

"SCISSORS AND PASTE."

A STUDY.

How many people invariably employ the term "Scissors and paste" as indicative of a certain "plentiful lack of originality!" It would almost appear that these two most necessary adjuncts of the editorial sanctum were the trade mark under and by virtue of which every member of the Fourth Estate conducted his business. And this is true of some editors. Reviews dignified by the name "eclectic" are in reality nothing but a cloaca for "selected matter," and the term "eclectic" is but a pleasing euphemism for "a thing of Scissors and Paste." But I digress. Almost everyone uses the phrase in a contemptuous sense. But this erroneous use of the term respecting these two important articles of sanctum furniture is not borne out by the facts of the case. True, Scissors and Paste can be used for evil purposes by unscrupulous editors and news-mongers. But they are in themselves good and true weapons; and when properly used by discriminating and upright men are their chief glory. They are an index of character. But let me explain. Now the Scissors indicate firstly, Incisiveness. This is shown by their sharpness and by their cutting capabilities. Incisiveness is a virtue which editors and literary men generally would do well to cultivate. It is the spirit of the age. Newspapers should lead the age and mould public opinion, and "hence accordingly" should foster a spirit of incisiveness. The Scissors, secondly, indicate Strength. This is a characteristic that is invaluable to the editor. Weak, pusillaninous conduct in an editor is most reprehensible; it is unpardonable. Again, the very material out of which Scissors are made, suggests the very essence of all that is requisite in newspaper men—truth. "As true as steel" is a proverb that admits of no doubtful application. In the next place, the Scissors indicate the possession of a temperate disposition. This is a quality which, in this age, is somewhat rare. Everybody is a violent partisan of some political party; or a too ardent disciple of some new creed in art or social science; or else an uncompromising iconoclast, a philistine, an outcast. Very few are gifted with that evenly-balanced, judicial and temperately enthusiastic cast of mind, which can acutely, readily and almost intuitively discover the strong and weak points in what they look at, write about, or discuss. Now the Scissors are usually made of a finely-tempered metal, which suggests the possession of such characteristics as have been just mentioned in the man who not merely possesses a pair, but who knows how to use them discreetly. Also, the Scissors denote utility. In a country editor, which capacity often is made to include those of business-manager, reporter, advertising agent, compositor, proof-reader, press-man, and "devil," the great advantage of being able to play, what the stage bills call "utility," is at once apparent. Lastly, the Scissors is a weapon of defence. Should subscribers or readers feel aggrieved at any remarks which an unlucky or intrepid editor may chance to make, and should they desecrate the reposeful quiet of the sanctum, with blood and thunder unmistakably concealed about their persons, and should they go so far as to threaten to do "grievous bodily harm" to the "utility man" who runs the paper, the quietus of such a reader or subscriber can be made as easily and effectually with a pair of Scissors as with the more orthodox Shakspearian "bodkin." Thus it will be seen that the much-maligned though invaluable Scissors has a use, and possesses inherent and intrinsic virtues, which, though they do not appear to the casual observer, are none the less real, valuable, and worthy of attention.

And now, what shall be said of Paste? Before passing a hasty judgment upon this compound, the very name of which is suggestive of unpleasantness, would it not be well to analyze it? And in these days of research, comparative anatomy, and vivisection, it is but right and proper so to do. And what are the constituents of Paste? Flour and Water! And what are these but the two elements—especially the former—which minister so frequently and successfully to the ever-recurring wants of our human nature? Are they not the very essence of simplicity and purity? Are they not wholesome and refreshing? Then why look with aversion upon their combination? When properly mixed and compounded together, their resultant indicates pliability, without instability, a certain firmness combined with elasticity, and, finally, a reasonable consistency—the con-

sistency of Paste! Its adhesiveness is strong and unyielding, its "personal magnetism" certain and lasting.

So much for Scissors and Paste. Henceforward let no one abuse them, or use the phrase as one of contempt. Both have their place, both are useful, and both are the consecrated weapons, and the true allies of that much-abused, important, and honorable, though little-appreciated member of Society—the Editor.

TRISTRAM.

THE WATER FAIRIES.

From Heine.

The tide plays over the lonely beach,
The moon, new risen, beams;
On the white sand a rider rests
Enwapt in pleasant dreams.

The water-sprites, in gauzy robes,
Come up from the midst of the deep.
They lightly approach the dreaming youth;
They think he is asleep.

The first one toys with curious hands
The feather that waves in his cap;
Another creeps close to his breast-plate hard,
And leans 'gainst his shoulder-strap.

The third one smiles and her bright eyes dance;
She draws his sword from its sheath,
And leaning upon the naked blade,
With joy eyes the knight beneath.

The fourth one dances lightly about,
And whispers with blushing face:
"O that I might thy darling be,
Thou flower of the human race."

The fifth one kisses with passionate warmth
The Knight's white finger-tips;
The sixth hangs back, but just touches at last
The cheek and half-opened lips.

The Knight is cunning, he does not see
Why he should open his eyes;
He quietly lets himself be kissed
By the fairies sweet, as he lies.

J. H. M.

THE STUDY OF ENGLISH.

In the current number of *Scribner's Magazine*, Professor Adams Sherman Hill makes some rather new reflections and suggestions, in a direct, forcible manner, on the subject of "English in our Colleges." Taking it for granted that English should form an important part of every college curriculum, and should be a prescribed study for all students in every college in which any subject is prescribed, the writer asks whether the objective point towards which the work as a whole ought to tend should be English as language, English as literature, or English as a means of communication between man and man. "Not that it is either practicable or desirable to teach English in one sense without teaching it in the other senses also. Students of a language cannot go far without