HEPPNER CHAUTAUQUA

June 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 1923

Lombard Entertainers Bring Varied Program

Chautauqua Folk Will Enjoy These Exceptional Entertainers on Fifth Day.

Harry Lombard, baritone, is known not only as a singer, but also for his ability as a comedian of high rank. Lels Fairchild Lombard has a deep contralto voice and is also a talented reader and impersonator. Both had many years of experience as platform entertainers before the blind god, Dan Cupid, brought them together and they formed a partnership for life, building a new program that gives both an opportunity to display their varied talents. The Lombards carry fifteen sets of costumes, among them one imported from Japan at a cost of over $300. The program will include musical selections from three grand operas, three light operas, and five musical comedies; plenty of popular songs, readings, monologues, pianologues, whistling solos, novelties, etc. A special feature will be an original sketch, "The Home Town Girl," absolutely new, and containing many clever situations.

SAM LEWIS COMING

Dramatic Welsh Tenor to Be Heard Here Soon.

Of outstanding musical importance is the appearance of Sam Lewis, who will be heard here in two concerts on the second day of Chautauqua. The following is typical of press comments received of his work wherever he appears: Martin's Ferry (Ohio) Times said: "Mr. Lewis' singing last night equaled anything we had heard on either side of the Atlantic. We will hear great things of this young Welshman. His singing of the oratorio numbers in his recital was highly artistic." From the Warren Daily Chronicle: "A rare privilege it was to hear Samuel Lewis, the tenor, in his interpretation of Manrico. His voice is rich in quality. He sang with feeling, his charming personality lending itself to the dramatic part. His phrasing was marked for its excellence."

Authority on Oral English Coming to Chautauqua

Dr. Henry Gaines Hawn Brings Inspiring Message, "The Soul of Things."

Inspirational of the truest type is the address by Henry Gaines Hawn on the fifth evening of Chautauqua. There are few speakers now before the public who equal this brilliant orator for forceful, persuasive eloquence and sparkling humor. His thought is strikingly original, and his whole soul goes out in instructing, delighting, and arousing people to an appreciation of "living as a fine art." He is a man endowed with unusual scholarly attainments; gracious, dignified, but modest and pleasingly democratic. Mr. Hawn is a recognized authority on oral English. He is ex-President of the National Speech Arts Association; Founder of the Hawn School of the Speech Arts; Instructor of Public Speaking, Rotary Club of New York; special lecturer for the Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences; and author of many works on subjects kindred to oratory.

Four Exceptional Artists to Entertain Chautauqua Folk

Sam Lewis, Welsh Tenor, Brings High Class Musical Organization on Second Day.

Sam Lewis, a distinguished Welsh tenor, has been in concert and oratorio work for eleven years, and has made four transcontinental tours with his own company of high class musical artists. Mr. Lewis is one of the most popular ballad singers in America, and is scarcely less a favorite in oratorio arias. His voice possesses a never-to-be-forgotten richness that goes home to the heart of every hearer. He has studied with Charles Edward Clarke, of Chicago, and David Bispham, of New York. He has appeared on the same courses with Louis Kriedler, of the Chicago Opera, and Frances Ingram, of the Metropolitan. He is appearing this season at the head of his own concert organization. His assisting artists are: Marie Colliton, pianist and accompanist; Allen Ament, violinist, and Nell Adams, reader.

A Story of the Highlands

By WILLIAM ALLEN WHITE

CROSSING the Missouri river into Kansas, the west-bound traveler begins a steady, upward climb, until he reaches the summit of the Rockies. The journey through Kansas covers in four hundred miles nearly five thousand feet of the long, upward slant. In that long hillside there are three or four distinct kinds of landscape, distinguished from one another by the trees that trim the bottom.

The hills and bluffs that roll away from the river are covered with scrub oaks, elms, walnuts and sycamores. As the wayfarer pushes westward, the oak drops back, then the sycamore follows the walnut, and finally the elm disappears, until three hundred miles to the westward the horizon of the "gently rolling" prairie is serrated by the scraggy cottonwood, that rises awkwardly by some sandbarred stream oozing over the moundy land. Another fifty miles, and a Garden City, high up on the background of the panorama, even the cottonwood staggers; and here and there, around some sinkhole in the great flat prairie, droops a desolate willow—the last weary pilgrim from the lowlands.

When the traveler has mounted to this high table land, nearly four hundred miles from the Missouri, he may walk for days without seeing any green thing higher than his head. He may journey for hours on horseback, and not climb a hill, seeing before him only the level and often barren plain, scarred now and then by irrigation ditches.

The even line of the horizon is seldom marred. The silence of such a scene gnaws the glamor from the heart. Men become harsh and hard; women grow withered and sodden under its blighting power. The song of wood birds is not heard; even the mournful plaint of the meadow lark loses its sentiment, where the dreary clanking drone of the windmill is the one song which really brings good tidings with it. Long and fiercely sounds this unrhythmical monody in the night, when the traveler lies down to rest in the little sun-burned, pine-board town. The gaunt arms of the wheel hurl its imprecations at him as he rises to resume his journey into the silence, under the great gray dome, with its canopy pegged tightly down about him everywhere.

Crops are as bountiful in Kansas as elsewhere on the globe. It is the constant cry for aid, coming from this plateau—only a small part of the state—which reaches the world's ears, and the world blames Kansas. The fair springs on these highlands lure homeseekers to their ruin.

Hundreds of men and women have been tempted to death or worse, by this Lorelei of the prairies.

A young man named Burkholder came out to Fountain county in 1885. He had been a well-to-do young fellow in Illinois, was a graduate of an inland college, a man of good judgment, or sense, of a well-arranged mental perspective. In 1885 money was plentiful. He stocked his farm, put on a mortgage, and brought a wife back from the home of his boyhood. She was a young woman of culture, who put a bookshelf in the corner of the best of the three rooms in the yellow pine shanty, in which she and her husband lived. She brought her upright piano, and adorned her bedroom floor with bright rugs. She bought magazines at the "Post Office Book Store" of the praire town. She was not despondent. The vast stretches of green cheered her through the hot summer. There was a novel fascination in the wide, treeless horizon which charmed her for a while. At first she never tired of glancing up from her work, through the south window of the kitchen, to see the level green stretches, and the road that merged into the distance. She sat in the shade of the house, and wrote home cheerful, rollicking letters. As for roughing it, she enjoyed it thoroughly.

The crops did not quite pay the expenses of the year; so "Thomas Burkholder and Lizzie his wife" put another mortgage on the farm. The books and magazines from home still adorned the best room. And all through the winter and spring the prevailing spirits of the community buoyed up the young people. It was during the summer of 1887 that the first hot winds came. They blighted everything. The kaffir corn, the grass, the dust-laden weeds by the wayside curled up under their fiery breath from the southwestern desert. Mrs. Burkholder stayed indoors. The dust spread itself over everything. It came into the house like a flood, pouring through the loose window frames and weatherboarding. Mrs. Burkholder, looking out of her window on these days, could see only a great dust dragon, writhing up and down the brown road and over the prairie for miles and miles. The scene seemed weirdly dry. She found herself longing, one day, for a fleck of water in the landscape. That longing grew upon her. She said nothing of it, but in her day dreams there was always a mental itching to put water into the lusterless picture framed by her kitchen window. It was a kind of soul thirst. In one of her letters she wrote:

"The hot winds have killed everything this year, but most of all I grieve for the little cottonwood saplings on the 'eighty' in front of the house. There is not a tree anywhere in sight, and as the government requires that we should plant trees on our place, as a partial payment for it, I was so in hopes that these would do well. They are burned up, now. You don't know how lonesome it seems without trees."

She did not tell the home folk that her piano and the books had gone to buy provisions for the winter. She did not tell the home folk that she had not bought a new dress since she left Illinois. She did not let her petty cares burden her letter. She wrote of generalities. "You do not know how I miss the hills. Tom and I rode twenty miles yesterday, to a place called the Taylor bottom. It is a deep sink-hole, perhaps fifty feet deep, containing about ten square acres. By getting down into this we have the effect of hills. You cannot know how good and snug, and tucked in and 'comfy' it seemed. It is so naked at the house with the knife-edge on the horizon, and only the sky over you. Tom and I have been busy. I haven't had time to read the story in the magazine you sent me. Tom can't get corduroys out here. You should see him in overalls."

Mrs. Burkholder helped her husband look after the cattle. The hired man went away in the early fall. This she did not write home, either. All through the winter days she heard the keen wind whistle around the house, and when she was alone a dread blanched her face. The great gray dome seemed to be holding her its prisoner. She felt chained under it. She shut her eyes and strove to get away from it in fancy, to think of green hills and woodland; but her eyes tore themselves open, and with a hypnotic terror she went to the window, where the prairie thrall bound her again in its chains.

The cemetery for the prairie town had been started during the spring before, and some one had planted therein a solitary cottonwood sapling. Its two dead, gaunt branches seemed to be beckoning her, and all day she thought she heard the winds shriek through the new iron fences around the graves and through the grass that grew wild about the dead. The scene haunted her. It was for this end that the gray dome held her, she thought, as she listened during the cold nights to the hard, dry snow as it beat against the board shanty wherein she lay awake.

In the spring the mover's caravan filed by the house, starting eastward before planting time. When the train of wagons had passed the year before, Mrs. Burkholder had been amused by the fantastic legends, which the wagon covers—white, clean, prosperous—had borne. "Kansas or bust," they used to read when headed westward. "Busted" was the laconic legend, written under the old motto on their first eastward trip. "Going back to wife's folks," had been a common jocose motto at first. Mrs. Burkholder and her husband had laughed over this the year before, but this year as she saw the long line file out of the west into the east, she missed the banners. She noticed, with a mental pang, that those who came out of the country this year seemed to be thankful to get out at all. There were times when she had to struggle to conceal her cowardice; for she wished to turn away from the fight, to flee from the gray dome, and from the beckoning of the dead cottonwood in the graveyard.

The spring slipped away and another sultry summer came on, and then a long, dry fall. Mrs. Burkholder and her husband worked together.

There were whole weeks when she neglected her toilet; she tried to brighten up in the evening, and dutifully went at the magazines that were regularly sent to her by the home folks.

But she seemed to need sleep, and the cares of the day weighed upon her. The interests of the world of culture grew small in her vision. The work before her seemed to demand all her thought; so that serial after serial slipped through the magazines unread, and new literary men and fads rose and fell, all unknown to her. The pile of magazines at the foot of the bed grew dustier every day.

The Burkholders got their share of the seed-grain sent to Fountain county by the Kansas legislature and, just after planting time in 1889, the land was gloriously green. But before July the promises had been mocked by the hiss of the hot wind in the dead grass. That fall one of their horses died.

Saturday after Saturday Burkholder went to the prairie town and brought home groceries and coal. It was a source of constant terror to him that some day his wife might ask him how he got these supplies. She hid it from herself as long as she could. All winter they would not admit to each other that they were living on "aid." On many a gray, blustering afternoon, when Burkholder was in the village getting provisions, a straggler on the road might see his wife coming around the house, with two buckets of water in her hands, the water splashing against her feet, which were encased in a pair of her husband's old shoes, the wind pushing her thin calico skirts against her stiff limbs and her frail body bent stiffly in the man's coat that she wore. Her arms and shoulders seemed to shiver and crouch with the cold, and her blue features were so drawn that her friendly smile at the wayfarer was only a grimace.

In the spring many men in Fountain county went East looking for work. They left their wives with God and the county commissioners. Burkholder dumbly went with them. In March, the covered wagon train began to file past the Burkholder house. By April it was a continuous line—shabby, tattered, rickety, dying. Here came a wagon covered with bed quilts, there another topped with oilcloth table covers; another followed, patched with everything. For two years the mover's caravan trailing across the plains had taken the shape of a huge dust-colored serpent in the woman's fancy; now it seemed to Mrs. Burkholder that the terrible creature was withering away, that this was its skeleton. The treeless landscape worried her more and more; the steel dome seemed set tighter over her, and she sat thirsting for water in the landscape.

After a month's communion with her fancies, Mrs. Burkholder nailed a black rag over the kitchen window. But the arms of the dead sapling in the cemetery gyrated wildly in her sick imagination. It was a long summer, and when it was done there was one more vacant house, one more among hundreds far out on the highlands. There is one more mound in the bleak country graveyard, where the wind, shrieking through the iron fences and the crackling, dead cottonwood branches, has never learned a slumber song to sob for a tired soul. But there are times when the wind seems to moan upon its sun-parched chords like the cry of some lone spirit groping its tangled way back to the lowlands, the green pastures, the still waters, and to the peace that passeth understanding.