

Harte Bret

# Her Letter, His Answer & Her Last Letter



Фрэнсис Брет Гарт

**Her Letter, His Answer  
& Her Last Letter**

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## Содержание

HER LETTER	5
Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.	7

# Bret Harte

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### HER LETTER

I'm sitting alone by the fire,  
Dressed just as I came from the dance,  
In a robe even *you* would admire, —  
It cost a cool thousand in France;  
I'm be-diamonded out of all reason,  
My hair is done up in a cue:  
In short, sir, "the belle of the season"  
Is wasting an hour upon you.

A dozen engagements I've broken;  
I left in the midst of a set;  
Likewise a proposal, half spoken,  
That waits – on the stairs – for me yet.  
They say he'll be rich, – when he grows up, —  
And then he adores me indeed;  
And you, sir, are turning your nose up,  
Three thousand miles off, as you read.

"And how do I like my position?"  
"And what do I think of New York?"  
"And now, in my higher ambition,  
With whom do I waltz, flirt, or talk?"  
"And isn't it nice to have riches,  
And diamonds and silks, and all that?"  
"And aren't they a change to the ditches  
And tunnels of Poverty Flat?"

Well, yes, – if you saw us out driving  
Each day in the Park, four-in-hand,  
If you saw poor dear mamma contriving  
To look supernaturally grand, —  
If you saw papa's picture, as taken  
By Brady, and tinted at that, —  
You'd never suspect he sold bacon  
And flour at Poverty Flat.

And yet, just this moment, when sitting  
In the glare of the grand chandelier, —  
In the bustle and glitter befitting  
The "finest *soirée* of the year," —  
In the mists of a *gaze de Chambéry*,

And the hum of the smallest of talk, —  
Somehow, Joe, I thought of the "Ferry,"  
And the dance that we had on "The Fork;"

Of Harrison's barn, with its muster  
Of flags festooned over the wall;  
Of the candles that shed their soft lustre  
And tallow on head-dress and shawl;  
Of the steps that we took to one fiddle,  
Of the dress of my queer *vis-à-vis*;  
And how I once went down the middle  
With the man that shot Sandy McGee;

Of the moon that was quietly sleeping  
On the hill, when the time came to go;  
Of the few baby peaks that were peeping  
From under their bedclothes of snow;  
Of that ride, — that to me was the rarest;  
Of — the something you said at the gate.  
Ah! Joe, then I wasn't an heiress  
To "the best-paying lead in the State."

Well, well, it's all past; yet it's funny  
To think, as I stood in the glare  
Of fashion and beauty and money,  
That I should be thinking, right there,  
Of some one who breasted high water,  
And swam the North Fork, and all that,  
Just to dance with old Folinsbee's daughter,  
The Lily of Poverty Flat.

But goodness! what nonsense I'm writing!  
(Mamma says my taste still is low),  
Instead of my triumphs reciting,  
I'm spooning on Joseph, — heigh-ho!  
And I'm to be "finished" by travel, —  
Whatever's the meaning of that.  
Oh, why did papa strike pay gravel  
In drifting on Poverty Flat?

Good-night! — here's the end of my paper;  
Good-night! — if the longitude please, —

## **Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.**

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