

THE VICTORIA HOME JOURNAL

Devoted to Social, Political, Literary, Musical and Dramatic Gossip.

Vol. III., No. 43.

VICTORIA, B. C., AUGUST 4, 1894.

\$1.00 PER ANNUM

THE VICTORIA HOME JOURNAL

Published every Saturday morning at 77 Johnson street, Victoria. Subscription, \$1.00, payable in advance.

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Advertising Rates on Application.

Address all communications to

THE VICTORIA HOME JOURNAL,
Office: 77 Johnson street,
Victoria, B. C.

SATURDAY AUGUST 4, 1894.

ALL THE WORLD OVER.

"I must have liberty.

Withal as large a charter as the wind—
By blow on whom I please."

"MY son desires to be a journalist when he reaches manhood. How shall I train him?" is the question a father puts to a daily newspaper.

As a newspaper is chiefly a summary of the history of the world for a day, it is to be desired that the youth shall develop a faculty for quick, clear and accurate observation, with power to crystalize and condense large masses of facts and to state the essence of them in the fewest possible words. To this end he should cultivate habitual precision and propriety of expression. To acquire the style that best suits journalistic conciseness, he ought to read only the best authors in English literature, seeking always to form his own vocabulary out of simple, plain and pure words, avoiding slang as he would poison and resisting temptation to be ornate, elaborate or grandiose. As newspapers are published for the common people, he should strive to write in a manner that even the humblest can understand, avoiding vulgarity as well as rigidity, and never employing language whose meaning is not direct and obvious.

To the acquirement of correct literary style for journalism, knowledge of other languages is not indispensable, but it is desirable, once wrote the *Chicago Herald*. If a writer is familiar with the sources of English, he is the more competent to avoid equivocal words; he more appreciates the real significance of good

English; he will not be guilty of thrusting words or phrases from foreign languages upon his constituency, only a small fraction of whom may be presumed to understand any language but their own; and he will discriminate with taste and aptness among the Teutonic, the Latin and the Romance elements of our speech. He should read everything he can that is well written; and his reading will be the more productive of results if it extend beyond the boundaries of his native language into the classics, ancient and modern, upon which mankind through generations or centuries have set seal of approval.

His reading cannot be too broad or too specific. Journalism takes note of the whole of human progress. A journalist cannot be a specialist in all arts, all sciences, all crafts; but he should be acquainted with the history and the principles of a large proportion of them. For the journalist more than for any other class of workers is Bacon's assurance true, that reading maketh a full man and writing an exact man. The mind of the journalist must be full in order that his writing shall be exact. To know what to read is no small part of the tact of a journalist. In one sense no reading is wasted if one have time enough, to digest and to retain what is assimilable; but it would be a folly, for example, to spend time on the controversies of Salmasius or the prognostications of medieval astrologers, at least until after the reader has exhausted living literature and mastered the subjects upon which this age is engaged.

Reading should be free from bigotry. Huxley says that the chief business of science to-day is correcting the errors of science yesterday. No man knows the whole of anything. It is well to read with candor and open-mindedness; not arbitrarily to discard one author in favor of another, but to give both a chance to contribute to one's culture. "Light your candle at many shrines," as the author of *Obiter Dicta* says; look in all directions for light, and never assume that the last word has been said upon anything, except those fundamental moral truths on which the security of society depends.

The moral training of the journalist is not less necessary, but while the journalist should read more widely than other men need to do, morally the journalist should be exactly like the upright man in any other calling. There is no special

set of canons in morals for him. The ten commandments bind him as they bind all human beings. There is a peculiar egotism likely to be engendered in the practice of journalism, misleading its victims into thinking that it is not incumbent on the journalist to respect the moral laws or laws of taste with the same rigor that binds other men. The truth is that, because of besetting temptations somewhat difficult to separate from journalism in its more active phases, the journalist should be more scrupulous about violating moral laws or social decorum. His pre-eminent virtues are respect for all that a noble standard of humanity holds sacred; truthfulness; avoidance of excess in drinking or indulgence in any habits that weaken physical or mental power; for above all other men, the journalist requires steadfast health of mind and body.

A young man trained in the way suggested will make a good journalist and, for that matter, he will be better prepared than he would otherwise be to take up any other avocation.

There is a great deal said as to the extent of the prevailing distress in Victoria, but I have yet to hear from the man who will say things are better anywhere else on the Coast. It is however, poor consolation to us to know that our neighbors are no better off than we are. There is a time when the utmost leniency ought to be exercised, especially by those who are, happily for themselves, so circumstanced that the general depression does not affect them. I cannot help thinking, though repugnant the thought, that a great deal of unnecessary hardship is imposed upon unfortunate families whose breadwinner is reluctantly obliged to take a place in the great army of the unemployed. I casually dropped into an auction mart the other day, attracted thereto by the usual flaring red flag and the ringing of a bell. There was a goodly crowd of intending purchasers and idle spectators, when the man of the hammer opened the sale, declaring that there would be no reserve whatever, as the goods had been seized for distress of rent. Distress of rent, thought I, as I viewed the miscellaneous collection of furniture—all that once went to make up how many once happy homes I know not. Parlor suites were put up and knocked down for next to nothing, the bidding invariably commencing at a