

**RALPH DUNBAR'S BELL RINGERS**

It is doubtful if any musical feature has ever been presented to the American public which has won greater favor or obtained a wider following than that of musical bell-ringing.

The art was brought to America first in the forties, by the late P. T. Barnum. While touring England, he heard a group of a dozen church bell-ringers practicing upon hand bells and he conceived the idea of using a larger peal of bells and playing more elaborate music. These bells were made in England, as the world's best bells always have been, but in conformity with his unflinching originality as an advertiser he dressed the players, both men and women, in the costumes of Swiss peasants and called the company "The Swiss Bell Ringers." For many years this company toured the United States in wagons before railroads were at all general. The act at that time was so successful that our grandfathers recall most vividly the visit of "The Swiss Bell Ringers" to their native towns.

It seems that thereafter the art fell into disuse, and it was not really perfected or revived in any worthy way until 1898, when Ralph Dunbar and his brother founded the famous Dunbar Bell Ringers, at St. Joseph, Mo. These brothers went to Europe, and, seeing the really artistic possibilities, they went to England and had made, under their personal supervision, a peal of 200 bells, which are undoubtedly the most complete and most perfect set of bells which were ever cast. These bells were made under their own personal supervision by the same bell-founders that cast the great bells of Westminster Abbey and St. Paul's Cathedral, in London, as well as practically all of the well-known church bells of the world. The peal embraces more than five octaves chromatic, and through the middle register there are as many as six bells of the same note. The vagus of the Dunbar Bell Ringers is the most notable of any similar company which has appeared on the American concert platform. They gave more than 2500 concerts up to 1912, when both Harry and Ralph Dunbar resigned their places in the quartet to others. The company, up to then, had traveled 490,000 miles in America and Europe. The Dunbar brothers have collected hundreds of pages of newspaper material published regarding their tours, but the patrons of this Chautauqua system are sufficiently familiar with this widely known concert company to recall the marvelous musical effects which this quartet of players obtains from this splendid peal of bells.

It may be interesting to know that the largest of these bells weighs twenty-five pounds and measures twenty inches in diameter. The size of those preceding appears in the scale, diminishing until the tiny bells of the upper registers are reached. In selecting the repertoire due attention is paid to the selection of music which is really appropriate for bells. There is none of us but what has thought of the important place which bells play in our mental activities due to their association with so many epoch-marking events in our lives. Perhaps no contributor to our literature has so vividly brought out this fanciful use of bells as has Edgar Allan Poe in his poem entitled "The Bells."

The feature which characterizes the programs of the Dunbar Quartet is the absolute blending of their programs into the complete whole. There is a consistency in these programs which have distinguished them among all Chautauqua attractions of the last double decade. No feature will be remembered longer than the beautiful chimes and harmonies which are introduced in their sacred selections.

**EXCEPTIONAL MUSICAL PROGRAM COMING**

There is no class of music more beautiful, more helpful, more inspiring, more uplifting, and contributed to more beautifully by the world's greatest music masters than that which is composed to be sung during services of divine worship.

Considering that the opportunity to hear these wonderful compositions rendered by a body of trained singers is far too rare in most communities, the Dunbar Cathedral Choir is presented at the Chautauqua, not only as a company of artists to entertain, but as a suggestion of a choir ideal; such an organization as might appropriately adorn any sacred portal. In presenting these artists it is hoped that wherever they appear, they may inspire a desire for more beautiful music in the worship of God.

The repertoire of the Philharmonic Choir includes a number of the short, modern oratorios by such composers as Buck, Stainer and Schaefer, one of which is rendered at each performance, this being the first company in the history of the Chautauqua to offer such works in their entirety. The programs also include a number of old hymns, the interpretation of which is a special feature. As a fitting contrast to the sacred music, and by way of furnishing a striking climax and finish, the company is heard in a number of secular solos, duets, quartets and choruses of a very high order, finally closing with a grand finale, "Cavalleria Rusticana."

**Lightning Strikes Woman**—BLOOMSBURG—Although struck on the road by a bolt of lightning, doctors are confident Mrs. Raymond Rider will recover. Mrs. Rider was deaf by the bolt. Part of her hair was burned and two streaks about an inch wide showed the course of the lightning from head to foot.

**"CROSSED WIRES"**  
Prize Winning Comedy-Drama  
at  
**Chautauqua**

PATTON, AUGUST 11 TO 18

**"CROSSED WIRES"**  
Prize-Winning Comedy-Drama

New York prides itself on controlling all the plays that are produced in America. It looks them over first, and when it is through with them it lets the rest of the country have a look at them. But for once the rest of the country has turned the tables. "Crossed Wires," the winner of the Chautauqua Prize Play Contest, which will be seen here as a regular part of the Chautauqua program cannot be produced on Broadway, according to the terms of the contest, until after it has been played all summer over the Chautauqua circuits.

A year ago the leaders of the Chautauqua movement got together and decided that Chautauqua was big enough and good enough to have its own plays and not use Broadway's cast-offs. They therefore decided to offer a prize of \$1,000 for an original play of American life written by an American author. More than 300 plays were submitted, and after careful reading of them all by the judges, "Crossed Wires" was selected as the winner of the prize. It was produced by a competent cast and presented before a large audience of critics before the opening of the Chautauqua season. It proved to be an overwhelming success and just what was wanted for production as the Chautauqua play.

The author of the winning play is Richard A. Purdy who is the author of several other plays and poems. A poem of his entitled "The Day" was published during the war and was much discussed in literary and patriotic circles, being classed with "In Flanders Fields" as one of the best poems written during the war.

In "Crossed Wires" Mr. Purdy tells a story that comes into the actual experience of many American boys. His principal characters are two boys with ambition. One of them wants to be a newspaper editor, but instead is forced to run the dry goods business which his father started. The other wants to be a dry goods merchant, but finds himself forced by his father into being a newspaper man. They realize that they are "Crossed Wires" and make up their minds that they will get the wires uncrossed so that they work. How they go about accomplishing their purpose forms a story that is full of laughable situations and amusing characters from beginning to end. Incidentally they both find that life is not complete without romance, and before the final curtain falls, wedding bells are in the air for two happy couples.

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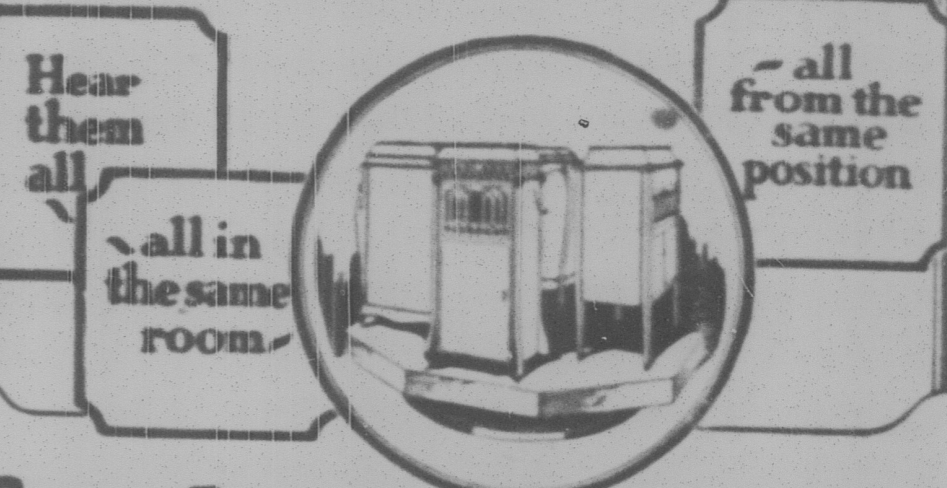
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