

THE NATIONAL AMATEUR.

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE NATIONAL AMATEUR PRESS ASSOCIATION.

VOL. I.

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NO. 4.

IN TWO PAPERS.—PAPER II.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF AMATEUR JOURNALISM.

Having fitted himself for thorough work by two or three diligent years with the stick and roller, and a year or more of practical experience as a publisher, the amateur writer devotes his spare hours, thereupon, to the composition of articles for other journals: or, if he issue one himself he is generally content to have the printing done by a second party. He begins to realize the benefits which "amateurism" has already conferred upon him and gaining more trust in his own abilities he strives to improve his style and elaborate the character of his articles. His efforts are kindly criticised by his contemporaries and, in turn, he begins to notice faults committed by his brother editors. This habit of criticism is one of the great levers in the self-made school of unprofessional journalism and to its discipline is due the steady improvement of our pens. Occasionally Satire is substituted for Criticism (tho' this is an innovation in the scheme.) but it is a dangerous weapon and calls for the most delicate handling. When properly displayed, its cutting words can produce an effect which mere criticism is powerless to perform.

The young aspirant for fame sometimes suffers his fancy to carry him to the haunts of the Muses, and he indulges in poetry. We must say the majority of this is wretched, miserable—abounding in poor thought and and worse meter. It is seldom that much improvement is made by him whose first poem was a poor one: for, strive as he may, if the *poet is not in him*, he cannot do more than rhyme words. *Poeta nascitur*, you know. Many amateur poems are sweet however, pleasant in ripe thoughts, given us in proper rhyme. The poems in the old *Now and Then*, by the mysterious W. H. S., will be remembered by many as masterpieces.

His "Coliseum" in the *Boys' Herald*

was a fair sample. Many other pearls have been dropped on the wayside by youths who have long since left that play for hard work. They are then technically styled "fossils." We will hear from them again—we are beginning to hear from them now, already.

So there are these three,—Printer, Publisher, Author.—and the greatest of these is the Author. And having these three divisions plainly marked, we class them together in a body and call it an Amateur Press Association—a term unintelligible to many persons. If they be in a city, they form a city association: in a state, a club containing members from that state: larger sections comprise several states, as the Eastern and Western: and finally the grand body which calls to it bright young writers from all parts of the Republic,—the only club in the world to which boys come from such great distances and so independently.

It is a novelty peculiar to peculiar America, being a creation of youthful ideas properly carried out, in a scheme which assumes the dimensions and dignity of a Congress. Its aim is to unite the young editors of America in a general purpose and defined action, and by its union to give strength to the cause. It is held in deep regard by its many members, its offices are sought eagerly and when obtained are greatly to be prized, for they are the rewards of genius, evincing popularity obtained by meritorious labor. The proposition to lay more power in the hands of officers—such power, in fact, that their proclamations would become the law,—will have the effect of still more increasing the value of these positions: while in a corresponding ratio greater care will be exercised by associations in the selection of men to rule over them. The lately introduced system of prize awards, by which the champion amateur poets and authors are designated and receive titles for a year, will have the effect of elevating the standard of all contributions.

In conclusion, let me beg that the efforts of our writers be not despised. On the contrary, think their worth

cannot be overestimated. Until within a dozen years the only field open to aspirants for literary fame was to be found in cheap magazines, which effectually smothered many a youth's hopes by rejecting his hard worked manuscript. Now there is open to the beginner throughout all the land a free system of publications controlled by young men like himself, between whom exists a mutual bond of sympathy. We have not seen the culmination of our labors yet. Amateurism is but a bud. *The Greeleys, the Dickens, the Emersons and the Longfellowes of tomorrow are among us to-day.*—C. CLEM CHASE.

AMATEUR LYRICS.

THE scarcity of prose compositions for the NAPA prizes is startling and betrays either a lack of interest or a sad degeneracy among our essayists and historians. But that lack, we may say, is more than compensated for by the excellence and marked beauty of the many poems which are submitted for the Laureateship. Our boys seem like Silas Wegg of wooden-leg memory, to have the habit of "dropping into poetry in a friendly way." Although it does not seem etiquette to anticipate the decision by even a mild criticism—whether our words might bear influence with Judges or no,—we cannot resist a few comparative quotations from the many gems before us. The writers clearly shun historical and domestic subjects, and have a strong predilection for the beauties of Nature. We were about to remark that the latter were the more difficult subject, and yet,—unless the style is practiced—amateurs are prone to jingle their words in a narrative style, whereas in pastorals Dame Nature herself helps him who would describe her. In the first it is generally rhyme without rhythm: in the last rhythm without rhyme,—which is preferable.

As said the most devout worshipper Nature ever had, the glorious Milton, who, though physically blind to her changes, was mentally alive to her

beauties and painted her with a fervor which none but a Thomson's grandeur ever excelled:

"In contemplation of created things
By steps we may ascend to God."

So 'tis true that all natural objects have an echo in man's heart. The body thrills with Nature's self, as if connected to it by some unseen cord. The whispering forest, the resistless ocean, the everlasting stars maintain a mysterious coexistence and connection with us. In the lighter lines of Moore:

"Nothing is lost on him who sees
With an eye that genius gave;
For him there's a story in every breeze
And a picture in every wave."

But we digress. The first production we read is happily written in Iambic pentameter of fourteen lines, in *Le Bijou*. It is addressed to "The coming Storm" and has no fault save metre in the third from the last, which would better chime if written, "Greet hoary Triton rising from his bed."

Another poem with faulty metre is "In the Woods," in the *Welcome Visitor*. But the sentiment is noble, stamping the author not only as a mere worshipper of the forest, but of the God who paints its beauties.

"And every darksome dell and stone
With mossy lichens overgrown
Are emanations of the Power
That curbs the storm, or props the
flower—
That formed the land and rules the sea;
The woods, oh God, are full of thee!"

The Stylus grants its columns twice for the publication of excellent poems. In March we find an ode on Music, which is struck with full and rounded notes. We will not be wasting space by a lengthy quotation:

"Through Art and Nature flows a
melody
Of highest and divinest harmony.
In all the world, in all the universe,
There swells and dies on modulated
chords

A music grand, consistent, yet diverse,
A music full of meaning without words;
And to the soul attuned to hear the
wondrous song
These voices bring a winged, intense
desire

To put away the world and drift along
The dreamy life the monotonous
inspire."

Imagine the whole beauty from this glimpse. Is this amateur? Yes. And may not the future pronounce on *this*, as the present speaks of *Thanatopsis*? Remember that Bryant was a mere

youth, an amateur, when he gave that, perhaps his greatest poem, to the world.

In the April issue we find a somewhat livelier piece, entitled "Retrospection," of whose five verses the last suits our fancy:

"Time — when our own, we oft
despise,

When gone, its loss deplore,
Nor till the fleeting moment flies
Do mortals learn to worth its prize,
When it returns no more.
For this an anxious look we cast,
Retrospection on hours passed."

In the *Observer and Critic* is something of a different nature but the subject is trite, "The Life Boat." The tetrameter is well handled and it is perfectly written. We give the close of this, also:

How like the ocean is our life—
Now filled with peace, now rent with
strife;
But though the storms be fierce and
long,
We're safe in Honor's life-boat strong."

The poem "Progress" in the *Southern Star*, as the editor hints, strengthens in appreciation on a second reading. Its meaning is deep, the tone philosophical, almost prophetic, and it is altogether thoughtfully composed. These four lines, for instance, open a view of thought:

"Who dreams of an era of peace?
Who speaks the extinction of war?
O, conflict will be evermore
Activity never will cease."

The poet cries the almost uselessness of reform, and the folly of the to-day which is so soon the to-morrow, but predicts nevertheless a progress "as boundless as space and long as eternity."

"O, architects, ponder and plan;
O, builders, rear temples on high!
What if in the toil you should die?
'Tis all for the glory of man!"

Then comes *Spiny's Spirit*, (which by the way abounds in good things,) and gives us "Caro Mio." O Muses of Italian poetry and airs of Spain! breathe on this young Byron and inspire more warming strains of as lovely verse! Verily we have a Swinburne, a Swinburne lacking the sensualism, though the poet's lively imagination does carry him over the bounds of *amateur* composition, in his Shakespearian allusion to Venus, yet which is in keeping of the hot pulse that moves the lines.

Here's for your appetite:

"Pears, with the odor of a thousand
hives
In hollow trees on Hybla; with olives
Smacking of prisoned heats: dusk
melons netted
With braided lines: cool juicy citrons
fretted
With a rough rind." * * *

This recalls to us Milton's warm picture of the feast which Eve spread for the angel visitor. Again, the purple wine almost courses through our limbs as we see

"Heaps of ripe grapes pulled from
the heated vines,
Crushed by girl's fingers into luscious
wines,
That linger on the palate."

There are many other excellent compositions offered, but we have not seen them. The superior tone of all these is something for us to be proud of, and we fear the Judges will find it no easy task to discriminate among so many perfect stanzas. —C.C.C.

OUR NEW HISTORY.

A CAREFULLY worked out scheme for the publication of Complete and Exhaustive History of Non-Professional Journalism Throughout the World is suggested by Mr. Oldham in the *Old Trumpet*. We do not hesitate to encourage Mr. Oldham and say that the necessary funds will be raised by distinct Associations, provided each is apportioned its proper quota: and as the literary part is to be contributed in the same manner by some twenty of our best writers, each giving a chapter on some particular topic, the project not only seems possible but probable. Definite action will be taken at Washington. If the Amateur Newspaper Directory for '79 and '80 could be issued about the same time and best in uniform shape and style as the History, by the same printer, the pair would make a valuable and interesting set. Of all the members of the famous Critics' League not one has proposed an idea equal to Oldham's.

Frank M. Morris, Second V. President, has assumed the Presidency of the Editors' Lyceum, and appointed Charles H. Young as Vice President and Will W. Winslow Treasurer and Secretary.

National Amateur.

OFFICIAL ORGAN N. A. P. A.

At the convention of the National Amateur Press Association held at Chicago, Illinois, the 17th of July, 1878, it was resolved to publish an Official Organ, the same to be issued quarterly and to be under the entire control of the appointed editor.

This paper is printed quarterly and sent free to all members of the N. A. P. A. who have paid their dues. To others, 25¢ a year, payable in advance.

OFFICERS of the ASSOCIATION.

PRESIDENT, Chicago, Ill.
William T. Hall.
VICE PRESIDENTS,
Arthur J. Huss, Tiffin, Ohio, Fred M. Cornell,
Brooklyn, Frank M. Morris, Indianapolis, Ind.
SECRETARIES,
Delavan W. Gee, Washington, Recording,
J. Fred Eberle, Philadelphia, Corresponding.
TREASURER,
Willis H. Allen, Carbondale, Ill.
OFFICIAL EDITOR,
C. Clement Chase, Lincoln, Neb.

FAREWELL.

With willing hands
We've pushed the Faber o'r our yield-
ing sheet,
And so, perchance, have sorely trou-
bled Huss,
Who, quarterly, our hieroglyphics deep
Translated for the printer, who then
spread
The handsome issue wide and spared
ourselves
The clerkish duty of the office. That
Saved stamps, forsooth, and twice re-
mailing, too
Our bow we make: and like the Car-
nal,
Bid long farewell to all our greatness.
We've much enjoyed the office, so we
hope
We've pleased you as an officer.

What will be the next dodge
that the ever active brain of an
inventive amateur will bring forth?
The most outrageous was when
Ficke offered his own name as a
sacrifice to be punned on, and now
the "smart ones" the country over
are splitting their jaws for his edi-
fication, and harassing their sub-
scribers with vain attempts.

—What, Winslow? No, it can't
be possible! Married? Ah, me, how
funny. No, how solemn. We sup-
pose he will now work himself into the
good graces of that elderly female
namesake of his, who dispensed the
quieting balm to millions of us when
we were young.

—Wm. F. Miller's descriptions of
Amateur Press Conventions which he
has attended in happy days gone past,

are rich in laughable events and pleas-
ant recollections, which show 'Vention
fun and 'Vention business in the past
to have been very much the same as
in the present, though we believe an
older class of gentlemen attended the
meetings in those days. May we have
many more letters like those in the
Southern Star.

—While sitting in a newspaper
sanctum in Omaha the other day we
were introduced to a good looking
young fellow by the name of Canis.
'George F.?' we immediately exclaim-
ed. 'None other,' was the reply; and
then followed a hearty, enthusiastic
chat over all the old brethren of the
press of '70-'74, nearly all since fossil-
ized. He talks of conventions like
Miller. Mr. Canis is still in Omaha.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE.

GENTLEMEN of the National
Amateur Press Association:—

Almost a year has elapsed since
we assembled together in Chicago,
and now the time has arrived for me
to indite my last message to you, as
your President. I wish to tender
you all my heartfelt thanks for the
strong aid and support I have had
from every side and I shall always re-
member my term of office with pride
and pleasure. Of course there have
been a few malcontents but their snap-
ping and snarling has resulted as such
howlings generally do—when a jack-
ass kicks a stone wall he hurts his heel
and doesn't injure the wall a particle.

I now wish to refer to a clause in
our Constitution which seems to be
troubling many; namely, that one re-
ferring to the "Election of Officers." I
understand it as follows:

There shall be a *meeting* of state as-
sociations in each state *during the month
of May*. It must meet as a state asso-
ciation only and during the month of
May. The ballot must be made out
in the form prescribed by the Consti-
tution and be counted and reported on
as required to the proper authorities.
The only amateurs who may cast these
ballots are those who are bona fide
members of our association at the time
of casting the ballots, and are at that
time on the membership roll of the N.
A. P. A. A majority of these legal
votes shall constitute an election, and
unless there is a majority the two can-

didates having the largest number of
votes shall be nominees and shall be
voted on by the members of the N. A.
P. A. in convention assembled, the nomi-
nee receiving the larger number of
votes to be declared elected.

Unless all these conditions are com-
plied with the votes shall be declared
illegal.

I have just been advised by our
worthy editor Chase that the Post Of-
fice department has succumbed and
amateur papers are to be accepted at
pound rates. Thus another obstacle
has been removed and I trust amateur-
dom will soon resume its former pros-
perous condition.

I am now prepared to receive bids
for the printing of the Official Organ
during the coming year, subject to the
conditions set forth in the Constitution.
All bids will be closed on June 16th.

I am not prepared to state at this
time whether I shall be able to attend
the convention, but I shall do my best
to be present. If I am compelled to
absent myself I shall feel sure that ei-
ther of the Vice Presidents will fill the
office of presiding officer acceptably.

I shall prepare a final message to be
presented at the convention in which
I shall endeavor to show the progress
made under my administration.

Your Most Ob't Servant,
Pres't N. A. P. A. Wm. T. HALL.

—The Official Organs now pub-
lished by distinct associations are as
follows:

New England Amateur, N. E. A. J. C.
L. E. Tilden, J. H. Burgess and Ralph
Metcalf, editors; quarterly; Marlbor-
ough, N. H.

Hub Amateur, Hub A. J. C., Stephen
S. Bartlett, editor; monthly; Boston.

Record, New York State A. P. A., C.
J. Ficke, editor; bi-monthly; New
York.

Register, Metropolitan A. J. C., Wm.
F. Buckley, editor; monthly; Brooklyn.
New Jersey Amateur Journal, N. J. A.
P. A., M. L. Angleman, editor; month-
ly; Plainfield, N. J.

Hawkeye Amateur, Iowa A. J. C.,
R. Van Vechten, editor; quarterly;
Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

—Chas. G. Wilson has removed
to Chicago, where he has a "case."
Success to you, Charlie.

THE NEWS.

CONVENTIONS.

The Missouri A. P. A. met at Sedalia May 14, with four members of the N. A. P. A. present. The balloting for President stood, Fynes 4, Huss 1.

The Washington APA have united on the following ticket: President, Briggs, Vice President, Harrison, Recording Secretary, DuHamel. This allows the city two offices. A campaign committee was appointed to endeavor to secure the election of the foregoing candidates.

The Ohio A. P. A. met at Fostoria May 30th. C. H. Kirshner was elected President, Herbert Clarke and Will Carter Vice Presidents, W. C. Brown Secretary and A. E. Margenthaler Treasurer. Balloting for President resulted Huss 4.

The Massachusetts A. P. A. met at Park Hall, Boston, May 30th, and elected E. W. Frye President, W. E. Leathe Vice President, F. A. Nield Secretary-Treasurer, E. F. Sullivan Official Editor. Balloting for President resulted, Fynes 16, Huss 7.

The Virginia A. P. A. met at Norfolk May 26th and elected R. D. Guy as President, A. B. Perry, W. C. O'Rourke and S. S. Stevens Vice Presidents, W. C. Brooks Recording Secretary, T. J. Hope Corresponding Secretary, W. R. Dashiell Treasurer, G. R. Cake Sergeant-at-Arms, J. E. Overton Official Editor. Balloting for President resulted, Briggs 10, Huss 2.

The following states held conventions during May and balloted for president with the results given: Florida, Briggs 3; Indiana, Huss 2, Briggs 2; New Hampshire, Fynes 9, Briggs 2; New Jersey, Fynes 9, Briggs 10; New York, Briggs 7, Huss 3, Fynes 1; Wisconsin, Huss 3, Briggs 1; Pennsylvania, Huss 1, Fynes 2, Briggs 11; Washington, Briggs 16. We have been unable to secure exact reports from Iowa, Illinois and Nebraska, but all these give Huss a majority.

PAPERS.

New Papers:—Catchall, Lebanon, N. H. Campaigner, Cambridgeport, Mass. Register, Brooklyn. Amateur Dial, Richmond, Va. Young Eagle, Marlborough, N. H. National Gem, Waterloo, Iowa. Youth's Repository,

Carson City, Nev. Palladium, Carthage, N. Y.

Notable Suspensions:—Enterprise, Portfolio, Our Own Journal.

PERSONAL.

L. Gronauer, former publisher of the Quill, Memphis, is now employed upon a daily paper in that city.

We are sorry to notice the retirement from the ranks of Charlie Young, the genial editor of Our Own Journal and one of the drafters of the National's Constitution.

Nathan Cole Jr.'s father is in Congress.

J. Randolph Tucker Jr., Secretary at the desk of the Speaker of the House of Representatives, is no relation to J. Randolph Tucker Jr., editor of the Bohemian. The latter is a "drummer" for Baltimore and Washington hotels.

Will L. Wright keeps books for a commission house: Frank Misner is in the Burlington & Quincy R. R. office at Cedar Rapids: Delavan Gee is a printer: Winslow Snyder a lawyer, and C. E. Stone buys—and sells—lumber.

Wilbur C. Bing, a very prominent amateur in times gone by, died of consumption at his home in Portsmouth, Ohio, March 10, 1879, at the age of 23 years.

TWO CENTS A POUND.

WE HAVE the great pleasure of announcing to the fraternity at large that the troublesome question of postage on amateur publications is at last decided, and favorably to us. We have worked nearly a year for this end, interviewing and corresponding, and finally we received the order published below, which will compel unobliging post-masters to forward all amateur papers which comply with the law. If any post-masters still are obstinate, we hope their address may be forwarded to us, and we will arrange the trouble at Washington.

In the first place, the following shows the Post-master General's position: December 19, 1878.

Dear Sir:—Congress has before it, with a fair prospect of success, a measure which, if passed, will obviate the difficulty mentioned in your letter to

me in regard to the right of amateur newspapers to pass through the mails on the same terms as regular journals. I have not, in consequence, considered the question submitted to me by yourself at the time I had the pleasure of meeting you some months ago. If the measure fails, I shall try to examine and determine the case you then presented. I have thought it due you to give this explanation of my delay.

Very Truly, D. M. KEY.

The case referred to was that of the Egyptian Star, Cairo, Ill. True to his promise, Mr. Key referred the matter to the department in charge of postal laws, and we now hold the following, *pro bono publico*.

Sir:— May 10, 1879.

In reply to your letter of the 7th inst., I would say that the rules which govern the admission of professional publications to the benefit of pound rates, will also be applied to amateur publications. The conditions to be met in either case are expressed in Section 14, Act of March 3rd, 1879, which may be seen at the Lincoln post office. Very Respectfully,

JAMES H. MARR.

Isn't that plain enough? what more could we ask? The law referred to is,

ACT OF MARCH 3rd, 1879.

Section 14.—That the conditions upon which a publication shall be admitted to the second class are as follows:

First. It must regularly be issued at stated intervals, as frequently as four times a year, and bear a date of issue, and be numbered consecutively.

Second. It must be issued from a known office of publication.

Third. It must be formed of printed paper sheets, without cloth, board, leather or other substantial binding such as distinguishes printed books for preservation, from periodical publications.

Fourth. It must be originated and published for the dissemination of information of a public character or devoted to literature, the sciences, arts, or some special industry, and having a legitimate list of subscribers, *provided however*, that nothing herein contained shall be so construed as to admit to the second class rate regular publications designed primarily for advertising purposes or for free circulation or for circulation at nominal rates.

Reprint, by W. J. Brodie, 25 Olive St., Cleveland, O.