

A TWELVE-YEAR-OLD EDITOR.

Olive Harper's Young Son Adopts Journalism in Aid of Charity.

THE "SUNNY HOUR" AND ITS OWNER

A Budding Journalist's Views on Politics, Sunday Newspapers and Many Other Things.

Journalism in New York is probably as diversified as in any city on the globe. Papers are published here by all sorts and conditions of men and deal with every conceivable topic, and now a new publication has made its appearance characterized by the novel and refreshing announcement that it is started not for personal gain, but in aid of a very worthy charitable scheme and possessing further the equally unique distinction that its proprietor, editor, publisher, chief contributor and advertising solicitor is but twelve years of age.

The paper in question is entitled the *Sunny-Hour* and is "published by a boy for boys and girls." It is issued monthly and consists of seven pages of really capital reading matter and one page of neatly arranged advertisements. Its typographical appearance is excellent and in general make up it excels many a sheet of greater pretensions.

With the exception of a few trifling paragraphs the matter is original, and the only shadow of plagiarism is the quotation from Charles A. Dana's address to the Wisconsin Editorial Association, which heads the editorial column exactly as it does that of the *HERALD*.

WHY HE FOLLOWED THE HERALD'S EXAMPLE.

The reason of the praiseworthy imitation referred to was explained to me by the young editor, upon whom I recently called, in the following naive manner:—"You see I may sometimes want to speak well of my friends," he said. "I have, for instance, praised a picture by a girl who is very young and paints beautifully, and I don't want any one to suppose that anything I may write like that is paid for."

And now for the editor himself. His name is Tello d'Apéry and he is the son of a lady whose *nom de plume* of Olive Harper is a familiar one to most magazine and newspaper readers. He is an active looking boy, twelve years of age, with an open, candid face expressing strong individuality, and during our brief interview I was struck with the impression that he happily united the characteristics of a thorough boy and a thorough little gentleman. His hobby is natural science, and several collections of rare insects, birds' eggs, minerals and vegetable products decorate the sitting room of his home at No. 18 West Fourteenth street, which is also the editorial and publication office of the *Sunny Hour*.

His first literary effort was made at the tender age of five years, when he competed for a prize offered by *St. Nicholas* for the best story to accompany an illustration in that magazine. His composition of six lines was so funny that a fac-simile of it was published, and countless readers were amused and interested in the carefully "printed" capitals of his early penmanship.

Tello's next effort was a far more ambitious one, and consisted of a story entitled "The Wave Factory." It was written nearly two years since, but was pigeonholed until the dawn of the *Sunny Hour*, and now appears as a serial in that publication. He also took part in a competition for a prize offered by an evening paper of this city, and obtained "honorable mention."

A MOST PRAISEWORTHY OBJECT.

A few weeks since it occurred to Tello that a juvenile magazine might coin money for a charitable scheme for supplying poor children with foot gear in which he has long been interested.

In his leisure time he solicited contributions and subscriptions to the proposed venture, and was so successful in both departments that he then confidently canvassed several prominent business men for advertisements. The result was the issue last week of the *Sunny Hour*, the first number having cleared all expenses despite the fact that Tello had his pocket picked of \$6 50 which he received in payment for an advertisement.

The editorial introduction of the initial number is a little gem—"Modesty, as becomes so young an editor." Master Tello announces that he intends to try and make the paper worthy of a place in every home where there are children. He will "devote the paper to such literature as mothers will approve and there will be no Indian scalping, nor pistols, nor any such thing." This bold resolve to eschew the "dime novel" style ought to boom the paper among parents at least; and now follows a bit of pungent sarcasm which would indicate success in store for the young editor. He says "I shall always uphold the cause of temperance and morality, and so shall not touch upon politics."

CONTRIBUTIONS BY FAMOUS WRITERS.

There are many things in the *Sunny Hour* which will amuse adults, one unique feature being the "Answers to Correspondents," which appear in the initial number. Naively remarking that it will be well to show how correspondence "would be answered if there had been any," the editor has invented a few questions and inserted the responses. Then there is a new poem by Ella Wheeler Wilcox and another by Olive Harper, either of which would command a place in any paper, while the assurances of contributions from those writers and from Mrs. Frank Leslie, Antoinette Van Hoesen Wakeman, Sara Layton and others, give promise of many future "good things."

I endeavored to ascertain Master Tello's views on journalistic and other subjects and quote some of his ideas, which will doubtless prove interesting as coming from so young a *littérateur*. "I think the daily press is about as good now as it can be," he said, in answer to a question. "Of course I have not much time for reading the papers as I am going to school and have a good deal to do at home, but I like the make up of the *HERALD* better than any of the other of the city papers. One always knows where to find the news, and then the little two or three line advertisements are not swallowed up by being mixed with other things. I wish some one would publish a comic daily newspaper. One for boys and girls, I mean. It could give all the funny news, and lots of people would buy it."

WANTS ONLY THE SUNNY SIDE OF LIFE.

Tello thought that the tragic side of life might be entirely omitted from such a paper as being both uninteresting to its readers and unhealthy, but when I suggested that general news of interest could not always be presented from a comical standpoint he admitted that a fourth of his ideal paper might be devoted to serious matter. "It must be awfully hard to write funny news," he added plaintively. "I have tried to make up comic stories, but whenever I do think of anything I'm always sure to see the same thing in one of the papers."

"How do you write your stories?" I asked, referring to the fiction in the *Sunny Hour*.

"Well, I don't know. I think them up in my head before writing, and then when I sit down it all runs off my pencil quite easily."

Tello's views on Sunday newspapers are entitled to much consideration, inasmuch as he is evidently strictly orthodox in his religious views. "I think Sunday newspapers keep people indoors reading them instead of going out and staying around," he said. "Besides they are not printed on Sunday, are they?"

I explained that the Monday daily is the product of Sunday's work, and Tello was a little puzzled at the problem thus presented, but he decided finally that it would never do to lose a day's record of the world's happenings and that the value of the newspaper overbalanced the possible breach of Sabbatarianism.

Politics will be eschewed in the *Sunny Hour*, but the editor is of republican tendencies. He wisely remarked:—"I may change my mind before I am twenty-one, but if I were twenty-one now I guess I'd vote for Harrison. I saw the two parades here and the republican was the biggest, so I thought I'd be republican and then I would not get left."

Here are his ideas on prohibition:—"I believe in temperance and I don't drink anything myself" he said; but when I asked him if he therefore considered that every one else should be barred from drinking, he replied:—"No! I think it is a good example not to drink, but it's every one's own business and other people must choose for themselves."

Master Tello d'Apéry was greatly pleased to receive among other epistles a pleasant letter from Mrs. Russell Harrison congratulating him upon the appearance of the *Sunny Hour*, and a photograph and autograph from Vice President Morton in token of the latter's appreciation of the young editor's work.