Perhaps I'll give you a job, if you can't find anything else."

"Thank you. I may be very glad to get a chance to sell papers even."

"'Tain't a bad business anyhow. Me and lots of fellers makes plenty of money at it. But I s'pose you're hungry, hain't you? If you be I'll take you round to a boss place and it won't cost nothin' hardly."

"I am very much obliged to you, but I had my breakfast soon after leaving the boat."

"And I bet they done you up on the price. I tell you what it is, it takes a fellow a good while to learn to live in this city. You don't know nothin' about what it costs. Why, I know a plenty of boys that spend more—yes, I'd say so, twice as much as what I do, and they don't throw no style into their livin' either. You see, they don't know how and hain't got no taste, any way. But I like your looks, Vermont, and ef you want any points—and you're liable to want 'em in this city, I'll bet you—why, you just call on me and I'll fix you out in big shape."

"Thank you sincerely," said the Green Mountain lad, a broad smile playing over his fine face as he regarded the drollery of his new acquaintance. "I shall need many suggestions, no doubt, for I feel almost lost in this great city. I had no idea it was so large. I was never here before, and do not know where to go for a room or meals."

"So I thought, and that's why I offered to put you into the right track. My name is Bob Huuter—I hain't got no business cards yet, but all the boys knows me, and my place of business is right round here in City Hall Park. You'll find me here 'most any time durin' business hours,"

" Boo Hunter ! Well, you may be sure I shall remember your name and place of business, for I want to see you again. But what are your business hours ? "

" Oh, yes ; I forgot that. Everybody must have business hours, of course. Well, say from five to ten in the mornin', and three to eight in the afternoon, you can find me in. "

" In ! You mean *out*, don't you—out here ? "

" Shucks ! Don't be so schoolmastery. Everybody in business says *in*. I guess I know what's proper ! "

" All right, Bob Hunter, I'll give it up. You know all about propriety in New York, and I know nothing of it, so here is my hand. I'll say good by till tonight. I must look over these papers now, and hunt for a situation. "

" I hope you'll have luck, and get a bang up place. I'll be *in* when you call tonight ; and if you hain't no objections, I'd like to know your name. It would be more handy to do business, you see. How could my clerks announce you so I'd know you, if I don't know your name ? You see, I might think it was some one that wanted to collect a bill, " continued Bob dryly, " and I'd be *out*. Don't you see how it's done ? I'd just tell my clerks to say, ' Mr. Hunter is not in ; ' so, you see, you would get left. Why, business men do it every day ! "

"My name is Herbert Randolph," replied the other, laughing heartily at his comical friend—I say friend, for he already felt convinced that he had found one in Bob Hunter.

"Herbert Randolph! That's a tony name—some old fellow I read about in school was called Randolph; most likely he was one of your relations."

The day was too cold for him to remain out in the park and read; so Herbert, acting on the advice of Bob Hunter, hurried to the great granite post office, and there, in the rotunda, ran his eye over the "wants" in his two papers.

Many columns of closely printed matter in each paper offering every conceivable position were spread out before him—a bewildering display of flattering prospects.

Young Randolph soon learned that if he stopped to read every advertisement in both journals it would be very late in the day before he could apply for any position. But should he only read a few of the wants he might fail to notice the best openings. This was a misfortune, for he was ambitious to get the right position—the position that would enable him to advance the fastest; and like all inexperienced boys, he hoped and even expected he might get it the very first time trying.

He had already marked a dozen or two adver-