4. America, America

By the time he was twenty, Charlie began to dream of going to America. He wanted adventure, but even more he wanted to try his luck in a new world. England already knew him well. People liked him and he made them laugh, but somehow the future did not promise him all the success he longed for. America, on the other hand, offered new hope.

When the opportunity came his way, he took it. An American company needed a principal comedian for their tour of the USA, Charlie got the job, and with the other members of the troupe he sailed across the Atlantic to New York City. He was there for two years, but his work did not go smoothly. His jokes were very British and so was his accent. American audiences did not laugh much. Soon he began to feel lonely and often wanted to go back to England. When the tour ended, he was glad to leave.

Charlie loved England and felt at home there, but deep down he knew that his future was in America. Thus, after only six months in England, he went back there again. For five months he toured the country with his group. It was after that tour, while the group were resting in Philadelphia, that Charlie got the chance of his lifetime.

A telegram arrived for him one day from firm in New York called Kessel and Bauman. They wanted him to go and see them. Charlie thought they were lawyers. He had a rich aunt somewhere in the States. Perhaps she had died and left him a fortune. With that exciting thought, he quickly took the train to New York.

When he arrived, he was disappointed. Kessel and Bauman, it turned out, were not lawyers but producers of motion pictures. Really, though, this was great news for Charlie. They worked for the Keystone Comedy Film Company. The company's founder, Mr. Mack Sennett, had seen Charlie playing the part of a drunk some years earlier. He wanted Charlie to appear in the Keystone comedies instead of another actor.

For Charlie this was a big chance. He had often thought of working in films and had talked about it with his manager, but the people around him did not know how to make them, so the idea was dropped. He was not too keen about the Keystone comedies, but he might become an international star. After that, whatever he did, he would stay famous.

He was to appear in three films a week with a salary of one hundred and fifty dollars. That was twice as much as Charlie was getting on the stage. However, he said he wanted two hundred. Finally he was offered a contract for one year, with one hundred and fifty dollars for the first three months and one hundred and seventy-five dollars for the remaining nine. He had never been offered so much money in all his life. Work would start as soon as his tour ended. The year was 1913, and Charlie was twenty-four years old at the time.

EXERCISES (4)

Ａ　（　）に適切な日本語を入れ、本文のあらすじを完成させなさい．

チャーリーはイギリスでの成功に飽きたらず、（ア　 　　　　　　　 ）を望んでいた．そのうち、アメリカ巡業の（イ　 　 　　）の仕事が入り、ニューヨークに渡ったが、成功せずに帰国した．

　しかし、２度目の渡米中、チャンスに巡り会う．数年前にチャーリーが（ウ　　　　　　）を演じるのを見ていたマック・セネットというプロデューサーに（エ　 　 ）出演を持ちかけられ、キーストン社と契約した．1913年、チャーリー（オ　　　）歳のときのことであった．

Ｂ　本文の内容に合うものにはＴ、合わないものにはＦを書きなさい．

(1) In America Charlie couldn't succeed partly because of the difference between British and American English. ( )

(2) Charlie felt so lonely in America that he decided never to return there. ( )

(3) Charlie got the biggest chance in his life during his stay in New York City. ( )

(4) He asked the Keystone Company to make his salary higher, which was accepted. ( )

Ｃ　日本文の意味に合うように、（ ）内の語句を並べかえなさい．

(1) あなたは疲れているが、私も疲れている．

You are tired (ｱ.I ｲ.and ｳ.so ｴ.am).

(2) 私が到着するまでに、彼は出発していた．

He had started (ｱ.the ｲ.arrived ｳ.time ｴ.by ｵ.I).

(3) 彼が本当のことを知ったのは昨日のことだった．

It (ｱ.yesterday ｲ.he ｳ.was ｴ.that ｵ.knew) the truth.