

became domesticated, but never really civilized. He recognized no authority, and he selected the warmest and driest places in the Man's house as his own.

Which was as it should be, for in the beginning it was all the Cat's idea.

VOCATIONAL JOURNALISM

BY FREDERICK L. ALLEN

THIS is an era of renaissance in chiropody.

You may be skeptical, but only because you don't read widely enough in what are technically known as class and trade publications. The renaissance is a fact: I have it on the authority of one of the chiropodists' own periodicals.

You can picture my wonder when, like stout Cortez, I first gazed upon my discovery. Books and articles on current history had spoken of the twentieth century in varied terms, but this was the first time I had ever been aware of the onward and upward tendency in matters chiropodal. Surely, I thought, Mr. Wells should have told me of this; or had I missed something as, breathing heavily and with teeth clenched, I struggled through the final chapters of the *Outline of History* and fell exhausted across the index? Suddenly I faced the future more cheerfully. What if my friends continued to point to the ominous condition of Europe and talk dolefully about civilization racing to its doom? Now I had my answer. "Ah, yes," I could say, lifting an optimistic forefinger, "but what of chiropody?" And I resolved that thereafter I would make a more consistent practice of imbibing the knowledge which is to be found in trade journals.

Since that time I have scanned many, ranging all the way from the *International Sheriff* to the *Soft Drink Journal*, and my horizon has been notably broadened in many directions.

It takes a little time, of course, to adjust yourself to the special point of view of some of these trade publications. Assume for the moment that you do not

happen to be an undertaker. On the cover of *Sunnyside* (a magazine for embalmers) an advertisement displays a persuasive slogan, "See yourself owning this big beautiful car." Illusions of ownership are pleasant; but begin to picture yourself rolling in luxury to the 8.13 train, when you glance at the accompanying picture and behold an unmistakable hearse. The shock is slight, perhaps, but distinct. And there may be a similar difficulty for the mere layman in accommodating himself to the point of view of the *Phrenological Age*, which declares itself to be devoted to "Human Nature, Health, Character Analysis, Morals, Education, Vocations, Right Wedlock, and the Improvement of the Race." (I like a good broad purpose like that: it gives the editor elbow-room.)

In a recent issue of this particular magazine I find a series of line cuts representing human heads, with instructions as to how the business man should approach men with the temperaments represented by these heads. No. 1 is a bearded gentleman, resembling somewhat the present Secretary of State; next to him is No. 2, a boyish fellow with a stupid expression and a bow tie. No. 1, says the text, "would not be much interested in plows, coal picks, or railroad shovels, but would listen to something in art, literature, or finance. And he likes to do things on a big scale. He would like to be the proprietor, or principal, or at least a professor, of a large business college. No. 2 would delight in baseball, pitching quoits, or a railway locomotive, but wants very little 'school education' in his. If the corners of the mouth of your prospective patron turn up, and the upper corners of his forehead are full, crack him a joke and introduce your wares. If his forehead is high in the crown and dark hair on it, you will have an impression that it is better to suggest and ask opinion rather than to try to advise or dictate."

The vistas opened up by such a passage are extensive. One pictures a salesman trained in the phrenological method

entering the State Department, and after one glance at the Secretary, laying aside in some confusion the coal picks and railroad shovels which he had expected to sell, and offering instead a set of Shakespeare and a professorship in a business college. I myself become uneasy at the thought of the important people whom I have met whose mouths doubtless turned up at the corners and yet in whose presence, dolt that I was, I cracked no jokes. But that, of course, is because my acquaintance with phrenological journals is so recent.

An ever-varying picture of modern life may be derived from the pages of the trade papers. The chiropodists, as already indicated, give us a message of hope. But there are clouds upon our twentieth-century horizon. The *National Hairdresser* calls attention to "a growing injustice which is menacing the well-being and prosperity of the hair-dressing profession." This, it seems, "is the tendency of barbers to encroach on the ladies' hairdressers' business." In Kansas this nefarious movement has actually gone so far that ladies' hairdressers may, it is said, be obliged by law to secure barbers' licenses in order to engage in hair-bobbing. A distressing state, Kansas. From such dismal reports we turn instinctively to the *Ice Cream Journal* for refreshment, only to learn from an advertisement therein that "Ice cream has not attained its rightful place as a food product. Potatoes, bread, and meats have reached the saturation point. Has ice cream? *It has not!*" Our relief is profound when we discover that even in a world not yet safe for the hairdresser and not yet saturated with ice cream, there are still those who can enjoy life without stint. On July 27th, says the *Sunnyside*, the Syracuse Undertakers' Association held their annual outing, and "the married men's ball team defeated one made up of single men. Fred Gorham was umpire and Coroner Jones watched the bases." Let the heavens fall; our fun-loving coroners will still have their sport.

Trade journals are full of accounts of trade conventions; but do not be deceived into thinking that this makes for monotony. The variety of conventions and of topics discussed thereat is sufficient to please the most jaded taste. The National Hairdressers' Association, in annual conclave, is regaled with papers covering all the ground from "Permanent waving, past, present, and future," to such more inspirational topics as "Life is what we make it" (I am sorry to have missed that one). The assembled chiropodists engage in what is described as a very interesting extempore debate on the subject, "Are bunions hereditary?" The American Poultry Association, after a hot argument over the question whether or not "the legs of Anconas be yellow only," finally reaches a masterly compromise by voting to have the "description of legs 'yellow or yellow mottled with black'"; proceeding thereupon to a consideration of Rhode Island Whites, for whose admission, we are told in the *Poultry Gazette*, "Mrs. Ponsonby spoke very feelingly." We find it a little difficult to make out exactly what it was that the Rhode Island Whites were to be admitted to, but apparently it was not the convention itself, or we should question whether Mrs. Ponsonby's show of feeling was not ill-directed.

The leisure hours of convention-goers, too, are sometimes very prettily spent. The program of the convention of the Pennsylvania Funeral Directors' Association, to be held at Erie, contains the item, "Social hour, when the Erie morticians will tell what they are doing." That sounds a merry note all of its own.

As anybody who has ever attended a convention is aware, the big event of the day is the discussion following the report of the committee on revising the constitution. Revising the constitution is a major sport at conventions. When the suggestion is made that Article 6 of the constitution of the International Baby Chick Association shall be changed to Article 7, and that the word "active"

shall be inserted in line two of section one, following the word "nine," one knows that the Baby Chick men are approaching a crisis. Not that poultry raisers are a particularly combative group; if you want to see human passions at white heat, watch an association of university alumni in the throes of changing its constitution. Get two hardened convention-goers into an argument over the language of the preamble to the by-laws, and it is an even thing whether the police reserves won't have to be called out.

Perhaps you think that the accounts of these arguments, as they appear in the trade journals, might not be enlivening to read. But don't let that turn you away from the trade-periodical field. These accounts have a value of their own; they are highly suitable for late evening reading. Perhaps you are a poor sleeper. It doesn't matter. Before you turn out the light and compose yourself for rest, pick up any trade journal and turn to the account of the last convention:

"Delegate Brackett then submitted as an amendment to the amendment that the word 'active' be placed after the words 'provided, however, no' in the fourth line. On roll call the amendment to the amendment was carried. The amendment as amended was then carried."

Sheep jumping over a fence simply aren't in it. Read these constitutional adventures for just about five minutes, and you will find yourself ready to sink into a deep and dreamless sleep.

THE WORLD AND THE POET

ANONYMOUS

FRANÇOIS VILLON, railing at the world, after the manner of his tribe, complained that

They grind you to the dust with poverty,
Then build you statues when you come to die.

VOL. CXLVII.—No. 880.—71

In his case there is reason to think that the anomaly went farther, and that the monument erected in his honor was a gallows. However, as a statement of the general attitude of the world toward its poets, his lines are approximately accurate. And when the world has not either starved or hanged its poets, it has for the most part laughed at or despised them. Of course, it has sometimes honored them during their lifetime, brought them both wealth and laurels. A good deal depends on where a poet is born, what nation he belongs to. In spite of Villon's complaint, France and Italy are good countries for a poet to be born in. Scandinavia also. I remember once being seated in a café in Christiania, when there entered a white-whiskered, irascible-looking old gentleman, clothed in black broadcloth, shiny silk hat, and white tie, and carrying an umbrella. He had hardly crossed the threshold when the whole café was on its feet, and, grimly acknowledging the deference thus paid him, the hero made his way stiffly to a table reserved for him in perpetuity. "That," said my host, "is our great poet Henrik Ibsen!" and I could not help reflecting how differently England treated her poets, trying to imagine any such happening were Mr. Swinburne suddenly to turn out of Regent Street into the Café Royal. No, England and America reserve such honors for their prizefighters. Even in Greece and Rome the treatment of poets was by no means uniform. One day they would be hailed as gods, and another buffeted as fools. Indeed, from Aristophanes to Gilbert and Sullivan, the poet has been the butt and laughing-stock of society. Plato, as we know, though essentially a poet himself, would have none of them in his Republic. His exclusion of them emphasized a certain fear of their influence which has also accompanied that social contempt. However society may value poetry—and, in spite of itself, it has always valued it highly—it has always had an uneasy feeling about the men who make it.