

Contributed Articles . . .

SPEAK TO THE SEXTON.

(First Whisper—Old Lady.)

"The church is exceedingly cold today—I hope you're not chilled my poor Mrs. Grey?
When I bring a friend with me, its always the way!
I must speak to the sexton about it!"

(Second Whisper—Young Lady.)

"How frightfully hot the church is, mama!
Just see how dejected my wretched bangs are.
There's not a curl left! We must ask papa.
To speak to the Sexton about it."

(Third Whisper—Rheumatic Old Man.)

"A current of air strikes my neck, sitting here.
The church isn't cold, but draughty my dear,
There's quite too much air, for this time of year,
I'll speak to the Sexton about it."

(Fourth Whisper—Healthy Young Man)

"I say Dick! This place is atrociously close!
If they don't open something, we'll have to vomit—
If I catch the Sexton, I'll give him a dose
He ought to be "blown up about it!"

Service ended, the malcontents made their threats good,
While, respectfully bowing, the bland Sexton stood,
Assuring each one, he "would do what he could,"
(Nor did any one of them doubt it!)

But wishing within, as he'd oft wished before,
That the calling of Sexton, required as of yore,
The use of a spade—for when grumbings are o'er
Not a grumbler can well do without it!

That at length he might quit them, sick, well, young and old,
Where, if they were hot, or if they were cold,
'Twould be out of the question for them to make bold,
To "speak to the Sexton about it!"

HENRIETTA R. ELIOT.

JOURNALISM.

Nearly fifty years ago an eminent Frenchman compared a newspaper to a "man standing at an open window and bawling to the passers by." In the time of our fore-fathers the "man at the window," was not bawling out sensations, crimes, fads and fancies (as he needs must were he bawling now) but of the short-comings and blunders of men in high places. This characteristic existed in our mother country, and still exists there today, with less change than it does in our own country.

It was the American press which first established the idea of news-gathering as the prominent factor in editing a successful newspaper. In the period of the last fifty years, education has become more general all over the world, and popular education in the United States has cultivated a taste for newspaper reading among all classes of our people, and in proportion the newspapers have been obliged to supply that which is most acceptable to popular fancy. It is to be regretted that this taste is fed largely upon sensational gossip, criminal cases and murder trial reports, with the excuse from the editors that the wishes of the readers must be gratified or the profits must drop off. Many papers are issued at what would be a ruinously low rate were it not that their circulation is so immense. For example the New York World, tri-weekly, is sold at two cents a copy, the daily at one cent, and while they are supposed to contain all that is of interest to business men, statesmen and politicians, they are overflowing with much that renders them unfit for a family paper. Still they claim a profit of a million dollars a year on the capital invested. Of course this income is greatly enhanced by the profits from advertisements which are so great an element in the successful business enterprises of the present day. There are scores of other papers in our country doing almost as well in proportion to the capital invested. There is a vast difference in the plans pursued by journalists in this country and in Europe.

In Paris (which generally means France) there is almost as much variety in journalism as in the U. S. but their success depends upon editorial

writing and in this line such men as Theirs, Guizot, Carnot and Brani wielded great influence or rose into political power. In Europe, criticism and comment are the rule, while in America, "news" is the one thing needful. This may be due to the slow spread of popular education abroad where the readers are more confined to the best educated classes who demand thoughtful criticism in a good literary form. In England great seriousness and regard for truth is a requisite in good correspondent and reportorial work, while in France no weight is attached to these things, if the articles are only droll or sprightly or written in a finished style. Their best writers in journalism gain fame from editorials of high merit, and it is said when a paper is started in Paris that the simple collection of news or reporter's work carries no weight with the proprietors of the paper, but their "leading article" and the art and theatrical criticism must be up to the best standard of that kind of work. It consequently requires a much less capital to go into journalism there than it does in our own country. With us newspaper work has become almost distinctly a news gathering process, leaving the higher art of journalism a very small and insignificant place, and it is for this reason that it has become merely a stepping stone to literary work of a higher order.

There has been some discussion as to whether newspapers were literature at all. Whatever is written and read is literature either good or bad, and newspapers have taken an immense hold on the reading public in all civilized countries. The hold they are taking on the bulk of the people should be considered a serious fact, for it is said, and I do not doubt the truth of the assertion, that they "are exerting more influence on the popular mind and the popular morals than either the pulpit or the book-press has exerted in five hundred years." An unfortunate influence in regard to such reading is that it unfits one's taste for book-reading, and renders it more difficult to concentrate one's mind on one subject. The ordinary newspaper articles requiring four or five minutes each, give one a habit of drowsing about mentally, which is destructive to concentration of thought. In confirmation of this fact I quote from Mr. Godkin of "The Nation" who says: "There has grown up a deep and increasing scorn on the part of the book reader and the book-maker, for the man who reads nothing but the newspapers and gets his facts and opinions from them. This is true in every civilized country. Go into a circle of scientific or cultivated men in any field in America, France, Germany or Italy and you will have the mental food which newspapers supply to the bulk of the population, treated with ridicule and contempt, the authority of a newspaper as a joke and journalism of that class used as a synonym for shallowness, ignorance and blundering. The conversion of journalism into the highest channels of thought will be one of the serious problems to be solved by the coming century." This from one of the most eminent journalists of our country is entitled to respect although one deprecates his intensity and severity. All honor is due to the eminent men who have done so much to elevate journalism in America, but one cannot but remember that the ready pen has also been in the hands of cultivated women. There is no branch of literature in which she has not shone and none where she has wielded a larger or more lasting influence. She has paved the way to a field of work wide, various and wholesome for herself and for her readers. A spirit has asserted itself, of late years, which makes way for women in almost all stations in which men are placed and she has had the intelligence to take the measure of the situation in reference to journalistic work, and one may speak with full assurance as regards the moral issue.

Mrs. R. S. S.

In Australia spring begins August 20, summer, November 20; autumn, February 20, and winter, May 20.

TWO OLD PROGRAMS.

On running across an old program of 1867, which had passed through one fire and three floods, and yet had been preserved in a scrap book for these 31 years, my mind was filled with many questions, and I could not help contrasting that time with the days of 1898. The concert to which this program calls attention was one given Dec. 11, 1867, for the benefit of the Congregational S. S., in Moody's Hall. This building was erected by Wm. C. Moody, who conducted a brokerage and commission business here, in the early '60's, but was no relative of the ex-governor of our state. The hall stood on the property directly east of the Columbia Hotel, and was the gathering place for all entertainments at that time. Its career closed at the time of the big fire of 1879, which burned the Umatilla House.

The admission to this concert was \$1, an unheard of price, for this end of the century; for who would dare ask such an amount at an amateur performance now? Either the people of those days had great cheek, or else had more money, or else gave a much finer entertainment than we can give today.

As our old world has swung around the sun, these many years, it has grown into the habit of later hours, for what performance commencing "promptly at 7 o'clock," would find more than a few boys in the front seat, at the first rising of the curtain?

The orchestra for the occasion consisted of Messrs Dehm, Bettignen, Schultz and Ross; three of whom have been called to their long rest. A quartet "faith, hope and charity" was sung by Mrs. Hogue, now living in Portland, and the mother of Harry A. Hogue, Miss Pentland, now Mrs. S. L. Brooks, Messrs. Brooks and Hand. It seems, in looking over old programs, as if no concert were complete without the voice of Wm. M. Hand, who was an editor of the Mountaineer, before it was merged into the Times, edited by John Michell, and became the Times-Mountaineer of today. Mr. Hand's ponderous, hearty, inflective laugh, will be remembered by the writer, and by many always, though I do not remember his singing. Tableau No. 2 was of peculiar interest to me, in that one of the actors was my sainted brother "Ally" Wilson, whose drowning, near Mill Creek bridge, cast a gloom over our little city. A solo "Then You'll Remember Me" was sung by Mrs. A. W. Buchanan, whose husband once owned the house now occupied by Mrs. Thomas Lang.

A tableau which will be remembered for its beauty, and because the two participants are now cut down by the Scythe of Time, was one in which Mr. Z. M. Donnell, once a member of the legislature, stood with a long white beard, representing the Old Year, holding a scythe, while the New Year was personified by that blue eyed, light haired boy, his son Laurie, who entered the scene on a velocipede, a very new invention at that time. Another tableau which will be recalled by some of my readers, was one, where Gov. Moody was powdered, and dressed to represent "John Anderson" while Miss Annie Puck sang "John Anderson my Jo John" in the sweet voice that will long be remembered in The Dalles.

Among the older names, I recognize those of Mrs. Comfort, now living in Arlington and J. D. Robb, then principal of our public school, and now teacher in the Reform school, near Salem.

Preserved for 19 years, in a sewing machine drawer, I found a program of the first Old Folks concert ever given in The Dalles, dated Jan. 31, 1879. The program, which began, "To all ye peoples within ye settlement of Ye Dalles, and all ye country round about, and ye region beyond, greeting!" should be reprinted, but I have space for only a few of the foot notes, which I believe were largely written by Dell Hinderman, then in the employ of the O. R. & N., and living at Celilo.

"N. B.—Now let silence reign for some minutes, as ye singers doe sorely need to reobtain they're breathe."

"N. B.—Any olde ladies whose foot stoves need fresh coals can now have them sent in from neighbor Warner's as her wimmen folkes will keep up a big fire on purpose."

"N. B.—All ye wimmen folks who bring small babies must leave them with our good Deacon Brooks, so that ye may not be disturbed by ye crying."

"N. B.—And likewise ye maidens, should not cast sheeps eyes at the young mense while they doe singe, for they are timid when many eyes be upon them."

"N. B.—Positively no live stock took as barter, as Elder Stons can't be pestered with 'em."

Mr. C. J. Crandall was the "Tym-eiste," his gifts in that line having been enjoyed many times since, by the people of our city, while the duties of "Harpis-chordistes" were attended mainly by Misses Anna Lang and Genevieve Wilson. All of the names on the program being fictitious I can refer only to those whom memory recalls. They were Clara McFarland, Grace Crandall, Anna Pentland Brooks, Viola McFarland, Emma Harmon Doane, Alice Mc F. Abrams, Annie Bunnell Fleck, Anna Durbin, now Mrs. Walker, of Gilliam county, Mrs. D. B. Grey, and among the men singers were Capt. Will Grey, who was one of the prime movers of the affair, Frank McFarland, Sam Gill, Wm Hand, W. R. Abrams, Capt. Coffin, Eugene Price, Emil Schutz, while Deacon S. L. Brooks and Cornelius McFarland were engaged in "anding ye wimmen fokes good places."

There is something very pleasant to me in recalling it but for a moment, of so genial and almost picturesque a personality as his, who was always called Father Harmon. He was indeed otherwise a historic character, having helped to set up the first locomotive ever run in the United States. There are many yet who remember him, but his kindly smile and pleasant greeting, will soon be a memory, with but few. His voice was phenomenal. I have heard it characterized in musical technique by those who understand it, but was not old enough to remember it, to quote the statements now. His diminuendo was a thing, those who heard it can never forget. He could make a note sound as if dying away far over the hills, and it is most surely rare that vocal powers are prolonged, as his were, to the eighties. LUCY WILSON PETERS.

A great many of Dr. Watson's stories have been dramatized, with his complete sanction and such stories enacted on the stage can only exert the very best influence and tend to refine present day drama. An interesting conversation with Dr. Watson is found in the columns of "Amusements," in the March number of Woman at Home. Watson is asked; "Don't you think that as there will be a theatre as long as children act by instinct, and the grown-ups love to see good acting, what good people ought to do is not to ostracise the theatre but to purify it?" "How can they do that?" replied Watson, "why, by encouraging managers to produce pure and noble plays, and supporting well living actors, until the higher drama be profitable and the lower left to vicious people, where it will die through destitution. You can never reform by repressing; the Puritans tried that method, and the result was the grossness of the restoration. You only reform by replacing. I wish well to every man and woman who helps to make the stage a blessing and not a curse to society."

A new enterprise in the hotel line has been inaugurated under prominent auspices, and is creating great interest in the circles where it has thus far been known. A corporation, to be called "The Woman's Hotel Company," is to be formed, with a capital of a million dollars, to erect one or more hotels for self supporting women; the first one to be for artists, teachers, clerks of the higher grades, and students in art, music and medicine. These women form a class for which no provision exists except the ordinary boarding house, which rarely supplies the comforts and refinements which many of them can afford.

Mrs. Tyndall, the widow of Prof Tyndall, has remitted to the Royal Institution a sum of £1,000 which she states that her husband desired her, at such time as should be convenient to herself, to present as an expression of his attachment to the institution with which he was so long connected, and of his sympathy with its objects.

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