

"Dr." Merry and the Poultry Herald.

While personalities should always be studiously excluded from the press, it is the duty, and often one of the most disagreeable duties of the public journalist, to give his patrons any warning that may be necessary to guard them from injury and imposition. In taking up the subject that forms the caption of this article we are not prompted by either business or journalistic jealousy. Our position and circulation are effected very slightly indeed by a journal so erratic. And while, on the one hand we have no motive but the public good, on the other hand we propose to make no statements which cannot be amply sustained by evidence.

Many of our readers know something of the career of "Dr." Merry, late of Toronto, now of Montreal, from his connection with the *Poultry Herald*, but most of them have no knowledge of his past history, and for the benefit of these, and the poultry fraternity generally, we propose giving a few facts, obtained partly from public journals, and partly from reliable information and personal knowledge. A large number of honorable and reliable fanciers, who have the good of the fancy at heart, have long urged us to this course, but we have hitherto refrained, believing that the good sense and discernment of the fraternity would soon make it evident to "Dr." Merry that he and his paper the *Herald* were not fitting representatives of the poultry interests of the Dominion. Our belief was well founded, it appears, for, in the midst of boasted success, in May last the *Herald* suddenly ceased to appear, lacking that support which was necessary to pay the printer. Subscriptions and advertisements payable in advance, were urgently solicited up to the last moment, and its pages boasted that during all its career no month was so successful as the last of its life. Its disappearance from public view was regretted by none but those who had been beaten out of their money.

In November last, probably prompted by the returning good times, and the busy season in the poultry business, the *Herald* again made its appearance; this time in Montreal. As we can judge of the future only by the past we believe "Dr." Merry's antecedents warrant the expectation that this new departure will be conducted on the same principles, and with a repetition of his former practices; we therefore, in the interests of our patrons, feel called upon to sound a note of warning.

We first hear of Merry in the capacity of editor of the *Southern Poultry Journal*, published at Louisville, Ky., U. S. Of his career before that time little is known, but an extract from a letter to that journal states: "I am not surprised to see Merry handled. I have always looked upon him with suspicion. He didn't go to you *pure* by any means." After severing his connection with the *Southern Poultry Journal* he came to Toronto, and from thence issued a circular reflecting in such terms on his successor, Mr. Hartwell, that Mr. Dunlop, one of the proprietors, replied, under the caption "A Rascal Exposed." We make the following extracts:—

"The *Southern Poultry Journal* was first issued on money furnished Dr. Merry by two gentlemen

of this city, Major E. D. Lawrence and Mr. S. D. Chipley, whose co-operation was obtained by gross misstatements. The agreement was, that Dr. Merry was to edit and publish the paper, and have half interest, while the above named gentlemen owned the balance, and furnished *all* the capital required. Dr. Merry's remuneration was to be half the profits, which he wildly represented would soon flow in most plentifully. As to his statement that he never received a cent for his labor, I can say that I have every reason to believe he made a good living out of it, and wanted to sell out his interest, as several parties can testify, as soon as Mr. Hartwell and I obtained possession and made him account for money received. In giving both his former partners and Mr. Hartwell and I a statement of the accounts of the *Southern Poultry Journal*, Dr. Merry made statements which were perfectly devoid of truth, and we obtained control of the *Journal* only in time to prevent his further obtaining \$100 or \$200 from Major Lawrence, for a purpose which could have resulted in no benefit as he afterwards confessed."

"Furthermore, a large poultry exhibition was held in this city last winter, organized and entirely conducted by Dr. Merry. Relying on his honesty and general good character, I, with several other gentlemen, allowed our names to be used as officers, and subscribed each \$5 to carry it on. Dr. Merry solicited the entries, managed the finances, and, in fact, ran the whole machine. Now for the result: None of the nominal officers have ever received any account of how the money was expended; he has taken with him whatever books he may have kept of his transactions, and all of us are left in the lurch. I, individually, am out from \$200 to \$250 for bills I paid. He sold stock belonging to exhibitors and never made them any returns, which fact Mr. S. H. Seamans, Wauwatosa, Wisconsin, will corroborate."

"The above is but the beginning of the truth which we now intend to thoroughly ventilate. He has been the cause of great pecuniary loss to Mr. Hartwell and myself; by his gross falsehoods and misrepresentations he basely deceived his former partners who had shown him such kindness, and he at last stealthily left the city, bidding farewell to the *Southern Poultry Journal*, to its exceeding great benefit."

In a subsequent issue the editor returns to the subject, and after describing some of "Dr." Merry's transactions, concludes thus:

"We shall dismiss this already disagreeable affair, and regret that duty required us to put the public on its guard against a consummate scoundrel and rascal. We gave him fair warning, and he has no one to blame but himself. We always attend to our own business, but when other busybodies interfere, we shut down on them in a way they deserve."

After "Dr." Merry had located in Toronto his first appearance among Canadian fanciers was at the show of the Canadian Poultry Association, in Hamilton, in January, 1878. This visit was made in the interests of the *Poultry Herald*, which was started in March following. The impression his conduct then made on the fanciers was anything but favorable, and many who were prepared to assist him cut him in disgust. But at the dinner of