

How to make failure a learning experience

Within the next few weeks, hundreds of young men and women dressed in cap and gown will be sitting on platforms at colleges and universities across the land, listening to commencement day speakers while waiting for their diplomas and degrees.

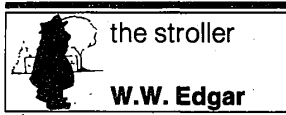
It's too bad they were born too late to hear the late Charles F. "Boss" Kettering, the famed General Motors engineer who gave the automotive world the self-starter.

Until he came along, the engines in automobiles had to be cranked. Many times the crank flashed back and broke the arm of the person attempting to get the motor started. When Boss came through

with his self-starter, it brought an end to such accidents and made the world a bit safer for the motorist.

IT'S TOO BAD the new graduates can't hear him, for Boss Kettering was one of the most interesting persons The Stroller ever met along the journalistic trail he has traveled for more than a half-century. It was not only the fact that he invented the self-starter that made him famous. It was his philosophy, his outlook on life and the way he attacked it that made him a most interesting chap.

Well The Stroller remembers the first time he ever met the famed GM engineer. It was during a luncheon break at a major golf tournament in Ak-



ron, Ohio, where Boss was holding court for a few of the visitors.

He was one of the club's "angels" and helped to keep the club on a sound financial basis by paying the deficit each year. So he was always a welcome guest even though he seldom played the game.

On this particular Saturday afternoon, he was telling about some of his ventures into the workaday world after receiving his diploma.

ALONG THE WAY, The Stroller, who had joined the group, heard him say that in all his career he never had experienced a failure.

This remark puzzled The Stroller who immediately cut in and asked, "Do you mean that when you had the idea for the self-starter you went out into shop, built it and it worked the first time you tried it?"

"I didn't say that," he countered. "It's never a failure, son, when you learn something. And when that first attempt didn't work, I learned that was not the way to build a self-starter."

His listeners smiled at that philosophy. They never had anything like that before. So they urged him to continue.

"I built quite a few samples and each time they didn't work I learned again that was not the way to build them. I found so many ways they couldn't be built that I finally came across one that did."

CAN YOU IMAGINE that type of philosophy? Yet, it was just another way of repeating the old saying, "If at first you don't succeed, try, try again."

When the gathering broke up that afternoon in the long ago, one of the young graduates stepped up to Boss and mournfully said, "Your words were fine, but you fellows have brought about everything we need. There's nothing left for us to do. So my diploma may not do me any good."

Boss chuckled. Then he asked, "Son, do you know why grass is green? Why it's not yellow or pink? If you can find out why it's green, you'll never have to worry a day in your life."

Is it any wonder The Stroller feels it is too bad that today's graduates never had the chance to listen to Boss Kettering?

Symphony plans calendar

New formats and programs will be discussed when the Oakway Symphony Society holds its annual meeting at 8 p.m. Tuesday in the Balford Inn on Grand River north of Eight Mile in Farmington Hills.

Oakway brass performers will provide classical and pops music for the meeting. Ernest Jones, chairman of the board of D'Arcy, MacManus and Manius, will be guest speaker.

Members will be asked their opinions on such matters as:

- Continuing to divide the six sub-

scription concerts between Saturday evenings and Sunday afternoons.

- Rescheduling Sunday concerts from 4 p.m. to 3 p.m.

Inaugurating a program of speakers and musical entertainment for organization meetings.

Francesco DiBiasi, conductor and musical director, will outline the 1980-81 season, including a collaboration with the Harbinger Dance Company.

Among soloists for next season, he said, will be concertmaster Victoria Halton and prize-winning violinist Scott Woolweaver as soloists in Mozart's Sin-

fonza Concertante; the Wayne State Faculty Woodwind Quintet; pianist Ruth Burek as soloist in a Greg Concerto in A minor; a young artists competition for piano and voice students; and a full production of Bizet's opera "Carmen."

Corporation moves to Farmington Hills

Manufacturers Hanover Mortgage Corp. has announced it soon will relocate its corporate headquarters and Southfield branch operations to Farmington Hills.

Its new address will be 27555 Farmington Road.

More than 400 employees will be located in the three-story atrium building

in early June.

When the corporation first opened in 1946, it was an FHA/VA lender with one office and four employees. Its first year produced a \$6 million portfolio.

At year end 1979, its servicing portfolio totaled \$2.4 billion, ranking 15th in the annual standings of the top 300 mortgage companies.

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