Too Much Efficiency

By E. J. Rath

BEGIN HEERE TODAY

JOHN W BROOKE, widower and hardware magnate, leaves the city after arranging with a firm of efficiency engineers to operate his home. This without the knowledge of his three grown children, Constance, Billy and Alice. It isn't until

H. HEDGE, efficiency engineer assumes control of the Brooke household, that they realize the full significance of the stringent situation that their father has wished upon them. Constance, felling that marriage to a man who adores her but whom she does not love, is better than another six weeks in the same house with Hedge, decides to elope.

She is stealing down the back stairway on New Year's morning when she trips and falls into the arms of Hedge. When she recovers her breath sufficiently she orders him to let her go.

NOW GO ON WITH THE STORY

"Not until you let me go," answered the efficiency man.

"And then maybe—"

With a little cry of dismay she disengaged her arms from his neck.

"Let me go!" she repeated.

"Temporarily or permanently?" he asked with great dilberation.

"B-Both!"

H. Hedge shook his head sadly.

"I never could do two things at once," he said. "It's unscientific even to try."

"Please—please!"

"In that case, temporarily," he declared, as he reluctantly withdrew the arm that held her close.

Constance's cheeks were fiery: she prayed that the gloom of the back stair rendered all colors neutral.

"Thank you—for catching me,"

Out in the courtyard stood a roadster, the engine illing wheezily. Tommy Tread well was standing beside it, nervously tapping on a fender. His eyes lighted with happiness as he sighted the furred figure of Constance and he sprang forward to assist with the grip.

"You dear old brick," he cried.

"Morning, Tommy," said Constance.

Tommy had seized the grip and swung it up on the baggage carrier in the rear, where he began an adjustment of the straps. Meantime, Constance stepped in and settled herself nervously in one of the bucket seats.

The efficiency man arrived in the courtyard while Tommy was still working at the grip. As Constance sighted him, she observed with a sinking heart that he was clothed in one of his ominous calms.

"Good morning," he said, as he walked across the open space.

Constance paled slightly and did not answer. Tommy Treadwell fumbled furiously at a strap and said nothing.

Hedge reached the side of the car, leaned over, pressed a button on the dash and turned off the ignitino. The engine stopped.

"You let that car alone!" called Tommy angrily.

"All right, I will," said the efficiency man, stepping back a pace and eyeing Constance.

Tommy finished with the grip and came around to the side of the car.

"Well?" asked Hedge.

"Well? echoed Tommy.

"What's the idea?"

The elopers exchanged swift glances and Tommy became emboldened.

"Well, if it'll give you any satisfaction to know," he announced, "Connie and I are going to be married."

"You surprise me," said the efficiency man. "I thought we had concluded that matter last night."

"You thought wrong. It's all settled."

"True; it's settled. Miss Brooke is not going to marry you."

Tommy flashed a dull red and there was a fighting look in his eyes.

"Are you, Miss Brooke?" asked Hedge.

Constance her compressed her lips and nodded.

"Which shows how error will persist," said the efficiency man, apparently talking to himself.

He stepped around to the rear of the car, unloosed a strap with a deft motion, and swung Constance's' grip to the pavement.

"You may as well alight, Miss Brooke," he said.

Tommy Treadwell sprang forward and confronted him across the grip.

"You'd better keep out of this," he said grimly.

Tommy was quite a large young man, fully as large as Billy Brooke. He was taller than the efficiency man, and wider. But H. Hedge did not appear to be observant of Tommy's bulk just at that instant. He was looking only at his eyes.

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I can't keep out of it, he said simply. "It happens to be my duty to stay in it. Go in the house, Miss Brooke."

Constance remained immovable in her seat and maintained silence.

"You're the one that's going in the house," announced Tommy, clenching his fists. "And maybe they'll carry you in, if you don't get out of here in about ten seconds."

"I'm sorry you feel that way about it," said Hedge.

"Well if you're sorry beat it! If you don't there'll be trouble.

"Trouble? I'm sure there will be no trouble."

The efficiency man spoke in a deprecatory tone.

"I see that I've got to lick you," observed Tommy Treadwell, and there was no reluctance in his voice or manner.

"I'm afraid you'll have to."

Constance, who had listened to this colloquy with her face averted, now turned and bestowed a curious glance upon the efficiency man. If she expected to see his dark hair bristling and his eyes snapping, she was disappointed. He looked exactly as he always did in the library. She looked at Tommy. He was bristling beautifully.

"Here goes," said Tommy.

The efficiency man nodded.

Tommy Treadwell let fly with his right arm, straight from the shoulder. Hedge did not have his hands up, but somehow the blow missed him entirely. Perhaps it was a case of Providence, or perhaps it was because he flirted his head a few inches to the right, accidentally. In any event, it missed him clean and Tommy fell over the grip.

He arose, chagrined and mad clear through. This time he came in swinging. Just what the efficiency man did it is difficult to say, for he did not appear to be doing anything, except failing to get hit. He had his hands up but he was not using them on Tommy. He was dodging punches, stopping punches, diverting punches,

"Don't make me do it again, you haven't a chance."

but he was contenting himself with that. His face wore a thoughful look. He was not giving ground, but at the same time he seemed to be engaged in a purely negative way.

It went thus for some minutes, and finally the efficiency man began to speak.

"I do not know," he said as a left swing passed over his head, "were you studied the art of boxing. But there is no doubt that you waste a tremendous amount of effort. You do not box efficiently. In the first place, you should not swing at all. It cause the fist to travel in an arc, rather than in the shortest way. Observe—you missed me again."

Tommy indeed, had, and nearly lost his balance.

"Furthermore," added H. Hedge, as he sidestepped a fresh volley, "when you use the straight blow, you start it too low and too far back. You are prodigal with muscular effort for which you do not obtain sufficient return, save in the form of exercise. Observe again. You should not start an uppercut from the ground; it takes too long. Don't start it below the waist."

Tommy, breathing now in gasps charged again.

"Your footwork is bad," continued the efficiency man. "You travel a great distance, but you do not arrive. I don't wish to be rude, but it is my duty to say that you are clumsy. You are mastodonic, it is true; but the mastodon is an extinct animal. Why be extinct?"

Tommy was missing more obviously than ever. He was tired.

"Now, if I can, let me illustrate an efficient blow," said H. Hedge. "The truly efficient blow is conceived with deliberate purpose and executed with due economy. It travels the shortest possible distance and, theoretically, carries with it the exact amount of necessary power. It may be delivered with either hand. In this case, we will assume that it is to be delivered with the left. Thus!"

The quick eye of Constance Brooke noted a fleeting and surprising change had been impassive until now. But in the face of the efficiency man. It as he said "thus" his jaw tightened, and his forehead contracted in a scowl that frightened her. His fist came from nowhere, but it landed somewhere, and his body was following it. Tommy Treadwell, already wabbling from his own efforts, turned half-way around, staggered, and fell flat on his face.

Constance uttered a cry and covered her eyes.

For an instant Tommy groped at the pavement: then began to arise, uncertainly.

"Don't make me do it again," said the efficiency man in a changed voice. "You haven't a chance."

Tommy, however, was not satisfied He wheeled as he reached an erect position and closed in. So H. Hedge, again with the sudden scowl on his face, did it one more.

This time Tommy was longer in arising, and when he did it was to sit on the running board of the car and rest his head in his hands.

"Now if you please, Miss Brooke," said Hedge quietly, as he picked up her grip.

Constance, still averting her eyes, suddenly sprang from the car and dashed into the house, where she ran madly upstairs, half choked with hysterical sobs. The efficiency man looked at the crest-fallen knight on the running-board and shook his head slowly.

"Sorry if I hurt you, old man," he said. "But, really, you mustn't try to marry Miss Brooke."

Then he, too disappeared into the house.

NEXT CHAPTER: Constance turns secretary.

Celebrated Their 55 Wedding Anniversary

Mr. and Mrs. John F. Peeler Now Living in Dana, Indiana—He was A Native of Cleveland.

The following from the Newport Indiana Hoosier state will be of interest to the old friends of John F. Peeler, native of Cleveland now living at Dana, Indiana, having left this county in 1867:

Not many people have the good fortune of living together and enjoying fairly good health for more than half a century, as our esteemed friends, Mr. and Mrs. John F. Peeler of Dana, who celebrated their fifty-fifth wedding anniversary Sunday, Dec. 6, in the K and P. Hall at that place.

A public invitation was extended to their friends, neighbors and relatives and although the weather man interfered with the day's program about two hundred were present to help celebrate the occasion and enjoy the bountiful dinner.

Mr. Peeler saw three years of service in the Civil war, being a member Co. F 34 th North Carolina regiment. He came to Vermillion county in the spring of 1867 and on December 6, 1870 he claimed Nancy A. Jackson a Helt township girl, as his bride. Five other couples were married the same week, but all parties have passed away ere this.

Mrs. Elizabeth Leatherman, Mrs. Caroline James of Dana and Mrs. Nancy Walker, of Indianapolis, who were the Dinsmore sisters before marriage are the only one living who were present at Mr. and Mrs. Peeler's wedding fiftyfive years ago. Owing to the weather, none of them was able to help celebrate the day.

With the exception of six years, which were spent in Missouri, Mr. and Mrs. Peeler have lived in Helt and Vermillion townships since they were married. They moved to Dana in 1882.

These old people celebrate their birthdays on the same date, June 11. This year they were 73 and 77 on County Centennial Day at Newport. This was a co-incidence which few people can claim.

They have only one surviving son, Joe who lives near Newport. He was present.

Everyone left at a late hour wishing Mr. and Mrs. Peeler many more years of health and happiness.

Take care of the milk cow during the cold winter months and she will return a good profit in increased milk production, say dairy extension workers at State college.

Christmas Menu
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Fruit Cocktail
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Oyster Dressing
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Hot Biscuits
Fruit Cake Cocoanut Cake
Ambrosia Fruit Salad
Whipped Cream
Hot Coffee Tea Milk

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PHONE 97.

—SCHEDULES—

INTER-CAROLINAS MOTOR BUS COMPANY

Leaves Shelby for Charlotte 7 a. m., 9 a. m., 11 a. m., 1 p. m. 3 p. m., 5 p. m., 8 p. m.——Leaves Charlotte for Shelby 8 a. m., 10 a. m., 12 Noon, 2 p. m., 4 p. m., 6 p. m.

SCHEDULE LINCOLNTON-SHELBY BUS

Leaves Shelby 7:20 a. m., 10 a. m., 1 p. m., 4:30 p. m.—Leaves Lincolnton 8:30 a. m., 11 a. m., 3:00 p. m., 6:30 p. m. ZEB COSTNER, Manager.

SCHEDULE SHELBY-RUTHERFORDTON BUS

Leaves Shelby 8 a. m., 1 p. m., Leaves Rutherfordton 9:55 a. m., 2:15 p. m. Z. V. COSTNER, Manager.

SCHEDULE SHELBY-ASHEVILLE BUS

Leaves Shelby 10 a. m., 12 Noon, 2 p. m., 4 p. m., 6 p. m. RED TOP CAB CO., and BLUE RIDGE LINES, Owners, Asheville, N. C.

For Information Phone 450—Union Bus Terminal, Shelby, N. C.

Our Town's A Good Town

Our People Are A Good People. We All Have Much To Be Thankful For.

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for you and those whose happiness depends upon you and may the New Year Bring you rich rewards.

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GEO. ALEXANDER, Manager.
J. S. McKnight, Trustee.

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HAPPINESS
Of Pleasant Associations and Rich Experience During Christmas
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PROSPERITY
Health and a Busy, Useful Year in 1926.

EFIRD'S DEPARTMENT STORE
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Clay Workers Attend First Short Course

Representatives of the clayworking industries from 18 states attended the first annual winter short course given last year by the department of ceramic engineering at North Carolina state college, Raleigh, and college authorities expect a much wider representation this year when the short course is repeated during the nine day period, January 18 to 27th.

The department of ceramic engineering at the local institution is the first ceramics department established at a southern university, or college. The winter short course will be held, it is stated, in the new ceramics building, now under construction, the class rooms of which will be ready by the first of the new year.

The short course is particularly designated to meet the needs, through intensive training, of those engaged in the clayworking industries of North Carolina and other Southern states. It will deal especially with the principles underlying the work of owners, managers, superintendents, salesmen, foremen, burners, and others engag-

As a common school education will suffice as preparation for the practical work of the short course, many cermaic plant owners in North Carolina, and other sections of the country, it is said, will attend the course and send large numbers of their employes. A bulletin describing the course has been issued by the college and distributed throughout the country.

Another way to attain obscurity is to be a civil war in China.

12 MEN PAY WITH LIVES IN CHAIR

This Year Makes High Record for Electrocutions in North Carolina.

Raleigh, Dec. 19.—The state of North Carolina this year has taken a greater number of human lives in retribution for crime than during any one of the 15 years since the electric chair was adopted as the method of exacting the supreme penalty. During the 12 months of the present year 12 men, each convicted by 12 jurors have walked down the short corridor of death row to the grim chair which snuffed out their lives.

Previously the largest number ever to die by electrocution in this state was nine. When this number was reached in 1911, it was high record. The record was reached again in 1916 but it was never reached again until the present year, with its record breaking number of electrocutions. Nineteen thirteen was the only year there was no electrocutions.

The record for the present year is probably complete for the date for the next electrocution is set for January.

A total of 85 men have died in North Carolina's electric chair since it replaced the noose in 1910.

The number by years follows: 1910, one; 1911, nine; 1912, two; 1913, none 1914, six; 1915, two; 1916, nine; 1917 four; 1918, seven; 1919, four; 1920 eight; 1921, eight; 1922, three; 1923 eight, 1924, two and 1925, 12.

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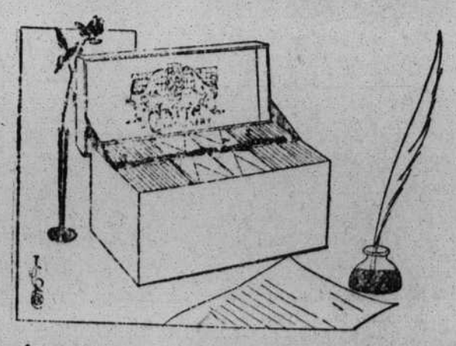

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