

# The Best Speech I Ever Heard

By CHAUNCEY M. DEPEW.

THE best speech I ever heard, for power and effectiveness, was delivered by Wendell Phillips in 1855 or 1856, when I was at Yale. Phillips at that time was the leader of the anti-slavery movement in Boston and was considered one of the greatest minds in New England.

His subject was slavery. The auditorium, Brewster's Hall in New Haven, was jammed and the audience of about 2,500 persons, mostly New Haven folk, was intensely hostile. Before he finished Phillips had captured them all.

The city of New Haven on account of its manufactures was violently pro-slave. When Phillips arose such a boozing and



Robert Ingersoll

hissing started that for ten minutes he could not make himself heard. For almost an hour he was interrupted constantly with hisses and catcalls, but finally his eloquence prevailed and the audience was laughing, crying or applauding as Phillips willed.

The effect of the speech was best illustrated in its reaction on a classmate of mine who had gone with me at my request to hear Phillips. This young man came from Louisiana and was himself a large slaveholder. Of course, he detested Phillips. He said before the meeting he was going only to jeer at him.

He thoroughly hated the principle Phillips was defending, and yet from the hostile demonstration, in which my friend joined, he ended by applauding the orator with unrestrained enthusiasm. After the meeting the young man spent some hours in my room upbraiding himself for having been weak enough to have been carried away by Phillips's eloquence.

At that time the country was very much excited about the case of Anthony Burns. Burns was a runaway slave who had escaped to Epston, where he had been taken up by philanthropic abolitionists of the Phillips school.

They had given him their protection and had educated him. He proved to be a man of a great deal of ability. He was prospering in business, had married well and was living with his wife and children in a comfortable home near Boston which he owned.

Then, when Burns thought his freedom was secure, his owner discovered him and under the fugitive slave law got an order from the United States Court to deliver him up. The matter caused a tremendous stir. The people of Boston rioted about it, so that Anthony Burns, after his arrest by a United States Marshal, had to be escorted to the warship on which he was to be sent South into slavery again by a troop of United States cavalry.

Phillips's description of the man's escape from servitude, his education, his rise, his industrial success, his family and of his being torn away by the law to be returned to slavery was so affecting that the whole audience was in tears. His denunciation of the conditions that made such a thing possible was so eloquent that the hostile crowd forgot its prejudice and lost sight of the fact that the victim of the law was a negro. They grasped the truth that he was a man like themselves.

Most surprising of all, although they were all redhot constitutionalists, they applauded wildly Phillips's dramatic appeal to heaven when he said:

"God damn a constitution if it can commit a crime like this against humanity and liberty!"

That was the greatest speech I have ever heard before or since. It was the only one I ever heard that captured and converted a hostile audience. Its effect eventually was the repeal of the fugitive slave law and indirectly the election of Abraham Lincoln as President of the United States.

I have heard Henry Ward Beecher deliver some of his most effective speeches in which he aroused his auditors to an excitement bordering on insanity, but they were addressed to friendly audiences. One in particular I remember in which Beecher spoke for the freedom of Ireland. The hall was packed with Irishmen, and before he finished they almost tore down the walls in the frenzy of their enthusiasm.

Throughout my term in the United

# A Flutter of Fans

By BLANCHE McMANUS.

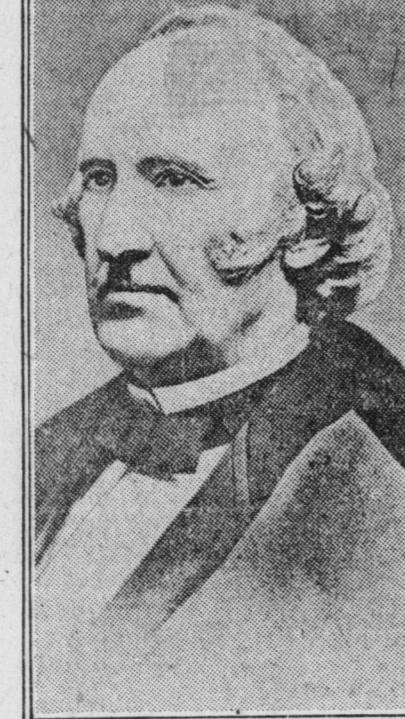
ID fans give birth to game cards, or did the hand of cards evolve itself into the fan? Their constructive principles are the same. Spread out a



bridge hand and you at once have the fan. Spread out the fan, says the Spaniard, and you have not merely a single hand of cards but a whole deck with which to play any variation in the game of life.

With this *fagotto* of tapering silvery sticks for finger play you may tap out the music of and run the physical gamut of the five great emotions—love and hate, joy and grief, and fear. That is if you are a Spanish *señor* or *señora* or a sophisticated *senorita* (and the flapper does exist in Spain also).

Gentlemen of the Convention, in the name of the great Republic—the only Republic that ever existed upon this earth—in the name of all her defenders and all her supporters; in the name of all her soldiers living in the name of all her



Wendell Phillips

soldiers who died upon the field of battle, and in the name of those that perished in the skeleton clutch of famine at Andersonville and Libby—whose sufferings he so eloquently remembers—Illinois nominates for the next President of this country that Prince of parliamentarians, that leader of leaders, James G. Blaine."

In spite of Col. Ingersoll's great speech the nomination went to Rutherford B. Hayes, who was elected. Blaine was nominated in 1884 and was defeated by Grover Cleveland.

I have heard Lincoln speak, but he did not have the oratorical gift of arousing emotion possessed by Ingersoll and Wendell Phillips. Lincoln's speeches were deliberate and logical.

There is no man in public life to-day that I know whom I can compare with some of the speakers of the last century. That does not mean, however, that I think the day of great orators is past. Give a man the ability to sway his hearers and human nature will be the same in 1922 as it was fifty years ago.

My own speeches—and I have made 1,000 or more—there are four that I remember with the most pleasure. The first was in 1880 at the dedication in Tarrytown of a monument to Major Andre, the British officer who was executed for his part in the treason of Benedict Arnold. The second was at the unveiling of the Bartholdi Statue of Liberty in New York Bay in 1886. The third was at the centennial of the inauguration of General Washington as first President of the United States in front of the Sub-Treasury in Wall street in 1889, and the fourth was at the opening of the Columbian Exposition at Chicago in 1893.

Throughout my term in the United

States Senate I do not remember a single great speech. I heard a great many good speeches, but no great ones. The most effective nominating speech at a national political convention I ever heard was the famous "Plumed Knight" speech of Col. Robert G. Ingersoll in which he proposed James G. Blaine for President in 1876.

The convention was held in Cincinnati. Its preliminary acts showed no especial tendency toward sentiment, but when Col. Ingersoll rose to name Mr. Blaine a great shout went up. During his speech he was interrupted constantly by applause. In his peroration Col. Ingersoll said: "Our country, crowned with the vast and marvelous achievements of its first century, asks for a man worthy of its past, prophetic of its future—asks for a man who has the audacity of genius—asks for a man who is the grandest combination of heart, conscience and brains beneath the flag. That man is James G. Blaine."

"For the Republican host, led by that intrepid man, there can be no defeat. This is a grand year—a year filled with the recollections of the Revolution; filled with proud and tender memories of the sacred past; filled with the legends of liberty; a year in which the sons of freedom will drink from the fountains of enthusiasm; a year in which the people call for a man who has preserved in Congress what our soldiers won upon the field; a year in which we call for the man that has torn from the throat of treason the tongue of slander; a man that has snatched the mask of democracy from the hideous face of rebellion; a man who, like an intellectual athlete, stood in the arena of debate, challenged all comers, and who up to this moment is a total stranger to defeat.

"Like an armed warrior, like a plumed knight, James G. Blaine marched down the halls of the American Congress and threw his shining lances full and fair against the brazen forehead of every defamer of his country and maligner of his honor.

"For the Republican party to desert that man now is worse than if an army should desert their general on the field of battle. James G. Blaine is now and has been for years the bearer of the sacred standard of the Republic. I call it sacred because no human being can stand beneath its folds without becoming and with-out remaining free.

"Gentlemen of the Convention, in the name of the great Republic—the only Republic that ever existed upon this earth—in the name of all her defenders and all her supporters; in the name of all her soldiers living in the name of all her

immovable on its single stem when, at a comparatively recent day in fan annals, the collapsible fan was invented in Korea in the sixteenth century, brought to China and from there spread by the manufacturers all over the warm countries of the Mediterranean.

The Spaniards intriguers ever and with a passionate love for the secretive dallings and philanderings, from love making to business, which characterizes the race of *dons* and *hidalgos*, seized with avidity upon the hand when this handy article arrived in trading ships returning from the China seas.

The Spaniard diverted the warlike ceremonial, liturgical and useful functions of this really attractive accessory of dress and soon developed it into something far more abstruse and complicated than even the *Cecilie* ever dreamed. It became a dictionary of fluttering wind swept symbolic emotions.

Spain thus brought into being at the very early date of the beginning of the fifteenth century the cipher code of the fan, an application which antedated the Morse code by more than 400 years. You may, if you have a taste for ancient politics, dig deep into the Spanish archives and still find hidden away, practically undecipherable into modern reading, old, cracked secret codes compiled from the fan dictionary which would provide some puzzle decoding for the experts of the telegraph and wireless of our time.

Fan talk thus became a serious affair in Spain as it was employed in everyday affairs of men and in politics quite as much as by fair ladies in their daily correspondence and proved to be the first aerial waves to dip into intrigues and plots and leave none of the traps of written words on paper which might later be produced as tangible evidence in courts of justice, whether the case be secular, political or of the heart.

Thus fan tappers in court and in love, as well as the man fan tapper in the street, were immune from any incriminating evidence which might echo indistinctly down the ages.

Later the fan dictionary became a medium for still further social amenities, the ultimate, of course, being love making in secret, at least as a means leading thereto in some more tangible, expressible form. As social intercourse between men and women in Spain is a dumb letter to all practical purposes, and is, as it always has been, confined to flirtations through barred windows or from balconies, the fan as a transmitting medium for an embryonic wireless was hailed as joyfully by these etiquette sequestered young women as the broadcasting radios are to-day blissfully captured by wireless amateurs possessed of a desire to know the next change in Paris modes, what pill to take at the full moon, the latest straight into the receiver sermon or the newest jazz step and tune.

Spanish young folk who would be socially and eternally ostracized if they sat and talked together decently at home, even in presence of *la familia*, still are able to wing their tenderest emotions and throw their most intimate heart throbs, by the flutterings of many fans, to the four winds of heaven, across streets, across theater and opera auditoriums and across the *plaza de toros* or bullring.

The shorthand code of the fan as the Spaniards have designed it is a double system of signaling which is keyed thus:

The palm of the left hand is what is known as the "receiver" and carries the capital letters, not only capital letters in the sense in which these words are usually used, but as capital letters in which to express the important words of the secretly compiled "Code of the Fan." The important part of the message to be communicated is thus spelled out on the left palm receiver. The left palm also is used to represent the hours of the clock face, and consequently this gives the Roman numerals without further complication.

Each articulation, or joint, of the left hand as seen from the palm side is made to carry a capital letter, these beginning, naturally, at where the hand itself begins—at the wrist.

Here the maker of Spanish fan codes

is off to teach you to play the fan.

Family with Soon be Leaving

not

D possible

E to meet you

F Y media!

G He has it!

H Three-thirty, the hour of

I wings before flight and the *senorita* preens

her fan for flights of fancy! There's al-

ways a happy ending to be had; no wonder

that editors demand it and the public like it.

As an appendix to the fan cypher code are certain gymnastic turns which are made with the fan.

Running the left forefinger over its ribs when closed signifies: "I want to speak to you."

As an appendix to the fan against the lips: "I have no confidence in what you say."

Dropping the fan from left hand: "Leave me at once!"

And so it goes with endless variation of meaning known only to the initiated in fan lore who may have evolved secret codes of their own that no A. B. C. Five Letter, Fifth Edition" may unravel.

Fan codes vary somewhat in their applications according to regions. That practiced in Seville differs from that used in Toledo. Society of Madrid has interpolations that one does not find in Cordoba. But the fundamentals of the shorthand dictionary of the Spanish fan wireless are the same wherever fans flutter.

(To David, 4.)

Swing away little birds of Baltimore,

Sway away high in the fat apple tree—

While the sun laughs down upon you and me.

Mammy'll come soon to help fill yore

Bright wide beats with a welcome store

Of bugs and slugs of ev'ry degree—

So you can go on a little bird spire—

While Mammy sings of oriole lore.

Swing high, swing low, in yore ham-

mock so high,

Yore Pappy wears such a flaming bright vest—

After yore dinner you all go rock-a-

baby—

Twas he that built that Hammocky nest;

Oh, some day you'll fly away—high away—

Trying your wings in the great blue sky, away.

SEABURY LAWRENCE.

Taking a Chance.

Flubb—Don't you think Jenkins plunged

rather recklessly in that stock?

Dub—Yes, considering that he never met the bootlegger before!

**The Spell of Beauty.**

Beauty has gripped me by the throat,

And left no voice to sing its praise;

Only dumb aw, a breathless hope

To have it with all my all my days.

Once I sang silly of the jay,

I had in Nature and in Art:

Spinning bright elegies of song—

With nothing of it in my heart.

Fall, I am silent now that I

Have fallen under Beauty's spell.

ADELE DE LEEUW.

**Bright Prospects.**

"I suppose we'll have the usual world

series ticket scandal this year."

"I doubt it. A lot of those speculators

have gone into the bootlegging business."

## In Our Poets' Back Yard

### Happiness.

The leaves come floating softly down,  
My heart is filled with happy song  
And sunlight through the whole day long.

Here in the country, miles from town,

I do not fear stern winter's chill.

I do not dread his snow and ice,

I have my friends—and they suffice—

My friends upon this wooded hill.

I feel I have attained my goal,

My ax is ready to my hand—

I hope that you may understand—

I do not have to purchase coal!

F. L. M.

### Over Thin Ice.

&lt;p