

daily practise, the effort to accomplish a more specific and more directly personal end than the creation of a work of art counts for much more than inspiration or the coquettish favor of the muses. In his own experience, M. Coquelin says that unremitting effort and study have brought him the success he modestly underestimates. In this estimate of the comparative value of inspiration and practise, Demosthenes, Lord Bacon, and all philosophers who have studied the effect of constant effort upon the quality and value of the product agree. The very large number of great authors who have filled space in a daily newspaper, for years, corroborates this view, disputed by so many gushers who idly wait for the descent of the spirit instead of getting to work.

RURAL DELIVERY.

F. A. Harrison.

(For The Courier.)

Rural mail delivery is in operation in many parts of the state, and of its success and popularity there is now no question, yet the average inhabitant of the city or town knows little or nothing of the new system which is bringing so many of the farmers into daily touch with the outside world.

A sample community is Pawnee City, a county seat town of 2,000 inhabitants. Running out from Pawnee are four rural routes, the first having been established in June of last year, and the last two in January of this year. The routes aggregate 109 miles in length, and deliver mail to 3,075 people, covering a territory of 146 square miles. This is one-third the area of the county, and practically one-third of the entire population.

During the month of March, 1901, there were handled on the four routes 22,539 pieces of mail, indicating a total for one year of 270,463 pieces, an average of 440 letters and papers for each family. Since the establishment of the routes this average has largely increased. One item of increase has been in daily papers. In a community where there was one daily paper taken a year ago, now there are twenty-five dailies, and this ratio of increase will hold good on all the routes.

Money orders may be purchased of the rural carrier, who is made the agent of the farmer desiring to send money away. The application is made out, the letter is carried to town unsealed, and the money order is made out and placed in the letter at the general office. This is a convenience quite generally taken advantage of, as is shown by the increase in the money order business of the Pawnee City postoffice. During the year ending April 1st, 1900, there were issued by the office 3,090 money orders, while for the year ending April 1st, 1901, the number was 4,632, an increase of 1,542. Registered letters may also be made out and sent by the carrier, but there has been very little increase in the registry business. There has been a perceptible increase in the sale of stamps at the city office, most of it due to the rural routes.

The farmers living along the routes purchase their stamps of the carriers. A patron who has letters to mail, and has no stamps, awaits the carrier, buys stamps and hands over the letters. Many of these letters are written to other farmers along the route. These are cancelled by the carrier and delivered on the same trip, so that the farmers are placed in closer touch with each other as well as with the outer world.

The other day a farmer was telling me of the many advantages of the rural system. He said: "First and foremost, it has increased the price of land five

dollars an acre on every route. It saves me a good deal of time in running to town. If I need a piece of machinery I order it by mail instead of driving to town. If the merchant has to order it from a distance, he notifies me by the next day's mail. When it comes he sends it out to me.

"Another handy thing is the daily paper. I never took one before, but I get one now. I can keep posted on the markets without going to town, and I can take advantage of good prices. We farmers are not so much at the mercy of the dealers now as we were. And I think we are getting a better price for our produce along the routes. If a town merchant wants to buy and ship a car of apples he comes out along the routes and contracts them. When he is ready to have his car filled he drops cards to all of us, and we haul them in the same day. It is handy for him and handy for us.

"We write more letters now, and we get more letters and papers than we did a year ago. Our old practice was to go to town once a week, and sometimes letters would be in the office six days before we got them. Weekly papers were stale, and dailies were useless. Now our mail comes right to the door before noon on every week day. It's getting to be a great country."

At Pawnee the carriers own regulation mail wagons, and drive their own teams. Each of them drives 8,500 miles during the year, in all sorts of weather, receiving the munificent salary of \$500 per year. They sort part of their mail early in the morning before starting, and part of it they sort enroute. Each carrier travels twenty-seven miles, stops to gather and deliver mail at 150 boxes, and transacts business with fifty people every day. He is a wofully underpaid servant of Uncle Sam, and the first reform in the service should come in the form of better salaries.

Why are the merchants in the larger cities interested in the rural mail delivery in distant counties? For the reason that their mail orders from each of these communities have increased fourfold. It may be that the merchants in the rural towns sell less goods, or it may be that the farmer on the route buys more than he did a year ago, but the fact remains that with his mail delivered every day he finds it convenient to do business with mail order houses. This furnishes a point for argument between city and country merchants as to the desirability of rural free delivery.

APPLE BLOSSOMS.

Dancing bits of pink and whiteness,
Fairy forms of airy lightness
Up against the blue sky seen
In your tents of tender green,
Have you any message for us
As you scatter rose-leaves o'er us?

"We mean not alone the May time;
Ours is not a long year's play time!
Pink and white and dancing youth
Soon must pass, because, in truth,
By and by comes earnest living,
Autumn days, and our fruit giving."

—Lilly Maxwell Strong.

Nothing is Sacred.

Pitter—The supply of books worth dramatizing will soon be exhausted.

Patter—Yes, I know; but so fierce is the craze that the dramatists are now utilizing everything they can lay their hands on.

Pitter—Is it really so bad?

Patter—Bad! I should say so. Why, Augustus Thomas is dramatizing with enormous success the map of the United States. He has already done Arizona, Missouri and Alabama and is now at work on Colorado.—Town Topics.

CLUBS.

Edited by Miss Helen G. Harwood.

The Lincoln Woman's club has closed its meetings for the year. The programs have not only been interesting but have developed interest in the organization. This, the first year of Mrs. Bushnell's regime has been one of effective results. Not only Mrs. Bushnell but the other officers, members of the board and leaders of departments have been so well prepared for their various positions that a happy spirit of unity and good will as well as that of progress, has been the guiding attractions of the club during the year.

The leaders of departments have already plans for their work for the coming season. Mrs. Morning has furnished the following for the current topics department:

The Evolution of the New Woman.

1. Social and educational development.
2. What has the Christian church done for woman?
3. Woman before the law for two hundred years.
4. Origin and elimination of emotionalism in woman.
5. Women as writers and artists.
6. Women in the professions.
7. Woman's history as voter and law-maker.
8. The legal status of woman in Nebraska.

The musical conference held in Cleveland this week has been a great joy to those in attendance and even those far off have at least enjoyed a look at the fine program offered. The Matinee Musicale was represented by Mrs. Doane and Miss Annie E. Miller.

The Women Pioneers of California is an association that owes its birth to the oversight of the California Men's Pioneer society. For a number of years the women eligible to the society except by reason of their sex, have waited patiently with the modest hope that some day they might be urged to become members of the existing Pioneer Society. At last realizing that there are times when patience ceases to be a virtue, they have formed an organization of their own. The requirements for membership are so tremendous that it seems great wonder how the men could have been so placidly heedless of the deserving ones of the other sex. Eligibility demands that a woman shall have crossed the plains before 1854 behind an ox team.

The Home Reading club of Rahway, New Jersey, has made a happy combination of charity and culture. A literary program is given at each meeting which occurs fortnightly at which time every member is assessed ten cents which goes towards the support of the Rahway Orphans' Home. Large amounts have been obtained by means of this simple and effective plan.

Much has been said of late in regard to the responsibility of society toward the consumptive. In New York City the Stony Wolde Sanitarium society is doing great good in sending poor consumptive patients to a proper climate and to a location where they will have proper care. Auxiliaries are being formed all over the city and work has now attained such proportions that effective results are seen. Doctor Alfred Meyer, at a recent meeting of one of these auxiliaries, gave some encouraging statistics: "Twenty-five years ago consumption meant death. Now twenty-five or thirty out of every hundred incipient cases which have hospital care are cured and forty-five or fifty more are able to return to wage-earning." An English authority says that the

disease is rapidly decreasing in Europe and that if the same rate of decrease continues in the years to come, the disease will be stamped out. In New York City, one of the D. A. R. chapters has become an effective auxiliary. This question is being agitated in Boston, where a special hospital, if I am not mistaken, is maintained. California and Colorado, owing to the great army of patients that flock to their territory for relief, are directing a movement for isolated hospitals. The latter idea does not apparently have even an altruistic surface, but it is self protection, and the hospital care that would be offered as a recompense for the isolation would be of the greatest value to the patient.

The Fairbury Woman's club held the last meeting of the literary department April the twenty seventh. The program, under the able supervision of the president, Mrs. Allie Leet, was especially enjoyable, consisting of vocal solos by Miss Conrad and Miss Sarbach, piano solo by Miss Henshaw, violin solo by Miss Davis, and short talks on club work and methods by Mesdames Steele, Letton and Cross. A social hour was then enjoyed, and refreshments were served.

The music and art department closed the year's work on Tuesday, April the thirtieth, with the following program:

Business; Response, music; Music; Talk, Should classical music be rendered to all audiences; Song; Recitation; Music, classical and otherwise; Song; Music.

The annual meeting of the club will take place on May the seventh.

A plan has been proposed for the establishment of a Normal and business college in the grammar school building at Tekamah. A kindergarten and departments of music, literature and election also are talked of. It is thought that the work could be done by lectures, and but one resident professor would be needed at first.

The Village Improvement society of Exeter held a meeting on April the twelfth. Great enthusiasm was manifested in the subject of village improvement, and resolutions were adopted relative to the planting of trees and ridding the town of the garbage and rubbish nuisance. A village park enclosed by a fence and planted with trees and flowers will be the object of particular effort this summer.

The Zetetic club of Weeping Water met on April the thirteenth with Mrs. Shannon. Responses to roll call were on the subject of the afternoon, English art. Mrs. Girardet, the leader, gave an interesting general talk followed by short biographical sketches of Vandyke, Hogart, Reynolds, Turner, Landseer, Blake and John F. Herring. The discussion was conducted according to the Socratic method, and beautiful reproductions of the works of these artists were given to the members as souvenirs.

The poem to be read at the launching of the battleship "Ohio" at San Francisco this month will be written by Mrs. Ida Eckert Lawrence of Toledo, Ohio. A stepdaughter of Governor Nash of Ohio, Mrs. Worthington Babcock of Columbus, will name the "Ohio."

The annual festival and banquet of the New England and Massachusetts Woman Suffrage Associations will be given at Faneuil hall, Boston, on Wednesday evening, May the twenty-second. Mrs. Julia Ward Howe will preside at this meeting; Mr. W. M. Salter of Chicago, will speak on "Women in public affairs;" Honorable William Dudley Foulke of Indiana, on "Woman suffrage