

TELLO IN HIS SANCTUM.

Talk with the Young Editor of "The Sunny Hour."

Heap of Shoes in All Stages of Repair—Although Tello Is Only Fifteen Years Old He Has Edited His Paper for Two Years.

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The editor was in his sanctum. He would see me. No ceremony whatever is required to obtain an audience with him. His friends are counted by thousands. They are found in several of the courts of Europe, upon upper Fifth avenue and among the poor and humble of the slums. He is the president of the Barefoot club, an organization that



AMONG THE GAMINS.

has for its patrons one thousand of the best known people in the world. He is a welcome guest at the most fashionable receptions in this great metropolis of the western world. He is loved and known to every ragged gamin who walks our streets or who goes home supperless and unhappy to bed.

Telemachus d'Apéry, or Tello, as he is best known, is a lad of fifteen years, who divides his time between attending school at Chappaqua, Westchester county, editing a journal for boys and girls happily named the Sunny Hour, and dispensing the benefactions that flow into him from generous friends who love him and the philanthropy which he so beautifully exemplifies.

As I entered his editorial rooms, situated in a hall room on the third floor of 18 West Fourteenth street, he was busily engaged in preparing his leading article for the forthcoming number of his publication. He is not a large boy for his age, but his face is a very striking one and leaves an impression that is sure to remain in the memory. Outside his window the bustling throng on Fourteenth street surges to and fro; the hungry hucksters haggle over the goods with which they try to tempt the idle shoppers and the noise of two lines of street cars add discord to the general hum. And yet, amid this din, the young editor goes steadily forward, composes rapidly, "thinks his thoughts," completes his charitable schemes and publishes his paper. It is a literary den such as is rarely entered. The walls are covered with autograph letters from the greatest, the noblest and the humblest of his friends and admirers. Side by side are messages of congratulation from the khedive of Egypt and Johnny Baxter of Cherry Hill, from Monsieur de Giers, imperial prime minister of Russia, and Sister Clarence, of the Foundling hospital, thanking him for his steadfast devotion to the friendless boys and girls of his own town. In one corner is a heap of shoes in all stages of repair, some newly cobbled, others requiring the immediate attention of the shoe physician and still others again hopelessly ill beyond all possibility of mending. Ten minutes later, to anticipate, a poor little ragged urchin from the streets has knocked at the door, timidly entered in response to cheerful words of welcome, and has been fitted with stockings and a pair of resoled shoes from this assemblage of footwear. Tello explains that to such visitors as this he always hesitates to give absolutely new shoes because of the fear that the parents will steal them while the child sleeps and pawn them at the corner shop for liquor. To all his friends he therefore says: "Send the worn articles, not the new ones, because the children are most likely to be permitted to enjoy and benefit by the latter."

"I began the Sunny Hour when I was thirteen years old," said young Tello. "I hadn't any very definite ideas about it, but I visited many of my friends in



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various parts of the city and secured about three hundred subscriptions before I published my first number. I never had been to the public school, because my mother taught me all that I knew at home. My father is a professor of the French language and I have learned to speak it fairly well—as well as I do English. I can see now, after the slight experience that I have had in the very difficult art of composition, that years are required to learn to write with accuracy. Quite as likely as not I never shall learn. At present all I attempt is to say what I have to say in the simplest possible language and I must confess that I sometimes think that I succeed very poorly in this. I do not permit the Sunny Hour to earn one dollar a year for me, but every particle

of profit that its books show at the end of the year goes to buy toys and candy for the barefoot Christmas tree. I am glad to see that many other rich and prosperous newspapers have followed the good example of the Sunny Hour in giving these Christmas entertainments to the poor children of the streets, the boys and girls who have no homes of their own, whose lives are all anxiety and care, whose stomachs are often painfully empty, whose eyes are familiar with tears, whose clothing rarely fits and more rarely keeps them warm, whose heads are often bare of covering, whose chapped hands are mittenless and whose frosted feet truly tell them when winter comes. These are my friends."

"Are you not often imposed upon?" I asked.

"Yes, I often was when I began this work, but that doesn't happen any more. I have four hundred boys and girls on my list. They all know me and I know them. I visit them at their homes or in the hospital when they are sick. When a stranger comes he or she brings a note from some of these little friends of mine."

"And you always honor them?"

"I should say I did. I would as lief have a letter of recommendation as to character from a newsboy whom I had known and trusted and who believed in me as from the president of the United States. It is mutual respect that makes friends true, and some of my sincerest friends haven't a dollar in the world, sleep in the Newsboy's home and have to 'hustle' every day to earn money enough for their night's supper and morning's breakfast. Dinner is something that they don't take into consideration. If they get it they are happy, and if they can't get it they are—what do you call it?—yes, philosophers. They have learned to do without so many things that the mere trifle of a dinner doesn't cause them anxiety. For example, here is one of the letters I received:

DEER TOLO: Heres Joey Coogan hes a friend of mine an all rite his mooter stoled his boots fr him if you kin PATSY BROGAN.

You knows me in Chery strel.

"That signature is as good to me for a pair of shoes as Mr. Vanderbilt's would be. If there's a pair in the house that fits him he gets them."

"You are very fond of hunting, are you not?"

"Yes, I have a gun, and in good weather spend considerable time shooting. You will notice in this drawer that I save all the wings of the quail and pigeons that I shoot. They are very acceptable to the little girls for trimming their hats. The small ones we use for trimming dolls' hats for the Christmas tree. I have never been a girl, but I do know that nothing renders her so happy as a doll. My experience is that as between a dinner and a doll the girl will always take the



TELLO J. D'APÉRY.

latter. I do not like to speak of the many friends who have helped me in this work, because it might be indelicate on my part; but to them, far more than to me, belongs the credit of this work. Mrs. Calvin S. Brice has been kind enough to ask me to her house and her son and daughters have shown me the greatest kindness. Sir Edwin Arnold has interested himself in my work and has written two poems for the Sunny Hour. Among the other contributors I can mention the Queen of Roumania, the Prince of Montenegro, Prince Roland Bonaparte, Osman Pasha, Prince Albert, of Monaco; Mme. de Lebedeff, Mme. la Duchesse d'Uzes, Dr. Rafael Nunez, president United States Colombia; Hon. Justin McCarthy, Mr. Pierre Loti, Mr. Sho Nemoto, of Japan; Countess of Martel (Gyp.); Mr. Sully Prudhomme, French academy; Mme. Juliette Adam, Paris; Hon. Adam Brown, M. P.; Mrs. Mary D. Brine, Mrs. Mary E. Bryan, Ella Wheeler Wilcox, Mrs. Frank Leslie-Wilde, Olive Harper, Mrs. Olive Thorne Miller, Miss Sophy Swett, Edward H. House, Miss Frances Courtneay Baylor, Miss Amanda M. Douglas, Miss Annie Douglas Bell, W. O. Stoddard, Rev. Edward Everett Hale, D. D.; Miss M. M. Friend, Marion Harland, Mrs. Henry Ward Beecher and Miss Marguerite Shepard.

"And you are fond of sports yourself?"

"I am very glad to go to a game of ball, and during the season I follow the fortunes of the New Yorks with breathless anxiety."

"Whenever I can spare the time I go to the Polo grounds to see the game, and I feel good whenever a fine play has been made. I am a collector of butterflies, and it affords me great pleasure to go to the natural history museum, search there until I have found a specimen similar in character, copy the name, attach it to my specimen and put it in my case. Senator Brice's son delights in electrical experiments and with him I pass many happy hours, though I am not well informed regarding the principles of electrical science. He seems to be, and his playroom is a very interesting wonder shop. But have forgotten that I must not talk about my friends. They love me and trust me and I must be true and honest to them."

These are the true and honest principles of a reporter and editor, and I certainly have no wish that Tello d'Apéry should have any others.

JULIUS CHAMBERS.