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The VENTNOR NEWS has the largest
circulation of any weekly newspaper pub-
lished in New Jersey.

Emerson loved the good more than
he abhorred evil. Carlyle abhorred evil
more than he loved the good.
If you should, by chance, find anything
in this newspaper you do not especially
like, it is not all wise to focus your
memory on that, to the exclusion of all
else. Bless my soul!—C. S.



SATURDAY, JUNE 30, 1923

RESCRAMBLING
RAILROAD EGGS

Ventnor as well as every other resort on Absecon Island has live and active interest in the protest of President Agnew T. Dice of the Reading Railway against plain big stick methods being attempted to amalgamate that line with the Baltimore and Ohio system. To the greatest extent possible, the officials and prominent citizens of this resort should show their appreciation of past Reading favors in line of upbuilding transportation advance by voicing their protest in opposition to any move which will take from the Reading the power to continue to give service, and to improve service, to Atlantic City which means Ventnor.

The proposal to which objection is raised by President Dice and other experts in railway transportation lines, is that roads now under separate management shall be merged into a few great systems to be managed without opportunity for that almost personal contact between the lines and those they serve which has been a potent force in recent travel and civic growth and advancement. The idea is advanced that by such consolidation and centralization saving would be made in operating and other costs, and that groups of railways could be made more profitable than are present single lines.

But a short time has passed since acrimonious battle was waged for securing of the very decentralization which now

exists. Political demagogues made capital out of their demands that every sort of railway combination be broken down and that the roads be forced to grow, or to fall, alone.

In face of the wide divergence in viewpoint of probable results, either the old or the new viewpoint must be absurd. For ourselves, and speaking with admitted selfish motive, we believe in the present system under which the men who direct the destinies of the railways which serve us shall remain not only to us known but to us civic, if not personal, friends. We feel that in ability to appeal to the men whom we know we are more likely to secure those railway advantages that we need than are we in event it becomes necessary to make our pleas to a man or men alien to our communities and more than likely uninterested in the very problems of transport which are to us the most important.

It cost millions of dollars and great effort to unscramble certain railroad eggs after the riot of consolidation of a few years ago. Let us continue under the present policy which has proved so highly successful before we give the plan of big, unwieldy and possibly dangerous policy of rescrambling the railways a new trial.

A POWER FOR GOOD

Several months ago, at a gathering of prominent men in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Godfrey Mahn, there was organized the Ventnor Club of Men. At that time the newspapers and the persons not connected with its formation gave the club but a cursory notice. However, in the short time that has elapsed this organization has gained a firm footing and is now demanding, by its purpose and expansion, the interest of the entire community.

A description of this club is a prediction of its future greatness. Men from every field of endeavor and prominent in the affairs of Ventnor are members or prospective members of this civic organization whose enrollment is confined to one hundred representative men of the community. Meetings are held once a week, not only in the wintertime, but in the summer as well. This means that these men, who by the sheer diversity of their industrious and political interests represent all Ventnor, will be able to exchange ideas for civic improvement.

The benefits or detriments to the different fields of endeavor that would result from the adoption of any proposal being considered by the city will be explained by leaders in that particular line of work. Since these meetings are held once a week immediate expression on every timely subject affecting Ventnor is obtained. In order to gain even a more general expression of the people, public-spirited women are to

meet once a month in conjunction with the club, and are to discuss with the men, questions as viewed from the feminine angle.

Furthermore, the conclusions, as reached by the Ventnor Club of Men, will be more than verbal suggestions; they will be the advice of foremost citizens backed by the representation of the whole community. What these men decide as the best policy or the best plan must be accepted as the views of Ventnor, and therefore, worthy of adoption.

To insure the integrity of the organization and to keep its standards civic rather than political, and its aim for the improvement of the city free from any exploitation of individual or party interests, there has been chosen a committee who pass on names for membership only after being satisfied that the prospective members are sincerely interested in the prosperity of Ventnor.

With such a purpose, such procedure and such members, the Ventnor Club of Men is certain to be a power for good and uplift in this city.

NEWS

By Charles Scheuer

When Curiosus lately accosted the writer with the question, "What is the news?" the writer made the usual reply, "Nothing." The answer is certainly as common as the question, and it is singular that there should seem to be a universal and instinctive disposition in modern society to put a question which is generally received with so baffling an answer. But Curiosus is not easily baffled, and he persisted in his inquiry, explaining, however, that he did not mean the current gossip of the moment, but generally what is news—or strictly—what is the news which justifies the name of the newspaper.

"You mean to ask, then," returned the writer, "what is the news which we may properly expect to learn from the morning paper?"

"Precisely Socrates," said Curiosus.

The young friend has asked the writer what the divines call a large question. But it is one which has been forcibly suggested by recent publications and comments in the press. If a newspaper is directly

challenged to declare why it publishes certain things, its reply, *ex officio*, is that it is obliged to supply its readers with all the news, and that it is a reporter and not an inventor; consequently that it must publish whatever happens, however disagreeable it may be. But this is a sophistry, like the other theory of many newspapers that corrections of editorial statements must not be made. "Sir," said an indignant man to Omniscientius, the editor, "your paper states that I have committed suicide by hanging myself. It is false, sir. I am not dead by hanging, and I demand a full and apologetic retraction of the calumny." "My dear sir," answered Omniscientius, the editor, "you must not demand impossibilities. The *Tongue of Truth* never retracts. But we will perhaps consent to state that you were cut down before life was wholly extinct."

The sophistry lies in this, that all that happens is not news, and that, if it were, no paper could publish it all, and consequently that every paper must choose. Thus the whole category of crimes and accidents includes innumerable incidents, that by the limitations of space cannot be, and by considerations of morality ought not to be, published. Of all that occurs, therefore, every newspaper must choose what it will print; and then, having chosen, it must decide how it will print it. The newspaper, therefore, has the whole responsibility, and cannot throw it upon fate or the necessity of the case. Fate does not compel it to print even a very small proportion of the incidents of a day, nor the necessity of the case force it to print what it selects in a way to demoralize the public mind. The newspaper may select any spot in a large city five hundred feet square, and while in every such space there occur every day and night incidents whose mere publication would create an uproar, the newspaper does not publish them. It is prevented by two reasons: one is the law of the State; the other is the law of public propriety.

It is untrue, therefore, that a newspaper must publish whatever happens. It does not and it cannot. Consequently it must choose from

BUM

He's a little dog with a stubby tail, and a moth-eaten coat of tan,
And his legs are short, of the wabby sort; I doubt if they ever ran;
And he howls at night, while in broad daylight he sleeps like a bloomin' log,
And he likes the feed of the gutter breed; he's a most irregular dog.

I call him Bum, and in total sum he's all that his name implies,
For he's just a tramp with a highway stamp that culture cannot disguise;
And his friends, I've found, in the street abound, be they urchins or dogs
or men;

Yet he sticks to me with a fiendish glee. It is truly beyond my ken.

I talk to him when I'm lonesome-like, and I'm sure that he understands
When he looks at me so attentively and gently licks my hands;
Then he rubs his nose on my tailored clothes, but I never say aught thereat,
For the Good Lord knows I can buy more clothes, but never a friend like that!

So my good old pal, my irregular dog, my flea-bitten, stub-tailed friend,
Has become a part of my very heart, to be cherished till lifetime's end;
And on Judgment Day, if I take the way that leads where the righteous meet,
If my dog is barred by the heavenly guard—we'll both of us brave the heat.

—Redmond Radcliff

the vast mass of incident that which may be considered to be of public importance. This includes what may be called general political information; facts in all the departments of human activity, and as illustrative of the actual condition of society, local crimes and casualties. This is all news, or incidents and facts in which the general public is interested. But the manner in which all this shall be published, the proper proportion and detail of circumstance, is wholly at the discretion of the newspaper, and for this the newspaper alone is justly accountable.

The execution of a noted criminal, for instance, is a matter of news. But description of the execution is a matter of choice. If two or three columns be given to it, and every ghastly detail of the event be laid bare, it is plain that the object of the publication is not the communication of news, but the gratification of a morbid appetite and a demoralizing curiosity. So the reports of crimes of various kinds are news; and the trials of criminals may be properly reported in detail, because in this way the public learns how the crimes were made possible, and how they may be baffled hereafter. But the publication of the details of trials of other criminals, whose crimes have no other public bearing than every violation of human and divine laws, and which pander only to the worst appetites and passions, is in itself a gross offense against the community. It is not the necessity of the case, and the duty of a news-

paper, and the condition of the enterprise, and the right of the public, and the improvement of society; it is the choice of the newspaper to pander to foul tastes, because, for whatever reasons, it believes such pandering to be peculiarly profitable.

"The high mission of the press," and "the press a great engine of public morality," and all similar phrases, do not conceal the disreputable fact. A newspaper which would publish such things as have been published, under the plea of exposing social classes and the hollowness of the fashionable world, would go further in the way, if it did not fear that it would be unprofitable, by causing the paper to fall into the hands of the law. Such a paper is in no sense a champion of public morals. It is a pander to immorality, and goes just as far as it dares to go with selfish regard to its own safety. Such a newspaper supplies a precise measure of its estimate of its readers. "This is what you like, ladies and gentlemen; fall to, then, in Heaven's name, and *bon appetit!*"

Curiosus will perhaps gather from these remarks that while a sudden insurrection and the dethronement of a foreign Prince is a matter of public news, the incidents of the interior life of his harem, if he have one, is not; and that if the Sultan is murdered in his seraglio, the newspaper which tells the news by an elaborate account of the private conduct of the Sultanas is not publishing news, nor "discharging the often painful duty of a news purveyor."

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