

CANVAS AND CULTURE

WHEN CHAUTAUQUA COMES TO TOWN

BY EDNA ERLE WILSON

EVERY year some time during the summer months a train unloads a big roll of canvas and a group of strangers in the busy town of Harrodsburg, Kentucky. The next day the horses that pull the delivery wagons are arrayed in chorus-girl skirts placarded with startling signs. Automobiles gliding up and down Main Street trail pennants in the sunshine like gaudy fluttering butterflies. The Zinzendorf, the city's biggest hotel, is crowded from garret to cellar with visitors wearing their holiday clothes and an expectant expression. And overnight a brown tent rises on a vacant lot like a gigantic rounded caramel. The annual Chautauqua has come to town.

For months the whole population has been looking forward to music, lectures, and the neighborliness that it offers. Twice daily in the coming week the big tent will be filled to bench-creaking capacity with an audience eager to be amused, informed, and roused out of the apathy of a humdrum workaday world. For this is what Chautauqua does for the ten thousand towns that mark its ever-widening course over the country's map. This tent-and-talent small-town combination is as successful an answer to the need for amusement as the famed Great White Way.

In fact, the Chautauqua of Harrodsburg supplies a very much more convincing answer to the question of what the average citizen likes in the way of amusement than Broadway's most successful musical comedy. To the pessimist who gloomily proclaims that the American public spends its leisure time

in breaking the Eighteenth Amendment, listening to the caterwaulings of the jazzists, and pursuing a giddy whirl of pleasures the lengthening trail of the Chautauqua brings a message of cheer.

Mr. George M. Cohan knows what a New York audience likes in its hours off. So does the manager of Steeplechase Park. But the crowds that fill the theaters around Forty-second Street or that flock to Coney Island on a sultry July Sunday are not typical American audiences. And Mr. Moreland Brown, of the White and Myers Chautauquas, with circuits visiting four hundred towns in fourteen States, has a clearer insight into the amusement tastes of the American citizen as he exists in his native habitat than any Broadway manager alive.

When Chautauqua comes to town, it means entertainment for the whole family and the entire community. The audiences run the scale from youth to old age, from the poor to the wealthy, from the cultivated to those of scanty schooling. There are men bearing the mark of the farm, and beside them women holding babies in their arms. There are visitors from the nearest city, with automobiles waiting outside.

To meet the need of just this type of audience, the plain people whom Abraham Lincoln loved, the Chautauqua, a word and idea of purely American origin, was born. It grew up in the West, away from the bustle and roar of the city, and is just as typical of our country as apple pie or baseball, and, although the enterprise has expanded from a small beginning to flourishing

proportions, it has never departed from the ideal of its conception. Chautauqua means music and laughter, relaxation and stimulation. It is fun for the whole community, but the fun is sketched in against a cultural background.

That is the type of amusement that the real American audience demands, and that is why Chautauqua has become a household word and a National institution. That is why a small town of five hundred inhabitants will gather together as many as five thousand people for the event. And that is why the town of Picture Rocks, Pennsylvania, with a population of seven hundred, spends two thousand dollars for Chautauqua. When it comes to town, the manufacturing plants close for the week, paying their employees full wages. It is estimated that ninety per cent of the people of this community hold season tickets.

In providing the best type of entertainment Chautauqua has discouraged lower forms of amusement. Discussing this holiday week as one of the most vigorous forces for the advancement of recreational ideals, Mr. Keith Vawter, of the Redpath Bureau in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, said: "The old-time medicine show is gone and the worst of the street carnivals are nearly gone, not because of any tirade or campaign against them, but because the Chautauqua has led the people away from such coarse horse-play."

Not only has the Chautauqua led the people away from the old-time rough-and-tumble carnival, but it has led them to an appreciation of the finest things in the great world of art, science, politics, and letters. For two dollars invested in a ticket Harrodsburg citizens may hear an eminent orator or statesman, a clever impersonator, or a musician of real artistic merit. The programmes under the brown tents are a quaint mixture of canvas and culture.

Next to the phonograph the Chautauqua is the greatest distributor of music in the land. The numbers that win applause from the audiences at these gatherings are not of the vulgar, insinuating type labeled as "popular." The people who have responded to the harmony of Rossini's "William Tell," Tchaikowsky's "Sleeping Beauty Waltz," or the aria from Puccini's "Butterfly" no longer accept the cheap music styles set them by theaters and cabarets. They have acquired a standard of their own and a measure of comparison.

One of the strongest points in the junior programme of the White and Myers Chautauquas, according to its president, Mr. J. Shannon White, is the teaching of an appreciation of music.

"We try to lay the foundation of real musical appreciation in the minds of our



STORY-TELLING HOUR DRAWS YOUTHFUL CHAUTAUQUANS INTO A CIRCLE OF CHARMED LISTENERS



Community Service

A COMMUNITY SING AT TWILIGHT IS AN IMPORTANT AND IMPRESSIVE ITEM UPON MANY CHAUTAUQUA PROGRAMMES

young patrons," he said. "Every morning they gather together and listen to various selections, which they are asked to explain in their own words. Folk songs are often given. Once the children have perceived the quality of the music of the various nationalities, the next step is to translate this sense of rhythm into the graceful measures of folk dances."

Young America likes this part of the programme, and carries home its new accomplishment for the benefit of the older generation. The Chautauqua audience is composed of stay-at-home people, and the entertainment that they enjoy during the gay week when the brown tent is planted in town furnishes them with food for thought and conversation and recreation during the other fifty-one weeks of the year. That music exists in most of these homes was revealed by a survey recently made by the University of Wisconsin, showing that it is a common recreation in fifty-one per cent of country homes and forty-three per cent of village homes. So the Chautauqua by familiarizing its patrons with the non-jazz variety is doing much to lift the standard of this form of entertainment in American households.

But, while music is a very necessary and vital part of a Chautauqua programme, the lecturer has always been the real meat. Not only will the audience stand for a lecture, figuratively speaking, but also literally—two hours in the rain! The forerunner of the present-day headliners was no less a per-

son than Ralph Waldo Emerson, who in 1868 mounted to the lecture platform and exchanged his fame for the currency of the realm. Since that time prominent statesmen, noted men of affairs, ministers, authors, and university presidents have furnished constructive entertainment at Chautauquas, being classified as "talent" along with the Swiss bell-ringers and the opera singers. That they share places on the programme alongside professional entertainers is a demonstration of the real democracy of the occasion. President Warren G. Harding is Honorary President of the International Lyceum and Chautauqua Association. He was a former lecturer and was secretary of the Marion, Ohio, Chautauqua for many years. William Jennings Bryan has long been a scintillating star in the Chautauqua sky. Ex-President William Howard Taft, ex-Vice-President Thomas R. Marshall, Bishop Mitchell, and Frank Mulholland are also well-known names.

Some of the more popular lecturers upon Chautauqua circuits give the same talk as often as five thousand times, a run which a Broadway manager might envy. Talks on civic beauty or sanitation often bring these matters to local attention for the first time. The community expert wakes up many sleepy towns. Long after the Chautauqua tent has been taken down the newly awakened community spirit remains. All up and down Main Street there is an added warmth in the greetings exchanged between the passers-by in the chatter

across the counter in the stores and shops; and in the stimulated civic pride that expresses itself in a cleaner thoroughfare than of old or a new playground for its future citizens.

Perhaps this last innovation may be traced directly to the success of the junior programme, for the children of the community are not forgotten in this week of entertainment. A miniature tent serves to dramatize to the childish imagination that they are really having a Chautauqua of their own. Boy Scouts are on hand to help put it up and distribute the printed programmes. Folk games, special parties, play days, storytelling hours, and walks in the woods for nature study bring magic to the hours. Every evening the youthful Chautauquans give a play stunt in front of the big tent, with interested fathers and mothers for spectators. And on the last night there is either a colorful pageant or a juvenile interpretation of "A Midsummer-Night's Dream" as a grand finale.

That this gala week of entertainment exerts a marked and beneficial effect upon the children of a community, not only in their recreation but in their studies as well, was demonstrated by an incident which occurred in a small town below the Mason and Dixon Line which failed to raise its Chautauqua collection along with its cotton crop. When it seemed probable that Chautauqua wouldn't come to town as a result, a teacher in the public schools got the people together and told them in vigor-

ous phrases that Chautauqua meant as much to her pupils as a year in school.

"It has made geography a living thing," she said, "put flesh and blood on the dry bones of literature, instilled the breath of life into the waning spirit of good English, and originated a loyalty hitherto unknown."

The Chautauqua is one of the most potent single forces now at work for the advancement of National thought, National entertainment, and National ideals. The statistics compiled by Mr. C. F. Horner, of the Redpath-Horner Bureau in Kansas City, at the request of the International Lyceum and Chautauqua Association, tell a striking story. In 1921 almost ten thousand towns were visited by Chautauquas, with an attendance of over thirty-five million. The ninety-five programmes provided one hundred thousand hours of entertainment and music to a multitude which is

in reality about one-third of the population of the United States.

At its best, Chautauqua is a community, and not a commercial undertaking. The Ellison-White Lyceum and Chautauqua Bureau of Portland, Oregon, one of the largest single organizations of its kind in the United States, has placed its business upon a non-profit basis, so that the towns that support it share in the profits.

When this step was taken, Mr. Roy E. Ellison expressed himself as feeling that the Chautauqua was too big an institution to be operated for private profit.

"It has long been my dream to place it on a bigger, broader basis—one purely of service," he said. "I believe our organization has effected this. Now the Lyceum and the Chautauqua can take its place with the school, the college, and the church—an institution of the common people."

Viscount James Bryce, former Ambassador of Great Britain to the United States and author of "The American Commonwealth," once said, "I do not think any country in the world but America could produce such gatherings as Chautauquas."

Probably not. And yet other countries are rapidly falling into line and eagerly adopting this made-in-America product. It is being exported all over the globe. Our next-door neighbor Canada has taken them to her heart. Alaska is as numerically dotted with them as the trail of the Yukon was with gold-diggers' camps in '98. New Zealand patronizes them. England has established a circuit. And that progressive bit of the Orient, Japan, is carrying on a lively flirtation with the idea.

No enterprise ever reaches such gigantic proportions unless it fills an urgent human need.

CLOSING IN ON COMMERCIAL BRIBERY

BY WILLIAM R. SCOTT

BUSINESS ethics is on the up-grade in America despite the innumerable "investigations," as shown by the passage on June 1 by the House of Representatives of the Volstead bill against commercial bribery, by far the most drastic anti-bribery bill ever passed by any legislative assembly in the world.

If the Senate acts favorably upon the bill and it receives Executive approval, the use of money, gifts, and other considerations to influence the buying trade will be made punishable by a fine of \$3,000, or by two years in prison, or both, if the bribe is offered or accepted in inter-State commerce. Salesmanship will thereafter have to depend upon straight argument under keen competition, unless subterranean methods of circumventing the law should be devised.

The passage of the bill by the House represents the fruits of a campaign of many years, but intensively prosecuted only within the last four or five years. During the war the attention of the Federal Trade Commission was directed to the practice of bribery in business, and upon inquiry the practice was found to be distressingly widespread. Purchasing agents, or buyers, in many industries considered it a normal part of their incomes to receive secret commissions of five per cent or more upon all orders they placed, or to accept expensive gifts of jewelry, furniture, automobiles, or other things from salesmen eager to dispose of merchandise.

One concern was found by the Commission to have given \$1,400,000 in two years in what was classified by the Commission as bribes to buyers of its commodities. Foremen in paint and varnish shops were found whose incomes from secret commissions on paints and var-

nishes they recommended to their employers were doubled or trebled. In the shipping industry virtually every captain or other officer of the vessel who did the buying expected five per cent of the amount of the order to be paid to himself. That is to say, bribery was almost as commonplace in several industries as is tipping in hotels, and it was found to some extent in all industries investigated.

The Commission also found that the industries most honeycombed with the practice were most anxious to get it outlawed. Thus the paint and varnish industry was so much in earnest that it established an Unfair Competition Bureau in Washington, the business of which was to prevent bribery within the industry. Later on the shipping industry or the supply houses along the Gulf and South Atlantic seaboard opened a similar bureau. Former attorneys or investigators of the Federal Trade Commission were placed in charge.

By this time the movement against bribery was gaining momentum, which resulted in several bills being introduced in both houses of Congress, but they were crowded aside. By the spring of 1922, however, nearly forty trade associations had lined up against the practice, including the National Association of Purchasing Agents and the American Society of Sales Executives (or the buyer and seller), and when the bill finally reached the floor of the House the opposition had been so completely met that no vote was recorded against the proposed legislation.

Exemplifying the new ethical outlook in business is the organization early this year of the Commercial Standards Council, with headquarters at 19 Park Place, New York City. Among the or-

ganizations represented in this Council are the Associated Advertising Clubs of the World, the two associations of buyers and salesmen already mentioned, the paint and varnish Unfair Competition Bureau, the American Ship Service Corporation, the National Association of Credit Men, and other associations of equal weight. The object of the Council is "to develop the highest commercial standards and to eliminate harmful business practices." Its full support was given to the Anti-Bribery Bill.

One feature of the bill as passed by the House is believed by its proponents to insure the end of bribery, namely, a provision that the first party to a bribe who confesses may obtain immunity. As no grafter could be sure that the other party would "stand hitched," it is thought that the risk will automatically stop the practice. Other sections of the bill make the use of fraudulent documents to conceal a bribe illegal; deny the right to plead custom in defense of bribery; require a party to a bribe to testify about the transaction even if such testimony incriminates the witness, but the witness so testifying shall not be prosecuted on account of any transaction about which he may testify; declare that the finding of any section of the act is unconstitutional shall not invalidate the remainder of the act; prescribe the practice as an unfair method of competition, and so within the power of the Federal Trade Commission, as well as of the Department of Justice, to prosecute; and that nothing in the act shall repeal existing laws against corrupt practices.

Twenty-one of the States have specific statutes against bribery of one kind or another, while England, Germany, Sweden, Canada, Australia, New Zealand,