

LECTURERS AND LYCEUMS.

The Former Not as Popular as they Were in the Past.

PHILLIPS AND OTHER PLATFORM STARS.

The Requisites to Success as a Lecturer at the Present Time—The Growth of the Lecture Bureau—The Local Lyceum and Its Lucrative Field.

A quarter of a century ago, when Wendell Phillips, Beecher, John B. Gough and men of that stamp were still in their prime, they could fill the largest halls, even with a circus in opposition, and they and their managers made money.

Educational and literary societies still give winter courses of lectures in cities like New York, Philadelphia and Boston, but it is the subject treated rather than the ability of the lecturer that draws.

John B. Gough was an actor rather than an orator. He was one of the most superficial of men intellectually, yet he could tell a story and act it, in a way that would have given him equal fame as a comedian.

General Grant was a very indifferent speaker, yet in the days of his adversity he could have drawn such audiences as never gathered to hear the greatest orator in America or any other land.

Up to 1872 lecturers had to make their own arrangements, and apart from earning much less than at present, they were at a great disadvantage.

From the same authority I learned that there are scores of local "lyceum bureaus" to be found in all our large cities, that the business for the whole country is worth several million dollars.

Before speaking more fully of Lecturers and Lyceums in the broader sense, it may be well to glance at the smaller agencies that are to be found in all our cities and which are ready on the shortest notice to supply "talent" for one night or for a regular course.

The committee, representing the community to be amused, or the organization to be benefited financially, calls on the manager of the lyceum or entertainment bureau in the nearest city, or communicates with him by correspondence, and agree with him upon the time, the "talent" to be supplied and the terms.

As a well-known manager assures me that he stands ready to pay Chas. M. Dwyer \$600 a night and expenses for one hundred nights, or about four months' work; but the chief of post-prandial orators is satisfied with his present income and the daily growth of his fame.

George W. Cable is a native of Louisiana, and the foremost literary man produced by the South since the war. He is one of the most popular lecturers and readers in the Northern states to-day, yet the people in the land of his birth deery his talents, and would not go to hear him talk if the admission were free; another case where prejudice blinds to the recognition of talent.

George Konnan, the Siberian traveler, is one of our most popular lecturers. He is not a strong man, but if his health permitted he could make \$200 a night for ten months in the year, and as it is he has saved enough to guard himself against the oppressive days of old age.

The four bureaus of national reputation manage between them something like 230 lecturers, and 45 musical people and readers. These give during the year over 5,000 entertainments, the prices for which, for talent alone, vary from \$100 to \$1,000 a night.

As these bureaus are managed on strictly business principles, the prices paid lecturers are gauged by their drawing powers rather than their actual abilities, or the amount of thought and culture given to their speeches.

The men who draw best are those who have made a reputation in other than the lecture field, and to see whom there is much curiosity. Horace Greely, while one of the most able men in the country, was a seriously bad speaker.

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and George W. Cable had appeared on the same platform, and Bill Nye and James Whitcomb Riley have made one of the most attractive teams that has been brought before the public for years.

Paul Blount (Max O'Ball) has made a great deal out of his satirical brochures, but much more out of his lectures, which, despite his French accent, or it may be because of it, have brought him in a great deal of money.

Among the women lecturers Anna Dickinson was one of the best. Susan B. Anthony, Miss Frances Willard, Mrs. Livermore and Mrs. Cady Stanton, although harping on one string, continue to do it to the tune of \$200 a night.

As a rule they are well housed, and do not go to new women entering the high walks of this most attractive and lucrative field, and when they do, it is to be hoped that their themes will be less hackneyed and didactic.

One of the most lucrative fields for the accomplished lecturer is the Young Men's Christian Associations. These are well organized, the members are well housed, they give intelligent audiences, and they pay well for good work, though unfortunately they do not permit a latitude of treatment that makes them familiar with the very ablest men.

Those who have won and are winning should encourage men and women with the proper gifts to study oratory. Great rewards await those who have a story to tell that will interest humanity, and the recitation of which will thrill the audience and impress them with the honesty and intense earnestness of the speaker.

Why should there be such a prejudice against optum joints, when New York justices run gin mills under sanction of the law? Optum pays its duty, and the fact that it is recognized, like whisky, as an article of commerce, implies that it is not consumed.

Like John B. Gough, Phillips was an exception to the rule as to the reputation of lecturers. His addresses on "Daniel O'Connell," "The Lost Arts" and "Universal Love" were delivered each as often as twenty times in the same place, and largely before the same audiences, but people never wearied of them, all of which goes to prove the high excellence of his art.

There are to-day in the North and South thousands of unmarried women between the ages of forty and fifty-five, whom Major Calhoun calls "Brevet Widows." He claims their husbands were among the 500,000 young unmarried men who were killed in battle or died of some disease during the war.

The following pretty story, translated from the Chinese gives the origin of the fan, which if not true, deserves to be: A famous prince counted as not the least of his treasures a beautiful daughter. In those days it was the custom for all Chinese ladies to wear masks in public.

New York and Brooklyn undertakers are about to shut down on Sunday burials; those contemplating a near demise will please govern themselves accordingly.

The one man in the senate who is greater than his party and greater than the senate, is John Sherman of Ohio—the way there is not one John Sherman, and it is doubtful if there ever will be, for men with dormant impulses and ever active brains are phenomenal.

It is said Queen Lil of Hawaii is coming over here to lecture, and, to make her presence more royally realistic, she is to wear a crown while speaking, "just as she does at home"—except when the royal brain is wooing repose and wears a night cap.

BRITAIN'S PRIMROSE PREMIER

Lord Roseberry Who Has Succeeded the Grand Old Man.

HE'S A SHREWD AND BRAINY SCOTCHMAN.

His Views on Imperial Federation and Kindred Topics—How He Regards the Home Rule Question—His Reservations as to the Adoption of the Federal Plan—His Private Life.

LONDON, April 1.—Now that the fever of uncertainty regarding the retirement of Gladstone is ended, and the young Primrose peer, Lord Roseberry, is installed as his successor, Englishmen are beginning to breathe easier.

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selected a House to which only peers, or men of certain standing, should be eligible, and that the people of these several countries should also select a Lower House, to which anybody might choose to be eligible—these two august bodies to assemble in parliament house as a federal council for the whole empire.

Regarding the peerage, too, the new premier holds views that shock not a few of the bluest-blooded families in the "eight little island" kingdom. Once, he even went so far as to suggest that it might be a good plan to leave the election of peers to the house of commons. He is stoutly opposed to the hereditary peerage system, and believes that such honors ought to come only as the recognition of most distinguished services to the nation, if at all.

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EDISON'S LATEST INVENTION.

The Kinetoscope and the Marvels it Accomplishes.

INTERESTING CHAT WITH THE WIZARD.

He Calls His Latest Work a Toy But Grows Enthusiastic Over What He Hopes to do With it in the Future—Some of Its Uses Forecast by the Wizard.

"The kinetoscope does for the eye what the phonograph does for the ear." That is a phrase which has often been on the lips of Thomas A. Edison during the past several weeks, and it conveys an idea which has been very much in his mind for several years.

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light of the sun. We then walked to the room on the second floor of the laboratory in which Mr. Edison was sitting.

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One of the best remedies for a sore throat is four teaspoonfuls of elder vinegar, four of water, one of salt and a small pinch of popper. Gargle every hour.



JOHN B. GOUGH.



GEORGE WILLIAM CURTIS.



PRINCESS MAUD OF WALES.



THOMAS A. EDISON.



SANDOW.



LORD ROSEBERRY.



EDISON'S BLACK MARIA.