

but usurped the seats of men entitled to them. We wish to express our opinion, however, as to the popular estimation of Col. Merritt as a city official. We believe that, generally speaking the people are fairly satisfied with his course, and the resolution is therefore more an exhibit of the public position than of the Council. And although we have occasionally given him a more or less vigorous overhauling nevertheless we share with what we regard as the general view on the subject.

Once in a while Col. Merritt, while acting in an official capacity, has blurted out an expression which savored of sarcastic wit. In the session of the Council held on the 17th of March, the subject of the agreement between the city and county regarding the transfer to the latter of one half of Washington Square, on which it is pretended the joint building is to be erected, being under discussion, Mr. Lynn made the following inquiry:

"For information I will inquire of the city attorney if it would not be possible, under such a contract, for the city and county, separately or jointly, to dispose of their respective portions of the square for any purpose that they might deem proper."

The manner in which the city attorney's legal advice regarding the sale of Pioneer Square had been treated, and the action of the Council in disposing of the property of the people, were evidently floating like dark clouds in the Colonel's brain. Hence the refreshing reply: "*In the face of recent occurrences, anything seems possible in this city, sir.*"

This was a telling truth, pungently expressed. It receives a striking verification in the passage by the Council of a resolution of appreciation of "able and impartial" public services which they treated with unmitigated contempt.

OLD AND NEW ADVERTISING.

ACCORDING to the ham-strung doggerel of the poet, men are wise, who advertise, in every generation. But there was a generation when men could not advertise, at least in newspapers. There were none to advertise in. It is probable that a form of advertising existed even in ancient Egypt, and if one were in the mood for diving among dusty records, the fact might be established that the modern full page "ad." is only the child of the ancient temple inscription.

The English language is ours, and we will not go beyond it in tracking the history of advertising. In London was published a paper called *The Mercurius Politicus*. The first advertisement ever printed in the English

language was in that journal, in January, 1652. It occupied but one inch space. However, the novelty and the usefulness of it, at once struck the business eye, especially so, the sharp and sleepless one. From this date advertising became an established department of the newspaper.

About this time tea began to be used as a beverage in England. *The politicus Mercurius* of Sept. 30, 1658, contains one whole column of an advertisement relating to the medicinal virtues of tea, "that excellent, and by all physicians approved, China drink, called by the Chinese 'teha,' and by other nations 'tay' or 'tea.'" This was the biggest advertisement printed up to that date. It boomed the bargains in tea at \$24 per pound.

In 1660 the English newspapers began to advertise the sale of slaves, and slave auctions. In 1662 the art had so far advanced that "adds" began to take the form of reading matter, and were inserted as news. This new development gave employment to the brightest of the literary lights of the time. The Warner Safe business is nothing new. Over 200 years ago the stolid Britisher was hunched into reading an advertisement as is the volatile Yankee of today.

It had become a science in the days of Dr. Johnson. The burly doctor, after reading a pill advertisement, which he mistook for a new revelation in science, by which old age and its infirmities were to be set at naught, called on Goldsmith, and both walked down Fleet Street, and to the East End of London for a supply of pills. When Johnson found that he was, as the Yankee would say, "played for a sucker," he delivered himself of the following:

"The man who first took advantage of the general curiosity that was excited by a siege or battle to betray the reader of news into a knowledge of the shop where the best puffs and powders or pills are sold, was undoubtedly a man of great sagacity and professional skill in the nature of man."

The famous Dick Steele got into the newspaper business in London in the early days of the eighteenth century. He established a journal entitled *The Tatler*, and in order to advertise his paper he published on March 13, 1709, the following item:

"Any ladies who have any particular stories of their acquaintances which they are willing privately to make public, may send them by the penny post to Isaac Bickerstaff, Esq., enclosed to Mr. John Morphen, near Stationers' Hall."

Of course, before a week, the *Tatler* was the talk of the town, and it became the fashion in literature. It was, unquestionably, a journal of merit, and even, today it makes interesting readings.

There was then in England, a well-known astrologer and almanac maker named John Partridge. Steele endeavored in vain to get an "ad," for his paper, from the shrewd Partridge. Steele was a native of Ireland, and he was resolved that an English astrologer and soothsayer should not get the best of him. In an issue of his paper Steele announced solemnly the death of John Partridge the almanac man. Partridge presented himself in person before Steele to demand a denial of the death. Steele got him to write the denial and then charged him advertising rates for printing it. In future, the old star gazer became a liberal advertiser.

On July 12, 1711, a stamp tax of one cent, was levied on every paper printed in Britain. This caused all the Grub Street papers to suspend, except two.

On April 22, 1712, a tax of 12 pence, or 25 cents, was levied on every advertisement. This caused honest trade notices to disappear, and patent medicines and lotteries, and other swindles to put in an appearance as advertisers. It was to advertising, the South Sea bubble owed all its success. In time the "ad" tax was abolished and was never afterwards resumed.

In 1722 an advertisement appeared in a London paper which attracted great notice. It read as follows:

"Challenge: I, Elizabeth Wilkinson, of Clerkenwell, having had some words with Hannah Hyfield, and requiring satisfaction, do invite her to meet me upon the stage, and box for three guineas; each woman holding a half crown in each hand, and the first woman who drops the money to lose the battle."

"Answer: I, Hannah Hyfield, of Newgate Market, hearing of the resoluteness of Elizabeth Wilkinson, will not fail, God willing, to give her more blows than words, desiring home blows, and from her no favor. She may expect a good thumping."

The match, it is said, took place, but the newspapers in those days had no prize-fighting department in their Sunday issues, and posterity must look in vain for the victor in this Amazonian contest. It is clear that the principle of fair play existed then among Britons, and they had also their Marquis of Queensbury. The reason for holding the half-crown in the fist, was to prevent scratching. If the woman opened the hand, the coin would fall and she would lose the battle.

Advertising in our time is one of the fine arts. It is estimated that in Chicago alone \$500,000 is spent annually in that department. And as to the "ad" reading notice how would the old Doctor Johnson feel after reading one of the latest in the pill, potion and political line. It is possible that to advertising three-fourths of the United States newspapers owe an existence, and probably to pills and potions, one half of them.