

(editor's note: This paper was transcribed from a handwritten cursive copy with various difficulties. For a perfect rendition, the reader might wish to consult the original, itself a copy, in the volume entitled *Literary Club Papers* 2, 1886 – 1887 June 5, '86 to May 21, '87)

Dear Dr. Carr:

Having promised you an article for your budget, I take this opportunity of writing you a private letter, setting forth the reasons why I have not done so. For some time past what little [money] I have has been employed in other channels: and I have put off the fulfillment of my promise until I find it impossible to comply with your request. Just at this time I am completely broken up having but two evenings ago enjoyed the pleasures of a whist party. On Wednesday I met our friend Sayler, otherwise Shorty, on Fourth Street; and he, knowing of my fondness for the game of whist informed me that he was going to have a little game at his room at the hotel that evening, and wanted me to come. Of course I gladly accepted the invitation and was there on time. Before long the party assembled and there was the Solicitor and his brother the Judge, the Doctor and his friend the Chancellor, Shorty, and myself. All of us being well acquainted, we were prepared for a good time. In one corner of the room was spread a little lunch table decorated with bottles containing various liquids; and before beginning the preparations for the game, we were invited to sample the hair restorer. There were several wine-bottles with beautiful labels on them; but the contents were as vile a concoction as you could well imagine. But you can probably appreciate the situation when I inform you that Shorty used to be one of the trustees of the Literary Club, and this wine was some that he had appropriated for himself. I do not wish to insinuate ought against the present trustees; I know it is one of the unwritten rules of the club that the Trustees shall be abused but the present Board should rather be extolled for their attention to the pleasures of the club. And right here let me say that if ever the opportunity presents itself I will make a public declaration of my admiration for them; for, besides being the three handsomest men in the club, they possess qualities that should endear them to all lovers of good wine and cigars. That brat Hunter has of late been somewhat derelict in his duty; but some excuse must be made for him as much as he has decided to join the miserable army of married men; and I presume by this time has received his commission. Baby Greve has manfully assumed responsibility and as we can all attest, perfection has been perfected. Simeon, though young at the business gives promise of future usefulness and does full justice – at the table. Pardon this digression – but on the personnel of our present board, one can hardly be complementary enough. But to return to our subject.

We seated ourselves around the card table, and then I discovered that there were six of us present – too many for one table and not enough for two: and upon remarking the fact was told that we were going to play American whist and that six was a very good number. Being unfamiliar with the game, they all volunteered instructions and said that I could learn best if I would act as banker. I didn't know what that meant but was willing to do as they said. So Shorty got out some little round pieces of bone that he called counters; and said that for convenience we would place a value on them, and the banker would sell them to the different players and at the end of the game he would redeem them so that everything would be fair and nobody would lose anything for he knew that I would not play any game for money. So they called the blue pieces one dollar, the red ones fifty cents, and the white ones ten cents and each bought ten dollars worth. They paid me the

money; but as I was banker, it was not necessary for me to put any money in the box; for at the end I would just have to pay them back their money and every thing would be square. They told me the object of the game was to see who would get the most of the counters, that the cards were dealt around one at a time until each had five, and that by putting in the center of the table a certain number of the counters you had the privilege of discarding some of your cards and drawing the same number from the pack to see if you could improve your hand. Shorty told me that two cards of the same denomination made what he called a pair but that three of the same kind was better. He said that I would soon pick it up as we went along. I had several good hands during the evening but somehow somebody else had better ones and it was not long before I had to get some more counters out of the box. Before a great while I got the hang of the thing and enjoyed the game very much (the Rye whiskey was better than the wine). It looked mighty pretty to see each man with two or three piles of counters before him; so when my counters got low and didn't look like the rest I helped myself out of the box. I being banker, it didn't make any difference and I like to have my side of the table make a good showing (the Scotch whiskey when made into a toddy was grand). After lunch we went at the game again and had a jolly good time. I got quite expert for a beginner but when we quit there was a circumstance that I can't make out: each of the 5 put ten dollars in the bank and when I redeemed there was \$93 worth of counters handed in. I don't see how I could have made the mistake. The next time I play, I will let some one else be banker, and may be I will find out how it happened. We parted singing auld lang syne and the clerk of the hotel put us in a carriage and told the driver where to take us. Oh, how my head does ache. But I like the game.

Yours

Jinks (F. A. Hunter)

Budget

Carr Editor

Feby 26, 1887