

## ENCOURAGEMENT.

It has always been one of our editorial tenets that the strength and usefulness of a journal lie not alone in its subscription list and in its editorial chair, but in its power to draw out the thoughts, observation and experience of its readers, in order that each may enjoy the truth and success which all have discovered, or attained. Our ideal journal is one which shall present each subject in the light of the freshest research and the widest experience. If a comet flash in the sky, let one who has made astronomy a careful study tell the people, in a style every one can comprehend, just what is known about it, and what, according to the best knowledge of such bodies, will be its future. For the lack of such authoritative statement and from the unbridled fancies of reporters, which occupied space which should have been better used, there are doubtless some people who believe that the comet now visible is revolving around the polar star. And, dropping to mundane affairs, the papers are filled with the imaginings of uninformed writers on social and industrial subjects until the public mind is charged with ideas on nearly all themes which are crude, untrue, and apt to mislead. For such deception and misguidance of the popular mind, the editor is responsible.

There is scarcely an issue of a journal which does not contain some statement of fact or deduction therefrom which is in reality an untruth, in essence and in inference; and there are readers, few or many, who know it. In the public interest it is the duty of the knowing one to correct the error, and the editor should welcome the new light and haste to shed it forth. In this way the public would be educated in the truth, both in small things and great, and the result is delightful to contemplate. We admit that editorial conceit would receive a stunning blow, and we see no reason why editorial conceit should be spared the crushing. It is an old dogma that an editor should be omniscient, and that journalistic dignity will not admit a correction of any kind. The journal will never be true to its mission until such narrow ideas are swept away.

But we did not intend to write a homily upon editorial conduct in general, but rather to point out clearly what we believe to be one way in which a journal may be brought up to the highest intelligence of the time and press most closely to the popular heart, and that is by encouraging its readers to freely contribute the truth which in them lies, whether it be a point of international law or the growing of a turnip. Much depends upon the editor whether his journal shall have a reputation for the fullest truth and accuracy on the subjects it discusses, or whether it shall slash around so that the lawyer may laugh at its ignorance one day, and the farmer denounce it as a pack of nonsense the next. If the editor is courteous toward contributors and welcomes their favors, the lawyer will be glad to set him right in the public interest, and the farmer will ransack his house for writing materials to tell him that he can't make a pound of butter from five lbs. of milk. But if the editor shows that he cares more for what he has said than for the truth and if the waste basket is proclaimed the largest piece of furniture in the sanctum, the editor will naturally be left alone with his conceit and the propagation of error and fallacy will continue.

We are led to these remarks by the perusal of an interesting article in an English magazine concerning Dickens as an editor, and we are proud to know that ideas and methods which we have held and practiced in our modest experience, were characteristic of him in his editorial conduct. The writer shows that he was most kind in his treatment of contributors, and in this way drew out their best efforts and enriched his journal by them. We have not space

to cite the many instances of this behavior which are given. In one place, alluding to Dickens, the writer says:

It is in his relations with writers in his periodical, and, indeed, in all connections with his "literary brethren," as he modestly calls them, that this amiable and engaging man appears to the most extraordinary advantage. As I read over his many letters on these points, I am amazed at the good-natured allowance, the untiring good humor, the wish to please and make pleasant, the almost deference, the modesty in one of his great positions as head, perhaps, of all living writers—to say nothing of his position as director of the periodical which he kindled with his own perpetual inspirations. There was ever the same uniform good nature and ardor, the eagerness to welcome and second any plan, a reluctance to dismiss it, and this done with apologies; all, too, in the strangest contrast to the summary and plain-spoken fashion of the ordinary editor. This patient interest should, in these editorial matters, become more wonderful when it is considered that his position as head of an important periodical made him a marked figure for inopportunities. I believe every composition was seriously glanced at, and some estimate made—and many an obscure, clever girl was surprised to find her efforts appreciated.

The writer of this tribute to Dickens as an editor, and who, we imagine, is himself one of the best known of living novelists, proceeds to show the patient labors of the editor in "touching up" contributions, which it must be acknowledged is often a severe task, but which no true editor will shrink from, providing there is merit in the article. He writes:

I have many proof-sheets by me, corrected, by his own hand in the most painstaking and elaborate way. The way he used to scatter his bright touches over the whole, the sparkling word of his own that he would insert here and there, have a surprising point and light. The finish, too, that he imparted was wonderful; and the "dashes," stops, shiftings, omissions, were all valuable lessons for writers. Now, this was all encouraging and cordial to a degree. I frankly confess that, having met innumerable men, and having had dealings with innumerable men, I never met one with any approach to his genuine, unaffected, unchanging kindness.

It would be well for journalism if the spirit of Dickens were invoked in every sanctum in the world. If all the mole-eyed conceit which rules in editorial chairs could be melted away in the sunny welcome to worth, which was his constant disposition, how much that is true and valuable would push from the columns the vapid generalizations, the gross inaccuracies and the glaring untruth and injustice which are too prevalent. We believe that this will be the future of journalism. Such policies are gaining ground and the people are every day learning to distinguish more and more in favor of true gentility, and love of truth for its own sake, in the journals which they support.—*Rural Press*.

**SPEED AT WHICH WINGS ARE DRIVEN.**—The speed by which some wings are driven is enormous. It is occasionally so great as to cause the pinions to emit a drumming sound. To this source the buzz of the fly, the drone of the bee, and the boom of the beetle are to be referred. When a grouse, partridge or pheasant suddenly springs into the air, the sound produced by the whirring of its wings greatly resembles that produced by the contact of steel with the rapidly-revolving stone of the knife-grinder. It has been estimated that the common fly moves its wings 330 times per second, that is, 19,800 times per minute, and that the butterfly moves its wings nine times per second, or 540 times per minute. These movements represent an incredibly high speed even at the roots of the wings; but the speed is enormously increased at the tips of the wings, from the fact that the tips rotate upon the roots as centers.—*Fraser's Magazine*.

**TREATMENT OF BURNS CAUSED BY SULPHURIC ACID.**—The *Journal de Pharmacie et de Chimie* says that two pupils of the Communal school of Clermont-Ferrand, were severely burnt in the face while holding sulphuric acid, owing to the rupture of a retort. The author covered their faces with a soft paste made of calcined magnesia and water, and applied in layers of two mm. in thickness. As portions of the coating slipped off, the paste was re-applied. All pain ceased in about a quarter of an hour, and after some time—5 hours in the slighter of the cases, and 24 in the more severe—no further treatment was needed. Their faces show no trace of injury.

## THE WOMEN'S ENTERPRISES.

Silk culture under the auspices of the energetic ladies of the California Silk Culture Association, is being pushed through its experimental stages in various parts of the State, and the local papers are furnishing much interesting information of the progress attained. We shall cite two cases as follows:

The Santa Cruz *Courier-Item* says: Mrs. A. J. Donzel and Mrs. O. J. Lincoln, on Church street, are conducting experiments in silk culture. About two months ago Mrs. Donzel took charge of about 5,000 eggs and Mrs. Lincoln 1,000. All that is required to hatch the eggs is a temperature of from 70 to 75 degrees, which must be maintained with but little variation during the period of worm life. The almost microscopical creatures are no sooner born than they commence to feed on mulberry leaves, which continues without cessation for six weeks, when they are prepared to spin their cocoons. The young worms are placed in wooden trays of any convenient size and supplied with fresh leaves three times a day in their early growth, but when it is nearly the spinning season, new leaves are required as often as once in four hours. The "nasty worms" encase themselves in their wonderful silken shrouds in a few days' time, and within ten days from the appearance of the first cocoon, the last delicate, glossy envelope has been spun and wound from the marvelous resources of the mulberry eaters. In this state of suspended animation the stay is short, and unless the chrysalis is "choked" the cocoons are soon pierced by the moths, which enjoy a brief existence, lay their eggs and die. In the experiments conducted by these ladies, from 80% to 90% of the eggs hatched. A few worms died at all stages of existence, as often from mistakes in their care, incident to amateurs, as from natural causes, but now they have about 600 perfect cocoons from each 1,000 eggs. The mulberry leaves for feeding were secured from trees on premises occupied by Mr. Donzel (the old Boston homestead), and from other trees about town, of which there are fine specimens in the yards of Mrs. Blackburn, and Messrs. Tierney, Field, Kirby and Longley, and perhaps others. The cuttings were saved by both Mr. Lincoln and Mr. Donzel, and next season they will have a fine supply of young trees for transplanting. Until disposal is made of the cocoons, or the eggs if devoted to that purpose, an estimate cannot be made of the profit in the business. These ladies, who by the way have by no means discarded masculine assistance in their operations, have been rewarded by witnessing the exceedingly interesting phases of silkworm life, and the cocoons produced are of beautiful quality and fine size, so that the experiments may be considered a success. When undertaken as a business industry, a million worms would not require more thought and care than is demanded by a thousand. We believe these remarkable spinners will prove a prolific source for "pin-money," and that their care may afford a means of securing a livelihood to many invalids and unfortunates, if it does not become a profitable industry.

The San Rafael *Journal* says: Mrs. Dr. McLain is very busy with her cocoonery, over Gordon's bank. She has about 5,000 worms, all busy in various stages, from those wandering about in search of locations, through the finest floss, to the finished cocoons, and the emerging moths. Mrs. McLain has found that the experiment involves a prodigious amount of labor, and that the actual business differs from all the theories of books. The worms are very large, healthy and vigorous. Mrs. Austin, Mrs. Downing, Mrs. Hooper and a few others are experimenting at their homes with worms from the same invoice of eggs. They will be taken to the State Society's rooms when the cocoons are ready. Mrs. McLain's success so far is very encouraging, and shows that the inducements are great for any who think of embarking in the business.