

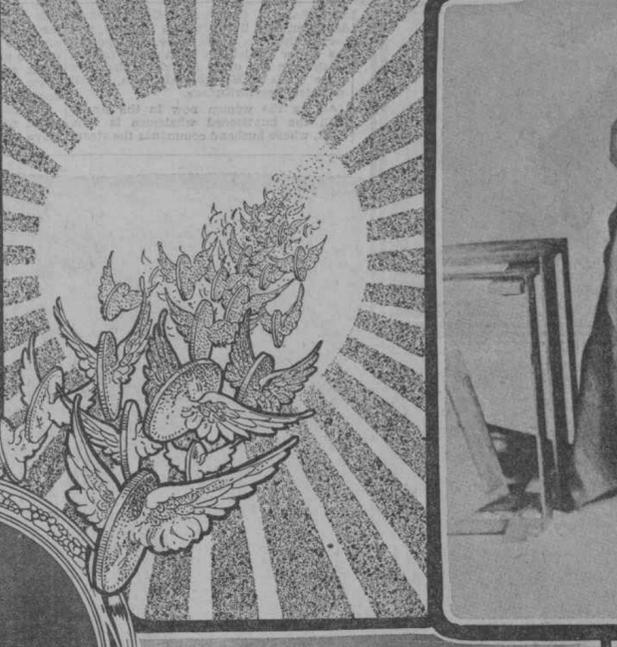
AN APPEAL to the SYMPATHETIC WHICH IS NETTING A FORTUNE



The "American Girl" Drawn by Miss Smith with her toes.



Putting on her spectacles



Working on a pen and ink sketch



Sawing a board



Miss Kitty Smith

How a Little Armless Girl Is Getting Money from the Kindhearted at the Rate of \$100,000 a Year

ONE of the most curious methods of making a fortune ever devised in this country is that by which a little armless girl named Kitty Smith is said to have earned \$35,000 from the American people in twelve months and by which she is now making money at the rate of more than \$1,500 a week—a sum more than half as big again as that which the people of this country are paying to their President.

From the little village of South Whitley, in Indiana, with its population of a little more than a thousand souls, this astonishing young person is reaching out to every part of this country, from Maine to Oregon, from Massachusetts to California, and is asked to contribute to her success—and their response is such that little Miss Smith is rolling up a revenue big enough to pay the combined income salaries of a dozen bank presidents, big enough to maintain a hundred mistresses of the aristocracy or big enough to support a thousand little armless girls in any of the "homes" to which such young people think themselves happy to be admitted.

It is a very simple one, this scheme. It involves nothing more than the sale of a little book. One of these booklets is likely to reach any one at any moment for the mail pouches of the country are being glutted with them. It is a plain little book with half a dozen ordinary half-tone pictures in it, a few testimonials, and enough reading matter to fill a column and a half in this newspaper. It is called "The Story of My Life." It tells how Miss Smith's arms were burned off when she was a child and how, with her feet and toes alone, she has since learned to paint, embroider in silk, saw wood, drive nails, and, in fact, do more things than thousands of young women who possess the full use of all their limbs.

Together with the envelope, a circular letter, a postage stamp, and a coin mailing card, the first cost of "The Story of My Life" is three cents, but in the coin there is a hole big enough to accommodate a quarter dollar. If the recipient is requested to fill this hole and return the card to Miss Smith "if he thinks the book worth the money." Three persons out of every ten who receive the book are giving her an income, which is beyond the rosiest dreams of ninety-nine out of every hundred of the donors themselves.

Office Force of Fifteen

Of course all this is not profit. Such an extensive business must be carried on systematically, and system means money. The system by which this enterprise is maintained would do credit to any bank or insurance company in the country. In the first place, it is carried on under a regular firm name—"The Kitty Smith Company." It has a manager to look after the business generally and a trustee, appointed by the court, to see that the manager does his duty. It has a bookkeeper to keep the accounts, a stenographer to attend to the correspondence, a boy to carry the mail to and from the Post Office, and eleven young women to address envelopes, fold circulars and do the more mechanical parts of the work. The manager is no less a person than Mr. Frank E. Miner, one of the solid citizens of the village and the general manager of an extensive job printing plant. The trustee is Mr. M. H. Maston, who is also the village president.

It must not be inferred, however, that Mr. Miner is actuated by motives of mere philanthropy. He makes no pretence that the Kitty Smith Company is anything but a pure business proposition and declares boldly that he is in the company for the money which can be made out of it.

"Just as I might have backed a fast horse on a profit sharing basis," said Mr. Miner the other day, "or as I might have published a book, sharing the royalties with the author, so I offered to publish the story of Kitty Smith's life, financing the business privately and dividing the profits between her and myself."

that the million mark may be reached within the span of Miss Smith's life. And there is nothing that can check this remarkable plan to exploit a whole nation for the enriching of one little crippled girl. The post office authorities have investigated twice and have declared that it is legitimate. There is no doubt about the story of Kitty Smith's life, as set forth in the booklet.

The Girl's Story. According to this narrative Miss Smith was only nine years old when she found a bottle of whiskey in her home, in Chicago, and drank herself drunk. Her father in the next room shouted to her to put wood in the kitchen fire, and in her intoxicated condition she fell insensible on the hot stove, and her arms were burned off before she was discovered. After that she spent long terms in the Cook County Hospital, the Home for Destitute Crippled Children in Chicago and the Children's Home in Poynette, Wis. Meanwhile she had acquired wonderful control over her feet and was able without the aid of hands to do everything necessary to her own comfort and many things besides which ordinarily endowed women cannot do. She could even take off her hat, brush her teeth and comb her hair with her feet. A little less than two years ago, while staying with friends in South Whitley, she met Miner, and the company was projected and the book issued.

They are very clever little booklets, too, although rather small for the price, being only five by six inches in surface, and the eighth of an inch thick. The cover shows a portrait of Kitty Smith without arms. Inside Kitty Smith is pictured as a little girl before the accident. She is also shown in her armless condition sitting at a desk, writing a letter with a pair of scissors with her toes, writing a letter with her toes, combing her hair with her toes, sawing wood with her toes, and visitors to

The Yellow Peril of the Trapper

AT the Zoo, in New York's incomparable Bronx Park, they have a pair of the wildest and most untamable of animals in America. He is the wolverine—a sleek, smooth looking mink colored animal, something between a tiger and a bear, with a row of sharp teeth so powerful that a few days ago he chewed up the steel matting of his cage and escaped. He was finally captured in Fordham, a mile away, and the exploit was the event of the week.

The Indians have long considered the wolverine as the most subtle of animals. He has almost human instinct in cunning. He steals everything out of your cabin, chews up traps, gnaws everything into shreds, which, perhaps, explains why the Indians call him "the mountain devil."

"The worst we have heard of the animal does not half describe it," said Director Hornaday. "There is one less 'camp devil' her toes, using a pair of scissors with her toes, writing a letter with her toes, combing her hair with her toes, sawing wood with her toes, and visitors to

South Whitley are shown other pictures of her driving tenpenny nails with her toes, and not smashing them with the hammer, either. The book also contains pictures of embroidery done with Miss Smith's toes, a picture of a cow drawn by Miss Smith with her toes, a picture of an American soldier in battle with the Filipinos done with her toes, a picture of a crazy quilt made with her toes, and lastly a writing desk which Miss Smith sawed out, planed off and nailed together by means of her toes.

These pictures are no exaggerations. Miss Smith does all these things, and does them astonishingly well. Of course, there is nothing in the book which gives any adequate idea of Miss Smith's income derived from the tens of thousands of good-natured Americans who pay her twenty-five cents for a book that costs three cents. The Kitty Smith Company is not even mentioned. The readers are told nothing about Manager Miner, or the stenographers, or the eleven girls who are addressing envelopes, but the post office authorities are of the opinion that these omissions do not invalidate the business. They point out that the buyer sees the book before he pays for it, and Miss Smith, in her letter, says distinctly that if he doesn't think the book worth it, he need not buy. Of course, Miss Smith appeals to the sympathy of her readers as well as their business instinct. Her letter contains such paragraphs as these:—"To you who help me by buying this little book I shall be truly grateful," and "Verily, I say unto you, inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, ye have done it unto me," but these are not regarded by the post office people as adequate reasons for checking Miss Smith's business. Miss Smith does not regard the omissions mentioned as savoring of dishonesty, nor do the people of South Whitley. In that village Miss Smith has a slight standing so

cially. She belongs to the Epworth League, sings in the choir of the Methodist church, and of fifteen prominent citizens who were recently asked for their opinions, not one had anything but praise for her.

The offices in which the Kitty Smith Company does business are among the best situated in the village, and comprise three rooms, over the village bank. The front room is large and airy. It contains a large oak desk, several easy chairs and a low desk at which Miss Smith works with her feet. There is a telephone and the room is electrically lighted. It looks like the office of a well to do business man in a large city, and it is used by the stenographer and bookkeeper as well as by Miss Smith. In the rear are two other rooms, and in these are the eleven young women who address the envelopes, send out "The Story of My Life" and keep the card catalogues.

In one of these rooms is a case of large pigeonholes in which there are dozens of telephone books, rural route directories and the State directories of the various commercial agencies. It is from these books that the Kitty Smith Company obtains its lists of addresses, and through them it is enabled to reach all parts of the United States. When these books have been exhausted it will doubtless have recourse to city and State directories and to the addresses for such purposes as that of the Kitty Smith Company.

A conspicuous article of furniture in one of the company's offices is a large cabinet which contains a drawer for every State in the Union, and in each of the drawers is a map of the State in question. When the Kitty Smith Company receives a telephone directory from any city a white tack is at once stuck into the map at that point. On the head of this tack a number is placed, and a corresponding number is placed on the newly arrived book, so that

the forewoman can tell at a glance the location of any address book in the office, and the manager can tell just what cities are covered in each State. When a rural route directory or a State telephone directory comes in a red tack is placed on the map at every village covered, and by the number and location of these tacks the forewoman can tell just what the Kitty Smith Company is doing in any part of any State in the Union.

The armless proprietor of the business may know just what returns she gets from this thorough canvassing of the country, and a card catalogue is kept. Each section of this catalogue is labelled with the name of some month, and in each is a card for each day, and as the returns from these letters come in the number of the books sold is entered in the same way. For instance, during one day in the early part of April, 1905, 1,462 letters were sent out. Up to February 20, of this year, 877 of those letters had been heard from, 863 of those who received books having bought them and fourteen having returned them.

During the first twelve months that the Kitty Smith Company did business, according to the figures given by Mr. Miner to a reporter a few days ago, the average receipts were \$900 a month, and in the year they amounted to \$31,200. In addition to this extra donations were received from the "buyers" of the booklets amounting to \$3,700. These donations are not placed to the credit of the Kitty Smith Company, but

United States, but he is now extinct in the Adirondacks, and he is gradually diminishing in nearly all sections except the fur bearing countries of Canada and Alaska. He belongs to a family of noted fur-bearing animals—the sable, marten, fisher and ermine—although he cannot boast of a superior skin himself. In fact, his skin is used more for robes, for centrepieces, for coats, or for trimming garments than for coats, muffs and sashes.

There is a great variety of color among wolverines of different ages and from different parts of the country. The long, wavy hair on the back is reddish-brown and a broad band of chestnut, or dirty yellow, extends from the shoulders down each side of the body to the tail, where they unite.

Like several other members of the weasel family, notably the marten and fisher, the wolverine often has several irregularly distributed cream or yellowish spots on his chest. His limbs are short and heavy and armed with conspicuous bone colored claws. He is a good climber, yet more at home on the ground than in a tree, he is utterly incapable of successfully following the swift footed snowshoe rabbit that inhabits his domain in large numbers.

"Seldom does he find a deer or a caribou so unappreciated that he can overtake and kill it, therefore he must necessarily feed upon the carcasses that he finds or content himself with such small game as grouse, starling, squirrels, and even mice, for his food."



A Wolverine

outrage from Borneo, chimpanzees from Africa, snow leopards from Tibet, great antelopes from Venezuela and musk oxen from the Arctic, all of them animals that are considered rare and valuable, this is the first wolverine that has found its way to one of the society's cages, yet it had less than three thousand miles to travel from the Elk River country, Southeastern British Columbia.

"As soon as word was received that the long expected animal had actually been captured the iron workers in the park got busy. In one of the cages in the small mammal house they removed the panels of steel wire netting, which would have resisted the 'caracajou's' attacks more than an hour at the most. Half inch steel bars, welded to a solid steel frame, were substituted. Since Sir Caracajou arrived he has spent most of his time growling at every one who seemed interested in him and in trying to break from the cage. So persistent have been his attacks

go wholly to Miss Smith. The Kitty Smith Company only accepts the actual price of the book, and after the expenses are deducted the remainder is divided between Miss Smith and Mr. Miner. So at the end of his first year Miner got \$2,481 and Miss Smith got the same sum, plus the donations, or \$3,200 in all.

Forty Thousand Dollars a Year.

Of each of those thousand booklets that are sent out, Mr. Miner says, 40 are lost or retained by the recipients, 30 are returned, while 20 others bring cash returns of twenty-five cents each or more. Mr. Miner says that the profits amount to only sixteen per cent, but it is probable that his calculations were made at an early stage in the business, when the expenses of getting under way were large and the receipts comparatively small. At the present time the card catalogue shows that the company is sending out about 2,000 booklets a month, and according to Mr. Miner's estimate that 300 in each month buy the book it would appear that 6,000 books were being sold weekly, which at twenty-five cents each, and not including donations, would bring in \$1,500 in cash each week. From this should be taken the cost of printing and mailing the 2,000 booklets, which at \$3 a thousand would be \$6,000. This would leave \$1,000 a week for profit and the expenses of running the office. These expenses could

result is practically the same, for if the unfortunate trapper is unable to rid himself of the pest he must surrender his present domain and seek new territory beyond the wanderings of his persistent four footed aggressor.

"In high spirits and with bright prospects of a large catch of furs, the trapper chooses a trapping ground during the early fall. He works hard with hatchet and knife until, at the end of two months, he has set a line of two or three hundred steel traps, deadfalls and snares.

"All goes well for a month or more. The wolverine traps daily, but after the weather becomes so cold that the bodies of the animals he has caught will freeze he does not have to make his rounds oftener than once or twice a week.

Like Trapper's Camp.

"His camp has the appearance of being that of a prosperous trapper. Marten, fisher, weasel, beaver, lynx and fox skins, stretched on wooden forms, surround his cabin or lean against the outside walls while drying. The trapper examines them daily, takes those that are dry from the forms, packs them in bales and stretches green skins on the bales to dry.

"Suddenly all is changed. While making the rounds of his traps one morning he discovers that a wolverine has entered upon the scene. Deadfall after deadfall and snare after snare have been torn to pieces. The sticks used in their construction are chewed and strewn about the camp. The wolverine has entered the traps and gnawed his way through them. The trapper examines them daily, takes those that are dry from the forms, packs them in bales and stretches green skins on the bales to dry.

scarcely exceed \$175 a week, which would leave a net profit of \$300 a week, or \$150 a week each for Miss Smith and Mr. Miner. Miss Smith's income from the Kitty Smith Company would thus be \$24,000 a year.

Kitty Smith's Personality.

As may be surmised, this enterprising young person is distinctly and unmistakably attractive. Her face, while not strictly pretty, is intelligent and animated. Her eyes are bright and large, and her manner combines vivacity with earnestness. Upon strangers she creates an impression that is unusually agreeable. She occupies a bedroom and sitting room, in an excellent house in South Whitley, and when visitors call upon her she is always glad to see them, and is ready to do any of the tasks which are accredited to her in the little book which is so rapidly making her a wealthy woman.

If Miss Smith is asked to write, she will walk to a desk, which is raised only six inches from the floor, sit down in front of it, and remove her shoes. Then the visitor will see that her feet are clad in stockings from which the toes have been cut. She will take a key between the great and first toes of her right foot, insert it deftly into the lock, and shoot the bolt. Then she opens the desk and lays out a few sheets of paper. Perhaps the pen is a little clogged with ink. If so, she will press the nib against the nail of her left toe, and make it ready for work. Then she nonchalantly as a society belle replying to a dinner card and with considerable rapidity she will dash off a verse of poetry, or a passage from the Bible, or some little sentiment of her own, and hand, or rather "foot," the sheet to her guest. Then it will be observed that the letters are well formed, and that the style of penmanship is seemingly little different from that affected by some people who use their hands.

Does the visitor like music? Then the armless girl will operate her phonograph, and she requires no assistance. She will place her toes upon the case and draw it from the corner into the middle of the room. She will put her foot upon the crank and wind the spring, insert the record and dash the music into the air. Possibly the needle is worn, and the music has a grating sound. If so, she picks up a box with the toes of her right foot, opens it, inserts the toes of her right, and selects a good needle from a tray of needles. This she puts into the machine, and, adjusting the screw deliberately, starts the music once more, and the operation occupies scarcely a minute.

Wipes Spectacles with Feet.

In the course of the day, it is very likely, a little grime may have settled on the lenses of Miss Smith's spectacles. She will sit down in a chair, bend her head forward, raise her right foot, take the spectacles between her toes and lift them off. Then she picks a handkerchief from the desk, and as easily and deftly as if all her members were normal she wipes the lenses free from dust, and replaces the spectacles upon her nose.

"This is a little piece of embroidery I am doing," says Miss Smith, picking up a little dolly worked prettily with pink and green silk. "Would you like to see how I do it?"

The needle has fallen upon the carpet, but Miss Smith picks it up with the toes of her left foot and puts it up as easily as any other woman could. The thread is out, and the visitor looks curiously at the armless girl, wondering if it is possible that she should actually thread a needle with those wonderful toes of hers.

During the first year the donations were nearly fifty per cent larger than Miss Smith's receipts from the company. If the same proportion should be preserved Miss Smith should within the next year be in receipt of a total sum of more than \$38,000. In the foregoing estimate no mention has been made of the three hundred books in each thousand which have returned un-bought and which in the assets of the company have a cash value of about \$15 a thousand. This would add about \$100 a week to the Kitty Smith Company's profits and increase her income by more than \$2,000 a year, raising her total revenue to a sum exceeding \$40,000 annually.

Working on a pen and ink sketch

In the letter which accompanies "The Story of My Life" Miss Smith declares that one of the objects of her life is to establish a home for crippled children. Up to the beginning of last month the Kitty Smith Company had contributed \$175 for this purpose, and Miss Smith had given \$300 from her own funds.

But this also seems easy. She lifts the needle to the light, raises the thread with her other foot, and thrusts it through the eye, as quickly and accurately as a sewing woman in a millinery shop.

After doing a few stitches of embroidery she will perhaps brush her hair, and if the visitor is a lady, she may possibly show her how she brushes her teeth. After these things have been done Miss Smith will drive a nail, if required, and show that at least one woman, and she an armless one, can perform this feat without crushing her thumb (or toe) by a misdirected blow of the hammer. She will take her saw and cut a board in two, open and close a door, put on and take off her hat and cloak and sharpen a lead pencil.

If it is summer she will show part of the visitor is a particularly favored one, Miss Smith may show how it is possible for an armless girl to cut up her own food, and raise it to her lips with as much ease as though she possessed both hands and feet.

"The method of capturing a wolverine most successfully employed by old trappers on the Athabasca River in Canada is to build an enormous log deadfall, resembling as much as possible a cabin or a cache. The bait is so placed that it does not appear to be put there for any particular purpose.

"The wolverine was caught in a double spring steel trap, attached to the end of a spring pole. Fortunately its foot was caught in such a snapper that no bones were broken and the foot was not permanently injured."