

KORN KOB REPLIES TO A CORRESPONDENT.

DEAR DIOGENES,—

The following letter was received by me yesterday afternoon:

DEAR SIR,—I want to write for DIOGENES, and, as I know you have a good deal of influence with the editor, I address myself to you. I belong to a Literary and Debating Society, and I have written lots of pieces of poetry, which the girls in our neighbourhood say are splendid. I could write funny things too if I had a mind, (*sic*), and I am only nineteen.

Now I want to know, what writers for DIOGENES get mostly? Can I make more money that way than by going into a grocery store? If you think I can, I'll send some pieces I've written, and you can give me your opinion of them. Don't you think poetry would pay better than prose?

What sort of fellow is the Editor? Does he encourage rising talent? I suppose he has read nearly all the books there are? Hoping to receive an early answer, I remain,

Yours, etc.,

THOMAS ———

As I have had several communications within a fortnight, all requesting information on the same subject, I propose for the benefit of all concerned, to answer this one publicly, in the columns of DIOGENES.

My dear Thomas,—I have received your modest epistle, and it is now my pleasing duty to furnish you with the advice and information you require. Your desire to become a contributor to DIOGENES, is a laudable, though not by any means a singular one, being shared by you, in common, with about three hundred young gentlemen throughout the Dominion. Still it evinces an ambitious spirit, and as merit is worthless, unless spurred by ambition, it is safe to infer that you are possessed of at least one of the qualities which ensure success.

You say truly, that I have a good deal of influence with the Editor, but didn't it strike you, Thomas, that you approached me in rather an unusual way? Wasn't there something left out,—something forgotten in your communication,—some little formula dispensed with, that is considered necessary among business men? Not that I want anything for myself,—I would scorn the imputation,—but if you had enclosed ten dollars, begging me to confer it on some charitable institution, with your compliments, it would have been a grateful and graceful acknowledgment of the value you placed on my services. However, I know that a hint on this matter will be sufficient.

So you belong to a Literary and Debating Society, do you Thomas? Those societies are very good things in their way. I read of one the other day, that decided Napoleon to be a usurper and without any legal claim to the French throne. This decision, however,—of which the Emperor must have been made cognizant by this time,—doesn't seem to have affected his policy much. So far, he has shown no signs of an intention to abdicate.

And you've written lots of pieces of poetry too? Why you must be a great fellow, Thomas! Belong to a literary society and write lots of poetry, and only nineteen! And the girls in your neighbourhood say it's splendid! Better and better! But I say, Thomas, if I were you I wouldn't lay too much stress on what the girls say. Girls, Thomas, are not the very best judges of poetry. Take their advice on the colour of a ribbon, or the price of a bonnet,—but poetry,—no Thomas they're not reliable!

And you could write funny pieces if you had a mind! Very likely you could, Thomas. A great many people could write funny pieces if they had the mind. But they haven't got it you see. That's where the rub is, Thomas.

What do writers for DIOGENES get mostly? Well they get abused, like thunder, by the Editor, mostly, when he has been compelled to wade through three or four sheets of drivelling nonsense, without finding a single good thing. Men, who

can write, however, get paid, and paid well. I don't think, though, this latter circumstance will affect you, just at present, Thomas.

Could you make more money that way, (by which I suppose you mean writing,) than by going into a grocery store? That depends a good deal on circumstances. Manuscript is a shaky commodity,—a very risky article indeed, Thomas, even at the best. Besides writing is hard work and a man of your physical organization might find wrestling with an idea, much more fatiguing than hoisting a barrel. On the whole, I think, Thomas, if I were in your place, I'd take my chance on the groceries. As to that little suggestion about sending me some of your pieces to read, I beg you to reconsider it. I never harmed you that I know of, and I don't see why you should entertain other than friendly feelings for me. No, Thomas, retain your manuscript. It may be of use to you some of these days.

Don't I think poetry would pay better than prose? Well now, do you know I don't think it would. And I'm quite sure, neither would pay you half so well as chopping wood or digging potatoes.

What sort of fellow is the Editor? Well he's a very decent sort of fellow, and he just *has* read lots of books. You may safely invest all your pocket money on that. You can't come round him with any of your stale jokes or stories, cribbed from somebody else, and foist them on him for original,—not much,—Thomas! If you did you'd soon find out what sort of fellow he was.

Yes,—he encourages rising talent. And so do I now encourage you to go home, and burn every bit of rubbish you ever penned, and if ever you feel an inclination to scribble again, get a pickaxe or a shovel and go out and work like thunder and lightning, till the malady has left you. Hoping you will be benefited by my advice, Thomas,

I remain, your friend,

KORN KOB, JUNR.

A REVEREND PUNSTER.

The Leviathan of Literature once asserted that "the man who would make a pun, would pick a pocket." This assertion must be received with considerable reservation. Puns have recently been made—if we are to believe the newspaper reports—by members of Parliament at Ottawa. Of course, none of these illustrious men would ever pick the pockets of the public! Nay, more. The Rev. Mr. Punshon lately punned near Ottawa; and DIOGENES has extreme satisfaction in embalming his well-authenticated pun. Mr. Eddy (of Hull), who is well known to the Cynic,—chartered the steamer "Alexandra," for the purpose of sailing down the Ottawa and showing Mr. Punshon all the beauties of the scenery. There was a pleasant party of about 150 excursionists. Before reaching Ottawa, the eloquent Methodist thanked his entertainer for his kindness, and closed a brilliant *extempore* speech in the following terms:—

"He had always associated in his mind with an *eddy* the idea of dread or danger,—something, in fact, to be avoided if possible, or encountered with extreme caution; but henceforth the word would be significant to him of a very different class of feelings, and he only hoped he might continue to have the good fortune of being sucked into many a similar vortex or *EDDY*."

Bravo! Mr. Punshon. Not bad for a beginner! *Dulce est desipere in loco*. In a short time DIOGENES will expect a contribution from your pen. Don't spare your puns. They will be duly appreciated, now that your ability has been made known;—and there is many a *Neddy* in Canada who will afford you opportunities of making innumerable jokes.