

Humors of Press Agenting

Rise of New Craft Explains Why Many Curious Bits of "News" Slip into the Daily Newspaper

Every newspaper, like Caesar's Gaul, is divided into three parts—advertising which appears frankly as advertising, advertising which appears in the guise of news, and the rest. The proportions vary, but the classification holds true.

Every subscriber to a daily paper would readily subscribe to the proposition that he could distinguish between news and advertising at a glance. "If I can't do that," he would say, "I deserve to be bamboozled." Poor innocent mortal! His is the pride that goeth before a fall down. Some day he will come to know that the ear-marks of an "ad" are past finding out, unless you are in the game yourself. Of course the common garden variety of advertisements are fenced off to their own pages or corners, and come up to the reader directly, slap him vigorously on the back and yell in his ear, "Buy Brown's Boots."

New Degree—"P.A."

But things are not what they seem, and it is this "unseemly" sort of ad rather than the plain hit-away kind which is deceiving the very elect nowadays. Here beginneth the work of the press agent. "Work," did we say? Beg pardon, we meant "profession." Indeed, the degree which they assume marks their high calling as one of the cultured professions. "P.A.," which to the great unwashed, uninitiated, vulgar multitude stands simply for "press agent," has far nobler meaning among the fraternity itself—"Publicity Artist," if you please. To define in a word the be-all and the end-all of one of these artists, it is to get into the news columns of the daily press as extensively and as frequently as possible whatever or whoever he is employed to boost.

The amount of supposed news which is smuggled into some of the metropolitan newspapers would stagger the outside public, were they let into the secret. Clip out all the newy little puffs of this character, and if you have chosen a good business day for the press agenting clan, the shabby remnants of your newspaper will contain as many loop-holes as a horse-net.

A Versatile Profession

The suavity of this enterprising gentry—or should we say "press agency?"—is surpassed only by their versatility. They guarantee to decoy the chance reader—for a consideration which is never left to chance—into browsing leisurely through some interesting news story, perhaps alleged to have been telegraphed from the distant places of the earth, or an interview with a noted figure, but which in any case originated under the hat of the press agent. These are the real cosmopolites. They know no country, creed, class or color.

Following a respected apostle's example, many moral reformers have aimed to become all things to all men. Not so our press agent. He has a trick worth two of that, from the material standpoint, namely, to be one and the same to all men, the said sameness consisting in furnishing so much publicity at so much per.

What won't he turn his hand to? Hair renovators and coffee percolators, insomnia pills and alarm clocks, charming debutantes and emaciated inventors, soap that will float and new companies that won't, tombstones and baby carriages, bathing beaches and complexion bleaches, mushrooms and pool-rooms, gas motors and mine promoters (sometimes these are not the same thing), corn extractors and tooth dittos (also different), Browning clubs, funerals, christenings, revival meetings, divorces, summer hotels, diamond rings, dancing masters, wigs, chorus girls, silk hose, garden rakes, automobiles, pen points, fall fairs, seances, song hits, shredded straw and granulated chips, tom-tom bullets, bon bons, high-heeled shoes and low-souled corporations—all is grist for the P. A.'s mill.

Some Wondrous Transformations

Truth, while desirable enough, is not essential. But making a living is. Can one paint the lily? The press agent can. Does he not with rare devotion and commendable consistency make every debutante (every one, that is, on his books) "popular and winsome"? Are not all "his" brides "blushing and beautiful"? And who can tax him with ever failing

to describe the hostess as "charming and versatile?"

Transformations still more notable are wrought on behalf of his male clientele. Any one-horse shopkeeper blossoms out as "the well-known merchant." An anemic young doctor, who would faint in sheer surprise should he get two patients in one month, comes out of the press agent's hopper as "the distinguished medical authority, Dr. Blank." The politician most frequently avails himself of the arts of this fraternity, and in turn is rewarded by having his tuppenny stump speeches transfigured into "a series of splendid orations accorded to the people's popular candidate." The newly rich family call to their aid one of these still-striving, quill-driving minions and, presto! the morning sun that rose on plain "old skin-flint Duggens, who made his money in real estate," sets on "Mr. D., one of our most prominent and highly respected citizens," while his buxom partner automatically becomes a full-fledged "society queen." There is often a negative side to the valuable services performed by the family press agent. He has harder work occasionally in keeping something out of the paper that would be harmful to the good name of his clients than he has in getting puffs inserted. Cases are on record where the press agenting consisted of equal parts of playing up the wife's pink teas, and hushing up the hubby's D.T.'s.

All these various lines of endeavor makes the life of the publicity commissioner a busy one. Their art is highly remunerative—the only particular, they say, in which it differs from the "other" fine arts. The more flourishing of the tribe are able to conduct themselves

with all the grace of a Spanish cavalier, tricked out in all the finery of a French Duke, and displaying all the easy pro-digality of a Pittsburg millionaire.

All of which, and a great deal more, goes to show that even if you "saw something in the paper" it need not be as absolutely true as the gospel, for in this world of change—small change for most of us, but big change for the press agent—"you never can tell." —A.B.H.

THE GUIDE IN SOUTH AFRICA

The following is clipped from the editorial columns of the Rand Daily Mail, the leading daily newspaper of Johannesburg:

"In the discussion on the tariff problem in South Africa, it is often assumed that the farmers are on the side of the protectionists. To some extent this is so at the moment. They see that large quantities of foodstuffs, which can be produced within the country, are being imported, and they naturally think that the taxing of these imports will help the South African grower. But there is another side to the question, and it will be found admirably stated in this issue in an extract from The Grain Growers' Guide, an influential farming journal voicing the opinions of the wheat farmers of Western Canada. One of the most noteworthy features of Canadian politics in recent years has been the revolt of the farmers against high protection. The agriculturists of the West are organizing against the manufacturers of the East. It is declared that a high tariff wall does an immense amount of injury to farming and mining, both industries in which world prices are the governing factor when production is on a large scale. Admittedly at the present time the conditions in Canada and South Africa, as far as farming goes, are very different. But as production in this country increases, the conditions will approach nearer to those obtaining in Canada. Our maize and wool today have to

KENDALL'S SPAVIN CURE

"ALWAYS SAFE AND SURE"

Icelandic River, Man., Sept. 26th 1902
DR. R. J. KENDALL CO.

Dear Sirs—Will you please mail to my address a copy of your "Treatise on the Horse"? I have been using Kendall's Spavin Cure and always found it safe and sure. Marino Striem.

That tells the whole story, and it is the experience that hundreds of thousands have had in the past 40 years, and it's the experience you will have—"It is the only sure remedy."

For Spavin, Ringbone, Curb, Splint, Swelling and All Lameness

Sold by Druggists—\$1.00 a Bottle, 6 bottles for \$5.00. Keep it on hand always. Be ready for the emergency. Kendall's stops the pain, starts the circulation, penetrates and removes the cause of the disorders. Ask for a free copy of "A Treatise on the Horse." If not at dealers, write to—

DR. R. J. KENDALL CO., Enochburg Falls, Vt.

be sold in the markets of the world, and the more the cost of production is increased, the more difficult will the work of the farmers become. We do not think that the farmers of South Africa have paid sufficient attention to the free trade side of the case. They fancy they see an immediate advantage, and they do not look very far ahead. It would be well for them to apply the reasoning of the farmers of Western Canada to the conditions which obtain in South Africa before hastily plumping for high protection."



"IDEAL" Fence will hold a Buffalo!

Any attempt to get the better of "IDEAL" Fence will only make him look foolish. "IDEAL" Fence was chosen by the Government out of fourteen makes, to fence in their herd of wild buffaloes at Wainwright. Naturally, buffaloes don't take kindly to fence of any kind, and "IDEAL" Fence was tested pretty roughly the first few weeks at Wainwright. Now, the buffaloes know better.

"IDEAL" Fence and its never-give lock are made of all large gauge No. 9 hard steel wire, heavily galvanized Rust-proof, won't sag, won't weaken, won't get unsightly.

GET A HANDSOME PICTURE FREE

Send us the names of five men who would be interested in GOOD fencing, and we will mail you a beautiful picture in colors, of the herd of buffaloes in the Government preserve at Wainwright. This picture is an excellent production and worthy of a place in the finest home.

SEND IN FIVE NAMES AND GET YOUR PICTURE BY RETURN MAIL.

IDEAL FENCE CO., LIMITED, WINNIPEG