

Exaggerating Trifles.

By Orison Swett Marden.



YOU can always take a man's measure by the way in which little annoyances and petty vexations affect him. If he exaggerates them, talks a great deal about them, spends valuable time fussing over them, you know that he is not a big-souled man.

The habit of making a fuss over a little thing, of exaggerating the importance of what, to great characters, would be but a trifling annoyance, is not only indicative of smallness and narrowness of nature, but is also demoralizing and weakening.

The really large man will not allow himself to be troubled by trifles. If he wants to go anywhere, he does not make a great ado because it rains, is hot, is muddy, or because he "does not feel like it." This would be too small, too playune for the broad, large-minded character.

Some people are upset by the least obstruction thrown in their path. They "go all to pieces" over somebody's blunder—over a stenographer's mistake or a clerk's error. Large natures rise above such trifles.

Some men do splendidly when they have the encouragement of good business, the tonic of good times; but when business is dull and goods remain on the shelves unsold, or they have any little discord in their homes, they are all upset. They are like children; they need to be encouraged all the time, for they can not work under discouragement.

"I have seen men lose their temper and waste energy swearing at a knot in a shoestring, or something else just as insignificant. The foolish or ill-tempered have no range in their scale. Small, irritating things come to and 'tag' us all; but the only way to conquer them is simply to smile and 'pass them up.'"

Everyone owes it to himself to live a real life, whether he is rich or poor; to be, and not to seem. He owes it to himself at least to be genuine.

The Strain To Keep Up Appearances

By Orison Swett Marden.



HERE are plenty of people, in all of our large cities, who do not allow themselves enough to eat, and practice all sorts of pinching economy at home for the sake of keeping up appearances in society.

What terrible inconvenience, hardship, and suffering we endure on account of other people's eyes and opinions! What slaves, what fools we make of ourselves because of what other people think! How we scheme and contrive to make them think we are other than we really are.

It is other people's eyes that are expensive. It is other people's eyes that make us unhappy and discontented with our lot, that make us strain, and struggle, and slave, in order to keep up false appearances.

The suit, the hat must be discarded, not because they are badly worn, but because others will think it strange that we do not change them.

The effect of all this false living, this constant practise of deception in appearances, in our manner of living, our dress, is undermining the American character, ruining our genuineness, making us superficial, unreal, false.

No man can really respect himself when he is conscious that he is sailing under false colors.

If you are wearing clothes and living in luxury which you cannot afford, these things label you all over with falsehood, and are perpetual witnesses against you. There is only one possible result upon the character of falsehood, whether acted or spoken, and that is perpetual deterioration. It does not matter whether you wear lies, tell lies, or act lies, the effect upon your character is the same.

Poor Dickens.

His Cockneyism and Vulgarity Are Relentlessly Exposed.

By Oliver Cram.



IN my opinion "Our Mutual Friend" is simply a piece of literary patchwork. The plot is clumsy; the characterization is flimsy. The very objectionable type of rascality, Rogue Riderhood, mentioned by Mr. Lightwood is a wretched caricature. But the same remark applies to Silas Wegg. Instead of being a "colossal work of genius," this book is the work of one of perhaps the least artistic of all writers of fiction. Contemporary novels may appear "episodic" and "incoherent" when compared with "Our Mutual Friend"

to a mind incapable of understanding what cohesion in a narrative means. In reality George Meredith has rightly said that Dickens represents cockneyism and vulgarity. The "vogue" of Dickens was entirely due to the ignorance and bad taste of his readers. He only knew the outside of things, as George Eliot pointed out. His villains are impossibly bad; his heroes are mawkishly "goody-goody." There is not a single novel of his that can be properly called a work of art. "David Copperfield" is marred by the grotesque figure of Micawber and the scarcely less ridiculous Betsy Trotwood. "Barnaby Rudge," in spite of some fine descriptive writing, is an absurdly improbable story. "Bleak House" is a gallery of marionettes. The entire Chancery portion of this novel is caricature. George Saintsbury forcibly said that Dickens might have known a solicitor out of court, but not a barrister. English readers will appreciate this. "Dombey and Son" is full of melodramatic rubbish. The scene at Dijon between Carker and Dombey's wife is pure transpontine drama. "Pickwick" is the only book of Dickens that will be read in twenty years, and it will only be read for its board fun.

If we take up such a work as "Middlemarch" and compare it with any of Dickens' books we shall see the difference between superficial and profound treatment of life. It used to be the habit of schoolboys years ago to compare Dickens with Thackeray. It would be as rational to compare Fielding with Mark Twain. The uneducated will cling for some time longer to the tradition of Dickens. The educated will let that vulgar caricaturist rest, and will read Fielding, Thackeray, Bulwer Lytton, George Eliot, Jane Austen, Charlotte Bronte, Nathaniel Hawthorne and Thomas Hardy.

Immense Rosebush.

A rosebush in a garden at Freiburg, Germany, covers 99 square yards and bears 10,000 buds.

Intellectual gems, insists the Washington Herald, never require the art

of the lapidary to enhance their brilliancy.

Says the Philadelphia Record: It would take more than a music teacher to cultivate the voice of conscience in some people.

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