

The Trails That Crossed

By HOWARD DEVINE

GO OUT and see if there isn't a story in these matrimonial agencies," said the Sunday Editor. "Join three or four of them; brush 'em against the game; meet the flirts they have in stock—get some good experiences. Never mind the fake part of it. I don't care to expose the frauds so much as to print some odd adventures and work up some interesting character sketches. Take your time and get a paper, then try."

I was dead broke and unattached and the idea pleased me.

"How far shall I go in my explorations?" I asked, rolling a cigarette.

"To the limit," he replied, laconically. "Clear to the altar. Go married. Do it upright."

Then we both laughed and he continued:

"Of course you haven't got a sou. Here's an order for \$15. Come in and show progress and you can have more if you need it. But mind, no blowing money. This is not a news story. Do it right, but don't buy any wires."

I took the assignment gratefully and went out on my quest. I will not weary you with the details of my experiences with the cheap, stout women and chaste, thin men who preside over the matrimonial agencies, and the still cheaper females who are listed at these places. I posed as Hiram Adams, architect, with a limited income and great prospects, in search of a wife with some ready money that would help me get my start. I met attempted school teachers, freckled stenographers and auburn haired spitsters residing at parental homes. I met stout widows and thin divorcees and sighing orphans of uncertain age. School teachers seemed to predominate. I made appointments to call, appointments to dine—fall sorts of appointments, the expenses of which the Clarion cheerfully paid as I related my story of progress. Really accumulated quite a decent story, but in the meantime I became most heartily sick of the assignments. The women were all so commonplace and their conversation so flimsy that it required something of a draft on my reportorial imagination, based on the experiences of a half dozen years, to make anything out of the material.

As about through and had about enough material whipped into shape, and was entirely tired of the game when I met Elsie Norman, registered at Bates' agency as an orphan and an heiress worth \$100,000 in her own name, and looking for a husband through the agency because of eccentricity.

When I stumbled into the little box labeled Parlor G I was totally unprepared for the vision which confronted me. Listen and I will try to describe it:

A petite little person, with a wealth of light hair, not golden nor brown, nor yet too color, but of that peculiar shade—well, you know what it is as well as I; a broad forehead; deep, chequered blue-gray eyes; dainty hands and feet; features not regular nor beautiful, but interesting and attractive because of the intelligence manifested. She was gowned simply, but with exquisite taste, and in that peculiar surroundings and in the light of my recent experiences, the effect was paralyzing.

I confess that I stumbled over the frayed rug and composed myself altogether more in keeping with my assumed character than I had yet done.

She smiled reassuringly and apologized for the rug. The conversation I do not remember very distinctly, but before I left a date had been made for a little supper the next evening at a cozy Italian restaurant in an obscure street, known only to the elite. The queer thing about it was that I seemed to remember afterward that she made the suggestion as to place. Also she told me that I had been recommended to her by Baldy as the best thing (for her) he had in sight.

As I went out Baldy called me aside and confided to me that this girl surely was the real thing for me.

"She's rich, rich," he said, pounding his old walnut desk, "and beautiful and clever—beautiful and clever," I say, as well. Go to it."

"But there's a ton of it," he continued, looking me in the eye with an piercing expression that I qualified, "old stager that I was; 'dis tid-bit is not for a mere fee. I had secured it for you. If you get it, we must have an understanding. I must have von-kewater of the fortune. All you needs, man, is enough to put you in business. You are in luck to get such a girl anyway. Promise me a kewater, and she is yours."

I shook him and fled. That night I slept not, because of my burning memories of the fair young heiress. It might have been my horrible experience of the past week, but she certainly seemed to me to be the fairest lady of my dreams—and that is a whole lot for a calloused reporter, in say.

The following day threatened to be the longest I had ever spent. Finally, in despair, I resolved to go to the Metropolitan agency and see what was "doing" although all interest in my assignment had lapsed.

"My dear boy, I'm just what you want," exclaimed Hobson, the manager, as I entered. "Parlor B, and get there quick. I've been a holdin' it for you all the mornin'."

Half pushed, half walking, wholly disgusted, I stumbled in, and there, right in front of me, fresh, dainty and alluring as before, sat Elsie Norman.

"What does this mean?" I demanded sternly, melodramatically.

ally, I will now admit. "You make a date with me and these go galvating around these cheap agencies. What does it mean?"

"And as to you, sir?" she asked, demurely, but reply.

"I am trying to pass the time," I replied, stertily.

"And I," she replied, smiling.

As we emerged from the building, I called a cab and handed her in. Before I let it go, I said:

"Come, now, no more agency business until after the supper—if you please."

"Agreed," she replied, a merry smile lighting her face—and I thought I saw a hint of downcast eyes and a hint of responsive comradery which well-nigh sent me into a fit of vertigo.

That supper was a red-letter occasion. I had never had much of a ladies' man, but had met many women of all degrees, and never had I met one with the charm of this mysterious product of the matrimonial agencies. She was so evidently up-to-date, so well-informed, so wise to everything going on in the world, so thoroughly posted in affairs and so well able to discuss current topics, that I could not reconcile her actual self with her position as a woman of fortune seeking a husband through the matrimonial agencies. Why! without a cent, she was a prize for a prince.

While we sat at the little table in the cozy corner, a party consisting of newspaper fellows and an actor or two came in for a bite. As I nodded carelessly to them, and they returned my salutation—a puzzled expression crossed Miss Norman's face.

"Who are those people?" she asked, sharply.

"Oh, Tom Bates, of the Universe; Jimmie Burns, of the Recorder; Louis Drake, of the Clarion, and Harold St. Hubert, the actor," I replied.

"Do you know them?" she asked.

Then I recovered my balance and replied:

"I met Bates, casually, the other night, and he pointed the others out to me."

Then I changed the subject.

Later on we went to the theater, and before leaving her I made an engagement to take her riding on the following afternoon.

I lay in my room and smoked that night until far past dawn, buried in visions. The evening had strengthened and vivified every impression of my first meeting with the girl. There was no question but she was a lady in every sense of the word—and her alert intelligence was not the least of her charms. There was no dodging it, I was madly in love with her. All my doubts based on finding her at a matrimonial agency were cast aside.

"I would marry her without question as to her object in being there," I said.

Then I groaned, as I thought of the barrier of her wealth and the cheap part I was playing. For, of course, I must be honest with her.

Finally I made my resolve. I could not remain in so equivocal a position. I would make a clean breast of it, and hope for her friendship at least. More I dare not dream.

"Perhaps years would efface the memory of my duplicity, and when I should have attained a high position in my profession, perhaps—who knows?"

The next afternoon, far out on a lonesome drive, I pulled myself together and told her the whole wretched business.

"I owe you an apology as subject as a man can make, Miss Norman," I started in, tragically. Then I hurried on, "I am compelled to confess to you that I am not what I have pretended to be. My name is not Hiram Adams, but Stewart Vance. I am a newspaper reporter doing the matrimonial agencies, getting material for a story for the Clarion. It was good enough fun before I met you, but I am heartily ashamed of myself now, and I humbly beg your pardon. I desire your honest friendship too much to go on with the deceit longer."

I had kept my eyes resolutely on the horse. I now turned to her, and was surprised to find her face suffused with blushes, and her eyes downcast.

Then she uttered a merry little laugh and looked at me with a mischievous glance that nearly caused me to drop the reins and gather her in my arms.

"It's 'tit for tat," she said. "I am on the same assignment for the Universe, and—and I was just thinking how dreadfully cheap I was. My name is Eleanor Vance. I guess it's a case of two fools."

A great joy leaped through my veins.

"Not if we can be friends—no I don't mean that," I said—"if we can go on with this courtship, Miss Vance. My Sunday editor told me to follow this assignment clear to the altar—in fact, to get married, if necessary to get a good story. I consider it very necessary. I haven't a dollar in the world, but I can always hold a good job. Will you help me follow out my orders?"

"Miss Vance the same," she replied, softly, "and two salaries are twice as much as one"—this in a whisper.

Then I dropped the reins and she had her own way for a season.

Two such stories never appeared as these in the next issues of the Sunday Clarion and the Sunday Universe. Mine led to a permanent job, and the Universe lost Miss Vance shortly, greatly to the gain of a cozy uptown flat.

They did not begrudge paying both agencies liberal fees.

UNFERMENTED BREADS

The Secret of Success in Making Them Without Soda or Baking Powder

One of the most important things along the line of hygienic cooking is the making of simple unfermented breads. It is an art to be able to make them without the use of any injurious substances and yet so that they will be wholesome and appetizing. In the first place, select a good flour. The color of good white flour should be a light cream, and not a bluish tint. Further, if you take up a teaspoonful of it and attempt to shake some of it off, it should fall in a fine shower, and not in lumps, says Good Housekeeping.

Whole-wheat flour is very nutritious and makes good bread, but it is not wise to lay in a very large supply of it at any one time, as it is rich and will not keep well. Excellent bread can also be made of 40 per cent. gluten flour, but perhaps no other bread requires so much care in the making, as does gluten bread. It is well to remember that the higher the percentage of gluten a flour contains, the greater is the proportion of liquid required in its preparation.

The secret of success in making unfermented breads without soda or baking powder is this: All utensils and materials used must be very cold. Should be unobtainable, the utensils may be cooled by placing them in cold water for a few moments; and any fish containing a material to be used in making the bread should be placed in a large dish containing very cold water.

A delicious breakfast food, and one which is quite indispensable in homes where a hot oven is customary at the morning meal, is the whole-wheat or corn-meal puff. The material required for making these puffs is as follows:

Two-thirds cupful milk and one-third cupful cream, one large or two small eggs (preferably the latter), one cupful whole wheat flour and one-half cupful white flour; or one cupful white flour and one-half cupful corn meal, one-third teaspoonful salt.

Break the eggs, placing the yolks in the milk and setting the whites aside in a cool place. With a batter whip mix the two thoroughly, and then slowly add the flour, beating all the time. After the flour has been thus worked in, continue the whipping process for ten minutes (unless enough puffs are being made to supply a large number of people, when the batter should be beaten at least 20 minutes), using long, even strokes, in this manner working in as much air as possible and thus insuring the lightness of the puffs.

Now beat the whites of the eggs, fold them into the batter very gently, and quickly turn the whole into very hot ovens, and bake in a very quick oven. If the pans and oven are not very hot, the puffs cannot be a success. After baking, let the puffs stand at least five minutes before serving, for they are apt to be a little sticky inside immediately upon coming from the oven.

In making crackers, the above recipe may be followed, using, however, a larger proportion of flour. The dough should be kneaded and beaten and kneaded until much air is worked into it. If, when pulled, the dough snaps apart, it may be pronounced ready to be rolled out, and cut into desired shapes. Perforate, and bake in a slow oven.

CIDER VINEGAR.

The Only Kind That is Pure and Absolutely Safe for Home Use

Old-fashioned cider vinegar that used to be made from hard cider. A long row of older barrels, in a well-ventilated cellar.

First, the cider is sweet, very palatable and much used as a beverage by farmers, and is even sold in some saloons.

Afterwards, the cider becomes hard. In olden times it was still used as a beverage by the New Englanders, who were perfectly innocent of any suspicion that it was an intoxicating beverage. The next change which happened to the cider was when it turned into vinegar. This was the sort of vinegar our forefathers used. This is the only vinegar that is absolutely safe to use, says Medical Talk for the Home.

The present method of making spirit vinegar has a great many liabilities. A low proof solution of alcohol is passed over beech shavings or birch twigs that have been soaked in the mother of vinegar or vinegar essence. This very quickly converts the alcohol into vinegar; sometimes sulphuric acid is added, and even hydrochloric acid.

The addition of any acid renders the vinegar very liable to dissolve any metal with which it comes in contact, copper, tin, brass, platinum, mercury, zinc. Vinegar that contains the slightest trace of any one of these minerals is apt to be the cause of slow poisoning, sometimes fatal poison.

The only safe vinegar to use is the old-fashioned vinegar. It is never to be quite sure that it is genuine, it should be procured, if possible, direct from the farmer who makes the cider, and allows it to sour. During the past temperance crusades great discouragement was raised against the manufacture of cider by farmers. Cider was under the ban of the temperance classes because of its supposed damage to the good morals of the people. This has resulted in a great falling off in the product of vinegar by the farmers, and has encouraged the manufacture of cheap and artificial vinegars, which are very deleterious and sometimes absolutely poisonous.

Out of the Question.

"You should sleep on your right side, madam."

"I really can't do it, doctor. My husband talks in his sleep, and I can't hear a thing with my left ear."—Silly Stories.



THE CAT AND THE MICE.

Find the Master of the House.

A Certain House was much infested with Mice. The owner brought home a Cat, a famous mouser, who soon made such havoc among the little folk, that those who remained resolved they would never leave the upper shelves. The Cat grew hungry and thin in consequence, and, driven to her wits' end, hung by her hind-legs to a peg in the wall, and pretended to be dead. An old Mouse came to the edge of the shelf, and, seeing through the deception, cried out: "Ah, ah, Mrs. Pussy! We should not come near you even if your skin were stuffed with straw."

MORAL—Prudent folks never trust those a second time who have deceived them once, and, indeed, we cannot be too cautious in following this rule; for upon examination we shall find that most of the misfortunes which befall us, proceed from our too great credulity.

IN THE FAR FROZEN NORTH.

Trip Through Alaskan Wilderness Described by a Department Official.

Under the direction of the war department in 1898 A. W. Guimaraes was the guide and surveyor of the all-American route from Valdez to Eagle City, Alaska, when the country was an unknown wilderness, where no white man had ever set foot.

"Our party," said Mr. Guimaraes, according to a Washington report, "was out of touch with civilization from February to November, during which time the Spanish-American war was fought. We knew nothing of the conflict until we reached Forty-Mile river, 60 miles below Dawson City.

"Our party consisted of five men—Lieut. P. G. Lowe, U. S. A.; Stephen Birch, surveyor; two army packers, myself, 11 pack horses and three burros, which we took as an experiment. They only lasted 100 miles, when they were abandoned. The Montana pack ponies were the only ones that could stand the strain even in the summer time. In winter only reindeer and dogs can endure the cold.

"Our expedition had to cross the Valdez glacier, an extremely hazardous undertaking on account of the numerous crevasses and fissures of from four to ten feet in width. To get over them we used snow bridges, roped together, as they do in Switzerland. Many people have since lost their lives in following this perilous trail; but since then's route has been found by Capt. J. Abercrombie around the glacier, and no more lives need be sacrificed.

"Within two years a railroad will penetrate the new gold fields at Tanana, that are just now causing a sensation among hunters of the precious metal. Valdez, with the most beautiful harbor in the world, and surrounded with mountains 5,000 feet high, will be the future capital of Alaska. The territory has a future splendid beyond the imagination of its most enthusiastic citizens, and in dollars and cents will give greater returns than any territory ever owned or ever to be possessed by the United States."

At His Own Estimate.

His height was a little over five feet. He was slender in proportion. But he was proud—O, so proud! He stood erect and with folded arms, near the rail of the steamer, and gazed upon the lake in sternal, majestic silence.

Presently the captain approached him and touched his arm.

"What is it, my good fellow?" he said, turning his head slowly and eying him from head to foot.

"Would you mind stepping over this way a little?" asked the captain, touching his hat.

"What for, my good fellow?"

"To trim the ship. You are giving it a decided list to port."—Chicago Tribune.

Mosquitoes on Long Island.

The authorities in Long Island have undertaken, for the protection of their horses, to fight the mosquitoes, which have long starred over the island. The owner of a well-known stable is the prime mover in the crusade against the mosquito. He has been successful in putting a new mosquito netting over the top of a new racing horse "out of condition." The proposed remedy is to spray the netting with fresh water. It has been observed that mosquitoes do not breathe in water which is frequently renewed, but only in stagnant water.

Familiar Names.

After returning from church, you should have been in church this morning. We had a beautiful sermon. Husband—But you can't repeat the text.

Yes I can. It was the tenth verse of the 13th chapter of Ephesians, which he said about with fine linen, and I covered me with the 13th of 12.

"Ruh! It is no wonder you remembered it."—London Tit-Bits.

THE JOYS OF SUNBURN.

A Luxury of Summer That Is Highly Valued and Enjoyed by Many People.

Among the horses of the sun is Erythroos. He is the "red producer." All of them, according to the Greek and Latin myth, "breathe fire from their nostrils," but it is this one that must be credited with those peach-bloom tints common to late spring and the summer. A half hour out in the open will convince one that the "red producer" is tainting the sunshine with his fiery breath, says the Baltimore American. Hall, Erythroos!

Sunburn to the city youth, and age as well, is one of the luxuries of the summer. It is becoming to some; some it makes hideous; along with it may come febrile galors; there may be days and nights of discomfort and cold-cream poulticing; but none of these possibilities rob the sunbeam of its charm. It serves an outward and visible sign of a good time somewhere.

"Where did you get it?" addressed to the wearer of a newly borrowed visage will, nine times out of ten, bring out the story of a day, or days, spent away from the town, and there will be a touch of pride in the tone of the narrator. He will talk of tennis, golf, boating, bathing, and the like, until you're sorry you got him going. There are those who will bewail the fate that browned them. Nine out of ten are unwittingly or maliciously prevaricating.

Sunburn, when all is said pro and con, is a distinctive joy of the summer. It speaks of the big outdoor world. It is the seal and sign of avocations which may not be pursued by most for eight months of the year, and those avocations all out the census of the chief recreative doings of both sexes and all ages. Sunburn is eloquent of fresh air, for the sunshine is the bouquet to the breeze. It is synonymous with energy, and the energy is the tell-tale of life. The dead bleach, the living breathe and burn, dogma to the contrary notwithstanding.

Sunburn burns. The first day's outing is apt to cook the back of the neck, the cheeks, the nose, the hands, and arms, and the hot breath of Erythroos reaches every exposed square inch. But there are scores of cooling salves and lotions, with cold cream and witch hazel high on the list, to make sadness and sighing endure but for a night. Everybody knows what a day, even in a nice, shining sunshine, means in this respect; but, safe to say, there will be no fewer outing seekers for this fact. Sunburn and love have many things in common, but, at any rate, both are a sweet pain; both know no cure but time.

The season for this is here. Erythroos is surely snorting. Those who have been following golf balls on recent days, who have been at tennis, or have chased the baseball about the lot know it, perhaps too well lay on Erythroos!

Antiquity of American.

America is older than the old world, and its aborigines are remnants of races of men that inhabited the earth before the present old world races rose to prominence. The land distribution was different in those days. There was communication between what are now the north of America and the north of Asia, and the climate was much warmer in these regions. Evidences of these facts are being found every day in both continents. The latest evidence is that collected by the Jessup expedition into the unexplored heart of Siberia, which recently returned to New York after a two years' exploration. Boston Budget.

Tough by Barretts.

Miss Nancy—I wonder why it is that sailors are such terrible swearers? Count Tom—Why don't you know? They learn profanity of the parrot. They thought everybody knew that.

"Why, of course! Wonder if he had occurred to me!"—Boston Transcript.

Agents for Ladies' Kidney Pills in the Union Station, Denver, Col., says:

"You see at liberty, acquainted with our Denver papers about Doan's Kidney Pills in the summer of 1899, for I have had no reason in the interim to change my opinion of the remedy. I said when first interviewed that if I had a friend and acquaintance suffering from backache or kidney trouble I would unhesitatingly advise them to take Doan's Kidney Pills. I was subject to severe attacks of backache, always aggravated if I sat long at a desk. It struck me that if Doan's Kidney Pills performed half what they promised they might at least help. This induced me to try the remedy. It absolutely stopped the backache. I have never had a pain or twinge since."

A FREE TRIAL of this great kidney medicine, which cured Mr. Lario, will be mailed to any part of the United States on application. Address Foster-Milburn Co., Buffalo, N. Y. For sale by all druggists, price 50 cents per box.

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