WORK FOR SYLVIA

By Joanna Single

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Sylvia Maine stretched out a gaunt arm and slammed down the window of her little dressmaking shop.

"Looks like spring wanted to git in here, too," she remarked precariously through the mouthful of pins which she was deftly transferring to the folds of the gleaming white satin gown draped on the lovely girl who stood patiently before her. She continued:

"I'm not sure that I'd know it if it didn't fit, Sylvy. Is it silly to be so happy? Here Harry and I've been engaged only a year, and our folks all like it, and now his grandfather leaves him all that money, and everything's perfect." She blushed with sky pleasure to the roots of her beautiful blond hair. The withered little spinster dressmaker sighed. Her only love had in anger married another woman and had been unhappy till his early death.

"It's silly not to be as happy as the Lord will let you be, Nelly. I don't let myself git too old to forgit that. You and Harry be as happy as you can and be good. There—ain't that sleeve sweet? I got to git this dress of yours done this week so's I can git at Annie Paine's. Her weddin's in June too. It's the Lord's own month for weddin's, and there had ought to be another besides yours and Annie's in this village." Nelly's resplendent image in the glass made her ask absently:

"What other wedding do you mean?"
"John King's and Alice White's."

Nelly considered the fit of her little girdle before she said carelessly:

"Why, they've been engaged forever. Everybody's used to it. I guess they are themselves, or they'd do something about it. I know Harry would not wait that way for me—he—he cares too much."

Nelly at twenty saw no romance in a ten years' engagement, but Sylvia knew that no woman gets used to being always engaged and never married. She took the last pin from her mouth and explained:

"It's his mother and her father that stand in the way. They are selfish old co[ck]s to stand in the way of the children's happiness. Even if Alice's father had any one to look after him I doubt whether Alice, who is the sweetest thing that ever lived, could get along with John's mother. She's a heady old piece if she is smart and handsome, and she likes her own way too well to want a daughter-in-law to have first place in the house John has earned and built with his own hands. His father was no earthly account, and folks do say all Mrs. King married him for was to spite Cornelia Jones, who was dead in love with him and was never married on that account, they say." Sylvia took the soft satin carefully off over the girl's pink shoulders, Nelly's sympathy was aroused. As she dressed she made a laughing proposal.

[Column continues...]

waited long enough—it ain't right! Well, I got to be goin'. You tell Alice I was here." She walked off, leaving the old man with a new fever—and with a new idea in his head. That Jephson! He and Judson had always conflicted. He grunted and lit his pipe.

Spring passed into early summer, and in June Nelly and Harry and Annie and Richard were married, Alice sweet and grave and dark eyed, sang at the weddings. Her rich soprano was indispensable. John watched her in love and despair and began to wonder if, after all, prudence and caution were not sometimes vices as well as virtues. Would he never be free to take Alice to his own home? Would she never leave her father to come to him? He went to see her much oftener than had been his habit, and, strange to say, of evenings her father disappeared, no one asked where, and left them to themselves. John and Alice were again almost the boy and girl lovers of ten years ago. They took twilight walks and long drives unmolested and unquestioned and were very happy.

With surprise John began to realize that his mother no longer nagged him about his engagement nor had fits of weeping, during which she declared that he was going to make her a stranger and a dependent in her own house.

Then one evening he took counsel and masterfully laid before Alice a plan to brave everybody. Finally she yielded, though she dreaded the explanation that would have to follow.

One soft September evening John, with a license in his pocket, drove to her door and told her father he was going to take her for a drive to Lynn ville, ten miles away, and that they would not be back till evening. The old man was used to their driving and said nothing. In fact, he seemed almost anxious to have Alice go.

Late in the evening they returned man and wife. John tied the horse and went in to have it out with Alice's father. But the old man, strangely enough, was not to be found. They waited awhile, and then John left her to go tell his mother.

When he had gone Alice sat, silent in the big chair on the porch, happy in spite of the probable trouble John's mother would make, happy in the face of her father's certain anger. At any rate, nothing on earth could make her anything but John's wife. So she waited for John and wondered where her father could possibly be. In half an hour she heard John's quick, eager footsteps. He sprung in at the gate and almost ran to take her in his arms: He kissed her, and he laughed—actually laughed—like a boy. Then he explained:

"It's at my house—our father. It seems they took advantage of our absence to marry each other, Alice. How's that for gir? They braved me to my face, but they were so afraid that we would be angry that they were positively relieved when I told them what we'd done. They are coming over here tomorrow, dearest, and then our home will be our own."

Then John, being a man, could not just see why Alice could declare that she was perfectly happy and still should weep on his shoulder. But Sylvia was a woman—she would know the reason.

The World's Water Supply.

A German scientist predicts that the time will come when there will not be water enough remaining on this globe to support human life. We are left to suppose that our shrinking sphere will form caverns in its interior into which the oceans will sink. For a similar reason, as some astronomers believe, there is no man in the moon, the former waters on its surface, if there ever were any, having retired into its cavernous interior. We have no evidence at present of subterranean hollows of any extent, and the earth's crust is continually adjusting itself by earthquake dislocations to the pressures within and without. Besides, nature has provided this planet of ours with a rather large water supply. Nearly three-fourths of the earth's surface—or 144,712,836 square miles—are covered by the oceans which is reckoned to be of an average depth of at least two miles. The globe must contract enormously and leave some huge cavities before our oceans disappear. At present its crust by no means resembles a rigid arch. It is a very curve, the tops of its mountains more than five miles high and the low est of its sea floors more than five miles deep. We may safely count on several millions of years before the last man has not a drop to drink.

THE DUST SPRAY.

Cheap and Easy to Transport—Has No Other Advantage.

Experiments at the Illinois station testing the relative merits of the dry and wet sprays in apple orchards have extended over three seasons, and some of the conclusions are as follows:

With regard to the effects upon foliage the results were identical in all orchards and in all seasons. Trees sprayed with liquid bordeaux and paris green retained their foliage in healthy working condition throughout the season. Dust sprayed and check trees were placed together, because the behavior of foliage was the same in both. Leaves began falling in July, and in early September these trees were practically denuded. This loss of foliage was very serious. The assimilatory processes of trees are active in proportion to the working leaf surface. As leaves fall these processes diminish until brought to a stop by the entire loss of foliage, long before the work of the season should normally end. The fruit is starved, does not approach normal size and buds for the next year cannot be properly developed.

Ineffective Against Scab.

It was frequently happens that under the stimulus of rains and high temperatures in October leaf buds of the defoliated trees that normally should remain dormant until spring unfold and develop. In spite of this the loss of foliage are very serious. The spawed and abnormal activity of the trees affects fruit buds also. A considerable portion of them have unreserved to swell and some expand the flowers. All this is greatly to the detriment of the trees and fatal to the crop for the next year.

Differences in fruit were as marked as were differences in foliage. Liquid sprayed trees gave smooth fruit of good size. Dust sprayed and check trees gave small, ill formed fruit, badly marked by scab and, of very little value as evaporator stock.

Dust spray is 25 per cent cheaper than liquid spray, and it is easier to transport about the orchard. It has no other advantages.

Safe Use of Lime.

Dr. Hopkins tells the farmers of his state (Illinois, that he never will recommend the use of slip material on land that would injure it in the long run. He suggests only natural insoluble... The source of the lime now used is limestone. The tendency of burnt lime—caustic lime—is to burn the soil. Ground limestone will correct acidity just as effectively as caustic lime if used in sufficient quantity. It is the cheapest form of lime for this purpose. It is absolutely harmless, and it does the work of destroying acidity.

The ground limestone cannot stimulate nor do any injury. On poor land it would not secure as much clover unaided as does caustic lime, but it would do all that may be required of it safely—it corrects the acidity and it feeds the clover directly when that is required. A ton of ground limestone is the equivalent of more than half a ton of caustic lime—"ground lime"—in neutralizing free acids in the soil. The price is low, usually $1 a ton at the works.—Alva Agee in National Stockman.

Pinching and Stopping.

"Pinching" and "stopping" are technical terms used in horticultural writings, which, although well understood by the initiated, have a very indefinite meaning to the general reader, at least in their horticultural application. Pinching or stopping is a method of summer pruning whereby robust shoots are checked at any desired height in their growth by removing their extreme points with a pinch between the finger and the thumb without the further removal of foliage. This operation retards for a time the extension of such shoots, induces additional growths in other buds and encourages the development of latent shoots as well as of other shoots where a more active extension is required.—L. C. Corbett.

Working For Comb Honey.

For comb honey one should watch very carefully at the time of putting the first supers on the hive. I think one has made a great mistake, and it will cost him money, if he defers many days after the proper day to put on the supers. To get the greatest flow of honey the supers should be put on early. If the honey flow holds out put another super on below when the first one is but half filled, says an Illinois apiarist.

Practical Points.

When asparagus cutting ceases let the shoots grow up, but keep the weeds down and the soil well stirred. The roots should now gather materials for the next crop. The application of some quickly available fertilizer will assist in that direction.

Dig around currant bushes and incorporate barnyard manure or bone fertilizer with the earth.

Do not permit grass or weeds to grow up in the orchard, since the moisture and best fertilizing elements required for the growth of the trees and fruit will be absorbed by the vegetation.

If you see gum or sawdust near the base of apple, peach or plum trees dig or cut out the borers. A sharp pointed knife will cut them out. A wire may be used effectively in probing the borer holes and then killing the insects.

Jar plum and cherry trees in the morning, when the curculios are torpid. Let the chickens eat them.

Pinch out lateral growths of grapevines to one or two eyes, so that all clusters will have a chance to develop ripen.

Wealth in Old Roman Times.

Our wealth, as much as we boast of it, is comparatively puny as compared with the wealth of men of old. There was Mark Antony's estate that was sold to Messala for over $500,000, and Scaurus' villa was burned at a loss of over $12,000,000. Otho spent over $14,000,000 in finishing one wing of a palace commenced by Nero. Nearly $36,000,000 was found in the coffers of Tiberius, and Caligula spent it in less than a year. Paulus could make a trifling present to the mother of Brutus of a pearl worth over $30,000. He let us be modest. We are a cheap people, even the wealthiest of us.

Smoking the Nargile.

A Greek thus tells how the nargile is smoked by his brethren:

"Only pure tobacco is used in the nargile. It is grown expressly for the purpose in Persia. The weed there is called tumbeky. This kind of tobacco is first washed two or three times by the man who keeps the restaurant. He puts it under a faucet and squeezes the juice out. Otherwise the tobacco would be too strong. Then, when the smoke of it is drawn through the water, the tobacco having, of course, been dried first, all the nicotine is deposited in the water, and a delightful and innocuous smoke is the result."—London Mail.

Ancient Hoses.

Flinders Petrie, the archaeologist, while excavating among some ancient Egyptian tombs, found a wreath of roses which had been bound into a garland and buried with the dead thousands of years ago. M. Crepin, the botanist and microscopist, made a careful examination of this queer find and prepared a paper on it which he read before the Royal society of Belgium. From this paper it appears that in places where the flowers were matted together they still retained their color as well as a very faint odor. The species to which they belong is now extinct, but a rose resembling them in several particulars is still grown in Egypt and Abyssinia.

"A Bare Bodkin."

"Bare" means "mere" as well as "naked," and I cannot doubt that by "bare bodkin" Shakespeare meant "mere bodkin," the point of the passage being with how contemptibly small an instrument we could, if we chose, put an end to life and its bother. "Bare" probably was used instead of "mere" for the sake of offensive alliteration. (Cf. with Hamlet's "bare bodkin," Richard II.'s "little pin," III., 2, 169.) For "bare" in the sense of "mere" I need cite only "bare imagination of a feast."—London Notes and Queries.

Four Days in the Year.

There are but four days in the year when the sun and clock exactly correspond. In other words, there are but four days of the 365 in which the sun is directly south at noon:
April 15, the 15th of June, the 31st of August, and the 24th of December.
On these four days the clock is in the right (true meridian) year.
The sun and clock both the same time of the year.

The Miracle.

Woodland—What is the difference between a wonder and a miracle? Lorain—Well, if you'd touch me for $5 and I held it to you it would be a wonder. Woodland—That's so. Lorain—And if you returned it, it would be a miracle.

Had Her Guessing.

Margie—I wonder if Mr. Smartly meant to give me a left handed compliment? Ritz—Why? Margie—He said these artificial flowers I am wearing I just watch my hair.

Discontent is the want of self reliance. It is infirmity of will.—Emerson.

QUAINT PRESENTS.

Odd Wedding Gifts That Have Been Received by Celebrities.

Celebrities are often the recipients of quaint presents. For instance, on the marriage of Queen Victoria the farmers of East and West Pennard, Somersetshire, wishing to show their loyalty, manufactured from the milk of 750 cows an immense cheese nine feet in circumference. The gift was graciously accepted and was stored at Buckingham palace, where it would undoubtedly have found its way to the royal table had not the donors wished to exhibit it as an advertisement. Their request was granted, but after it had been exhibited and the makers would have returned it her majesty signified that owing to the altered conditions she could not accept it as a gift.

An equally homely gift was made to the late King Charles of Wurttemburg on the morning of his marriage to Princess Olga of Russia. A peasant woman sent him a pair of trousers of her own design, with a note expressing the hope that they might be found a better cut and fit than those which she had last had the honor of seeing his majesty wear.

The Italian singer, Signor Mario, inspired a hopeless passion in the hearts of so many women that at the time of his wedding some of this affection found expression in various strange gifts. One was in the shape of a cushion stuffed with tresses from the heads of many of his hopeless admirers. Another was from a lady in Munich who had one of her teeth set in a scarfpin surrounded with pearls and emeralds. In an accompanying note she expressed the hope that by sometimes wearing the gift he might be reminded of his unknown worshiper.—New York Herald.

THE FIRST SPECTACLES.

They Were Made in Italy in the Thirteenth Century.

Spectacles were invented late in the thirteenth century. The use of glass to aid the sight of defective eyes is, however, much older. Nero looked through a concave glass in watching the gladiatorial games, and many other historical men of his day were dependent on similar devices for lengthening their sight.

Till the latter part of the thirteenth century only the single glass was in use. In 1290 the double glass invented, and in the fourteenth century spectacles were used quite frequently by the very wealthy and high born, although they were still so scarce that they were bequeathed in will with all the elaborate care that marked the disposition of a feudal estate. The first spectacles were made in Italy.

Somewhat later the manufacture of cheaper glasses sprang up in Holland, and it spread late in the fourteenth century to Germany, Nuremberg and Rathenow acquired fame for their glasses between 1400 and 1500.

For many years glasses were used only as a means of aiding bad eyes, until the fashion of wearing merely for the sake of wearing them sprang up in Spain. It spread rapidly to the rest of the continent and brought about the transformation of the old thirteenth century spectacles into eyeglasses and eventually into the monocle.

Quicksilver.

Quicksilver is found in veins of rocks, like gold, silver and other metals. Sometimes the tiny globules of the mercury appear in the interstices of the rock, but usually it is found in the form of cinnabar, a chemical compound containing 13.8 per cent of sulphur and 86.2 per cent mercury. When pure and reduced to a powder it is a bright red color.

The principal uses of quicksilver are for removing free gold and silver in placer and quartz mining, for manufacturing vermilion paints and dyes, for backing mirrors, for making fine barometers and many other scientific instruments.

What Water Did.

A certain liquor dealer, a hard headed old Scot, grew rich in the trade. After he had grown rich the old man built himself a fine house, a limestone mansion on the hill, with a park around it, with conservatories, stables and outbuildings—in a word, a palace. One day the old Scot rode in the omnibus past his fine house. A temperance man pointed up at the grand edifice and said, with a sneer, "It was the whisky built that, wasn't it?" "Na, na, man; the water," the Scot answered.—London Mail.

The First Sapphire.

There is an Indian legend that Brahma, the creator, once committed a sin that he might know the torments of remorse and thus be able to sympathize with mortals. But the moment he had committed it he began to repent the enormity, or prayers of purification, and in his grief dropped on the earth a tear, the hottest that ever fell from an eye, and from it was formed the first sapphire.

Happy Thought.

Doctor—Your throat affection is one of the rarest in the world and is of the deepest interest to the medical profession. Patient—Then remember, doctor, when you make out your bill that I haven't charged anything for letting you look down my throat.

The Strong Point.

He—Really, I never loved anybody before. She—That isn't the point. Are you sure you'll never love anybody by, and by?

In so far as you approach temptation to a man, you do him an injury, and if he is to overcome you share his guilt.—Emerson.

Longevity Among Forest Rangers.

While in the forest reserve in which we hunted I met several of the forest rangers, and of all their intelligent men, some with college education, some who seemed peculiarly adapted to their calling, who knew the mountains thoroughly, hardy with an ax and gun and full of resources. A degree of ethics obtained among the forest rangers, guides, trappers and forest rangers that was interesting. When any one goes to a deserted cabin, in most of which would be found food, bedding, a stove, etc., it is proper form for him to stay all night, eat all he can put away under his belt, if he dirt need divide any supply of tobacco and matches he may take off tobacco and matches he may take away from that of the cabin, but he must take away nothing else, since to carry off an article of its value, such as hammer, hatchet, pinchers, snow glasses, screw driver, dirk hook, pipe or other similar article might inconvenience the owner greatly and be a hardship and wanted them and was forty miles or more from a source of supply. If a belated wanderer fails to reach the cabin wanders about without a supply of dry wood neither finds a fire and cook a meal he is at once tabooed and his companionship is not sought after.—Northwestern Sportsman.

ASSUMING A VIRTUE.

What Can Be Done by Right Thinking and Self Control.

Zopyrus, the physiognomist, said "Socrates'" features showed that he was stupid, brutal, sensual and addicted to drunkenness. Socrates upheld the analysis by saying, "By nature I am addicted to all these sins, and they were only restrained and vanquished by the continual practice of virtue."

Emerson says in effect, "The virtue you would like to have, assume it as already yours, appropriate it, enter into the part and live the character just as the great actor is absorbed in the character of the part he plays." No matter how great your weakness or how much you may regret it, assume steadily and persistently its opposite until you acquire the habit of holding that thought or of living the thing not in its weakness, but in its wholeness, in its entirety. Hold the ideal of an efficient faculty or quality, nor of a marred or deficient one. The way to reach or to control yourself toward it with all one's might, and we approximate it just in proportion to the intensity and the persistency of our effort to attain it.

If you are inclined to be very excitable and nervous, if you "fly all to pieces" over the least annoyance, do not waste your time regretting this weakness and telling everybody that you cannot help it. Just assume the calm, deliberate, quiet, balanced composure which characterizes your ideal person in that respect. Persuade yourself that you are not nervous or excitable, that you can control yourself, that you are well balanced, that you do not fly off on a tangent at every little annoyance. You will be amazed to see how the perpetual holding of this serene, calm, quiet attitude will help you to become what your thought.—Success.

CATCHING COLD.

Suggestions That May Keep One From the Doctor.

A person in good health, with fair play, easily resists cold, but when the health flags a little and liberties are taken with the stomach or with the nervous system a chill is easily taken and, according to the weak spot of the individual, assumes the form of a cold or pneumonia, or it may be jaundice. Of all causes of cold probably fatigue is one of the most efficient. A jaded man coming home at night from a long day's work, a growing youth losing two hours' sleep over evening parties two or three times a week or a young lady heavily "doing the season," young children overfed and with short allowance of sleep, are common instances of the victims of cold.

Luxury is favorable to chill taking. Very hot rooms, feather beds, soft chairs, create a sensitiveness that leads to catarrhs. It is not, after all, the cold that is so much to be feared as the antecedent conditions that give the attack a chance of doing harm. Some of the worst colds happen to those who do not leave their home or even their beds and those who are most invulnerable are often those who are most exposed to changes of temperature and who by good stag, cold bathing and regular habits preserve the tone of their nervous system and circulation. Probably many chills are contracted at night or at the fag end of the day, when tired people get the equilibrium of their circulation disturbed by either overheated sitting rooms or underheated bedrooms and beds. This is especially the case with elderly people. In such cases the mischief is not always done instantaneously or in a single night. It often takes place insidiously, extending over days or even weeks.—London Lancet.

Fighting the Current.

Papa has swift streams well stocked with fish. An explorer tells of Japanese fresh water mullet which numbers weigh as much as fifteen pounds. These fish are wonderfully provided by nature with an appliance which helps them to combat the extraordinary currents. At one foremost you will see them being swept down resistlessly, but suddenly they shoot off into the quieter water and attach themselves to the rocks by a strong sucker near the mouth. There they hang just outside the current, their tails moving gently with it, and when they have recovered their strength they make another dash through the swifter waters.

Observance of the Sabbath.

There was the minister of Tweedsmuir who on a certain Sabbath found a salmon stranded in shallow water and who, being unable conscientiously to take it out on such a day, built a hedge of stones around it and, returning on the morrow, claimed his prize. There was the old farmer who could not go to the kirk because he had neglected to shave on the Saturday night, and he would not profane the day by the use of any edged tool.—Macmillan's Magazine.

A True Fish Story.

Here is a fish story told by a British gentleman: An Irishman had caught a big pike. Noting a lump in its stomach, he cut it open. "As I cut it open there was a mighty rush and a flapping of wings, and away flew a wild duck, and when I looked inside there was a nest, with four eggs, and she had been setting all the time on the nest."

Shocking Precocity.

"What is the result," asked the teacher of the primary class in arithmetic, "when you put two and two together?" "A kith," lisped the curly headed little girl in the front row.—Chicago Tribune.

There are many diversities of vice. It is one never failing effect of it to render us displeased and discontented.—Seneca.

Language in France.

There are several districts in France where the very ancient tongue still survive. Basque is spoken by about 100,000 persons, who are naturally proud of a language that is their exclusive possession, for it is unlike every other spoken tongue, and the assertion commonly made that to understand it one must have learned it in the cradle. This peculiar property gives in the mind of the Basque people support to their belief that it was the primary language of Adam and Eve. The Romans when they conquered Gaul conquered Breton to croaking of ravens. About a million people speak Breton. Then there are Flemish, still spoken by a comparatively small number in northeastern France, Catalan in the Pyrenees-Orientales and Languedoc and Provencal, whose gradual extinction has been delayed mainly by the efforts of a few literary enthusiasts.

The More the Merrier.

"I want to introduce you to a young lady—a very nice girl—and she's worth her weight in gold."

"Stout girl I have."—London Tit-Bits.