

TRYING TO MAKE "A HIT."

The boy who is dancing a jig,
And the girl in the chorus who sings,
And the man who exhibits a pig
He was taught to do wonderful things
May die disappointed, but still, in their
hearts, they are hoping away
To make the great thing which they call
"A hit!"—
Some day.

The poet who scribbles and sighs
And squanders his paper and ink,
Who cuds his brain and who tries
To think and cause others to think,
May die disappointed, but still, in his
heart, he is hoping away
To sing out a song that will make
"A hit!"—
Some day.

The man who is daubing his paint
On the canvas no other shall buy—
The man who with hunger is faint,
But is never too hungry to try—
May die disappointed, but still, in his
heart, he is hoping away
To lay on the lines that will make
"A hit!"—
Some day.

The man who is waving his arms
Like a windmill churning the air,
Has few of the orator's charms—
He may die disappointed, but still, in his
heart, he is hoping away
To deliver the words that will make
"A hit!"—
Some day.

O let each go on with his part!
'Tis better a thousand should fail
Than that one should be taken from art
Through a critic's discouraging wail!
They may die disappointed, but where is
the judge who has power to say
Which one of those trying shall ne'er
"ake 'a hit!"—
Some day!

S. E. Kiser.

Her Sole Ambition.

By Rufus Tracy Stroh.



HARMING Sybil was at her desk, busily writing, when I entered the room.

She glanced up for a second, smiled cheerfully and said:

"Sit down, Don. I'll be at leisure in a moment."

Now I wasn't in a mood for waiting, so I didn't sit down.

"It seems to me that you have grown wonderfully industrious of late," I remarked.

"Yes," replied Sybil. "I have."

"What are you writing?" I asked.

"Another love letter to Burns?"

"No; of course not!" she answered. "The idea—I don't write love letters."

"Indeed!" I said. "What are you doing, then?" And I peered over her shoulder.

"It seems to me that you have grown wonderfully ill-mannered of late," she retorted, covering the pages with her hands, and giving me an indignant glance, but not before I had seen the first few lines.

"Ho, ho!" I cried. "A story, is it?"

"A novel," corrected Sybil, flushing.

"That's worse and more of it," I muttered, half to myself.

"It is what?" cried Sybil, turning swiftly.

"I said, 'Let's hear more of it,'" I replied, calmly.

"Oh, I couldn't—not now. But I'll let you help me read proof."

"That's very kind of you, to be sure," I said. "But Burns could do much better."

"A plague on Burns!" ejaculated Sybil, crossly. Then, suddenly, "Why, I do believe you're jealous of him."

"I—jealous? Not a bit of it, my dear cousin! I was just in a teasing mood, that's all."

"Well, I wish you had chosen a more opportune moment to gratify your whim. Don't you see that I am very busy?"

"No," I lied. "I hadn't noticed it before."

"Well, I am. And your coming spoiled one of my best chapters. My thoughts are so scattered now that I can't write another line."

"I'm glad of it," I said, unfeelingly. "You can devote your time to me. Come, now, Sy, tell me the name of your story."

"I haven't given it a title yet," she admitted. "Authors usually leave that until the last."

"So you are an author—an authoress, rather?"

"Not now, maybe. But I intend to be, some day. Just think how pleasant it must be to have the whole world talking of one's books!"

"Yes, and the critics, too," I added. "Oh, they help to make one famous," she declared.

"Sometimes. Not always. It all depends upon the merit of the book or the social standing of the author."

"Haven't I both qualifications?"

"I'm not certain about the first," I said. "You won't let me see even the beginning. By the way, how does it open? Roses, June, sunshine, river, and so on?"

"No, it's not such a stereotyped affair as you may imagine," she replied. "It begins with a splendid church wedding."

"Good beginning, bad ending?" I quoted. "And when do the hero and heroine meet? I suppose you have those characters in it?"

"Yes, indeed! All good-novels must have those essential features," she answered.

"And love, too," I added.

"Of course. That is a foregone conclusion."

"How do you keep the two main characters separated until the end?" I inquired. "Do you make them quarrel, or marry each to the wrong person, and then kill off those poor, offending puppets in time to secure the popular ending?"

"I'd have you know that this is original, Don," she said. "I have no quarrels, no separations at all. They are commonplace. I simply compel the man to wait until my heroine will marry him."

"Pooh! That's not at all uncommon," I said.

"Isn't it?" she replied, surprised and disappointed, judging from the expression of her face.

"No," I said. "Why, I know of two persons who are living just such a romance."

"Who are they?" she asked quickly. "That would be telling," I replied. "But your characters—are they drawn from real life?"

"Most of them are," she said. "What does your heroine look like? Give me a description of her. I suppose she is a blonde, with chemical hair and blue eyes."

"The very opposite," said Sybil. "Good!" I exclaimed enthusiastically. "A brunette is my ideal."

Sybil glanced at me sharply. She is one of the forest of blondes. I did not meet her gaze, but stared dreamily at the figures on the ceiling.

"I suppose she looks very much like Pauline McGrath," I continued.

"Not in the least," contradicted Sybil. "She is much prettier than Pauline."

"So?" said I. "Why, I think Miss McGrath is a very beautiful girl."

"Do you?" retorted Sybil, with clouded brow. Then, a moment later, "It seems to me that you have come to see me just to be disagreeable. I wish you'd go."

Now, such words from any lips but Sybil's would have frozen me in an instant. But I knew her too well.

"No," I assured her. "I came here intending to be very pleasant. But the turn which affairs took quite made me forget my mission."

"I saw that Sybil was becoming interested, so I continued:

"The truth is, I have decided to get married."

"To whom?" gasped Sybil.

"Oh, I haven't made up my mind on that yet. I came over to see whether you might not have compassion on me."

"Don't be silly, Don," she warned. "I'm not," I said gravely. "Don't you love me, Sy?"

"Yes, of course," she replied quickly, "as a—"

"Second cousin should," I finished. She laughed a little hysterically.

"Then you will marry me, Sy?" I said slowly.

"No, I don't think I can," said she.

"And why not?" I asked. "I suppose your book has so absorbed your thoughts as to leave none for marriage."

"That is about true," she confessed. "There is only one thing that I desire, and that is to become famous."

Then I burst into a hearty laugh. Sybil looked very much surprised.

"You do not know how happy you have made me," I said, still laughing. "Happy?" repeated Sybil, wonderingly.

"Yes," I answered. "No doubt you think I ought to feel quite forlorn and cut up. But I'm not. Quite the reverse, I assure you."

I paused to note the effect of this, my last card. There was a look of mingled anger and amazement on Sybil's face.

"You see, Sybil," I continued, "I was really afraid you had learned to care for me. You remember the last three summers at the seashore?" She nodded. "And the past two winters in the city?" She nodded again. "Well, considering all that, I am truly glad I have not awakened any other feelings than those of friendship."

I saw her wince at that, and I felt my conscience goading me, but I had to carry out my lie.

"Of course," I rattled on, "if I had found that you loved me, I should have married you. As it is, however, I am free to follow my own sweet will." And I arose to take my leave.

"You're not going, Don?" she said.

"Yes," I answered. "I must make another call. And since you are my best friend"—I emphasized the word—"I may confide a little secret to you. I truly believe that Pauline McGrath cares for me, and I am going over now to find out."

Sybil did not speak, and I went into the hallway to get my top coat. I was putting it on when I detected the rustle of skirts behind me. I pretended not to have heard, however, and hummed a few bars of a light song while arranging my tie before the dresser.

"Don!" said a low voice behind me. "Come to offer your congratulations already?" I said. "Don't be too certain as to my fate."

"Don," repeated the voice, with a noticeable catch in it. "I believe there is something I would rather be than a great writer."

"Is there?" I cried joyfully. And I removed my top coat again.

"But your ideal?" said Sybil, after a few minutes had elapsed.

"Oh," said I, "such things are pleasant subjects for day dreams, but we never meet them in real life. Beside," I added softly, "one may change his ideal."

There was another blissful pause.

"How about your novel, Sybil? What will become of it and your fame?"

"Oh, they can wait. But love—love can't."—Waverley Magazine.

A Speedy Kentucky Fishworm.

The other day Jeff Eddins noticed a fishing worm coming out of the ground at a rate of speed he thought it impossible for a worm of that kind to attain. After landing on the surface it kept up its gait, which was accounted for when a mole popped out of the ground and took after the worm. The mole was killed and the worm spared.

—Burlington Recorder.

Crape Makers' Contracts.

Girls employed in the crape manufacture in Europe are under a curious contract not to engage in any housework after their hours of labor. The reason is lest their hands should become coarse and unfitted for the delicate nature of their employment.

The Detroit Journal is moved to remark that walking encyclopedias and walking dictionaries are often too poor to ride.

Alfred Austin says he never reads American criticisms of his poems. This may account for the fact that Alf keeps on writing them.

Germany has advanced furthest in electric railway work among the European countries, with Great Britain and France following in the order named.

The customary reports that microbes lurk in kisses and ice cream soda water have been put in circulation. But statistics show that ice cream soda water has suffered no diminution of popularity.

A New York man with an income of \$50,000 a year has committed suicide. He was probably despondent because of the poor prospect of making it \$75,000 and thus getting into a position where the strain of life would be eased somewhat.

With reference to China the situation has changed with such nations as Russia and Germany. As Cecil Rhodes called the British flag a "great commercial asset," so the foreign offices are coming to regard the missionary in China as a great political asset. The killing of one of them is worth a seaport. The slaughter of half a dozen may be worth a whole province, observes the Louisville Courier-Journal.

Pekin is of little interest to a business man. There are no foreign stores of any account and no manufacturing. Ruin, filth and the direst poverty are everywhere evident in this, the dirtiest city in China. Minister Conger expressed the hope that more American business men will soon awake to the opportunities for them in China. He says it is not pleasant to sit idly by and see the English, Germans and other European people furnish all the machinery and manufactured goods in Pekin. American products are as hard to find in China as the proverbial needle in a haystack.

According to our Paris correspondent there is a tendency in the French fashion centre to bring about a revival of the hoop skirt or crinoline, states the Dry Goods Economist. Considerable uncertainty seems to prevail as to whether the revival can be effected or not. We hardly think, however, that such a cumbersome and ridiculous fashion could be adopted in these days of common sense dress, even in Paris, and we are satisfied that the athletic go-ahead American woman is not going to handicap herself by a return to the enormous balloon skirts of forty years ago.

Returns just issued by the British Board of Agriculture are dismal reading for the English farmer. From them it is learned that the ever increasing importation of dead meat to the United Kingdom has reached the daily average of over 2300 tons, while wheat, butter, eggs, rabbits and game have all enormously increased in the extent of the importation. The foreign products being almost invariably cheaper, the farmers are confronted with the prospect of eventually having no home market. For these conditions the Board of Agriculture suggests no remedy.

Fire insurance experts report that the last year has been one of great fire losses. They think the "moral hazard," as the risk of people burning their own property to get the insurance money is called, was probably smaller than usual on account of good times. When buildings are pretty well occupied there is less temptation to commit the offense than in a period of stagnation. Just now, electricity comes in for a good share of the blame for fires. As a cause, it operates for the most part out of sight, behind walls and under floors, and where the evidence of its work perishes in the flames.

The monetary value to a small community of the presence of a great university is aptly shown in figures collected by the statistician of the senior class of Yale. During the four years' stay of these young men, numbering 327, they have spent a million and a quarter of dollars. The grand total for the university may be estimated on this basis, with an enrollment for the four classes of 2517. The value to local business of the sums stated and suggested lies chiefly in the fact that they are made up of innumerable and steady small expenditures. New Haven can afford to wink at the pranks of the youngsters, at the rate of some \$2,500,000 a year distributed among the shopkeepers.

THE GIANT ANT-EATER.

Something About the Strange Beast in the Bronx Park Zoo.

At the new zoological gardens in Bronx Park, New York City, there is an exhibition from Venezuela a giant ant-eater, one of the most outlandish creatures in all the domain of nature. It is an animal about two and a half feet high. The body and tail taken together measure about seven feet in length. The tail is usually carried curved over the back, draping and shading the body. In appearance the bushy tail may be likened to a clump of ornamental grass. The head is very small, but it is prolonged into a snout a foot or more in length. The mouth is at the extremity of this snout.

The ant-eater belongs to that group of the animal kingdom known as the Edentates, a class usually toothless. If they have any teeth at all, they are very few in number, of a rudimentary or simple form, in the back of the head. The ant-eaters are toothless. They resemble in this respect birds, and they furthermore bear a resemblance to the bird creation, in the possession of a muscular gizzard-like stomach. One feature of the Edentates is that they all have some peculiarity in the covering of the body. The armadillo, for instance, has a shell of armor, the pangolin a series of shingle-like scales; the aard vark, native to the Transvaal, a pig-like skin, scantily covered with hair, and lastly the ant-eater with a bushy tail and the body plentifully covered with hair.

The ant-eater is in many ways unlike other animals. The most striking dissimilarity is in its mouth, which does not open and shut with an up-and-down movement of the lower jaw, as that of all other quadrupeds, but it is a mere aperture, opening only enough to admit the passage of the foot long whip-like tongue.

In captivity the ant-eater is fed on bread and milk. In its native haunts, the forests of South America, it feeds exclusively on termites, or, as they are commonly called, white ants. These termites abound in the wilds of tropical America, and the ant-eater tears open with his sharp foreclaws their conical mud nests, and with its slender tongue licks up the inmates out of every nook and crevice.

The ant-eater has a queer way of walking—it is the manner in which it uses its fore limbs. The claws of its fore limbs are so constructed that they are incapable of sustaining the weight of the body, but are turned backward, compelling the animal to stand and walk on the outer surface of the wrists. When it ambles around, awkwardly as it appears, it seems to be using two amputated fore limbs.

The specimen at the zoological garden is of gentle and harmless disposition, allowing itself to be handled. The keeper can stroke its head with impunity. There is, of course, no danger of being bit by this toothless creature. It is now temporarily quartered in the green-house.—Forest and Stream.

Conservation of Chromographic Energy.

"My husband," said the lady who combed her hair straight back from her brow, "used to waste words a good deal, but he has gradually outgrown the habit since he and I have known each other."

"And how has this happened?" the other woman asked.

"It has just been a sort of natural development. Evolution, you might perhaps call it. The first letter he ever wrote to me was shortly after we had become acquainted and before there was really anything like an understanding between us. This is the way he signed it:

"Yours, my dear Miss Winston, most sincerely, John Hamilton Easton."

"There, you see, were ten words—enough for a telegram—just to bring a commonplace friendly letter to an end. But after we became engaged his first letter to me was signed in this way:

"Yours, my darling, affectionately, John."

"That, you will observe, was a reduction of 50 per cent. from his conclusion as a mere friend. The first letter he ever wrote to me after we were married was signed:

"Yours, John."

She stopped for a moment and sighed, and then continued:

"We have been married seventeen years now. Yesterday I received a letter from him. Here is the way it was signed: 'J.'—Chicago Times-Herald.

Favors Late Suppers.

A London doctor in an interview recently spoke strongly against the theory that late suppers are injurious. He declares, in fact, that many persons who remain thin and weakly, in spite of all precautions in regard to diet, etc., owe the fact largely to habit and abstemiousness at night. He says, very truly, that physiology teaches us that, in sleeping, as in walking, there is a perpetual waste going on in the tissues of the body, and it seems but logical that nourishment should be continuous as well. The digestion of the food taken at dinner time or in the early evening is finished, as a usual thing, before or by bedtime; yet the activity of the processes of assimilation, etc., progresses for hours afterward. And when one retires with an empty stomach the result of this activity is sleeplessness and an undue wasting of the system.

Just Like a Pedagogue.

An absent-minded German professor was one day observed walking down the street with one foot continually in the gutter, the other on the pavement. A pupil, meeting him, saluted him with: "Good evening, Herr Professor. How are you?" "I was well, I thought," answered the professor; "but now I don't know what's the matter with me. For the last ten minutes I've been limping."—Answers.

GOOD ROADS NOTES.

Broad Tires For Wagons.

THE use of the bicycle is affording an illustration of the operation of the broad-tired vehicle in keeping roadways in good condition. This illustration is conspicuous after showers, when it will be noted that the tires of the bicycles beat down and harden the bicycle path much more rapidly than the narrow-tired wagons restore the roadway proper to a smooth condition. It is true that the action of the pneumatic tire is more beneficial to a soft roadway than that of the hard broad tire, but its tamping effect is an illustration of what the wide tire does in comparison with the cutting effect of the conventional narrow tire.

Were it possible to substitute broad tires for the narrow tires now generally used, the condition of the average country road would be improved in a comparatively short time. Not only that, but the efficiency of the average draught horse would be materially raised. Instead of cutting into the soft spots in a roadway, the wide tire compresses the soft earth and passes over it, leaving the spot in an improved condition for the passage of the next wheel.

An exhaustive test of the broad and narrow tire, made at the agricultural experiment station of the Missouri State University, demonstrated that on hard, smooth and nearly level macadam roadways the strain required to haul a given load was 35.7 per cent. less with the broad tire than with the narrow tire. On a gravel road with a hard surface, there was a margin of 33.3 per cent. in favor of the broad tire. On a road composed of a large quantity of sand mixed with gravel, the margin was 45.3 per cent. in favor of the broad tire. Over a new, unused dry gravel road the difference in favor of the broad tire was 26.6 per cent. The narrow tire required less strain for haulage on a road where water covered the surface and loose sand from one to two and one-half inches deep was found. But while the broad tire required a greater strain for haulage, it did no injury to the road, whereas the narrow tire cut through the soft earth beneath the water, and destroyed the surfacing. The broad tire was also at a disadvantage on roads where the hardpan was covered with dust, as the narrow tire cut through to the hardpan, while the wide tire pinched and heaped up the dust and thus increased the strain of haulage. The broad tire also required a greater strain on some kinds of mud roads. But as a whole the tests were strongly favorable to the use of broad tires for the average roads.

Good Roads and Politics.

Vice-President Kingsbury, of the League of American Wheelmen, has been discussing the good roads question in a most sensible and matter-of-fact manner. He thinks that it is perfectly proper that the demand for good roads should be recognized in both the Republican and Democratic speeches this year. It has been a long twenty years' campaign of education, commencing with local work and the distribution of literature and working gradually by the expenditure of thousands of dollars and the distribution of millions of pamphlets to successful legislation in many States, and to the adoption of the State aid system, which has proved an unqualified success wherever tried.

Mr. Kingsbury thinks that the time has arrived for a wider movement, and that from the League of American Wheelmen should come the primary efforts which would result in a thoroughly practical system of national, State and city road-building. The effect of the insertion of a strong plank in favor of national highways, which with the united efforts of farmers, automobilists and wheelmen would not be difficult to obtain, could have only beneficial results, even if it were placed there only with the idea of vote-getting by the party managers. The good road movement to-day is strong enough, Mr. Kingsbury asserts, to follow up such a party promise with demands for its fulfillment.

This would prove the entering wedge which could be driven deep enough into Congress to produce immediate results, and the gentleman is confident that it will be accomplished, and that we shall mark the beginning of the coming century by a general starting of national highways throughout the United States.

An Experiment With Prisoners.

The experiment of employing persons committed to the county jail in making roads is now being tried in Oneida County. The Road Commissioner of Whitestown has forty of the county prisoners at work, one guard being employed for eight prisoners. The Commissioner furnishes board and lodging to the prisoners, and pays the county for the services of each man 25 cents a day. The county is thus the gainer financially, the prisoners are better for working in the open air, and the expense of making the roads is somewhat diminished. Many of the inmates of the county jails are not dangerous criminals, and with a proper classification of prisoners the experiment in Oneida County ought to succeed. It certainly deserves to be watched by the authorities of other counties, who now have legal power to use this class of labor in making roads for the construction of which the State grants aid.—New York Post.

A Policeman's Legacy.

The will of S. Robinson, a Boston policeman, bequeaths \$40,000 to the town of Gilmanton, N. H., the income to be expended exclusively to building and maintaining good roads about the place.

AN ESSAY ON SAUERKRAUT.

Vice-Consul Murphy Unable to Penetrate Its Deepest Mysteries in Germany.

Vice-Consul Murphy at Magdeburg writes to the State Department at Washington concerning sauerkraut in Germany as follows:

"The best German sauerkraut is made in Magdeburg; but when a consular officer attempts to ascertain how it is made, he encounters the usual insuperable obstacle—business secrets. The manufacturer politely replies to all inquiries: 'My receipt is what makes my business profitable. If I gave it to you, you could make the same sauerkraut in Washington. The fame of Magdeburg would thus be dimmed, and what would become of the orders which mean so much to me?'"

"The process of manufacture, omitting business secrets, is about as follows: Take a number of heads of white cabbage, as fresh as possible, and cut them into fine, long shreds. Place in layers in barrels or kegs, strewing salt over each layer, using one-half a pound of salt for each twenty-five cabbages. Press the mass down with clean feet, wooden shoes, or a heavy stamper. Place a cover on the barrel and upon this lay a heavy stone. This presses the sauerkraut more and conserves it better. The sauerkraut must then be allowed to ferment in a cellar for from three to eight days, according to the temperature of the room. The barrel should then be tightly closed and kept in a cool place, preferably in a cellar.

"Fancy grades of sauerkraut are produced by pouring white wine into the barrels after they are filled. Apples chopped very fine are also sometimes mixed with the cabbage.

"After the barrel is closed the sauerkraut will be ready for use in about a week. As soon as some is used, the barrel should be covered and a stone again placed on top.

"In preparing and keeping sauerkraut sunshine and extremes of heat and cold should be avoided."

WORDS OF WISDOM.

"Man is unjust, but God is just, and finally justice triumphs.—Longfellow.

"There is little influence where there is not great sympathy.—S. I. Prime.

"In every rank, both great and small, it is industry that supports us all.—Walter Scott.

"He that is ungrateful has no guilt but one; all other crimes may pass for virtues in him.—Young.

"He is armed without who is innocent within, be this thy screen, and this thy wall of brass.—Horace.

"What is often called indolence is, in fact, the unconscious consciousness of incapacity.—H. C. Robinson.

"You are tried alone; alone you pass into the desert; alone you are sifted by the world.—F. W. Robertson.

"Human nature is so constituted that all see and judge better in the affairs of other men than in their own.—Terence.

"In life it is difficult to say who do you the most mischief—enemies with the worst intentions or friends with the best.—Colton.

"Let all your views in life be directed to a solid, however moderate, independence; without it no man can be happy, nor even honest.—Junius.

"What right have we to pry into the secrets of others? True or false, the tale that is gabbled to us, what concern is it of ours?—Bulwer.

Expense For Target Practice.

A single bullet gun of the many now being put in place for the protection of seacoasts costs a large sum. Some interesting figures on this subject have just been submitted, says the Scientific American.

A twelve-inch breech-loading rifle, with its disappearing carriage, costs one hundred and forty-one thousand dollars; a ten-inch breech loader, ninety-nine thousand two hundred and fifty dollars, and an eight-inch, seventy-two thousand dollars. The figures show that modern high-powered guns cost great sums, and the cost of firing them is proportionately large.

The report of experts who have inspected these guns and the devices for securing an accurate aim, shows that great saving is effected by modern range-finding and position-finding devices.

"The demoralizing effect of a hit as compared to a miss," said one of these reports, "cannot be reduced to a money value, but it costs big money to snag a big gun and then miss the mark."

"Take, for example, the twelve-inch gun. To miss the mark is simply to throw away five hundred and sixty-one dollars and seventy cents. With the ten-inch gun the loss is three hundred and twenty-two dollars and forty cents, and with the eight-inch rifle it is one hundred and eighty-four dollars and sixty-five cents."

Sheep Dulness Exemplified.

"The stupidest animal in the world," said Henry Rudolph, "is just a plain, every-day sheep. About two weeks ago a sheep belonging to G. W. Painter, who lives about three miles south of town, turned up missing. Mr. Painter concluded that it had been killed by dogs; but a few days ago, while looking under the barn floor for some purpose, he saw the missing animal in a salt barrel. The barrel was lying on its side, and the sheep had gone in to lick up the salt which adhered to the sides of the barrel. Finding that it could not go on through, it stopped, and had been there nine days, when discovered, without food or drink. And it would have stayed there until it perished. All it had to do was to back out of the barrel, but it hadn't sense enough to do it!"—Punxsutawney Spirit.

A gossip is a person who believes the stories he invents.