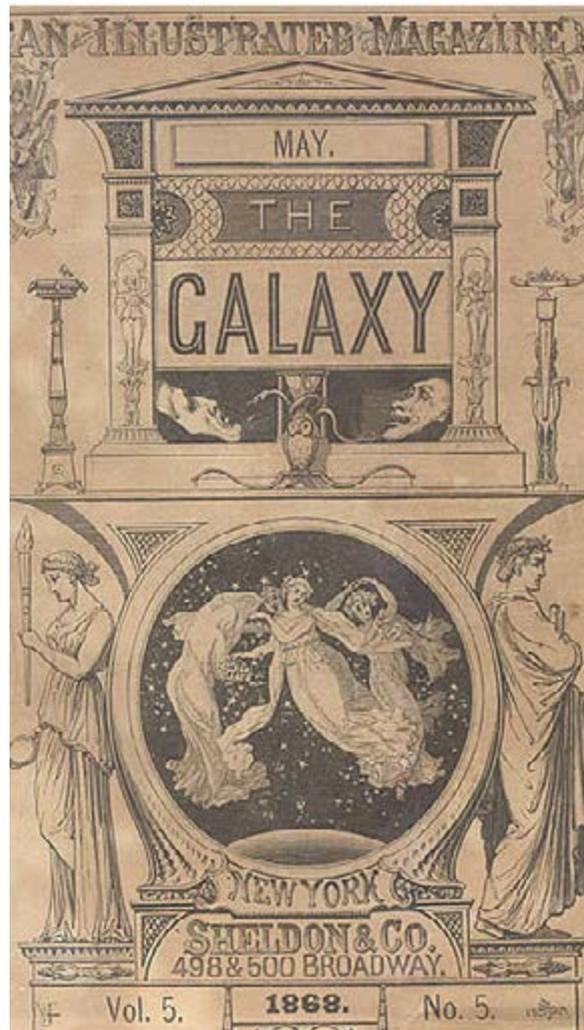


Editorial

How I edited an agricultural paper once

The title was adopted from the marvellous short story of Mark Twain, published in 1870 by *The Galaxy*: an illustrated monthly magazine edited in New York. The humorous story summarizes the adventures of a journalist who is appointed by an agricultural paper temporarily. The regular editor of the paper was going off for a holiday, and someone accepted the terms he offered, and took his place. He tried to handle the journal in accordance with the general patterns of newspapers. Namely – it does not matter what you write, as long as it is attractive to the readers. The more astonishing the information is the better is the reputation of the periodical. In this belief our man wrote various crazy articles about turnips that should never be pulled from the soil but harvested from trees, or how to hatch the eggs of the guano bird, and why not produce pumpkins instead of gooseberries etc. The readers of the paper soon started to revolt, the poor regular editor had to return from his leave, and our man was fired. At the end of the story there is a real “Mark-Twainian” conclusion. Specific papers in general and agricultural papers in particular should avoid employing journalists having no sufficient information on the matter they write about. This should be left for political parties since they welcome anybody with the philosophy “that the less a man knows the bigger noise he makes, and the higher the salary he commands”.



Front page of an original GALAXY magazine from the Dave Thomson collection.

So, it isn't an easy job neither to produce nor to edit a scientific paper. Columella - Journal of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences has reached a milestone. We are five years old now, and the present issue is just the 10th in our history. Of course it is not (or not *yet*) an anniversary. We don't have to be proud and also we cannot be satisfied with the results of this brief period. However it would be worth to see some of the records of the paper. The foundation of the journal was in 2014. We are completing the fifth volume by now. Ten regular issues and one conference proceedings book have been edited, so far containing 74 full papers and 50 conference papers. These have been selected from among 145 articles. The rest of them were discarded during the reviewing processes. We believe in the wise opinion of a onetime professor of ours according to whom "the value of a paper is determined by the power of the reviewer". During the past five years altogether 105 international reviewers contributed to the success of our work. The magnitude of papers published is 944 pages. The editorial process required some 1500 working hours. All papers are open access published and so they are available on the internet having DOI numbers and the journal is ISSN registered with both hard copies and electronic issues. The journal is indexed and stored by a wide range of repositories and it is a scientific journal approved by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.

Finally we have to return to the initial question again; what is the mission of a scientific paper nowadays? I believe it is the support of science in general, and the dissemination of scientific results in a controlled, broad and open access way to the public. Our journal, Columella provides a forum for scientific publications in the field of agricultural and environmental sciences. The journal of one of the most ambitious agricultural faculties of Hungary has a task to disseminate novel research results, in favour of creating a better world.

The editors would say thanks to the authors of the present issue, and also welcome the readers who may read, use and broadcast the scientific information compiled. We also do hope that they may become future authors as well.

Márton Jolánkai

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