Smithfield Herald. ine

SEICE ONE DOLLAR PER YEAR.

The Girl

Across

the Aisle.

By E. H. HOUGH.

I stared at her until my persistency

her father, whereupon I withdrew my

gaze, and he resumed his newspaper.

Immediately the girl across the aisle

glanced around, and I intercepted a

with what seemed like fear or en-

But not even the beauty of my fair

vis-a-vis could successfully divert my

mind from the painful theme upon

which it was dwelling with a con-

The cashler and confidential man of

a large business house had absconded

with half a million dollars in cash and

negotiable securities, and simultane-

ously the only daughter of the firm's

senior member had eloped with a

We were to trace the absconding cash-

black mustache, smooth shaven cheeks,

while certain memoranda evidently for-

gotten and discovered in a secret com-

partment of his desk seemed to render

the task of overtaking him a matter of

My assignment on the case was a

high compliment, and I had been san-

guine of success. But most of the

clews I followed ended in a "pocket;"

my carefully formulated theories and

hypotheses proved fruitless, and while

debating as to what I should do next

I received a peremptory telegram di-

recting my immediate return to head-

drumming with my fingers on the arm

the alsie looked up, darting a keen, in-

quiring glance at me. Her lips moved

as though repeating some formula, and

as I kept on drumming her excitement

visibly increased. Just then her fa-

ther, looking up from his paper, frown-

ed at her and, glancing over at me,

tapped his forehead, waving his other

For awhile I kept up my drumming.

While ruminating thus I fell to

Instantly the girl across

little time and ordinary skill.

My firm was not professionally in-

sciousness of humiliating failure.

treaty.

worthless suitor.

quarters.

of the seat.

hand toward the girl.

[Copyright, 1907, by E. H. Hough.]

ETURNING to my car as the

apparently a well dressed, gray

"TRUE TO OURSELVES, OUB COUNTRY AND OUR GOD."

her to her feet, and we proceeded,

others following. Glancing through

scanning the cars. On the platform

against me. Instantly I caught Saun-

One officer seized Saunders, and as

his sister tried to drag the girl away I

caught her arm, jerked her around and

in a moment she and Miss Osgood

After the first gasp of astonishment

and fury Saunders fought like a de-

mon. He plunged one hand in his pock-

et and shot it out toward Miss Osgood,

looked like a fountain pen, but proved

to be a hollow tube with a sharp me-

tallic tip and filled with poison. One

prick of that tiny weakon on the girl's

flesh and she would have been dead

past all help. Handcuffs were finally

snapped on Saunders' wrists, and we

were all marched off to a vehicle in

Committing Miss Osgood to the care

of the prison matron, who took her to

her own comfortable home, we kept

telegraph and long distance telephones

hot for awhile. I was the hero of the

whom requested me to await their ar-

"Saunders was my father's confiden-

trusted him. The day of the robbery

he seized me on a bystreet, put me in

right in the city, for several days. I

overheard him when he thought I slept

telling that he had written father that

I had eloped with a man I had long be-

fore dismissed. Finally we left Cincin-

nati, and he has passed me off as his

crazy daughter and declared that when

safe from pursuit he would force me to marry him to prevent father from

"Tell no more if it pains you!" I

"It relieves me," she replied. "You

were the first friend I found, and by

that time I was nearly in despair. But

from the moment I looked into your

face I felt that I could trust you. I

had studied telegraphy as a pastime, so

"And I thank heaven that I took up

the study when a lad, intending at

that time to fit myself for an expert

telegrapher," I answered fervently.

urged as her lips quivered and her eyes

prosecuting him."

filled with tears.

for that knowledge!

ders by the shoulder, exclaiming:

"Here they are! Take all!"

were prisoners.

waiting.

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com you a goin orich, i suppose," and Barney winked humorously at the rest of the staff.

"Don't know yet whether it will turn out to be a gold brick or not. Reckon I shan't worry any if it does. I've invested in gold bricks before, and the way I figure it it's nobody's business but my own if I do it again." "Oh, I see," said Barney smoothly.

"A trifle touchy on the gold brick question, eh, Mr .- er-Hayseed, is it?" "Not quite. Hayden happens to be

my name. Didn't make quite as slick a guess as you did on the Horace. But go ahead and call me Hayseed if you like. You can remember that name guess it fits me about as well as the me, Mr, Blake, isn't it?" other, anyhow. Don't it strike you that way?"

"Oh, no, you're no hayseed! You're right from Chicago or New York city -anybody could tell that from the cut ed the wink to the others, who all felt in duty bound to roar at the managing editor's wit.

"Nice, genial staff you've got. Chuck full of fun, ain't they? I hope they're to take lessons in journalism and the not laughing at me. Hain't got a art of entertaining callers. But here 'Please Kick Me' sign pinned to my back, have I?"

"That's all right, Uncle Horace," purred Barney. "Don't go to getting excited. The boys are just spoiling for a little fun-been working under steam pressure today-but none of them would ever be guilty of-er-by George, they have, just the same! But it doesn't read 'Please Kick Me;' it

says 'We're From the Farm.' And if I only knew the deep dyed villain who pinned it on you I'd discharge him this instant-yes, sir, this very inaround again until tomorrow morning," he added in a stage whisper as he stepped around behind the rural looking visitor and removed the offending sign, deftly replacing it by another handed him by one of the crowd,

reading, "Turnips For Sale!" "There; that looks better," observed Barney, at which everybody roared promptly once more.

"Not quite so much levity, boys," said Barney reprovingly. "I am going to show our friend here through the Argus establishment, and I want to see how well you can behave while"-Biff!

A big wad of paper came sailing across the office and caromed on the ear of the caller.

"That was our baseball editor who did that," explained Barney coolly. "Force of habit, I suppose. He probably imagined he was throwing a ball at first base. Don't let that happen again, Higgins." "All right, sir," glibly responded the

young man who had thrown the pa-"Mistake, anyhow. I was aimper. ing at the wastebasket."

"Well, seeing you've apologized, it is all right," said Barney, with mock solemnity. "Now, Mr. Hayseed-1 should say Opening it, Mr. Hayden read as fol-

Hayden-you have already been intro- lows: duced to our baseball and society edi- Major Hayden tors, and if you will cast your optics over the rest of the collection of gen-iuses before you I will enlighten you will care to retain in your correction to your co iuses before you I will enlighten you as to their duties, so that when you go back to the farm you will understand the secret of the Argus' success in gathering and disseminating the daily news of the entire world, including the city and county of Boomonalis news of the entire world, including the city and county of Boomonalis city and county of Boomopolis.

countryman of a moment before was transformed into something quite different as he went on in crisp, businesslike tones: "Exceedingly valuable ones, too, most of them. Now, seeing I have been running a newspaper myself for the past fifteen years, I had a glimmering sort of an idea when I drifted in here today that possibly I knew something about the business, but I find I was mistaken. I'm only a jibbering idict in the newspaper business, from the Argus standpoint, and, having bought the paper, I've got to start in at the bottom and learn the trade all over again from its highly accomplishbetter than Hayden probably, and I ed and courteous staff. Good joke on Barney-not to mention the rest of

the Argus staff-looked as if it would be a great relief to him at that moment if the earth were to open and twallow up the entire establishment.

"W-why-er-who-who are you?" he stammered uneasily,

"I? Oh, I'm nobody much. I'm only Uncle Horace, the old hayseed that dropped in on you a few minutes ago comes Colonel Starbuck. Perhaps I can get him to introduce me. How are you, colonel? A triffe late in keeping your appointment, aren't you?"

"Why, how d'ye do, major?" exclaimed Colonel Starbuck cordially. "I am sorry I've kept you waiting, but it has given you a chance to learn something about the Argus establishment and the staff."

"Yes, it has," interposed the caller dryly.

"Pretty bright looking crowd, major, aren't they? Boys, this is Major Hayden, the former owner and editor of the Centerville Courier. He has bought out my interests in the Argus, taking possession at once, and I trust the new relationship between you as employer and-

"Hello! What has been going on here? What is that sign you are carrying around on your back, major? Here, let me remove it. "Turnips For Sale, eh? I surely hope that miserable attempt at wit was not placed on your back by any one connected with this establishment."

"I am afraid it was, colonel," was the calm reply. "You see, the boys mistook me for one of your rural subscribers, and they have been having some amusement at my expense. But I see they are pretty well worked up over it, so perhaps we had better finish our interview in your private office and give our humorous friends a chance to think the matter over quietly by themselves." Half an hour later when the new proprietor of the Argus emerged from the inner sanctum he found a rather solemn looking crowd awaiting his appearance, and Barney Blake's erstwhile smiling countenance was the most sepulchrally solemn of them all as he stepped forward and gravely handed him a folded document.

my fingers. Instantly she stopped, regarded me eagerly, then, sadly shaking her head, dropped her crude play-

What was the girl trying toolo? A Saunders first, I behind him, and the look into her set, tense face scoated the idea of anything so tribini as a flirta- the end window, I spied three men tion. When I stopped drumming she resumed her performance; then I Miss Osgood stumbled, falling heavily against me, Instantly I caught Sauntently, but with evident disappointment. Giving up the riddle at last, I leaned back, with folded arms. Immediately, with a most inexplicable look toward her father and toward me, the girl across the aisle resumed, with an air of desperate determination, the train started, I noticed that I same unvarying iteration of sounds had neighbors across the aisle, and pauses until the performance became almost intolerable. Indeed, it haired and bearded man, his wife and was getting upon my nerves, and I was contemplating an appeal to her father when I stumbled into the light. Her his elbow, sending the Sject flying, their daughter, the latter so lovely that provoked a keen, fierce glance from maneuver was making its way not up- then, springing past him, secured it. It on my nerves alone, but upon an inner consciousness, slowly responding to the magic code. I began to follow and analyze that rhythmical succession of flash from a pair of dark eyes instinct sounds and pauses until I was able to recognize, distinguish and translate them. The girl across the aisle was communicating through her crude play-

> Noting my expression, she stopped, then flashed a significant glance toward her father. Obeying her unspoken injunction, I busied myself with a book, but in a moment she was at work again, and her message read: "I am trying to speak to you. Do

My response was to cast a bewildered glance at her. Instantly she turned her face from me toward the window, but I was on the alert for the next tial man," she said, "and a secret suitor for my hand. I disliked and dis-

fer, described as twenty-seven years of age, tall, slender and dudish, heavy of your seat as you did before. I can read that. Don't look at me."

Here was the last link in the riddle. I rapped:

you?"

ting with her hands relaxed, apparently lost in reverie. But another message soon followed.

is not my father nor an old man-only twenty-seven. Read again."

I rapped "Yes," keeping my eyes on my book. Then her improvised telegraph spoke again.

and will force me to marry him as soon as he is safe from capture. He threatens to kill me if I try to escape or betray him. His name is Jeremy Saunders. Have you understood?" Had I? If ever I needed nerve it immediately. How I thanked heaven

and while the girl did not appear to had come the heaven sent inspiration notice me I could see that she was we both needed.

sussessessessessessessessesses rually, uring of Watening her, I re- tion platform. Cough if you underumed my pastime of drumming with stand me." A brief suspense, then Miss Osgood sat up, coughed sharply and shot a look at me. The woman fairly jerked

thing in her inp.

thing telegraph messages to me!

occasion, receiving eulogiums from my chiefs and from Mr. Osgood, all of you understand?" rival. That evening I heard Miss Osgood's story.

terested in this branch of the case. "Drum with your fingers on the arm

"I understand you. How can I help

She appeared not to notice me, sit-

"This man who pretends I am crazy

"He robbed my father, abducted me

was then. On my return home, defeated, baffled, I found myself by a freak of fortune hot on the trail. Across the aisle, so near that I could touch him, yet so secure in his disguise that he could mock me to my face, sat my quarry, while to this girl, his prisoner, stinctively into the habit of keeping

Fun For the Staff. By WILL S. GIDLEY,

(h):00000000000000000000000000000(h)

been pouring in steadily all day, filled of your jib!" And Barney again passwith an unusual and most discouraging quantity of unpronounceable and unspellable names-that is, to any one except an expert in Russian and Asiatic nomenclature. To an ordinary editor, proofreader or typesetter they were simply so many jagged mountain chains of consonants, with an occasional vowel thrown in for good measure. To cap the climax one of the hand set columns got knocked into pi just as the paper was about ready for the press, which made a great improvement in the spelling of some of the names, but ruined the article in other respects, so that it was necessary to reset it, which was done, putting all hands on the work and rushing it through at race horse speed in order stant-and I'd tell him not to come not to delay the edition more than

could be helped. The result was-well, the Argus got out about on time, but as managing a carriage and kept me somewhere, editor of the paper Barney Blake had

no reason to feel proud of that particular column of war news as it appeared in print. Some of it was still pi, but it came out all right in the second edition, also in the third and fourth. Blake saw to that personally, as he expected Colonel Starbuck, the proprietor of the Daily Argus, in some time during the afternoon, and, knowing him to be of an excitable temperament-the colonel often swore the Argus with its blunders would be the death of him-he did not care particularly to have him see that dispatch as

originally printed. The colonel failed to show up at the usual hour, however, and Barney was rather glad than otherwise that he of course I recognized your tappings didn't.

What he needed-in fact, what the entire Argus staff needed just thenwas a little wholesome recreation instead of an interview with or a lecture from Colonel Starbuck-something to take off the tension instead of screw-When I am thinking deeply I fall in- ing it up tighter.

It is no wonder, then, that when an tally, as it were, with my fingers. But unexpected opportunity for innocent fun pr itself Barney iovfully

[Copyright, 1907, by Will S. Gidley.]

that day the Argus staff had had an unusually trying time of it. To begin with, the press dispatches had consisted chiefly of Russian war news, which had

s moved, and ng intently; he her expression varied from one of hope to the deepest depression. For the want of better occupation I continued the experiment awhile, finally ceasing altogether, whereupon she sank back against the seat, pale and inert.

By and by the cars stopped again, and my attention was attracted to a boy on the platform jerking a rosined string through a drum shaped piece of cardboard-a sample of the basketful he carried and which he was demonstrating with a zeal and volume of discordant sounds that rivaled pandemonium. Instantly the girl across the aisle-that was the side nearest the station platform-became violently ex-

cited. The blood rushed to her cheeks and tears to her eyes. Touching her father's arm, she exclaimed eagerly:

"Papa, papa, buy me one of those pretty, noisy playthings!"

I fancied I detected a sinister gleam in the man's eye, but he answered roughly:

"No; that thing is only for boys and children!"

"Oh, please, please, papa!" she persisted, clasping her hands. "I must have it! I want to see if it will sing for me. Quick, quick, before he is gone!"

some of the passengers were looking at her, her father smiled grimly and thrust one hand into his pocket.

"Anything to please a fool!" he muttered. Opening the window, he bade the boy outside toss up one of his infernal machines, snatched it from him. threw out a quarter and shut the window

"There!" He tossed it in the girl's lap. "See how long that will amuse you." As he resumed his paper I watched the girl across the aisle with a new interest, coupled with growing mystification.

She turned the toy over and over, held it to her check and lips, her face instinct with passionate yearning, then slowly and timidly drew the string back and forth, producing a succession of short, jerky, rasping sounds, which she gradually tempered and softened.

Steadying my fingers by an effort, I rapped:

"Yes. Your name next. Will ald yon with my life."

"I am Almo Osgood," she responded. "The woman is Saunders' sister. We alight at Rochester, and unless help

comes quickly I am lost." I consulted my time table. We would reach Rochester in an hour.

"Do you fear arrest and temporary detention?" I rapped.

"I fear nothing that will free me from this man," was the prompt response.

power I will free you. Say no more. It is risking too much."

As I rapped the last words Saunders flung down his paper.

"Be done with that infernal din!" he exclaimed. "It is past all endurance!" "Yes!" said the girl wearily. "The

tune won't come, and I'm sleepy!" She lay back, with closed eves.

"About time!" I ejaculated. "Will you have a cigar with me in the smoker? I'm feeling a blt dotty myself." "Thanks, no. I dare not leave the girl. This is the first outing for three weeks, and I swear it will be the last." "I don't blame you. Well, I'll have a smoke and dispose of this thing." I As she would not be pacified and took the toy gently from her lap. "So long."

> Passing through the train to the telegraph operator's car, I sent a code message to the Rochester authorities: "Arrest man, woman and girl alighting from car Cumberland, train 47. Will signal. Send man who knows me. Farnham."

When I returned to my section Miss Osgood was still sleeping and Saunders reading, but I managed to engage him in conversation until we reached Rochester. Then he made a sign to his firmed his cordial invitation that 1 sister, who shook Miss Osgood none too gently.

"You alight here?" I said. "So do I. We may see more of each other." "I think not," he answered shortly.

"I stop over but a few hours." As his sister was arousing her charge I rapped one more message.

"Stumble when you reach the sta- show,"-Cleveland Plain Dealer,

why did you not try to open communication with me in the same way?" "I was afraid to risk it for fear

Saunders would notice me and suspect what I was doing."

"What would he have done in that case?" I asked.

"Nothing that any one would be likely to notice. He would simply have pressed a tiny needle point into my arm, and I should have fallen back dead, while, as he took care to warn me beforehand, the only verdict would be heart disease. But when I caught sight of that boy with his wares I believed I could find the way, while in-"Very good," I replied. "If in mortal ducing Saunders to believe that I was temporarily demented-as he evidently did-to catch and fix your attention until you discovered what I was really about."

"You certainly kept me guessing a good while," I said, smiling.

"But it took you so long to guess right." she rejoined, with a sigh. "But, really, the greatest risk was when you began to reply," said Miss Osgood after a pause. "I feared that one of us might make some unlucky slip or gesture that would betray us and ruin all.

I stayed with Miss Osgood as late as her hostess would permit ere I bade her good night. When the various interested parties arrived the following day I was lauded to the skies. Mr. Osgood declared I had made him my debtor for life. Morning brought the news that the prisoners had made a simultaneous and almost successful attempt at suicide, but they were discovered in time and subsequently tried, convicted and sent to long terms of Imprisonment.

When I bade Miss Osgood farewell two days later as she left Rochester with her father her sweet eyes conshould be his guest at the first opportunity, and my chief very kindly made that opportunity an early one.

"What would her folks do if she went on the stage?" "Probably stay away from the ly acquainted. I had a little business

and eagerly seized upon it and made the most of it.

The opportunity in question came in the shape of a caller-one of the oddest looking fish that had drifted into the Argus office in many moons.

One quick glance at the linen duster which hung loosely about his robust form and the last year's straw hat Barney had sized him up for a horny nent ears is Mr. Perkins, our secret. handed agriculturist-probably one of service reporter and war correspondthe country subscribers coming in, as ent. His build, as you will notice, fits they frequently did, to look over the him admirably for the position. He is Argus establishment and see the mo- so thin he can crawl over a transom dus operandi of getting out a daily without the slightest difficulty." newspaper.

"Hello, Uncle Horace! Looking for any one in particular?" saluted Blake date headgear paused inside the doorthe room.

my cog-no-men before I even opened bills for repairing broken ribs, etc." my trapdoor?" queried the caller whimsically. "I always heard the Argus had a mighty smart staff, and now I know it. Reckon you must be the-er-sassiety editor, eh?"

"No; I'm only the managing editor," is the chap in the corner with the in to the paper he grinds it out on a chrysanthemum hair and a rose in his wireless sending machine, something buttonhole. You will also recognize him like a phonograph, and it goes flying by the diamond ring that flashes on his off into space until it strikes the Aerial "write' hand as he dashes off his elo-quent and sparkling society bonmots whizes through the air with almost and his fascinating descriptions of Mrs. Browa's colonial ball, Mrs. O'Raffer-

ty's French fete, Mrs. Robinson's Italian musicale or Mrs. John Q. Smith's Japanese lawn party. Oh, he's a genius-our society editor."

"You don't say!"

"Yes. The paper simply couldn't exist without him."

"That so? Queer Colonel Starbuck never told me anything about him," mused the caller.

"Oh, you know the colonel, do you?" asked Blake, "Yes, we're what I might call slight-

transaction with him the other day."

"The exceedingly tall, thin young perched on the back of his head, and man with the short hair and promi- Editor Blake and the other members 'You don't say!"

"Fact, I assure you. And that is why a thin man has a marked advanas the man with airy toga and out of tage over a 200 pounder. It requires less gas to carry him, and if he falls fault. way and glanced inquiringly around from a balloon it doesn't muss him up so much as it would a fat man, there-"How did you happen to light on to by effecting a big saving in doctors'

"I see. Quite an idea, that."

"Yes, and, besides, a thin man occupies less space and leaves more room jobs until I tell you different," anin the basket of the balloon for the wireless message apparatus. You see, finished reading the above communicaas fast as the war correspondent in a tion and, tearing it into strips, dropped explained Barney. "The society editor balloon gets a message ready to send it into the wastebasket. "You've had whizzes through the air with almost lightning speed until it reaches the Argus office. It would do you good to

see our office boy catching the messages in a wire basket as they come flying in at the window." "Well, well!"

"Oh, I tell you there is a pile to learn about the newspaper business when a fellov once sets about it. Now I rather ima tine you've learned a few things in that line today, Mr. Hayseed -I mean Hayden-that you never knew before.

"I reckon I bave picked up just a few stray hints about the newspaper ousiness," drawled the man in the linen duster, and then he suddenly start thtough un, and the owknow

Dear Sir-We have had our innings, and

This note was signed by Managing of the Argus staff, and below the signatures was the following postscript:

P. S.-The boys were bound to share the blame equally with myself and hand in their resignations with mine, but as I am the head of the office and the others their cue from me I feel that I a should shoulder the responsibility for what occurred, and as an act of justice to my fellow employees I ask that my resignation alone be accepted and that no one else shall be made to suffer for my fault. The rest of the boys are a pretty good lot. They will serve you faithfully and redeem themselves in your eyes, I am sure, if you will give them a chince. Yours respectfully, BADNEY DI AVE

BARNEY BLAKE.

"Resignations declined with thanks! You are all going to stick right to your nounced Major Hayden bluntly as he your lesson, boys, and I guess there isn't much danger of any more such exhibitions as we have had here this afternoon. I'm willing to try you anyhow.

"But I'm glad you added that postscript, Mr. Blake," he concluded, reaching over and giving Barney's hand a hearty shake. "It has a manly ring to it, and I reckon we'll get along to-gether all right."

Won a Ride.

Francols was going to market in his cart.

"Hi!" called a neighbor. "Are you going into the town?"

"Yes." "Could you take a blouse for me?" "Certainly, if you will let me know where to leave it."

"Oh, that's all right!" said his friend, jumping into the cart. "I'm inside it now,"-Nos Loisirs.