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AMATEUR AND
EDUCATIONAL DRAMATICS



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SCENE FROM TENNYSON'S "PRINCESS"
(Courtesy of the Dwight School, Englewood, New Jersey)

Amateur and Educational Dramatics

BY
EVELYNE HILLIARD
THEODORA McCORMICK
KATE OGLEBAY

*Endorsed by
Educational Dramatic League*



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1917

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PREFACE

A wider use of Educational Dramatics is made possible through the recognition of certain elements not usually considered as fundamental. Original work constituting a departure from conventional instruction in this field has been undertaken by the authors of this book. Each author presents in the chapters indicated the results of specialized work, which, taken collectively, represent a complete presentation of the subject from a view point never taken before.

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AMATEUR AND EDUCATIONAL DRAMATICS

CHAPTER I

WHAT IS EDUCATIONAL DRAMATICS — ITS RESULTS

Help in building of character — In better understanding of the lives about us — In building up the body — Expression.

PERHAPS, in order to explain exactly what something *is*, the best way is to tell first what it is not. Educational Dramatics is as far removed from amateur dramatics as the real true outdoors of the country is removed from the stage picture of the country. Amateur dramatics may be good, may be elevating, may educate, but it is not necessarily educational dramatics. The difference lies chiefly in the fact that in amateur dramatics it is the "show," the fine performance that is the principal object; in educational dramatics the development of the player is the principal object. The performance is merely a goal, the climax of the work, but it is not of first importance.

Educational dramatics is not primarily intended for the professional stage. On the professional stage the manager chooses the actors for their special ability to play the various parts. No stage manager would choose for the part of the hero a man

who, in previous engagements, had always acted the old man. In educational dramatics that is precisely what is done. The boy who plays the "king" one year is cast for the "beggar" the next, in order to develop his character, to give him the beggar's outlook on life as well as the king's, through playing the different parts. Physique alone debars an actor from taking certain rôles, but even this is overlooked in educational dramatics, unless the physique would produce a sense of the ridiculous in the mind of the audience, which, of course, must always be avoided for the player's sake. Everything is done for the player, and the performance to a great extent takes care of itself. The very heart of educational dramatics is the development of the player. This development is brought about by giving him a part quite different from his own life. The part is analysed until it sinks beyond the mere presentation and into the very heart and life of the actor. The part, as it were, becomes his own, a part of his own life, developing his character as real life experiences do. He is absolutely natural because everything he does is the result of a complete understanding of himself as the character. It gives a spontaneity and finish to a performance that can be gained in no other way. When a group of players is trained by a teacher understanding the science of educational dramatics, the result is quite different from that obtained by a group trained by a teacher who does not understand the science. The science of educational dramatics applied to a play gives its performance an ease and charm that is indescribable. The amateur actor, from his com-

plete understanding of the part he is portraying, *actually lives it*. He thinks the thoughts the character would think, and feels only the emotion of the person in the play. He allows the character to take absolute possession of his own personality, and he moves and speaks and has his being *as the character*. He does not think or imagine he *is* the character,— he merely allows the character to use his person, his mind and voice and body to express itself through him. He steps aside, as it were, and lends his personality to the part. By analysis, he knows the character almost as well as he knows himself, and, therefore, the character in his person acts naturally and spontaneously. There is no question of imitating any one; the action springs from the thought, as actions do in real life. In the "imitation" method it is like putting on something outside, adding on a new grace or action or gesture copied from the acting of some one else, possibly the dramatic director, or using some preconceived idea of what the acting of the part should be.

In educational dramatics, the player, by analysis of the character he is to play, develops the part from within his own heart and mind, and this analysis results in natural gesture and action.

Of course the dramatic director may suggest what the character might do under given circumstances, but he never forces his personal idea of the action upon the player. It must come only as the result of the player's own complete realization of his part. The director may suggest that under such and such circumstances, such a character as the text would seem to indicate would be liable to do such

and such a thing, and thus help the player to understand more clearly the part he is studying. The director may ask questions about the action if it seems confused, such as —“ Why is Brutus moving about in that nervous way? *Is he nervous?*” This will usually bring out analysis and clear up the situation.

A director may even illustrate a point of action, if he does it to bring out characteristics in a general way; but the director may not teach by imitation, if he wishes to teach according to the science of educational dramatics. All the dramatic director has to do is to see to it that the thought of the character being portrayed is correct and perfectly understood by the player. The action will then correspond and help give out the thought in the clearest and simplest way. Occasionally, of course, an action itself has to be worked out, as for instance: how to manage the exit to make it a little quicker; just how to lift the chair into place in the best way; how shall a knight carry a sword; how the queen shall mount the throne and handle her train; what is the proper way for a lady to curtsy; what is the easiest and best way to rise from a low chair. But this is not made a part of the acting; it is merely to help the character to use his or her body more gracefully. Incidentally it also makes the player more easy and graceful in everyday life.

All work is done wholly for the benefit of the player. Teaching players through this method gives a performance a naturalness and charm that can come only with perfect understanding and true love of the player for the part. He becomes so enveloped in his part that no self-consciousness can

penetrate to disturb his realization of it, and he often gains an ease and natural grace unsuspected by even his nearest friends. These qualities developed through his work in the play, he uses to advantage in his everyday life. This bridging the acting of a part across into the real life of the player is the work of the teacher and one of the vital rules in educational dramatics.

It is the teacher's part to scientifically use the dramatic imagination and dramatic instinct to give to the pupil a fuller life, by teaching him to know and understand other lives by working them out in the form of acting. The teacher, by analysing the motives, causes, and true reasons for the character's words and actions, brings the player to know and sympathize with the lives of others. The watchword is "analyse." She talks about the characters, about their relations to one another, their past life, their past environment, their probable life before the play began; about their thoughts, their real motives and feelings. Thus, by study and analysis, the teacher arouses in the player a growing understanding and sympathy with his part, which finally takes away all self-consciousness and allows his dramatic instinct, — always ready to respond, — to act.

The teacher of educational dramatics should have courage and knowledge to deal with this tremendous force, — experience in life and a love for the player, the work, and the part, in order to instil into the player the love of his part and waken in him the desire to give it out in its highest form.

The knowledge of this science is the greatest asset

a teacher can possess. A teacher who has carefully studied the laws of this science is as far removed from the ordinary dramatic coach as ordinary amateur dramatics is removed from educational dramatics.

The result of educational dramatics might be divided into three parts — first, the result to the player and his growth through *character*; second, the enlargement of his understanding and his resultant comprehension of the lives about him; third, the physical change and improvement that often takes place in him. Of course, all three are closely interwoven, yet they can be treated separately and so, perhaps, best explained.

Take, for instance, a scrubby boy whose thought has mostly been directed towards “scraps,” and their settlement by force of fist. Put him in a play where he represents a judicious ruler of his people, where right alone is might and justice only reigns supreme. What a new and illuminating light must come to him to solve his own life problem. Would he not learn through the part he played that his former method was incorrect? Might it not somewhat change his nature?

Take a girl who has never had a dainty instinct, whose hands and face are always soiled, whose thought has never risen to grasp the fact that “cleanliness is next to godliness.” Give her the part of the charming little princess of the play; dress her in the pure white frock of that character; surround her with the pretty accessories belonging to a princess: will it not open her eyes to that daintiness which is her right?

The rich young man, in a play takes the part of the poor, under-paid clerk. In the play he suffers because he is not able to pay his rent; he cannot properly clothe or educate his children. Do you not think that after playing such a part the rich young man will better understand the case of the poor clerk? Suppose there is a clerk who rages in his heart against the rich, who feels a terrible hatred for all rich men. Give him the part of a banker, burdened with many cares; let him see, through acting the play, how "uneasy lies the head that wears a crown," and his hatred melts away in understanding.

There is a little dissatisfied girl, who thinks her life the hardest in the world. She longs to be rich and great. Cast her for a part like the "Poor Little Rich Girl." Let her, through her dramatic instinct, see and know the curse of having too much. Her outlook on life is changed.

Take the big, strong boy of the East side, full of vitality and pent-up energy. He becomes the leader of the "gang," because he must express himself somehow, and the glittering position of leadership allures him, appeals to his dramatic instinct. The picture of having a clanging wagon come to arrest him, with the gang fighting the police to rescue him, flits across his imagination as part of the game. Give this same boy a big, noble part, let him express himself, and he becomes a leader in another way and blazes a trail for the gang to follow.

In every form of amateur dramatics developed educationally, the actor is elevated; but if it is first the "show" and not the "player," it is not educa-

tional dramatics. It will have educational results, but, to be purely educational, it must be concerned always with the benefit to the player. The teacher tries to educate the player through the part he takes in the play. She tries to cast him for a part that will give him a new outlook on life, and she tries to show him that outlook. She analyses, explains, works out the character given to the player, until he begins to see the real heart and life of that character,—until he begins to absorb into his own life the lesson which he could otherwise only learn by personal experience in his own life, and through a long life of experiences. Real life is too short and too hemmed in by environment, to give him those experiences. Experiences, and the lessons they teach, develop character. Through educational dramatics we can, in a way, have those experiences and so develop character.

The second point to be gained as the result of educational dramatics, is the understanding of the lives and people about us. Our success in life and in our work is gained by understanding the people with whom we come in contact, and, therefore, any study which will give us this knowledge is the study we most need. Educational dramatics is a direct study of man. Educational dramatics analyses actions and discovers the motive *for* such actions; analyses the voice and finds out the reason for changes in the tone; analyses words, and finds out their real meaning,—decides why certain words are used to convey certain thoughts, and what the thought is that the words convey; reverently and lovingly

studies man in all his varied changes, and thereby enlarges sympathy and broadens understanding.

The third end achieved by educational dramatics is the effect upon the body. Take the careless, slovenly person, whose life-thought has not made his body erect and well poised: let the stoop-shouldered boy or girl play the well-poised character, and let them learn, through the part, to hold the body erect and firm. Character is improved by the added consciousness of dignity.

The body is influenced by the mind, but the mind is also influenced by the body. When one is depressed and droops supinely under the load of depression, one may stand physically erect and throw off the load. Mentally it will also disappear. Make the erect carriage, the definite step, the firm knees habitual, and you have made a change in character. The boy who has a shuffling gait and weak knees, usually lacks moral fibre. Give him a part where he must learn to walk with a strong, definite purpose, and the walk may become a natural one,— his nature, too, may change with the physical change. It is easier for a strong body to fight off evil influences than for a weak body to do so. It is true, that the spiritual nature can hold in check the physical nature, so why not equip the boy for the battle of life, by giving him all the strong armour we can provide? If we can give him an erect carriage, strong knees and firm walk, and head held high, it is our business to do so. The body reveals the character, but the character is formed somewhat by the body. Educational dramatics helps the body to be noble.

Take these three — the help for the building of character, the help for the building of sympathetic understanding of the lives about us, the help for the building up of the body — and add to them the help toward expression. This age needs *ex*-pression, not *re*-pression. Man has been repressed too long. In every department of education this is being felt. What is "Natural education" but EXPRESSION for the child? What is Froebel's system but expression? The Montessori system is also based on expression. Why this great desire for dancing? It is a means of expression. Dramatics gives us an opportunity to express ourselves and do those things we have so longed to do, to be that which we have so longed to be, to give out in movement, voice and words that which has been within us waiting for utterance,— to go into that wonderful world of imagination before the gate closes forever; to act in a life away from this stupid every-day life around us. It is necessary for us to do this, has always been necessary, but only now are we coming to know it, and the best way to know it is to make it *educational*, through EDUCATIONAL DRAMATICS.



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CHAPTER II

GAMES AND PLAYS OF CHILDREN IN RELATION TO THE DRAMA

Personification and imitation — Invented personalities — Kindergarten games — Stories in semi-dramatic form — Story playing — Pantomime.

PERSONIFICATION and imitation are two of the fundamental instincts of the human race, and from their union may be traced the development of the drama of today. The universe is seen by every one through a lense of his own individuality. Civilization and education bring a wider vision, but undeveloped intellects can see little beyond the ego of themselves. They are their world. Everything outside exists only in so far as it effects their experiences of life. The abstract is beyond their comprehension, and the concrete must be translated into terms of their understanding. Since "self" is the key word of their being, they endow objects, and things outside of themselves with an imaginary personality, similar to their own.

In primitive and simple languages there were only two genders; masculine and feminine. Consequently everything was divided into two classes. Whatever had the characteristics of man was given the personality of men; and whatever the feminine qualities, became as women. For example, the sun was the mightiest power known to the primitive peoples. It bestowed warmth, light and growth to their

plants. It gave good gifts. Sometimes it did them harm by the strength of its arbitrary power. Therefore, it was as a man, a great man, mightier than the earth man; it was like a ruler, a king. It was wise to placate him with prayers and offerings, dances and songs. Thus he became a god with all the attributes of a man. In the same manner the earth was given the personality of a woman, for it was she who bore the fruits of life. So winds and water, summer and winter, wars, love, and wisdom acquired personalities, became gods and goddesses, and gathered about themselves life, history and characteristics, like those of men.

Our own race has not grown far beyond the tendency to personify. A generation or two past conceived their god, concretely, in the image of man, not man, abstractly, in the image of God. If you can pry from any child his ideas of God, you will probably discover that he imagines an anthropomorphic deity: a benevolent, white whiskered old gentleman, who sits upon a cloud and possesses all the mildly agreeable characteristics of some elderly friend or relation.

Children, in fact, have a vast circle of inanimate friends or enemies. These may be well known objects, or abstract things to which they have attached personalities, personalities absolutely absurd and unreasonable to "grown-ups" but logical and inevitable to themselves. A group of city children found a large garlic plant in a vacant lot. This plant they adopted as the symbol of their "club," and in time grew to regard it with a fierce primitive adoration. It was the first green thing that ap-

peared in the spring. It grew at the foot of a sumach bush; and when one knelt down close to the earth and drew a deep breath, one smelled strong pungent odours of earth and sumach and garlic that awoke dim and delightful visions of great open fields and woods. There among pavements and apartment houses that garlic plant embodied all of nature and of spring. No wonder it was to the children no mere plant, but a personality, a fetish, almost a God. To them it was sacred. A sacred garlic plant!

There was an obvious reason for this personification; but often the reasons are completely hidden in the mysteries of a child's mind. A certain little girl took a peculiar dislike to the key of E upon the piano. Her music teacher found that the child always played that scale with great reluctance, and tried to discover the basis of her antagonistic feeling toward it. Finally the child admitted that she "couldn't stand the scale of E." It was exactly like a very haughty, sarcastic and altogether disagreeable woman who was always dressed for a tea, with white furs, lorgnette and spotless white gloves.

These invented personalities are apt to escape from the control of their originators, and gain the "upper hand" in a dangerously despotic manner. A little girl made a large paper doll giant from brown paper, drew a hideous face upon it, and put it in a "castle" behind a door, and then was afraid to enter the room where it was lurking. Little woolly blankets would seem to the casual adult to be harmless, rather dull things; but to children they appear to have some strange and appealing vital

quality. Nor is this vital quality meek and timidly gentle as their appearance would suggest. On the contrary, if once a woolly blanket acquires a personality and gains a footing in a household, it quickly shows its true dominant individuality. The child who possesses it will become absolutely dependent upon it, demanding its presence before he will sleep. No matter where the family go, "Woolly" must go too, and often years pass, under the nightly supremacy of "Woolly" until at last its proud spirit succumbs to holes, and it perishes after the manner of all blankets.

These illustrations show that man early in his development attributes existence and individuality, somewhat like his own, to objective things. Granting that these objective things have an existence, the next step toward a more complete understanding of that existence is to partake more fully of its nature. He must absorb its significance into his consciousness and then express it through his own comprehension. He must make the objective, subjective. He has no real appreciation of the meaning of anything until he has taken it into himself, and then given it out again with his own interpretation.

The attempt to put himself in the being of something or some one else, and then to act as it acts is imitation. This imitative desire of man enables him to convey his impression to others; and this, says Loomis Havermeyer in his "Drama of Savage Peoples," "is the real origin of the Drama." "What the child imitates," says Froebel, "he is trying to understand." He is trying to express in terms of his

own action, some impression he has gained of something outside himself.

The union of these fundamental desires for personification and imitation, and the subsequent growth of the drama, may be seen and traced in the kindergarten games and simple school plays of today.

The following is one of the simplest of the kindergarten songs:

“Come little leaves said the wind one day,
Come o’er the meadows with me and play,
Put on your dresses of red and gold
For summer is gone and the days grow cold.”

“Soon as the leaves heard the wind’s loud call
Down they came fluttering, one and all,
Over the brown fields they danced and flew
Singing the sweet little songs they knew.”

In this game two things of nature are personified: the wind, and the leaves. The children sing the song in unison, and imitate the action of the personified leaves with their hands. It is all done in chorus, and neither personification nor imitation have been far developed.

In the next step toward the drama, the game is more complicated. There is still a ring, or chorus which does most of the singing, but imitation is further developed. We will take the “Five Little Chipmunks” and plot it in dramatic form. In this, Chipmunks are given a well defined personality, and are of equal importance with the “boys” who are also characters.

"FIVE LITTLE CHIPMUNKS"

CHARACTERS

FIVE CHIPMUNKS

CHORUS

SCENE — *An imaginary woods. The chorus stands in a ring. The five little chipmunks are in a group in one corner.*

RING OR CHORUS

Five little chipmunks lived in a tree.
Says the First Little Chipmunk,

FIRST CHIPMUNK

What do I see?

CHORUS

Says the Second Little Chipmunk,

SECOND CHIPMUNK

A boy, I declare!

CHORUS

Says the Third Little Chipmunk,

THIRD CHIPMUNK

A storm in the air.

CHORUS

Says the Fourth Little Chipmunk,

FOURTH CHIPMUNK

I'm not afraid.

CHORUS

Says the Fifth Little Chipmunk,

FIFTH CHIPMUNK

Let's hide in the shade.

CHORUS

(Suddenly impersonating boys.)

“Hurrah, hurrah, hurrah!” cry the boys,
And Five Little Chipmunks run at the noise.

(Chipmunks run.)

“Come back, come back, come back,” say the boys,
“Come back little chipmunks we’ll make no more
noise.”

(Chipmunks return.)

There is dramatic structure, even if very elementary in this song. A curious parallelism may be seen between games of this type and the ancient Greek drama: in both, the chorus carries the principal part of the plot and links together the speeches of the characters. Possibly the same ethnic impulse accounts for the similarity of dramatic development between that age of the race and this age of the child.

In this game, “The Five Little Chipmunks,” the dramatic structure is excellent because each speech is essential to the plot, and carries the action along swiftly to the climax. There is not one unnecessary word. The Ring, or chorus, supplies the exposition in the first line, “Five Little Chipmunks lived in a tree.” It introduces the first character in the second line. The First Chipmunk strikes the tone of expectancy and suspense. The Second Chipmunk heightens the interest. The Third Chipmunk throws the attention ahead to an obligatory scene of conflict and trouble by anticipating, “a storm in the air.” The Fourth Chipmunk supplies the element of courage with his, “I’m not afraid.” The Fifth,

replies with the contending element of fear. His speech, "Let's hide in the shade," is the climax, and here the play balances between the triumph of courage or fear. Suddenly the Chorus, now impersonating boys, cries out, "Hurrah, hurrah, hurrah!" and the Chipmunks, terrified, run away. If the play ended there it would be a tragedy. However, the Chorus calls the Chipmunks back,— they return, and the play ends happily.

After this type of kindergarten game come stories in semi-dramatic form which are used in the first and second year of school. In these the Greek chorus has dwindled from a group to a single chorus figure: the teacher. She supplies the exposition, explains the action, and binds the speeches together, while the children take the various parts of the characters. Here personification has practically disappeared, for instead of impersonating animals or objects of nature such as trees, winds, sun and stars, the children usually take the part of people. This is a naturally later development, for social consciousness comes after consciousness of nature.

Below is an example of "Bo Peep and her Sheep"—from Coe and Christie's "Story Hour Readers."

BO PEEP AND HER SHEEP

CHARACTERS

BO PEEP
LITTLE JACK HORNER
LITTLE MISS MUFFET
HUMPTY DUMPTY
CHORUS — TEACHER

CHORUS FIGURE

Little Bo Peep lost her sheep
She looked and looked but could not find them. Then
she went to Little Jack Horner.

BO PEEP

Please, Little Jack Horner, help me find my sheep!

CHORUS FIGURE

Little Jack Horner sat in a corner.
Little Jack Horner said,

LITTLE JACK HORNER

Leave them alone and they'll come home.

CHORUS FIGURE

Then she went to Little Miss Muffet.

BO PEEP

Please, Little Miss Muffet, help me find my sheep.

CHORUS FIGURE

Little Miss Muffet sat on a tuffet.
Little Miss Muffet said,

LITTLE MISS MUFFET

Leave them alone and they'll come home.

CHORUS FIGURE

She went to Humpty Dumpty.

BO PEEP

Please Humpty Dumpty, help me find my sheep!

CHORUS FIGURE

Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall. Humpty Dumpty
said,

HUMPTY DUMPTY

Leave them alone and they'll come home.

CHORUS FIGURE

Little Bo Peep found the sheep herself. The sheep came home wagging their tails behind them.

From stories like this it is only a short step to little plays in regular dramatic form. The chorus is here of little importance, in fact it could almost be entirely eliminated. The connecting link of "he said" and "she said" is beginning to be left out. Repetition is a distinctive feature of this play, as of many of the kind. After this type comes the modern drama in its simplest school form, and the more primitive expressions of personification and imitation are dropped and lost.

The games given as illustrations have been the more formal ones of childhood; but the informal games also may be used as examples testifying to the truth of similar theories. Many children, unfortunately, have been robbed of their natural play instinct by the myriad distractions of the twentieth century. Some, however, are simply brought up and still play the old imitative games that have been played for generations. Little boys still impersonate their heroes, and little girls still play house. And throughout their games, the dramatic elements are always to the fore. Strife and conflict and competition are the basis of boys' games. Watch little girls playing house and you will see that they delight in having some especially bad baby who refuses to be amenable to family discipline. Here is the conflict. Then the doll, or child who plays the part of the bad baby is apt to receive barbarously

severe mock punishment, which supplies the primitive slap stick element of humour.

From these unstudied dramatic instincts should be developed a much neglected form of dramatic expression: story playing. The teacher or director should tell a story, clearly, placing much emphasis upon the dramatic crises, and sequence of events. The parts of the characters are then cast, and each character must know just what relation he bears to the entire play; just what episode he must bring out to further the action of the plot. The players must also know their exits and entrances, but beyond that nothing is definitely learned beforehand. They act their parts and improvise their speeches as they play. Any age children, from the kindergarten to the high school, can do this story playing, and do it well, after a little experience. At first they will be awkward and shy, and will explain their business in as few and blunt words as possible. The director will have to stand nearby, and possibly take one of the minor parts herself in order to prompt with suggestions as to what to say, and when to go out. Soon, however, the players will become more self-reliant and will need no assistance. The training in quickness of thought and action, and spontaneous self expression is invaluable.

A certain private school tried this story playing experiment among the girls of high school age. They wanted a dramatic club, but had no time to devote to learning long parts. They took plots with which they were familiar — fairy stories, stories they were studying in school, or historical

episodes, and acted them spontaneously. The club was a great success. Girls who had been shy and unpopular developed unexpected talent through this stimulus. Under the excitement of not knowing what their fellow players were going to say next, the necessity of replying, and the laughter and applause of a delighted and informal audience, self-consciousness disappeared and a certain poise and presence were developed.

Story Playing is not a new and peculiar form of the drama, with Dumb Crambo for its mother and Charades as its father. On the contrary, it is descended from an old and illustrious ancestor: the *Commedia dell'Arte* of Italy, which can be traced from the middle of the sixteenth century.

The actors in the *Commedia dell'Arte* became thoroughly familiar with the plot of the story they were to play, then went on the stage and spoke whatever occurred to them on the spur of the moment. They were always on time with their exits and entrances, and never at a loss for a speech. Sometimes they learned rhymes or quotations that fitted their part, but generally their lines were pure improvisation, that sometimes had little to do with the plot yet usually carried on the action.

The Pantomime, a form of dramatic expression somewhat similar at first to the *Commedia dell'Arte*, developed during the middle ages. That, however, was not the origin of Pantomime, for communication through gesture was before communication through the spoken word. Before men had articulate language they conveyed thought to each other by means of pantomime action. If when hunting,

a primitive man saw the approach of the enemy, he fled back to his tribe and by gestures, imitative of what he had seen, communicated his news. The savage dances and plays are almost purely pantomime.

The development of Pantomime as we know it, however, begins with the Forains in 1660. They acted "out of doors on their long narrow balconies, simple little pieces requiring at most three or four speeches — farces called *parades*." ¹ Their lines were so indecent that the legitimate theatres succeeded in having the speeches suppressed. The Forains continued to act however, "and when all speech was forbidden them they went on acting silently, enlightening the audience the while as to the progress of the fable by *écriteaux* — scrolls of explanatory verses let down from the ceiling of the stage. When this in turn was forbidden they passed about among the spectators a printed outline of the plot with the songs fully written out, and when the orchestra played the air the house was encouraged to sing the gay words on the programs." ¹

From this the Pantomime grew and flourished, and from these beginnings we can still recognize traces in our modern Motion Pictures and Vaudeville performances.

Pantomime, or "acting Movies," as it is called is in use in some schools for the purpose of developing natural gesture. The teacher acts out some episode in pantomime, and then asks the children to interpret her action. After that the children

¹Quoted from "The *Commedia dell'Arte*" by Winifred Smith.

act, with the teacher or rest of the class as audience. Simple experiences are taken at first; perhaps a trip in the subway, entering, giving a seat to a lady, hanging to a strap, then going out. Little by little the representations become more complicated, until at last they come to stories with more involved plots.

All of these three forms of dramatic expression; the formal but simple drama, the Story Play, and Pantomime are the natural inheritance of childhood. Through their encouragement a child will develop undreamed of latent abilities. Through an enlarged scope of understanding will come a greater comprehension of life in general, and through normal self expression will come greater happiness.

CHAPTER III

TEACHING READING BY MEANS OF DRAMATICS

Reading and acting nursery rhymes—Old Mother Hubbard—Making up rhymes to read and act—Creating a desire to read—The real meaning of the words brought out by acting—Playing little stories—Overcoming shyness, awkwardness and self-consciousness—Cultivating the imagination—Mental pictures—Their absolute necessity.

THE fact that things done are greater than things heard, would seem to argue that teaching reading to beginners can be done more quickly, and with greater accuracy, through dramatic form than in other ways. In many methods of reading, dramatization is part of the process. Happy is the child who goes to a school where this is true,— where he is allowed to use all his faculties of expression in mind and body, and to gain the freedom that comes by so doing. Since the young child has little or no self-consciousness, is naturally a motor animal, and has much dramatic imagination, he enjoys acting out his ideas. All the old nursery rhymes give ample material for a child to express himself in this way, and are also most useful as reading lessons. When these rhymes are acted out, the full meaning of the words and sentences will be fixed in the mind of the child. The familiar story of Old Mother Hubbard, for instance, is an excellent example, showing what can be done in acting out a nursery

rhyme and learning to read at the same time. First, we see dear old Mother Hubbard coming into her kitchen, all smiles, followed by her faithful dog. How do we know she is coming into her kitchen? Because the poem says she is going to her cupboard to get her poor dog a bone, and a cupboard where bones are kept is usually in the kitchen. Why do we like her and call her dear, and why do we think she is smiling? Because she must be good and kind to be so good to animals, and she must love the dog to take so much trouble for him, and she must be smiling because she knows that a bone will make the dog happy. Now we read the text carefully to see what we are to do. "Old" Mother Hubbard. Here we have a fact about Mother Hubbard. She is old, bent over, maybe, or perhaps just old; maybe she is so old that she is lame or uses a cane. The idea of age is acted differently by every child, and each child must be allowed her own expression of what she interprets as "old."

Now we read again to see what she *did*. "She went to the cupboard." Let us here explain that long word "cupboard," but not take too much time about it, for we are so anxious to know what old Mother Hubbard was going to do when she "went to the cupboard." She went "to get her poor dog a bone." What is the meaning of that word "poor"? Often we say "poor dog" when we just mean that we like him,—a term of endearment. Maybe it means here that he was poor because his mistress was poor, as we shall discover in the second verse; perhaps it means that he was a *thin* dog. He probably gaily leaped about, and maybe barked;

or perhaps he was a trained dog, and could sit up and beg. Now what happens? "When she got there the cupboard was bare." Of course Old Mother Hubbard did not know the cupboard was bare. She thought she would find a bone there for her dog. Had she known the cupboard was bare, she would not have gone there for a bone for him. Poor old Mother Hubbard! She must have been terribly disappointed not to find that bone. And the dog — what happened to him? "And so the poor dog had none." He ceases to bark and leap joyously about; he sits sadly down, to wait for better times.

Perhaps old Mother Hubbard cries, and maybe her poor dog tries to comfort her, and in his doggy way tell her not to mind,— that he is not so very hungry, after all. Of course the dog is represented by one of the children, and as children usually love to act the part of animals, this part of the dog is a general favourite. The children's interest in the story, and their anxiety to find out what old Mother Hubbard and her dog were doing, are an incentive for the whole class to read the lines. It is the easy road to learning.

Old Mother Hubbard is merely a sample of what can be done. The interest in doing these stories never wanes, because each child in acting it out does it differently and adds something of interest each time it is done. One Mother Hubbard after another plays her part, and one is very, very old, and one is almost young, according to the child's idea of age; one weeps when she finds no bone and another bravely faces the facts like a true philosopher.

Other rhymes easy to act are "Simple Simon," "Little Miss Muffit," "Tom, the Piper's Son," "Mary and her Lamb."

Another method of bringing out dramatic action with understanding is for the teacher to read a story in prose which concludes with rhymes. These rhymes are written on the blackboard and learned in that way. The rhyme only is acted out. For instance, the teacher might read a story of the coming of Spring, telling how beautiful the earth becomes and how glad and happy are all the trees and flowers. The story ends with the rhyme, "Come, come away, Spring is here today." Now the children elect a leader, who, skipping from one to another, chooses playmates, calling "Come, come away, Spring is here today,"—and presently all the children are acting out the idea, each in his own way, and learning to read at the same time.

Another method might be the quiet acting out of a little tale. Write on the board, "I have found a dear little bird." The children all pretend they have a little bird in their hands. After they have learned to read this, write on the board "I love the little bird." All the children show their love of the bird in different ways. Then write, "Let the little bird go free," and every child opens its hands so that the little bird may go, eagerly watching as it flies away.

One great gain in this learning to read through action is the training of the imagination. A wise teacher, too, may inculcate a love and care for the birds, through acting out this loving little play.

According to all present systems of reading, the

child must wish to read, in order to learn. Anything that will awaken in him that desire is what all teachers are looking to find. Certainly the dramatic element must be a help along this line. The old-fashioned idea that the only way to teach reading is to have absolute quiet on the part of the class, and one child read aloud, stumbling along, to the utter weariness and boredom of the listening class, has about disappeared. They read now to find out just what "Big Bear" said to the "Little Bear" and their great interest carries them along; and when they personate these stories their interest increases. At first, children personate animals better than they do humans. The reading lessons become most accurate, for their audience is very critical and will tolerate no mistakes because of the acting. This impersonation is a great joy, as well as a great help, to the children. The shy, self-conscious, awkward child becomes transformed under the skilful guidance of the wise teacher, and becomes as graceful a butterfly, as charming a bird, or as natural a beast, as one would wish to see. As the class advances further, we see what a help this is in discovering how the child has failed to grasp the true meaning of words in what he reads. A class once read these words: "The kid railed at the wolf." The children thought "kid" meant child, and that he threw a rail at a wolf. When it came to be acted out, the mistake was discovered. No amount of explanation helps so much to show mistakes as the acting out of a thing will do. When children act out a story, the words yield up their real meaning. A child may read very well, and

apparently correctly, and the listening teacher fail to detect the slight inaccuracy in pronunciation, showing that the child does not understand the meaning of the sentence he has read. For example:— A class once begged the teacher to allow them to read Jean Ingelow's charming little poem, "Seven times One," asking her to let them read "There is an old dude left on the daisies and clover." Some little negro children in a Mission class were especially fond of singing the hymn which has a chorus ending with the lines "And we'll all swell the harmony in Heaven, our home." A teacher, listening carefully one day, discovered that they were all singing joyfully "And we'll all smell the hominy in Heaven, our home."

Mary Raymond Shipman Andrews writes of a little girl who, having heard "I am a soldier of the Cross, a follower of the Lamb," was heard singing, in all seriousness, "I am a shoulder of a horse, a quarter of a lamb." Children mistake the words, and often do not understand them, and, so long as they have the rhyme and rhythm of what they recite, they do not trouble about the meaning unless there is some reason for them to know it. Acting it out gives the reason.

Pictures help very much and make the emotional appeal that is so necessary to understanding. If the lesson is the "Poor little match girl," a picture of the sad little child will stir a feeling of sympathy and charity, as words alone could not do. This emotional preparation can be given by letting the children imagine the scene. Take "Excelsior," for instance. Imagine the terrible snowstorm in the

Swiss Mountains. Let the children tell about snowstorms they have known or heard about, and then begin the story of the boy in Longfellow's poem. Interested comprehension and sympathy must follow. This emotional background is almost more necessary than the intellectual one, and it is used by many writers. For instance, in "Evangeline": "This is the forest primeval, the murmuring pines and the hemlocks," gives at once the sadness and tragedy of the coming story.

In an overture the musician does the same thing in preparing his audience emotionally for what is to follow. On the stage we see this done constantly. The tenor of the play to be given is shown in the music played before the rising of the curtain, and also the atmosphere of the production in lights and scenery. In the play "Magic," as given in New York this past winter, the epilogue was a blue-grey scene, with strange and graceful trees outlined against the sky. In the dim, blue light, was discerned the figure of a girl, and the very tall shape of a man, in a queer cloak, with the pointed hood drawn over the features. With exquisite diction these figures talked about fairies and phantasy,—a wonderful preparation for the play of "Magic" which followed.

This preparation must also be done for the children in their reading lessons, if we are to train them to appreciate the great literature which is to be gradually given to them. The environment must be made real. These mental or dramatic pictures are one of the great helps in teaching reading. For instance, "The wheat field was all yellow with the

grain; it shone like gold under the warm sun." Can you imagine a field of grain? Can you feel the warm sun, and see it shining on the yellow grain? Now read the sentence, so we may all see the picture that you see. Try this one: "But when the grey dawn stole into his tent, He rose, and clad himself, and girt his sword, and took his horseman's cloak, and left his tent." Can you see the warrior awoken in the grey dawn? Do you see him vaguely because it is the dawn? Do you see him rise and clothe himself, and buckle on his sword, put on his cloak, and leave the tent? If so, you can make any one else see it.

It has been proved that it is absolutely necessary for the mind, if it is a good working mind, to see mental pictures conveyed by the written or spoken word. If the mind does not see these pictures, the mind has been improperly trained, or is lacking in intelligence. The fuller and more complete these pictures, the better is the mind. These pictures remain in the consciousness long after the story itself has been forgotten, and these pictures help to form the character. In other words, what we understand and do is greater than what we merely hear; it is the stirring up of the imagination. This is one great argument for the need of dramatics, and how important, then, is the need that these dramatics be truly educational; that the picture which is conveyed to the mind of the child, be a picture that shall educate and help to form the character.

A physician and specialist in speech defects has been making a study of pictures in the mind formed

while people are talking, to use in connection with the cure of stuttering. He discovered that with normal talkers usually a mental picture passes before the mind, and the stronger this mental picture the more convincing is the talker. In the case of fifty stutterers examined by this physician, he discovered that during stuttering there were no pictures in their minds. He was convinced, therefore, that one way to cure stammering was to give to the sufferer the ability to see these pictures of the imagination, which he set about to do, with great success. Of course it is not enough merely to arouse the imagination; it must be used; then only does it become re-creative,—otherwise, it is a dissipation of energy. In the mere amusement found by the child in the use of the imagination, there is very little value. The imagination must be used for creative work. The training of the imagination ought to be done while the child is young, because if left until later, the atmosphere of the school-room and the fear of being thought “queer,” may kill the spontaneous expression of emotion, and thus the wonderful power of imagination may be lost. Such a loss cannot be over-estimated. It means an inability to appreciate the fine spirit of literature.

CHAPTER IV

DRAMATIZATION

Dramatizing well known stories—Silas Marner—Arranging a poem in dramatic form—Horatius at the Bridge—Inspirational dramatization—The twenty-fourth Psalm—Dramatizing a poem—Young Lochinvar—Making up an original class play or pageant.

THERE is incalculable value in the dramatization of good literature or well-known stories. The printed character leaps into visualization when put in dramatic form, and teaches a lesson that no amount of reading could do. Take, for instance, "The Man Without a Country." Will not this story, dramatized, bring home the true meaning of patriotism to every boy and girl? The chivalry of the knights of the Round Table can be acted out in playing portions of the "Idylls of the King," and the characters, as well as the story, firmly fixed in the minds of the actors, to their lasting benefit. The power of love can be truly taught by giving scenes from "Silas Marner," as no reading of the book could do. It is excellent practice for a class in literature, who have made a study of "Silas Marner," to dramatize it. The story has two plots: the main plot, which, of course, is the coming back of Silas from a sordid, empty life, to natural human relations through the loss of his gold and the coming of Eppie. The second plot is the life of Godfrey

Cass,— his weakness and failure to fulfil the obligations belonging to marriage and fatherhood. The two plots overlap through Eppie. The scenes can be taken all through the book, or only a few selected. The following is a series of splendidly vital scenes.

SCENE I. The library of Squire Cass; introducing Godfrey and Dunsey Cass; the quarrel between the two brothers.

SCENE II. The Rainbow Tavern; introducing the men of the village; Silas comes to tell of his loss.

SCENE III. Silas Marner's home; the coming of Eppie.

SCENE IV. The same; Eppie a woman; introducing Aaron Winthrop.

SCENE V. Home of Godfrey Cass; Godfrey's confession to Nancy.

SCENE VI. Silas Marner's home; Godfrey and Nancy come for Eppie; Eppie's refusal to leave Silas.

Arranged in this way, it would be very effective for students of the book. Of course this arrangement of scenes is not suggested for a play to be given before an audience, but simply for pupils who have studied or read the book and are familiar with the parts of the story which have been left out of the dramatization.

In dramatizing a book to be played before a regular audience, you must always pre-suppose that they know nothing whatever about the story, and treat it exactly as you would original matter. Reduce the

book into short story form, making it very clear and concise. In order to do this, first carefully read the book and note its salient points, then rewrite the story in your own language, leaving out all unnecessary descriptions. Cut the story down to its actual events, making it as short as possible. Next decide on the length you wish to make the play, and how few scenes you can use and still keep the sequence of events. Take directly from the story those scenes severely cut. This will make the best form for any audience unacquainted with the book, and give them a clear outline of the story. This is quite different from taking scenes from a book, as we did in "Silas Marner," and putting them into dramatic form,—which is excellent practice for dramatization work with students, when the audience does not have to be considered. In the one case, it is for the audience who do not know the book, but are to be entertained; in the other case it is for the pupils who are studying the book.

Another very simple method for making literature dramatic, is to take poems like Macauley's "Horatius at the Bridge," Scott's "Lady of the Lake," "Marmion," or any poem used in connection with the study of literature, and arrange it as follows:

Four pupils are chosen to carefully study various points of the story. One has the history of the time in which the story is laid; another the costumes worn at that period; a third a description of the setting, and a fourth the story itself. These four pupils write out their various parts as briefly and comprehensively as possible, and study to read them well.

In "The Lady of the Lake," for instance, the first pupil explains about Scott's life, the quarrels between the Highlanders and Lowlanders, and the causes which led to the story. The next pupil tells about the costumes worn at the time, describes the Scotch plaids and their significance, the weapons of warfare, and any matters of interest pertaining to the dress of that period. Another pupil takes up the description of the wild, Scottish scenery, the wonderful lakes, the glens, the mountains and foaming torrents. All this prepares for the poem itself, by furnishing the background and dramatic atmosphere. The fourth pupil tells the story of the poem, until he comes to the place where the hunter's steed sank exhausted. At this point is recited the hunter's love for his steed. The story-teller again resumes his narrative. When the next vital point is reached, that portion of the poem is given to a pupil to recite. If, in the poem, there is a scene where a number of characters speak, these characters are assigned to different pupils and given like a little scene in a play. This makes variety, and the work becomes more interesting. In this manner a class can give the entire "Lady of the Lake."

In making dramatic the poem "Horatius at the Bridge," an interesting idea would be to divide the class into three groups, namely, the two contending armies and a listening group. Lars Porsena is the leader of the Etruscan Army, who are to march against Rome and try and restore the ancient rule of the house of Tarquin. Rome is defended by the Consul, the Senators and the Citizens of the Roman Republic. The first twelve verses are read or re-

ing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of his salvation." The people then make the statement: "This is the generation of them that seek him, that seek thy face, O Jacob."

The priests intone verse 7: "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of Glory shall come in." The people ask, "Who is this King of Glory?" and the priests reply, "The Lord of hosts, he is the King of Glory."

An excellent poem to dramatize is the stirring ballad of Young Lochinvar. It has infinite acting possibilities for children. The poem can readily be divided into five scenes:

- SCENE I. The Road.
- SCENE II. Netherby Gate.
- SCENE III. Netherby Hall.
- SCENE IV. The courtyard.
- SCENE V. The road.

First, the teacher reads the entire poem with simplicity and understanding, and then, by questions and constant reference to the text, the children's understanding of it is gradually developed and their interest awakened to the point of acting it out. Before beginning the first scene, let us know in what country the story is laid. In Scotland. How do we know? Because the poem speaks of the Eske River and the Solway. The Solway Firth is just south of Scotland and the estuary of the Eske river forms its upper part and is in the southeastern part of Scotland. Then, too, the poem "Young Lochinvar" is a song sung by Dame Heron in the Court

Canto of Marmion, for James IV, King of Scotland.

“O young Lochinvar is come out of the west.”

What does “west” mean here? It refers to the western territory of the border-land between Scotland and England.

“Through all the wide border his steed was the best.”

“Border” is a name given to the territory on either side of the line dividing England and Scotland.

“And save his good broadsword, he weapons had none.”

What is a “broadsword”? A broadsword is a sword having a flat blade for cutting. What does it mean about his having no weapons if he had this broadsword? The Scotch knights, in the time of young Lochinvar, carried a bow and arrows, a dagger, a shield, and often a lance, and young Lochinvar carried only his broadsword, which was almost equal to having *no* weapons. He had nothing to guard himself with, like a shield, if he were attacked, and nothing to shoot with,—having no bow and arrows.

“And he rode all alone.”

The poem calls young Lochinvar a “knight,” later a “gallant” and a “Lord.” It would seem, therefore, that young Lochinvar was of high degree, and in those days young men of high degree usually were accompanied by squires or attendants of some kind.

It was, therefore, quite remarkable that he should ride "all alone." It was brave, too, for Scotland was a very rough country at that time.

"So faithful in love" (he was true, you see), "and so dauntless in war,"—he was brave. "There never was knight like the young Lochinvar." It means that in those two things there never was a knight like him.

"He stayed not for brake."

What is a "brake"? A place overgrown with bushes and brambles.

"And he stopped not for stone."

He went right over every obstacle in his hurry to reach Netherby Hall in time.

"He swam the Eske river where ford there was none."

That was a dangerous thing to do, because, of course, it must mean that his horse went right in, too.

"But 'ere he alighted at Netherby gate
The bride had consented, the gallant came late."

In olden days the fathers made the marriages; the daughters had very little to say about it; and being an obedient daughter, she had consented. It was not a weakness,—it was a custom.

"For a laggard in love,"—meaning a man not very much in love,— "and a dastard in war,"—meaning a man who was a coward, just the opposite of young Lochinvar, you see,— "was to wed the

fair Ellen of brave Lochinvar." Ellen, you see, was really in love with young Lochinvar and probably was very unhappy at being forced to marry the "laggard in love" and the "dastard in war."

Now let us act Scene I, the road. Young Lochinvar comes riding along all alone, his broadsword in his belt, riding fast in his hurry to reach Netherby Hall. Possibly one reason why "he rode all unarmed" was because he was riding so fast and did not want to add the weight of extra arms to his steed. He goes right over all the stones in his path and through the bushes and brambles. He comes to the Eske river and does not wait to find a ford, but horse and man swim across and then gallop on. He reaches the gate of Netherby Hall and leaps from his charger, leaving the horse standing near the door. How does young Lochinvar leave his steed? Does he, perhaps, throw the lines over the horse's head, and has the animal been taught, when that happens, to stand until his master returns? Perhaps some small boy held the horse for young Lochinvar. The horse must keep very quiet,—he must not neigh or stamp or attract attention while his master enters the hall, because he is not put with the other horses: he is kept right at the door.

"So boldly he entered the Netherby Hall. Among bridesmen,"—these are men who attend upon a bridegroom and bride,—“and kinsmen and brothers and all.” Young Lochinvar has no friends there, you see; all the guests are relations or near friends of Ellen's father and mother.

“Then spoke the bride’s father, his hand on his sword.”

Ellen’s father is courteous; he is the host; he goes right up to young Lochinvar, which is courageous.

“For the poor craven bridegroom said never a word.”

The “dastard,” you see, was afraid. The father says:—

“O come ye in peace here or come ye in war,
Or to dance at our bridal, young Lord Lochinvar?”

The father is polite. He says, “O come ye in peace here,” first, before he speaks of “war.” Young Lochinvar, not being afraid, replies:

“I long wooed your daughter, my suit you denied.”

You see, he had loved Ellen for a long time, but Ellen’s father would not allow her to marry him.

“Love swells like the Solway but ebbs like its tide,”—

referring to the Solway Firth, an arm of the Irish Sea, noted for the rapidity of its tides; Lochinvar was pretending his love had ebbed like the tide,—

“And now am I come with this lost love of mine
To lead but one measure, drink one cup of wine.”

Young Lochinvar deceives Ellen’s father by pretending his love has gone and that he has only come to dance one measure and drink a cup of wine.

“There are maidens in Scotland more lovely by far
That would gladly be bride to the young Lochinvar.”

This speech deceives the father and Ellen, too. She believes him, and because she believes him she "has a smile on her lip and a tear in her eye." She tries to smile and be brave, but she can't help crying a little, too. Now the bride kisses the goblet of wine, and young Lochinvar drinks it and "he threw down the cup."

Of course this does not mean that young Lochinvar is so impolite that he throws the cup roughly down. A "knight" and "gallant" and "Lord" would not have had bad manners like that.

"He took her soft hand ere her mother could bar —
'Now tread we a measure,' said young Lochinvar."

He has come to dance and drink one cup of wine. He has drunk the wine; now he dances. He said he came for that and that only, so Ellen's mother does not object.

"So stately his form and so lovely her face"
(he is tall, she is beautiful)

"That never a hall such a galliard did grace."

A "galliard" is a spirited dance for two dancers only. It is something like a minuet.

"While her mother did fret and her father did fume"
(they did not like it at all, you see.)

"And the bridegroom stood dangling his bonnet and plume."

He was still afraid to interfere, but "stood dangling his bonnet and plume." This "bonnet" referred

to the Scotch hats worn by men at the time, which usually had eagles' plumes in them.

“ And the bride-maidens whispered, 'Twere better by far
To have matched our fair cousin to young Lochinvar.”

They did not care, you see, who married Ellen. They had come for a good time and were probably very much interested in the unexpected arrival of this handsome young knight. They are Ellen's cousins and probably fond of her, and perhaps know that she is really in love with young Lochinvar. Some of them may even be sorry to see her marry “ a laggard in love and dastard in war,” and are hoping that something may happen that will prevent it.

“ One touch to her hand and one word in her ear
When they reached the hall door, and the charger
stood near.”

Now, before we go out into the Courtyard, let us go back and act out the scene in Netherby Hall. First, we have the wedding party, before the arrival of young Lochinvar:— the pretty, gay, young “ bridesmaids ” talking and laughing with the “ bridesmen ” and “ brothers ”; Ellen's father and mother receiving their guests, the “ kinsmen ” and “ all ”; Ellen looking very unhappy; and the prospective bridegroom most inattentive to his lovely bride. Suddenly in the doorway appears the tall, straight figure of young Lochinvar. Ellen's father strides forward to meet him, “ his hand on his sword.” Ellen's mother looks worried and annoyed. Ellen

looks excited and glad. Everybody stops talking, and all are breathlessly listening while young Lochinvar answers the father and tells why he has come. He drinks the cup of wine given him by Ellen; he dances with her, always in the dance moving nearer the door. Then he asks her to go with him, and they rush out.

“So light to the croupe the fair lady he swung,
So light to the saddle before her he sprung,”

He springs in front of her, you see. How does he swing her up? How does he get on? To spring before her is not easy. He must do it much more carefully than in the ordinary way. Usually, a man puts his left foot into the stirrup and swings his right foot over. In this case we must have the horse near the stone steps of Netherby Hall, in order that young Lochinvar may easily and quickly spring into the saddle.

“She is won! we are gone, over bank, bush and
scaur!” (a barren place)

“They’ll have fleet steeds that follow, quoth young
Lochinvar.”

You remember that the poem said “through all the wide border his steed was the best.” He has faith in his steed, he knows his horse is the best. He knows “She is won.”

“There was mounting ’mong Graemes of the Netherby
clan
Fosters, Fenwicks and Musgraves they rode and they
ran.”

All these are the names of lofty families. The Graemes were wards of the king. They are all terribly excited, and lose time because their steeds are probably not near and ready.

“There was racing and chasing on Cannobie Lee.”

This place is in the southeastern part of Scotland.

“But the lost bride of Netherby ne'er did they see.”

“So daring in love and so dauntless in war
Have ye e'er heard of gallant like young Lochinvar?”

This final scene in the Courtyard — the mounting and riding off of young Lochinvar and Ellen, and the rushing about and chasing of the Netherby clan, makes a splendid finale to the poem.

One of the most interesting experiments in dramatization is that of making up a play. For example: the senior class wishes to give an original class play or pageant to celebrate the birthday of Shakespeare, April 23. First must be considered the possibilities and limitations of the class, the age of the pupils, the number in the class, and the other pupils in the school who can be counted upon to assist in the production. Suppose there are 45 members in the class, 15 boys and 30 girls, the ages ranging from 15 to 17 years. The class holds a council to discover the individual talent. It is found that all of the girls dance, and five of the boys; two of the girls have been trained in stage dancing, all of the class can sing — one boy especially well — several play on musical instruments, all can act. It is also ascertained that members of the lower classes will be glad to join the senior class in making the play

a success. After a discussion, the seniors decide to give a pageant, because of the fact that the class is large and their talents more in line with pageant work, and also, it being in the spring of the year, it is decided that it will be more effective to give it out-of-doors in the school grounds.

A study of the time of William Shakespeare follows, in order to gather together material for the play: the history, the customs, the sports. It is discovered that in the days of Shakespeare, Queen Elizabeth enjoyed wonderful pageants which were planned to do her honour, and that the Lord of a Castle would arrange a pageant in which his tenants often took an active part in giving country weddings, dances, and tumbling feats to amuse the Queen. The Earl of Leicester gave such a pageant at Kenilworth Castle which lasted several days while Queen Elizabeth honoured him with her presence. This is described at length by Walter Scott in *Kenilworth*: how Queen Elizabeth arrived at Kenilworth Castle at twilight of a summer night, July 9, 1575, escorted by its owner, the magnificent Earl of Leicester. The Queen was mounted on a milk-white horse and the Earl of Leicester rode a black steed "which had not a single white hair on his body." The Queen was magnificently arrayed and glittering with jewels which scintillated in hundreds of waxen torches held by horsemen. As the cavalcade approached the gallery-tower, a huge porter stepped forward and barred their passage, but at sight of the Queen resigned his keys and welcomed her to the castle. Cannon were fired and bands of music played as the Queen approached. As she crossed the bridge a

new spectacle was provided, for here a raft, made to resemble an island, floated down, and a beautiful lady was discovered attended by nymphs. The lady addressed herself to the Queen, telling her she was the Lady of the Lake who, until now, had reigned supreme, but had left her crystal palace in the lake to pay homage and duty to the peerless Elizabeth. Fireworks of great magnificence were now discharged as the Queen entered the castle. During her visit at the castle sports of all kinds were arranged for her pleasure.

The class decides to plan a pageant founded on this idea. A committee was formed to bring drawings and pictures of the costumes of the period. The name of the pageant was discussed and voted upon, and "A Day in the Time of Queen Elizabeth" was finally chosen. Each member of the class was to write a pageant, having always in mind the class and its possibilities, and hand it in to the class teacher during the coming week without the writer's name attached. A committee of five members and the teacher was appointed to read these and choose from them six of the best, to be read to the entire class, and then the best parts of these six plays were to be taken to form a whole. The writer chosen by vote of the class, after hearing the six plays, was to take the material and write the final play. This was done. The pageant began in this way:

Scene, a grassy place near a castle.

To bright music (this music to be furnished by the musicians in the class, with the assistance of a drum and brass instruments) enter, in groups, the

villagers, gathering to see the show; sellers of wares, children, a few Puritans here and there, who, by their manner, show their disapproval of the gaiety. The costumes are varied; those selling wares have trays fastened over their shoulders with ribbons. They approach the others, and in pantomime ask them to buy. Autolycus enters, singing the Pedlar's song from "Winter's Tale," "Lawn as white as driven snow." (This song was introduced especially for the boy of the class who sang so well.) The vendors of wares join in the chorus and sing the song with him.

A loud drum is heard and in come the tumblers and their group of performers. (This act was introduced because the school boasted a wonderful gymnasium and the boys did pyramids and feats of this kind particularly well.) They wear coloured tights and trunks, carry strips of bright carpet which they proceed to unroll, and, amid loud drum beats, begin their show surrounded now and again by the townspeople who vigorously applaud each act. Seemingly they are interrupted by a fanfare of trumpets, and a procession of heralds approaches and announces the distant coming of Queen Elizabeth. The crowd immediately group themselves to watch her arrival. From one side comes the Lord of the Manor and his attendants to await the Queen's arrival. The heralds fall to the sides, holding back the crowds. First, come more heralds and pages, then gentlemen and ladies of the court, then the Queen, followed by more attendants. The Queen is met by the Lord of the Manor, who escorts her to a pavilion (ar-

ranged at one end of the garden path), amid the shouts of the crowd, to whom she graciously bows. Her group then forms a tableau.

Enter, in Irish costumes, the two girls who have learned to dance exceptionally well. They give an Irish dance.

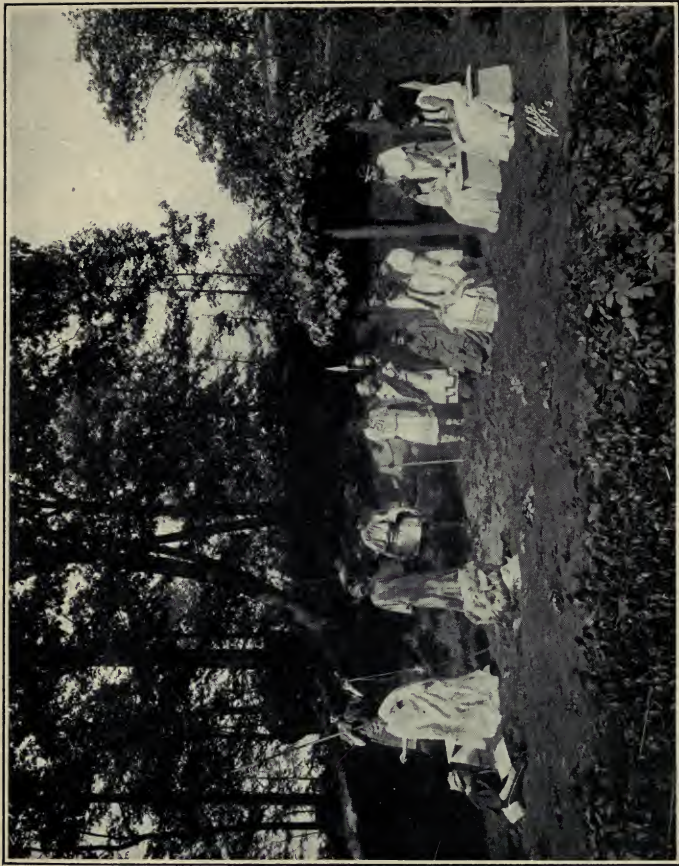
Meantime, a group has been coming down the path, headed by a country maiden in white with Elizabethan short veil over her hair, accompanied by her gallant bridegroom, and a wedding procession. The band plays a country wedding march. Two or three people from the crowd detach themselves and come up, offering gifts to the bride. The procession forms into a group and dances a country dance.

Now all sing "Over hill, over dale," from "A Midsummer Night's Dream," and two fairies enter carrying a bannerette on which is inscribed "A Portion of 'Ye Midsummer Night's Dream,' by Master Will Shakespeare." They stand at centre-back, holding bannerette during performance which follows. Fairies enter carrying branches, with which they make a bit of scenic effect like a wood. They group themselves in graceful poses.

Enter Puck, to singing of "Over hill, over dale." He dances, but, apparently hearing a sound, he becomes frightened and runs and hides.

Enter a fairy, who dances, but suddenly seeing Puck peeping out at her from behind a tree, she runs away. Puck reappears and the fairy shyly returns. Hearing some one approaching, Puck and the fairy hide, but stealthily watch the scene that follows.

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ARTISAN SCENE FROM "MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM"
(Courtesy of Riverdale Country School)

Titania enters with her little Indian boy, whom she "crowns with flowers." Oberon enters and demands the child, but Titania refuses to give him up and indignantly exits, taking the child with her. The fairy follows her mistress. Oberon beckons Puck to come to him and they exit talking in pantomime. The fairies then exit, taking the tree branches away with them.

When the pantomime is over all the fairies group themselves behind the pavilion.

Next follows a Maypole dance. The band now plays a grand march, and all form into procession according to groups, led by the Queen and the Court group. After marching about the paths, all exit.

In giving "A Midsummer Night's Dream" the artisans' scenes could be included if desired. For instance, beginning with the fairy scene, as here described, the scene next given could be a pantomime of the Lullaby sung by the fairies to Titania, her sleep, the coming of Oberon and his dropping the juice from the purple flower upon her sleeping eyes; the coming of the artisans and the amusing rehearsal of their play; Nick Bottom's exit to the brake, where Puck transforms him by giving him an ass's head; his return and the terror and flight of his friends; the awakening of Titania and the working of the spell, followed by the exit of Titania and Bottom with the laughing train of fairies; Oberon's and Puck's return and Oberon's naughty joy at Puck's description, in pantomime, of Titania's plight; the return of Titania and Bottom attended by Cobweb, Mote, Mustardseed and Peaseblossom, and their waiting upon Nick Bottom at their mis-

tress's command; the fairies' departure, leaving the sleeping Titania and Bottom, and her awakening after Oberon squeezes the healing juice upon her eyes; and the reconciliation of Oberon and Titania.

A "Winter's Tale" can be used in the same way, by giving the shearing scene in pantomime.

Wonderful scenes can be arranged from Henry V. The scene before Harfleur, or the gorgeous scene of the entry into London in triumph. This could be prolonged by beginning the pantomime in the London streets before the arrival of the soldiers, and all sorts of bits could be introduced in the way of street venders, tumblers and performers of all kinds, and even pathetic bits when the soldiers begin to arrive and a maiden looks anxiously for her lover as the men march past, and presently one soldier signifies to her in pantomime that he will never return:

Henry VIII, of course, has wonderful possibilities in the feast scene, the court scene and the coronation scene.

Modern plays that are well known can be arranged in the same way, and fairy tales can always be used.

CHAPTER V

HOW TO WRITE A PLAY

Choosing a subject—Crises of life—Conflict—Construction of framework—Charts of crises—Bluebeard used as illustration—Scenario—Development of characters—Lines—Exposition: different types—"Planting" properties and setting—Suspense—"Obligatory scenes"—Action and interest.

THE first requirement of a successful play is that it must hold the interest of an audience. Before beginning to write a play, therefore, the first thing to do is to decide whether or not your subject is interesting. It may be of intense interest to you, but has it a universal appeal? Will other people care to spend twenty minutes or an hour or two hours of their time and attention upon it? Certain great themes, of course, are of supreme interest to every one. Love, hatred, jealousy, ambition, patriotism, and a few others never fail to win a general response, but they have been used so often that one is tempted to cast them aside in scorn and hunt for some new and original subject.

This search for the unique and unusual has led playwrights to all sorts of strange themes for their plays. A certain cult has arisen which worships the trivial. No situation in life is too small and unimportant for them. They write dull and tragic dialogues about such matters as the burning of toast

for breakfast, or the selling of a cow. In the hands of a master these trivialities could be made matters of supreme importance and significance, but in less skilful hands small affairs remain small affairs, and cannot be lifted from the sordid and commonplace to the realm of the dramatic. And, after all, when the trivial things *are* transformed into matters of supreme significance, when they do become truly dramatic, they become so only because they are shown in some vital connection with one of the few fundamental emotions of life. Therefore, there is no use in trying to discard the old subjects. They are few and badly worn, it is true, but they are the basis of all thought and action and are, therefore, of interest to all the human race.

Plays are unlike any other form of literary expression because they deal only with the important moments of existence, the significant happenings, the crises of life. The definition of a crisis is that it is "a turning point in the progress of an affair or of a series of events,— a juncture on which depends a transition from better to worse." It is a moment of suspense, a moment when the action hesitates, a moment of conflict between success and failure.

✓ "Conflict," then is one of the essential elements of drama. All drama, in fact, is conflict in one form or another. The Greek tragedies portrayed man in conflict with relentless fate: Ædipus struggled in vain to avoid committing the horrible deeds to which he was destined by the Gods. Shakespeare's characters are shown in conflict with some weakness of their own personalities. The tragic element in Macbeth lies not in the death of Duncan, but in the

fact that Macbeth was beaten in the fight with his own ambition. In modern dramas the conflict lies between one personality and another, or between the soul and its environment. "The Doll's House," for example, is concerned with Nora's struggle to develop amid the discouraging influences of her home.

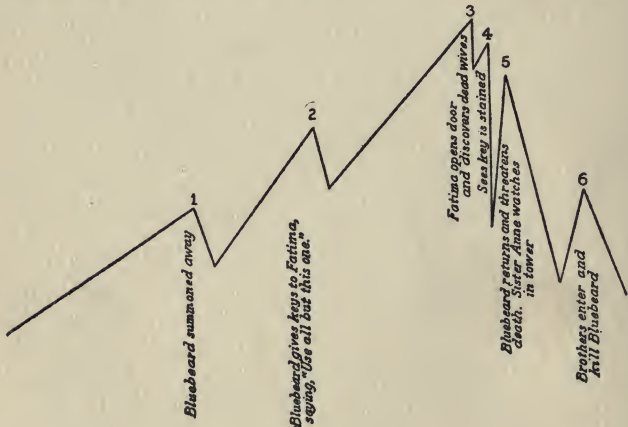
There is another type of story-play and adventure play, of which "Peter Pan" and "Treasure Island" are good examples. The conflict here lies between character and circumstance. This type of play particularly must be built up around important crises to which the action leads clearly and logically, for they are really narratives in dramatic form.

The logical development of action is absolutely essential in dramatic construction. Events must follow each other rapidly and in proper, consecutive order. In a play there is no going back and saying, "Oh, I forgot, this thing happened along about the first act." Every bit of action must occur at the right time and in the right place. Next to an uninteresting subject, nothing bores and annoys an audience as much as a good subject handled in a confusing way. Your audience must understand what is happening. It must be able to follow the plot, step by step. To tell any story clearly and logically is a far more difficult matter than it would appear to be. To build up a play clearly and logically it is almost essential to draw up an outline, diagrams, and a scenario before even considering the lines.

The first step in building this framework of a play is to find out exactly what it is about. Analyse the story, discover the climax of the action, and the

crises and sub-crises leading up to, and down from it. Find the high spots in the plot, the "sign posts" that point the way the story is going. When you have found the climax and the crises, then diagram them in a chart like a fever chart, indicating high spots of tensity as you would indicate high degrees of fever.

For example you might be writing a play about the story of Bluebeard. To find the central climax of the plot, that point toward which all rising action leads and from which it descends, ask this question: "What is the play about?" It is about a young wife who opens a door her husband forbade her opening. Roughly, that is the story; therefore, that moment of *opening the door* is the climax of the play. The important steps, or sub-crises, in the development of the plot are easily outlined. A young bride, Fatima, has been brought to Blue-

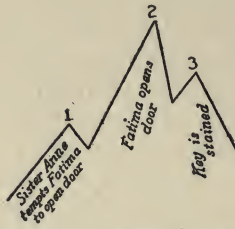


beard's castle — he is summoned to go away — he gives her his keys with the command that she shall not use a certain one in opening a certain door — he goes away — she is tempted by sister Anne — she opens the door and discovers headless wives — the forbidden key is seen to be stained with blood — Bluebeard unexpectedly returns — demands keys — threatens death — Anne watches for brothers — brothers enter — Bluebeard killed. For a one-act play it should be charted in this way.

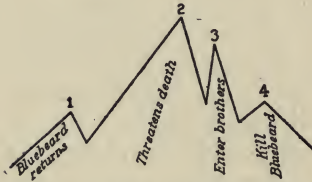
If "Bluebeard" were to be made into a three-act play, however, each act should be diagrammed separately, after the whole has been charted as shown above. An act is a division of a play which has to do with one consecutive part of the action. It has dramatic structure similar to that of the whole play, with crises and sub-crises, rising and falling action. It has a theme of its own, subordinate to the theme of the whole. In analysing Bluebeard it is seen that there really are three themes: (1) The giving of the keys, with the command not to use the certain one. (2) The opening of the door. (3) The results of Fatima's disobedience. They would be charted in this way:



ACT I. THE KEYS



ACT II. THE DOOR



ACT III. THE CONSEQUENCES

Charts are excellent to use in rehearsing a play, in order to keep the action at the right tempo at important crises. A dramatic director should know the play she is rehearsing so well that the making of charts would be very simple. They will also be found to be of the greatest assistance to others who may be helping with the rehearsals, by clarifying the director's ideas about the value of the different scenes.

After the charts have been made, the important points in the plot are clearly seen. The next thing to do is to make a more detailed outline of the action, putting in every entrance and exit and indicating the substance of the speeches. It is absolutely necessary to have a clear plan of action for every character.

A detailed outline, or scenario as it is called, will keep this action straight. In making this scenario, remember that every bit of action must have some reason for being and must be accounted for. If a character enters a room there must be some reason for his entering it; if he goes out, he must go out because he has obvious business elsewhere,—not because you, as the author, must get him off stage by fair means or foul. Do not take as your example the type of modern play in which ten or twelve neighbours in night garb appear suddenly and casually in a bed-room at midnight, with no apparent excuse for their being there except that they are thus obeying an arbitrary author. The author must never consider his own convenience in a play, nor must he ever accept chance as a partner. Nothing in a play must ever happen by chance. Everything must be accounted for. In making out the scenario of Bluebeard it must not be left to chance that the brothers appear at the crucial moment to save their sister; it must be shown that they have been expected to drop in and were delayed in coming.

In making the scenario of Bluebeard, it will be more convenient to consider it as a one-act play. In that case the setting would be that of a reception hall, with several doors in the walls. A stairway would lead down to the courtyard below, and another narrow stair would lead up to the turret chamber from which sister Anne must watch.

The term "scene," as it is used in a scenario, applies to every change of entrance or exit and has nothing to do with setting or scenery.

SCENARIO FOR BLUEBEARD

- SCENE 1. Sister Anne and friend waiting in reception hall to receive guests — Discuss Fatima's wedding — friend dubious as to Bluebeard's character — hint of mystery in castle.
- SCENE 2. Messenger arrives bringing news that brothers have been delayed and cannot come to party until late.
- SCENE 3. Enter Fatima happily — disappointed about brothers.
- SCENE 4. Enter Bluebeard — agreeable and polite.
- SCENE 5. Enter courtiers, etc.— merrymaking.
- SCENE 6. Enter messenger summoning Bluebeard away.
- SCENE 7. Sister Anne and others go down to banquet — Bluebeard gives keys of castle to Fatima, forbidding her to use a certain one.
- SCENE 8. He goes — accompanied by guests.
- SCENE 9. Sister Anne and Fatima open doors — Fatima finds door into whose lock the forbidden key fits — Sister Anne tempts her, she opens door, sees headless wives, faints — Sister Anne closes door,— they discover blood stain on keys.
- SCENE 10. Bluebeard's voice from below,— he has forgotten something and returned — Fatima and Sister Anne scrub key — Bluebeard's step on stairs — Sister Anne rushes up to tower to signal for help — Fatima conceals key.
- SCENE 11. Bluebeard pleasant at first — Fatima tries to hide terror — Bluebeard demands keys — sees one missing — threatens death. Fatima pleads for time — calls to Sister Anne — "Sis-

ter Anne, sister Anne, do you see them coming ”
etc. Bluebeard brandishes scimeter.

SCENE 12. Brothers rush in — fight — kill Bluebeard — all happy.

Curtain

The development of characters is the next thing to do after the framework of the play has been constructed. They must be carefully thought out and must be as much like real people as it is possible to make them. Unless you are writing a melodrama, your heroes and heroines must not be the personification of all virtue, and your villains and vampires the incarnation of all evil. They must be human, with a mingling of good and evil,— and some of them must be amusing. Most people have some trait about them that is amusing: inconsistencies of character, incongruities, an entertaining manner of speaking,— something that makes for laughter. Play characters are too apt to be either hopelessly foolish or unbearably stiff and serious. Make them human. Remember that even kings and queens of history had many of the same interests and instincts as have any of our friends of today. Queens were just as much absorbed in whether or not their hair was becomingly arranged, and kings were just as much annoyed when the beef was overdone, as are any of our neighbours in any modern suburb.

Your heroes and heroines must not be absolute perfection, but they must be attractive enough to win the sympathy of the audience. It is fatal to one's play if the audience is attracted to the wrong

character. Your hero may be weak, but he must not be so weak that he inspires a feeling of antagonism instead of sympathy. Above all things, the audience must not rejoice in his misfortunes and leave the theatre saying, "Well, it served him right." No, the audience must feel toward him as toward an old friend; they must see and love his admirable qualities, realize his weaknesses, but forgive them through sympathy and understanding, and they must ardently desire that at the end of the play he will triumph over all difficulties.

To work out the characters, take your scenario and diagrams and think out just what kind of people would be apt to find themselves in the situations of your play. Certain situations are invariably the result of certain human characteristics. Work backward by saying: "This thing happened to such and such a character. Why did it? It happened because she did something that led up to it; because she was a certain kind of a person, or had a certain weakness or failing or virtue." In this way you can trace occurrences back to important characteristics. When you have one important characteristic of a person, it is easy to work out the others. For example: all the trouble in "Bluebeard" occurred because Fatima opened the forbidden door. Why did she open it? Probably for three reasons. (1) She was curious to see what was behind. (2) She was tempted by her sister Anne. (3) She was overcome by a mischievous desire to do what she was told not to do. There you have all the elements necessary for the character of Fatima. She was inquisitive, rather too easily

swayed by other influences, and was in reality little more than a spoiled child. A spoiled child may be very charming and delightful; a heroine should certainly be charming and delightful. There is the character of Fatima all ready to be embodied in the play. In the same way the other characters can be worked out and made to appear real and living persons.

The lines have a great deal to do with this appearance of reality. Your characters must talk consistently. They must not talk as you would talk, but as they would talk. A farmer does not talk as does a king, nor does a young girl use the same words that a sage would use. And every one talks in short, disconnected phrases and sentences. Very few people talk in prose, as it is written. Listen to people talking on the streets or in the trains; analyse their sentences and try to punctuate them. You will see that every-day speech does not conform to any rules of composition. In old plays, people talked on and on for paragraphs. In Calderon's "Life is a Dream," in fact, one character talks without a break for 238 lines. If that were done nowadays the audience would get up and file out of the theatre in the middle of the speech. Short sentences and short speeches are the rule.

There are four important kinds of lines:—

(1) *Plot lines*

Lines which carry on the action.

(2) *Atmosphere lines*

Lines which establish the tone and mood of the play.

(3) *Character lines*

Lines which bring out the characteristics of your people.

(4) *Laugh lines*

Take a short passage from Macbeth, for example, which has three of these types of lines. It is from Act I, scene 2, where Macbeth and Banquo enter.

MACBETH

“So foul and fair a day I have not seen.”

This is obviously a line which produces an effect of atmosphere. It is a bit of verbal scenery, the kind of scenery which Shakespeare used almost exclusively but which is not found as successful today as is canvas and paint.

Next Banquo speaks:

BANQUO

. . . “What are these
So withered and so wild in their attire?”

This line and the rest of the passage are character lines, explaining and bringing out the characters of the witches.

The following speeches of the witches are plot lines:

FIRST WITCH

All hail Macbeth! Hail to thee, Thane of Glamis!

SECOND WITCH

All hail Macbeth! Hail to thee, Thane of Cawdor!

THIRD WITCH

All hail Macbeth! Thou shalt be king hereafter!

These plot lines throw the interest forward and are three of the most important lines in *Macbeth*.

Laugh lines are also of great importance and should be placed carefully where they may be of greatest value. Never have a speech that is very amusing crowd too closely upon an important plot line, for the laughter of the audience will drown the plot line and so a link in the development of the action be lost.

One of the oldest tricks of play-writing, however, is to put in a laugh line after the pause which follows a very tense or pathetic speech or situation. The audience needs a relief from tensity or pathos; it needs to be let down gently after it has been keyed up to a pitch of emotion. This particular use of the laugh line not only affords temporary relaxation of the emotions but also intensifies, by contrast of mood, whatever serious action immediately follows. One of the best examples of this is in *Macbeth* in the beginning of Act II, scene 3. The last scene has just ended with the murder of Duncan. The closing speech has been one of deep horror and tragedy.

MACBETH

"To know my deed, 'twere best not know myself.

(Knocking within)

"Wake Duncan with thy knocking! I would thou couldst!"

There the scene ends and the next scene opens in the same place, with the knocking continuing. The Porter enters, and the Porter is a comedy character.

PORTER

"Here's a knocking indeed! If a man were porter of hell-gate, he should have old turning the key. (Knocking within.) Knock, knock, knock, knock! Who's there, i' the name of Beelzebub?" etc.

He continues, and though his humour is the broad humour of Shakespeare's time, still it supplies the comic relief, and the contrast to the tragedy that enveloped the castle.

The laugh comes at odd times in real life, and that is the basic reason for the introducing of comic relief into dramas. When putting in a laugh line after a serious pause, be careful not to detract the attention of the audience too far from the main issue of the play. Let them laugh, give them their moment of relaxation and then swing them back again into full attention to the development of the plot.

This undivided attention of the audience is the thing you must work for constantly in play construction. You must hold the attention from the rising to the falling of the curtain. Consequently, the beginning of the play is of great importance, for the beginning supports all the structure of the whole. It is impossible to jump right into the middle of an intense situation without some explanation of the events which have gone before. This explanation of all that leads up to the beginning of a play is called the "Exposition."

From the earliest point of dramatic development there have been different methods of handling the exposition. In Greek plays it was supplied by the

chorus, or the soliloquy of a servant, or possibly by a god. In plays of a few generations past, a character known as the "Singing Chambermaid" came out and dusted the parlour, and while dusting and singing informed the audience all about all the family secrets. When she had fully prepared the audience for the plot that was to follow, another character entered the room and the play was really on. Now the exposition is always transmitted to the audience through the medium of a willing listener. The character who is to reveal the explanation of the events leading up to the opening action must have some one to talk to. He may not talk either directly to the audience or to himself. Consequently, some other character must "lend him an ear." This character may be a policeman who must be informed of all the details of a crime, or an elderly clergyman, doctor or lawyer who must be consulted about family difficulties. Usually, however, the willing listener is some confidential friend, just returned from Africa, perhaps, or from driving an ambulance in France.

The exposition in *Romeo and Juliet*, in which the servants of the Capulets and the Montagues meet, is almost perfect in the rapidity with which the audience is introduced to the situation and the theme.

In writing the exposition for "Bluebeard," for example, the important points to be brought out are these:

- (1) Bluebeard has married a young wife.
- (2) He has recently brought her to his castle.

- (3) There is some doubt as to the perfection of his character.
- (4) There is some mystery connected with the castle.
- (5) Guests are expected and merrymaking is about to take place.
- (6) Fatima's brothers, expected to the merry-making, have been delayed but will come later in the day.

If it were a Greek play some old, bent retainer would come out into the centre of the stage and declaim something like this:

“Into this ill-omened castle Bluebeard hath led his maiden,
 His young wife fair,
 Now come the guests, with gifts of welcome laden;
 But lo, a pair
 Is late — her brothers — may they haste their riding,
 Spurring their steeds, or they will meet some tiding
 Of black despair.”

After that, in would come Fatima and Bluebeard, and the play would be in full swing. Or, if this were a play of a few generations past, the “Singing Chambermaid” would enter the hall, arrayed in bewitching black dress and white apron, and proceed to talk to herself while she dusted: —

“I must hurry and get through with my dusting before the new mistress comes down and the guests arrive. Oh, the poor young thing! — coming to this gloomy place; alas! no good will come of it. (She dusts and hums.) And every one saying such

terrible things about the master. (She hums, and picks up a letter from desk.) I suppose I shouldn't read this, but I'll just peep. (Reading.)

' My dear sister :

' We have been delayed and cannot come until late this afternoon. Expect us then for dinner.

Your affectionate
Brothers.' "

Then Fatima would enter, the maid quietly put down the letter just in time to escape notice, and, the exposition being over, the play would proceed.

In a thoroughly modern play, sister Anne and a friend just back from nursing at the front would enter the hall.

SISTER ANNE

I'm so glad you came early, dear, before the other guests. I've been dying to tell you all about it —

FRIEND

And I'm just *dying* to hear — wasn't it *very* sudden?

SISTER ANNE

Yes; but you know Fatima just will have her own way, and Bluebeard, of course, when he makes up his mind about a thing — well, that's all there is to it.

FRIEND

(drily)

Yes, so I imagined. Then all those stories about him weren't true?

SISTER ANNE

(shrugging her shoulders)

Who can tell — anyway, he's very rich, and it's a fine castle.

FRIEND

(shuddering)

Yes, but gloomy. Ugh! It almost seems —
 (Telephone rings; Anne answers it.)

ANNE

Hello, hello, — yes, it's Anne. What? — you've had a blow-out? — too bad — well, get here as soon as you can. Fatima wants you specially. Good-bye. (To friend.) It's my brothers, — they've been delayed.

(Enter Fatima, and the action goes on.)

The greatest difference between the old and the new type of exposition is that now the soliloquy is prohibited. It used to be an easy matter to get any thought "across," when the actor could address the audience directly. He could stand alone on the stage and reveal the inmost workings of his mind, his attitude toward life, religion and eternity. The audience quickly saw just how he stood in relation to all the other characters, and knew just what his line of action was to be. It was very simple. Now it is much harder for a character to take the audience into his confidence, for the soliloquy is banished absolutely from the play.

The "aside" also is a thing of the past. A hero may no longer stride upon the stage, greet the villain with polite words and, while shaking hands, declare passionately over his shoulder to the audience: — "Ah, the miscreant! — he means to get my beloved, but I will foil him."

Every important point in your play must be emphasized and re-emphasized. Not only the impor-

tant lines, but also important properties or part of the stage setting must be forced upon the consciousness of the audience. If there is a certain "property" upon which the action of the play depends, you must "plant" that property so that the audience may become accustomed to it from the beginning of the action. In "Bluebeard" the play centres about a key and a door. It would make a bad interruption in the attention of the audience if, in the middle of the play, Bluebeard should produce his keys for the first time. Every one would crane his head and remark to his neighbour,—“ Oh, there are the keys. Which is the bad one — that long one? See, there it is.” It would break the tension of the moment in which the mind of the audience should be following closely the action of the play. To avoid this, Bluebeard should wear his keys on his sash from the rising of the curtain. They should jingle as he walks, and some mention should be made of them by some character early in the action. In this way the audience would become accustomed to them gradually and realize that they are an integral part of the play. An idea gets across to an audience slowly, and so must be repeated and repeated in different ways. Another example in "planting" a property or bit of scenery can be seen by working out the problem of proper emphasis of the mysterious door in "Bluebeard." The audience must be made to believe that that door *is* mysterious, that there is something strange and evil about it. Of course, the characters can talk about it with fear and trembling; but talking does not, after all, get an idea "across" as effectively as does action.

"Seeing is believing," and the audience must see that there is something wrong about that door. A curious, ghastly light might be thrown upon it, or it might have a dark brown stain on one of the panels. At any rate, people in passing it could edge away, as if in fear. When once the audience realizes that a line or property or bit of setting is important, they begin to wonder why, they begin to expect something, and this expectancy heightens the suspense.

Suspense is one of the secrets of a successful play. Carry the audience up to a crisis by a clear line of action, and then tease them by making them wonder which way the action will turn next. Expectancy is one of the fundamental elements of suspense, and one of the best means of stimulating expectancy is through an "Obligatory Scene."

An obligatory scene is a scene which the author promises the audience. It is a scene which is prophesied by some speech or action earlier in the play. The entrance of the brothers in "Bluebeard" is an Obligatory Scene because it has been brought out that they will come. Therefore, all through the part of the action where Bluebeard is threatening to kill Fatima, and Fatima is crying to sister Anne—"Do you see anything, do you see anything?"—the audience knows that the brothers ought to be there,—they expect them, and yet they may arrive too late.

Volumes, of course, have been written upon the art and technique of writing a play. The two most important things to remember, however, are to have your action move quickly, clearly and logically, and to have it interesting.

CHAPTER VI

PROCESS OF PRODUCTION

The choice of a play—Preliminary rehearsals—Behind the production—Business Committee—Stage Manager—Lights—Costumes—Make-up—Properties.

THE choice of a play is the first step to take toward the production of a play. Its value to the players and to the audience is its first aspect to be considered; and to be of any value it must first possess a quality of entertaining, and of holding interest. Entertainment does not necessarily mean amusement, but diversion. No one would say, "the first quality your play must possess is that of humorous appeal"; but it must have a certain human appeal that holds the attention, and does not bore either audience or players. There are two unfortunate theories in regard to the choice of amateur plays; one held by most schools, and the other, by most small amateur companies. The schools consider the drama only as a vehicle for educational purposes.

They hitch their wagon to a star and go shooting wildly off into dramatic realms, far, far above the heads of their unfortunate pupils. They wish to educate the taste, to elevate the masses. What is better, they ask, for such purposes, than to have their pupils act the wonderful inspiring age-old

Greek plays — or perhaps the Shakespearean tragedies? Unfortunately this theory of “only the best” often works badly; for the pupils, totally failing to understand the beauty of the classics, are apt to be bored and wearied; and ever after hold the old Greeks in supreme contempt.

The theory held by many amateur companies is that they are the chosen of God to present Truth to the world; Truth in some new and strange and shocking form. They revel in plays that are strong and passionate and sombre. Russian gloom is to them a godsend. The slices of life they choose to portray are composed largely of elements resembling a mixture of soggy dough, vinegar, long over-ripe fruit — with a little gunpowder sauce on the side.

No one would ban the presentation of Truth, but it should be remembered that artistic power is required to present ugly truths, or they degenerate into absurd and unconvincing melodrama.

This is not a plea for the adoption of the vaudeville type of performance by all schools and dramatic associations; but it is a plea for the adoption of plays that are somewhere near the mental and emotional understanding of your players. The play is a failure, as far as your players are concerned if they have not the maturity to grasp it mentally; it is a failure, as far as the audience is concerned if the players have not the power to portray it emotionally.

Moral and educational values must, however, also be taken into serious consideration; and the play chosen must have some reason for being. There must be something in it that repays study and effort.

It must be a true interpretation of life, or a convincing portrayal of fantasy. The characters in it must be *real* people, with *real* emotions; and they must say *real* things, in lines that are worth learning by heart. It should have a plausible plot, well developed, with good dramatic situations, moments of pathos, or tragedy, all intermingled with humour. Do not be afraid of humour: players and audience respond to it with gratifying appreciation.

Practical aspects must also be considered: the number and type of characters required, and the necessary costumes, scenery and properties.

If you are choosing a play for a school it is advisable to have a good many characters: a few principals, and a number of non-speaking characters, such as fairies, sailors, soldiers, or villagers. A large cast is, however, very difficult to handle, for the players will be absent, and late to rehearsals, and the more people there are, the greater is the confusion. If there are few characters in your play, and many people who desire parts, then have a double cast. The members of the second cast serve as understudies for the first, and if more than one performance of the play is given, they must have an opportunity of playing before the public. This double cast arrangement is excellent for a disciplinary measure, for if any member of the first cast disobeys rehearsal rules, or is inattentive or uninterested, the understudy immediately takes his place.

Avoid plays with star parts, particularly when working with children. It is extremely bad for any child to feel himself the centre of the spot light, and besides this there are very few amateur players who

can successfully take a star part. They seldom know enough of stage technique to preserve their energy for special scenes and so keep the rest of the performance from being dull. This is the only thing that saves a star part from being monotonous and so deadening a play. If a star part is unavoidable, however, build it up as well as possible, and place great emphasis upon the importance of all the smaller parts.

The costumes, scenery and properties demanded may bar many plays which would otherwise be possible.

Many require gorgeous costuming that no amateur company's exchequer can afford; and again many demand such things as marble palaces, mountains of ice or enchanted forests; and small properties in such profusion that any professional would be sorely put to it to supply the lists.

The physical characteristics of your stage must have some influence in your choice of a play. If your stage is small, as it probably is, it may not be possible to give a play with many "supes" or many dances. Or your text may demand more exits and entrances than your stage and scenery provide.

PRELIMINARY REHEARSALS

The first rehearsal, after the play has finally been chosen, should be devoted to a reading by the director, and a general discussion. The story of the play should first be told and an explanation made of the theme and character development. Special emphasis should be laid on the small parts, and

their relation to the plot as a whole. In this rehearsal there should be no stage business.

At the second rehearsal there should be a round and round reading of the play. This arouses the interest of the players and gives the director an idea of their ability and intellectual grasp of the situations. Special attention should be paid to pronunciation, and an intelligent reading of the lines, with correct punctuation. The meaning of important lines may be entirely changed by the use of the wrong punctuation, or by some absurd mistake in the typing. All mistakes of this kind should be corrected early in the study of the play, or they will become fixed in the player's mind, and remain stumbling blocks throughout all the rehearsals.

An instance of this sort occurred in a play in which there was this line—"This week-old crust of bread is all the food I have here in the house." Either the hyphen in "week-old" was omitted in typing, or the girl who spoke the line failed absolutely to grasp its meaning, for ever after she rang all conceivable and inconceivable changes upon that phrase. She would say, "this week, old crust of bread is all the food," or changing the spelling, "this weak, old, crust of bread." The misunderstanding slipped the attention of the director in the early rehearsals and, therefore, was always a spot of trouble.

At the third rehearsal the parts should be assigned. In educational dramatics the emphasis in regard to a play is placed on its value to the players: in professional dramatics the emphasis is placed on its value to the audience. Consider upon which

group you are placing the emphasis of value and then cast your parts accordingly. If you are working with young children and the purpose of your play is merely to develop personality, or teach the players some lesson, then cast them for the parts which will best bring out the characteristics you want to encourage. If you are counting upon an enthusiastic audience, or a financial success, then give the part to the player who will play it best.

Do not give two parts to one player unless it is absolutely necessary. It is extremely difficult to change costume and make up while the performance is going on; and moreover, after having played one character it is not easy to get into the feeling of another merely by the change of garments and the addition of grease paint.

The regular rehearsals begin after the parts have been cast. Sometimes the director does the coaching, but when there is a separate coach the director turns the whole business of rehearsals over to him, withdraws from all that part of the responsibility, and turns her attention to the practical details of Production.

BEHIND THE PRODUCTION

"The Production of a play" is a phrase which means to the public at large the presentation of a performance, the acting and speaking of certain lines upon the stage. They watch the unfolding of a story, the interpretation of some "slice of life."

The audience sees the action move smoothly and swiftly, and they must not hear the wheels of the mechanism go round, nor must they be aware of

the presence of the *deus ex machina*. But behind it all is the director who creates this illusion of reality from a mad medley of incongruous elements. Her materials are myriad: canvas and paints, lights, furniture, costumes, dramatic crises, hammers and tacks, and innumerable and different and difficult personalities. All must be handled adroitly and tactfully and fitted together into their proper places to work in perfect accord. The fitting and planning and managing is the responsibility of the director, but no one person should attempt to carry through the work alone. The director holds all authority and power, but under her should be a competent working staff with definite duties and responsibilities.

The staff should consist of the managers and sub-managers of four committees; business, stage, costumes, and properties. The workers on these committees should be carefully chosen as being best fitted to fulfil their several responsibilities. The business manager must be clear headed, trustworthy and exact, with some knowledge of mathematics. The stage manager should possess some executive ability and artistic sense. The costume manager should be a girl who understands the making of clothes and has an appreciation of colour values. The property manager must have ingenuity and skill at manual, constructive work.

THE BUSINESS COMMITTEE

The Business Manager attends to the budget, expenses, advertising, tickets and programs, and everything in "front of the house." Before any work on scenery, costumes or property can be be-

gun, the Business Manager must find out approximately how much money there is to be expended, and make a preliminary budget. It is advisable to realize that the final cost will probably be exactly double the amount expected. There are two methods of conducting this business side of the production. One way is to give the Business Manager an order book, and allow nothing to be bought for the play without a written order, signed by his name. The other way is to give certain sums to the Stage Manager, the Costume Manager, and the Property Manager. This they use for their necessary expenses, and for which they account to the Business Manager.

He attends also to all advertising and publicity. The best results are obtained by advertising in the papers; but if that is too expensive, have leaflets printed and send them to all the friends and acquaintances of your cast. Follow-up post cards bring good returns, particularly if sent out just a few days before the performance. Large posters and cards in store windows are one of the best means of advertising.

The Business Manager arranges for tickets and programs, and attends to the payment of all bills.

In addition to these duties he is responsible for everything in "front of the house"; cloak rooms, drinking water, the seating of the audience, and the ushers.

STAGE MANAGER

The Stage Manager, with his committee, is responsible for the scenery, the setting, and the stage

proper. If possible he should help the director plan the scenes, and after they are planned, assist in their construction. He sees that the stage is kept in good condition, and attends to the shifting of the scenes between the acts of the rehearsals and the performance. He should appoint one member of his committee as Manager of the lights; and one or two to have charge of the curtain.

The "New Movement of the Theatre" is toward simplification of the whole problem of setting and scenery. Gordon Craig and Max Reinhardt have set a standard which should be followed by every one interested in the stage. They insist upon the elimination of all unnecessary, cluttery detail of setting, and place great emphasis upon preservation of the spirit and atmosphere of the play. "Imitation" was the keynote of the old style of stage craft, while that of today is "illusion."

It is impossible to reproduce a forest upon a stage and about as difficult to make massive castle walls of great grey granite. Modern producers realize that the audience is distracted by the old style of stage setting. A canvas forest with tree trunks that tremble in every draught, and a myriad leaves cut out and pasted on chicken wire, dropping from the flies, is not a convincing woodland glade. The eye of the audience fastens upon the wavering trunks and leaves, and the mind, following the eye, wonders how they were made, and why a stage is such a strongly draughty place. Or perhaps the audience begins subconsciously to count the leaves. Or, if a realistic castle is represented, with walls blocked out with black and white lines, the audience will

probably count the number of blocks, and wonder idly about the colour they are painted, paying only half attention to the progress of the play.

A smooth, plain surface, however, does not catch the eye and drag the attention away from the action.

A forest may be suggested by using curtains of dark green and brown cambric sewed in alternate strips; or heavy green denim stenciled in brown.

Castle walls may be made of screens covered with dark grey cambric. House screens are apt to be too low for practical use, but higher and larger screens may be built the desired size from a second grade of lumber that will not be very expensive. The hinges may be made of strips of leather, if the cost of metal hinges is too great.

If a hedge scene is desired, and the plain screens are not "realistic" enough, it is possible to fling vines over them, or mass bushes at the base. It is wise to remember that lines of vines extending downward over a wall give an impression of age, while bushes or small trees pointing up from its base suggest youth.

Screens or curtains may be made of the cheaper materials such as cheesecloth, muslin, cambric and canton flannel, painted with kalsomining or dyed with diamond or colite dyes.

In interior scenes, have as little furniture as possible, and as few unnecessary articles. Atmosphere is not achieved by the number, but by the significance of the details of the setting.

After the scenery has been constructed, the Stage Manager and his committee must see that it is kept in order. If it is torn, he must have it mended, or

if the paint comes off, he must touch it up. He must have a supply of tacks, hammers and tack pullers available, and must see that they are not taken away from their proper places by members of other committees.

The third and very important duty of the Stage Manager is to oversee the shifting of the scenes. For this he must have a regular corps of stage hands and assistants, each with his assigned place and duty. The minute the first curtain is rung down between the acts at a performance all the players are fired with a wild desire to help change scenes, and so flock out onto the stage in a body. There must, consequently, be an absolute rule keeping them off, and allowing no one on but the Director, Stage Manager, Property Man and scene shifters. Systematize the scene shifting and have those who are doing it communicate together by signals. When organized properly, scene shifting can be accomplished easily and swiftly. There is no excuse for the interminable waits, and wild scramble and confusion that take place behind the scenes at most amateur performances.

The Lights Manager has stepped into new prominence during this New Movement of the Theatre. Formerly, any stage hand capable of turning a switch held this position. Now, however, he is an important member of the working staff, for modern plays rely greatly on the lighting for artistic effects.

This whole problem of lighting of amateur plays is a difficult one, because so few small stages have as yet any proper lighting equipment. There are,

however, a few suggestions that may be carried out easily and will help somewhat in solving these difficulties.

If you must play in an auditorium where there are merely overhead or wall fixtures, soften the light with coloured silks fastened in front of the bulbs; or strengthen it by putting tin reflectors behind. If you use coloured silks, be very careful that they do not get afire from the heat of the bulbs. Sometimes it is possible to light the stage by using old fashioned acetylene automobile lamps, one on each side of the hall. Cover these with coloured silks to soften the glare. There will be heavy shadows to guard against, if you light in this way.

The best amateur lighting equipment is that of overhead lights, side lights and spot light, but this is seldom found. Coloured silks or coloured gelatine disks are also used with these. Footlights are being eliminated whenever possible, as they throw an unnatural glare on the faces of the actors.

The Lights Manager must write down all cues for dimming, changing and putting out his lights; post the paper by the switchboard, and be extremely careful to come in on time. In an amateur play given recently the king and queen were looking out of a casement window.

“Why doesn't she come back?” said the King, which was the cue for dimming the light. The Manager missed it.

“It's getting late,” said the Queen, and still no change of light.

“Yes, see, it's growing *dusk*, the sun is almost *set*,” answered the king, with emphasis to arouse

the Lights Manager. It did arouse him, and the sun set with such speed that the audience laughed — and spoiled the serious tone of the scene. Few slips on the stage amuse an audience as much as obvious mistakes in the lighting.

The management of the curtain is also an important factor in the mechanical smoothness of a production. Whoever draws the curtain must have his cues posted, as are the Lights' cues, and must be informed about curtain calls. He should pull the curtain down promptly when the time comes, and never leave the players standing in awkward uncertainty, longing for the moment of release from their tableaux.

To assure the smoothness of all these details, it is advisable to have a lights and scene rehearsal before the dress rehearsal. At this time each change of scene should be gone over a number of times, the light cues should be practised, as well as curtain cues. Only the Director, the Property Manager, the Stage Manager and his subordinates should be present.

THE COSTUME MANAGER

The Costume Manager with her committee should help the Director plan the costumes, then assist in their construction and see that they are kept in order. One of the members of the costume committee must have charge of the "make up" and another of the dressing rooms.

The costume committee should begin work the day the parts are cast, and have it completed one week before the dress rehearsal. The whole prob-

lem of costuming is a difficult one, because of the cost and labour involved. In some places plays are given with no attempt at any costumes except the usual clothes of the players. It is said that once, when on the road, Booth's company had to play in an unfinished theatre. It was bitterly cold, so cold that it was impossible for the actors to put on their stage costumes, so "Hamlet" was played in nineteenth century travelling clothes. Hamlet wore a business suit, Ophelia wore a sealskin coat, and the performance was a complete success. It takes a Booth, however, to put such an experiment across, and it is never successful with amateurs.

If it is impossible to have a fully "costumed" play, choose something in which modern clothes are worn.

When modern plays are not desired, and there is no money in the treasury to pay for costumes, then it is well to fall back on the comforting theory of "illusion." Have the players wear their usual clothes, and add to these small accessories such as crowns, capes, sashes and swords, and suggest the type of costume the characters should wear. This manner of costuming is particularly suitable for younger children, for the imaginations readily supply whatever is lacking, and proud parents in the audience give little thought to the effect of the whole. Although this partial costuming of plays is often of great value, still it is far better to costume as completely and well as possible all plays that are to be presented publicly.

Rehearsals are often greatly strengthened by giving the players some small accessory to their cos-

tunes to help create the atmosphere of the play. A girl playing one of the Oriental women in a play of "The Forty Thieves," had great difficulty in getting into her part. The emotional abandon of the East was incomprehensible to her New England instincts, and she felt foolish and self-conscious. The Director finally wound a towel about her head, for a turban, and from that moment her self-consciousness departed.

The first thing to do for a fully costumed production is for the Costume Manager and the committee, if desired, to plan with the Director the style and colour scheme in which the play is to be produced. Every play is of a certain period, modern, historic or fantastic to which all costume must conform at least in suggestion, if not in absolute accuracy. Besides conforming to the period, the costumes must conform to each other. In order to save time and trouble, often the Director gives each player a vague description of the general type of costume she should wear, relying upon the mother of the player to make the perfect costume. The result of this method is a bedlam of incongruities. The player, in the first place, mixes the directions, the mother, in the second place, cannot understand them, and then, either flings together an apology of a garment, or else, with a wild zeal to have her child "look the best," produces an appallingly unsuitable wonder of cheap lace and spangles.

To decide upon a consistent scheme of costuming, particularly for historic plays, it is often necessary to look up historic sources. One or two members of the committee should be appointed to do this

research work in the museums and libraries. Even the smaller libraries can offer some information on the subject of costuming. An idea of old styles and colour schemes can be gotten from looking over plates of tapestries, parchments, designs on pottery and porcelains, and illustrated stories of the period. Whoever does the investigating for the costume committee should make careful notes of colours — if possible should make sketches. Some libraries permit students to trace the plates they wish.

When the general type of costume is decided upon, each one should be planned out. It is worth while to be fairly accurate historically, but foolish to sacrifice everything to that one aim. In this, as in every other department, "illusion" should be considered the key word. The Director is striving for an artistic effect, not a perfect historical reproduction. Neither the accuracy, nor inaccuracy of detail should detract the mind of the audience from the action.

The colour scheme must be carefully planned to harmonize with the stage setting, and somewhat with the tone and mood of the play. A dainty, fairy fantasy should be done in soft, cool shades, while an oriental play, full of action and emotion, should be costumed with warmer tones, with an occasional clashing colour combination. An interesting psychological result is obtained by putting the "villain," if there is one, in a colour which is in discord with the other costumes.

The cheapest materials for costuming are cheese-cloth, unbleached muslin, cambrics, canton flannels and sateen. Cheese cloth is seldom satisfactory

unless first dipped in water to take out the harsh appearance, or else dyed. Remnants of better materials often can be gotten cheaply; and almost any material can be given an air of grandeur by dyeing or stenciling.

Gold and silver paint can be applied as stencils by mixing the powder with melted gum arabic. Almost any fabric takes this combination with excellent result. If you wish to paint buckram, however, mix the gold or silver powder with regular "bronze liquid." Coloured stencils can be made by painting with the "Tempora" paints which come in tubes, but this paint is very expensive, and takes a long time to apply.

Some patterns for historic plays can be gotten from Butterick, but often costumes have to be cut "on." This is not very difficult, however, and can be done by almost any one with a slight knowledge of dressmaking.

The making of the costumes is always a problem. If they are first cut out, and pinned or basted together and if the parents or players themselves have the time or inclination to make them up, they can be easily accomplished. Otherwise a dressmaker must be hired or a separate dressmaking committee formed.

The costumes must be completed a week before the final performance, and then a costume rehearsal should be held.

At the costume rehearsal, every player puts on his completed costume, and comes up for inspection before the Director and Manager of the Costume Committee. They then tabulate everything belong-

ing to that costume, making two copies of the lists, one for the Manager of the Committee and one for the player.

For example:

KING	
<i>Costume</i>	<i>Property Accessories</i>
Purple tights	Crown
Yellow under jacket	Sceptre
Purple stenciled robe	Dagger
Gold Belt	
Pointed Shoes	

They must see that the garments fit, that every hook and snapper is in place and that every costume is marked with tapes on which is written in indelible ink the name of the character by whom it is worn. No action is rehearsed at this time, but the players sit about and become accustomed to themselves and each other in their changed personalities. This simplifies the dress rehearsal.

The make-up committee is a sub-division of the costume committee. The Manager of this group provides the following items:

Cold cream
 Lining
 Foundation paint
 Rouge for face and lips
 Powder of different shades
 Powder pats
 Hare's feet
 Baby brushes to wipe powder off face
 Moustaches

Spirit gum
Wigs
Plenty of cheesecloth squares for removing
make-up *Cheesey*
Hair pins
Mirrors

The Make Up Manager should write a list of all changes of make up which take place between the acts and post this list in a conspicuous place.

Young players, especially, should use little make up. Ordinarily all that they will need will be, first, some cold cream rubbed into the face, then dry rouge on the cheeks, with a touch on the chin, a little darkening to the eyebrows, and a thin line along the lower lid of the eye. Touch the lips with rouge paste. Then powder the face lightly, to blend everything together, and brush off the powder with a baby's hair brush. A very light make up is sufficient for out of door, afternoon performance, but a heavier one is needed for indoors and brilliant lights. When the make up must be much heavier, then the "foundation" is used. Rub this paste on after the cold cream has been applied to the face, then put on the rouge, the lines, and the powder as before.

To make the eyes look larger, darken the upper lid, run a thin line along the lower lid, draw a short, sharply defined line out from the end of the eye, and put a dot of rouge paste in the corner nearer the nose. When applying rouge paste to the lips, put just a touch in the middle, then colour it down on each side, but not quite to the corners of the mouth.

unless you wish the mouth to be large and prominent. For a young and attractive make up, the dry rouge is darkest about the cheek bones, shading down toward the nose and lower part of the face.

To show age, darken under the eyes, with a slate colour, and make a few tiny "crow's feet." Instead of leaving the dry rouge heaviest on the cheek bones, it must be on the lower part of the face, and very little rouge used at all. For wrinkles, follow the natural lines of the face, with black or grey lining. No lines should be sharply defined, but should be carefully blended into the skin.

The best moustaches and beards are made of the twisted ropes of hair sold at "Make Up Stores." This hair can be pulled out of the twist, cut the length desired, fastened on the face with spirit gum and then trimmed into the proper shape. A good deal of pressure must be exerted when putting on the moustache, or it may fall off at a crucial moment in the play.

The make-up table in the dressing room must be covered with a rough cover of unbleached muslin; and the make-up and all the accessories laid out upon it in order.

The dressing room should be in charge of one of the members of the Costume Committee. It should always be kept in perfect order, with a place for everything and everything in its place. Each player should be assigned a certain spot in which to dress and have an individual hook or chair on which to lay her clothes and costume.

The wash stand should be provided with plenty of soap and paper toweling. Straight pins, safety

pins, needles, thread and scissors should be kept in a drawer or box. Each player should bring his own comb and brush.

There should be as little noise and confusion as possible, and if the dressing rooms are near the stage, all talking must be absolutely forbidden while the play is going on.

Before and during the play, the costumed players, who are waiting for their entrances must be kept in the dressing room, and absolutely no one allowed outside to see his family or friends in the audience. Besides being against professional etiquette to appear in front in costume during the play, to do so destroys the illusion of the part and action.

The directions for entrance, light and music cues may be posted by the entrance. It is sometimes necessary for the Property Manager to keep his properties in the dressing rooms. When it is, he must have a table, or special place to keep them, and no one must be allowed to touch them, or thoughtlessly cover them up with hastily discarded garments.

PROPERTY MANAGER

The Property Manager, with his committee, provides the furniture, rugs, and every small article called for in the play. Usually the larger things may be borrowed or rented, but the Property Manager must be prepared to make anything that may be demanded from fountains to crowns.

The first duty of the Property Manager is to make a list of all the properties needed. He then provides substitutes for the more important prop-

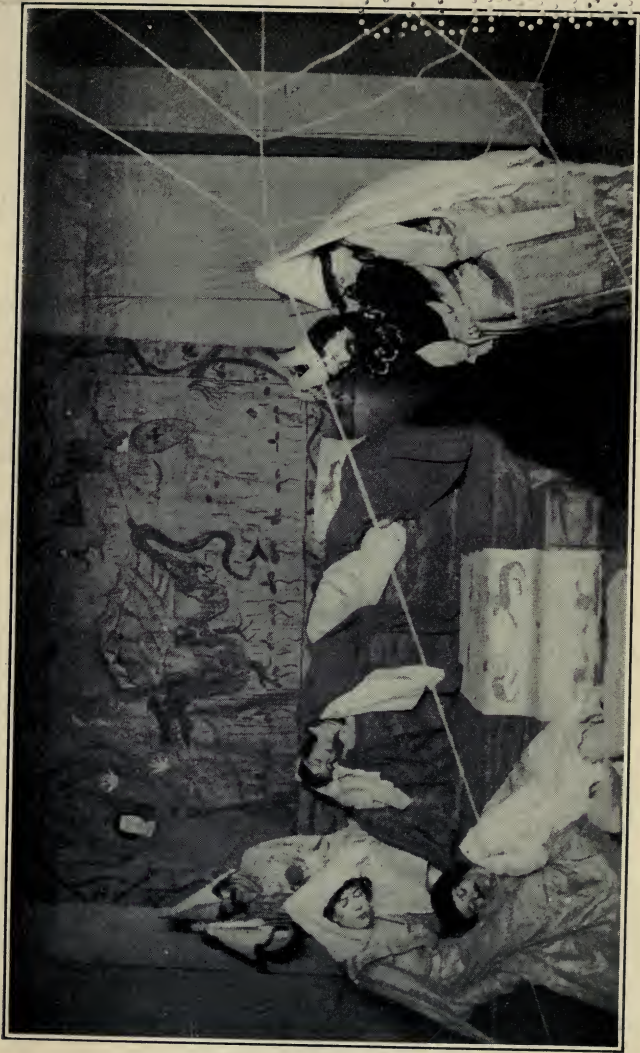
erties to be used in the rehearsals. For a while a stick will do for a sceptre, or a newspaper for the missing will; but there is one thing for which a substitute will not do, and that is a sword. If one is to be worn, it should be used in as many rehearsals as possible, for until the wearer has become absolutely accustomed to its vagaries, he will trip up himself, and all other players whom he approaches.

The borrowing of properties is to be discouraged, for articles receive rough treatment during hurried scene shifting, and there is often inexcusable carelessness in regard to returning things of even great value. Whenever it is possible, the Property Committee should make what is needed, and by necessity will discover many short cuts to good effects.

Stiff buckram is a boon to any Property Manager. From it one can construct crowns, armour, mediaeval head-dresses, hats, scabbards, and animals' masks. It can be easily cut with heavy shears, it bends and rolls without tearing or cracking and when fastened with Dennison's divided brass tacks, holds its shape. After made into the shape desired, it can be painted easily and effectively with gold or silver paint, or with ordinary oil house paints.

Tapestries may be "woven" by painting burlap with soft colours of house paint, and old parchments may be made of strips of brown wrapping paper painted with creamy white, applied with a rotary motion of the brush. Porcelain or china "take" oil paint, and by a careful use of colours, shaded together when first put on, can be made into an excellent imitation of old wares.

In Oriental plays, great jars may be needed.



SCENE FROM "THE SLEEPING BEAUTY"
Showing tapestry made of painted burlap, crowns, armour and mediæval head-dresses of buckram
(By courtesy of "The Workshop Players of Yonkers")

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These can be made by taking barrels, covering them with chicken wire shaped above the top into a rim, then covering the chicken wire with newspapers, and lastly the newspapers with unbleached muslin drawn as tightly as possible over the whole foundation. If the kalsomine water colour paints are to be used, size the barrels first with liquid glue. This shrinks the muslin somewhat, and makes the foundation even firmer than before. After the glue has dried, apply the paint.

By the dress rehearsal, all the properties must be finished, gathered together and listed according to acts. All the actors must have the property accessories to their costumes, and the Costume Manager must be supplied with lists of such accessories. The properties must be kept in their proper places and before the play begins and between the acts must be "planted" in their proper positions on stage and off. This must be done with the greatest of care, for often the whole play hinges about one small property, and if the Property Manager has forgotten it, woe be unto the frantic actors.

PROMPTER

The Prompter is as important a personage as any of the heads of committees and he is far too often overlooked until the last minute. Amateurs are apt to feel that any one can come in and hold the play and prompt with only one or two rehearsals. On the contrary the prompter should be present at all rehearsals after the lines have been learned. His prompt book should be the text, clearly typed, pasted on the right hand side of leaves of stiff paper,

loosely tied together. There should be margin for notes of stage business, action and pauses. He should be thoroughly familiar with all such business, action, and stage waits, and should never interrupt with prompting unless he is absolutely sure it is necessary. Some signal should be determined upon by which the players can let the prompter know when they are losing their lines. A slight motion of the fingers might be decided upon to be used in case of trouble, and this would not be noticed by the audience.

It is not wise, however, to allow the cast to become too dependent upon the prompter, and of course, by the final performance prompting should never be necessary.

It is a good plan when nearing the date of performance, to have one or two rehearsals without any prompting allowed, making the players improvise if they lose their lines. This is a great aid to a sense of self-reliance and poise.

CHAPTER VII

IMPORTANT POINTS

Team work — Cues — Exits and entrances — Crowd work —
Stage pictures — Harmony of colours.

Team Work. One of the greatest faults of amateurs is that they fail to get the important points "across." The action, instead of being clear-cut, is muddled by placing undue emphasis on side issues. The way to "point" special lines is to centre all the interest on the person who speaks them, and to stress the key words with proper inflection. But often the difficulty in getting the action clearly "across" is not due to faulty emphasis of the lines, but to undue emphasis of minor characters. The attention of the audience is split up among the different players, each mother watching her own child, thinking that he is undeniably the "star," even if he only announces that the carriage waits. On the stage it is the natural instinct of each player to think that he is the centre of interest. In this way there is no focusing of attention, either of audience or players, and there is danger that a minor character may steal the big crises from the star. This happened recently in a play in which a minor character got the entire attention and sympathy of the audience in an eating scene. They were entirely

“with” her, and roared with delight and amusement every time she put anything into her mouth. She thought that, since she was there to entertain, she would be just as entertaining as she could, with the result that she completely dominated the scene, and the player who should have given the important line could not do so against the laughter of the audience. The director should guard carefully against all such mistakes, by pointing out to the cast the absolute necessity of “team” work in all successful productions, and by insisting upon the harmony of the whole. Each part should be brought up to fit perfectly with every other part, and no undue emphasis given to any. All should work together for perfect production, and it should be the first consideration.

Cues. Cues should be taken up quickly. Nothing makes a play drag so badly as long waits between speeches. One good way to overcome this defect is to have the first speaker continue speaking until the one who should take up the cue learns to do it on time. The action for taking up a cue really begins before the first speaker has finished speaking. The articulation of the first word of the answer is often begun before the last word of the first speaker is finished. Players cannot go far wrong with the lines if they *feel* what is coming. It is not a “cue,” really, but a response to the former speech. There is always a statement somewhere in the text of the first speaker which starts the idea of the reply, and it is when this idea comes that the cue is really taken up. At that point the listener takes breath, and is ready for his reply. This quick response is very

important and should be carefully worked out by the dramatic director.

Exits and Entrances. Almost any one can make a good exit, because the work on the stage builds up to a climax, the actor is more or less in the spirit of the part, and consequently can make an exit without losing that spirit. An entrance is a totally different matter. An entrance must be built up outside. The influence of scenery behind the stage helps amateurs wonderfully in giving them the necessary feeling, which aids so much in making a good entrance. If you cannot have the actual scenery, you must build up the feeling in some other way. Certainly you must try to keep distractions away from the players as much as possible and teach them to think of their part and keep in the spirit of it. One great actor, it is said, constantly acted his part behind the scenes. He put it on with his costume and make-up, and kept it on until the end of the play.

The feeling that there are wonderful fairies watching the little girl who enters timidly and yet with such happiness, hoping to meet one of these dainty folk, is begun behind the scenes if her entrance is to have that naturalness so much to be desired. She feels the presence of the fairies, and sees the wood, before she appears in the actual scene.

Take, for instance, the first scene in "Romeo and Juliet," the quarrel between the servants of the houses of Montague and Capulet. The feeling that makes the quarrel, the loyalty of the servant to his master, is worked up behind the scenes, and, therefore, the quarrel can begin at once as soon as the actors appear.

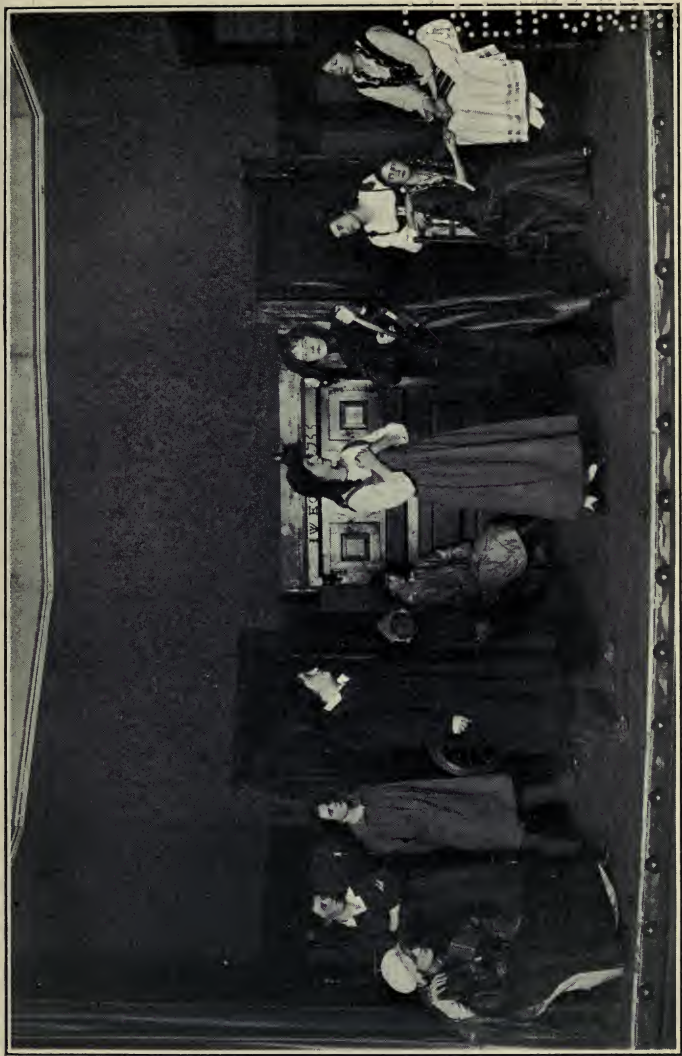
Take, also, the prologue of "The House of the Heart":

"I am Experience. I dwell
In mountains called Delectable,
And come from those far heights to pray
A gracious hearing for our play."

You do not build up the "mountains delectable" and "far heights" then, but long before. One interesting way to accomplish this is for the players to write and work up little scenes between the acts,—scenes that will not appear in the real play, but are, nevertheless, acted out by the players. It gives a wonderful idea of unity and keeps the spirit of the play intact.

If the players could be made to feel that they, as the characters, are living their lives all the time behind the scenes, and that once in awhile they merely appear to show a portion of that life,—the life itself continuing just the same, although not shown,—it would make entrances as natural as exits and as effective.

Crowd work. The difficulty of managing a stage crowd will be much lessened if the director will choose a leader, or possibly two, and train them as crowd leaders. They lead the crowd as a musical director does his orchestra, namely:—by hand and arm motion. For instance, your angry crowd are coming to attack the palace. They are really just behind the scenes, waiting for the cue to make their presence known. They are divided into groups, each group having its own lines to say, its own sounds to make. The leader knows all the parts,



TWIG OF THORN

Good type of costume play for all girl cast. Notice how each character is engrossed with the dramatic situation

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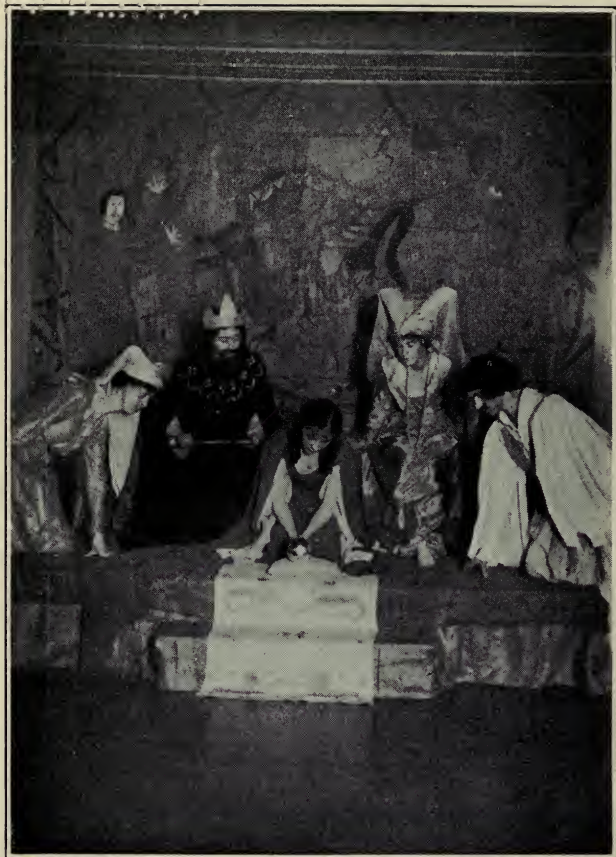
and where the speakers in the crowd are stationed. The cue is given; the first group murmurs angrily. The leader waves his right hand toward that group, the arm held low, which indicates a low murmur, his left hand over his mouth. The crowd imitates his left-hand gesture, covering their mouths, and behind that screen they murmur. Gradually the hand moves away, the murmur consequently becoming louder, which gives the effect of a crowd coming nearer and nearer. Meantime, the second group, under the waved guidance of the leader, has been doing its part. It is "Kill! Burn!"—the tone ever growing louder. Now comes the third group with a shriek of "Kill! Kill!"—always led by the director's hand. The first crowd's murmur grows into Ah-a-a- pitched in differing tones, with a strong intake of breath. The second group's outcry becomes more distinct. Now a fourth group begins to work, with shrieks mingled with confused imprecations. The first group now beats upon the doors, they break down, and the crowd rushes in.

The crowd on the stage can be managed in almost the same way if the leader is well trained and knows and watches every movement, and the crowd knows and watches him. The effect of a crowd upon the stage is easily obtained, even if no real crowd is present, by filling the open spaces so that no openings are visible from the audience. There is no object in having a huge crowd of Romans listening to Marc Antony's oration, if with a few the stage director can make the audience imagine that half of Rome is present. Of course all sorts of devices, such as the effect of various colours to indicate the

temper of the crowd, can be practised to make crowd work realistic. The difference in feeling imparted to an audience by the coming of the crowd from one point or another, such as, for instance, a line of Indians filing one by one from the back and massing for an attack, is much more exciting than a sudden rush of Indians from the side would be. All these things, however, really bring us naturally into

Stage Pictures. On this important subject one could write almost a volume. The director, in studying a stage picture, must keep two points in mind: the artistic value of the picture, and the all-important, and often forgotten, value to be gained by the players. In other words, the director should keep an eye on the stage picture, but should never tell a player to take a certain position, because the stage will look better. There must be a human reason why every person on the stage should be in any given position. No actor should be told to face the audience, he must be given a reason for facing that way. Avoid movements and never allow a player to move, unless he knows exactly why he does so. Never tell him how to do it. If he knows why he does it, he will know the way. Never tell a player he is awkward; lead him to see another way. Develop the situation and the player will cease to be awkward. Never tell a player a fault or what he does badly; it only serves to make him stumble whenever he reaches that particular situation again. Lead him away from it by directing his attention toward right development of the situation. Do not allow the player to think of the

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"In a stage picture, usually, there is a central point, and on both sides of this the parts must balance well"
(By courtesy of "The Workshop Players of Yonkers")

audience. Teach him to forget that there is an audience. So develop his interest in the play that he will not have a thought left for the audience. Keep the players interested in the progress of the action; then no player's attention will ever be diverted toward the audience, nor will the players be bad "listeners," and so lose the interest of their audience. Nothing is so distracting as any signs from the players that they are *distract*.

In Shakespeare's day the scene was depicted in the lines of the play, as, for instance, "How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank," or the banished Duke's speech in "As You Like It," describing the Forest of Arden. In amateur productions the scenery is often as simple as it was in those days; nevertheless, the stage picture is now an essential part of the director's work. If the raising or lowering of a window shade forms a part of the important action of the play, then a window with an adjustable shade must form a part of the stage equipment. If an important letter is to be written, a desk must be placed somewhere near the centre of the stage as part of the scene. Too elaborate scenery, however, in amateur plays often distracts the audience from the all-important matter, namely, the players themselves. The director should study the stage picture with regard to colour, balance, and form, but should not sacrifice his players at any time to these things. In a stage picture, usually, there is a central point, and on both sides of this the parts must balance well. An isolated object will attract powerfully, especially if placed either a bit forward or a bit back of the main picture. These stage pic-

tures should not be formed in a haphazard fashion, but should be thought out carefully in advance, then tried and tested to see if the thought-form follows the stage-form, for the thought or idea must never be sacrificed to form.

Straight lines are not conducive to dialogue. Actors in a straight line do not seem to be talking to one another. Amateurs have a tendency to stand in straight lines, to stand too close together, or to get in front of one another. If they are placed farther apart, both dialogue and stage pictures are improved.

Often an amateur speaks his own lines well, and then, because he does not listen to the reply, seems to step out of the stage picture until his turn to speak comes again. The reply may be eloquently moving, but the listener is not even interested. The action of the listener is as important as that of the speaker.

Colour is an essential part of a stage picture. In the first place, the background colour must be of a tone to blend well with the colours shown against it. Colours symbolize various states of feeling. White has always been symbolic of purity and youth. Black has always been typical of sorrow and awe; sometimes combined with or placed near cold colours, it suggests fear. Cream white and ivory white are, of course, warmer than blue white. Red signifies royalty, as does purple. It may indicate also religious zeal, or courage; and, in an evil sense, malice, hatred and war. Green, of course, is the spring colour and typifies youth and hope. Yellow stands for wisdom, and in the golden shades is a

type of the sun; when dark and dingy, it is a sign of deceit. Pale blue is cold and signifies purity and coolness.

The combination of colours should be carefully studied, as well as their significance, to obtain pictorial and pleasing effects, and this can be done only by experiment. The study of nature will give us the cue. The best plan is to choose a foundational colour, expressing in its tone the idea of the play, and let the other colours for the scene be modified by it.

A whole stage colour scheme can be worked out and visualized by placing spools of sewing silk in various groups, combining the colours until the best result is obtained. Skeins of embroidery silk can be used in the same way. ✓

Light, of course, changes the colour scheme and it is well to choose the colours to be used with reference to the stage lighting. Little things in the stage picture often help much in securing the desired effect. For instance, a vase of flowers, the glass catching and diffusing the light, will often give a little touch of wealth and refinement to a stage room. A chair can often be converted into a throne by merely throwing over it a piece of tapestry or a satin cloak. It is suggestion, creating illusion in the mind of the audience, that really creates the stage picture. The audience fill in the details with imagination and make a picture much more perfect than could be devised by tons of properties.

CHAPTER VIII

ANALYSIS OF TWO SCENES

An analysis of the teaching of a play for primary dramatics — *The Enchanted Garden* by Constance D'Arcy Mackay.
An analysis of the teaching of a scene for High School dramatics — *As You Like It*, Scene II.

THE play chosen as an example for Primary Dramatics is *The Enchanted Garden*, by Constance D'Arcy Mackay.¹

The children are all assembled and with great pleasure and unbounded enthusiasm I tell them the story. It is always best in dealing with children to tell them the story before reading the play. They form better mental pictures while hearing a story told. Because of the form of any drama, it is almost impossible for a director to read a play aloud with spontaneous naturalness, and the children follow the dramatic form instead of the idea.

Once there was a wonderful garden where many beautiful flowers lived and were carefully watched and tended. There were dainty sweet peas,— pink, yellow, purple and red, reminding one of butterflies as they swayed to and fro. There were tall, white graceful lilies, sleepy, bright poppies, sweet brown

¹ *The Enchanted Garden* in "The House of the Heart" by Constance D'Arcy Mackay. Published by Henry Holt and Co.

mignonette, gay iris, and dear little hooded pansies, but not a single rose. This garden where all these flowers grew was surrounded by a high wall, so high that no flower had ever been able to look over it, so they had never seen how big the world outside was, nor knew at all about the wild flowers that grew in the big fields or along the road, but only about those that grew in their own cultivated garden.

When the play begins it is almost time for the sun to rise, and lively Will-o'-the-Wisp, who is a sort of fairy, is in the garden looking at the sleeping flowers by the light of his tiny lantern. With the rising of the sun he vanishes. The flowers all wake up one by one,—last of all the sleepy poppy. Then they all dance and nod their dainty heads together, because they are so glad of another bright day. Suddenly, in the midst of their gaiety, they spy a new flower and think she has no right to be there. The newcomer sweetly explains that she is a wild rose and has strayed in by mistake, but the flowers are all very disagreeable and unkind to the little wild rose. Presently in comes Prince Butterfly, who flits from flower to flower, teasing each one as he flies about. He brings the great news that the Queen of Hearts “will leave for one morning her baking of tarts to choose from the garden the loveliest flower.” Each flower hopes she may be the favoured one. Suddenly Prince Butterfly sees the little Wild Rose and asks who she is. Very jealously the flowers reply that she is only a weed and grows wild in the country. Prince Butterfly indignantly rebukes the flowers, saying that this is Wild

Rose and that no flower in the garden is more fair. Just then in comes the bustling Bumble-Bee, announcing with his droning trumpet the coming of the Queen. Presently the Queen of Hearts comes down the garden path, saying that she is "weary of lilies and tired of sweet-peas" and that "the mignonette and gay poppies all fail to please." Then she sees the Wild Rose, and with pleasure stops beside her. The Wild Rose explains with great diffidence and embarrassment that she came in by mistake, but, much to the joy of Prince Butterfly and Bumble-Bee, the Queen chooses the Wild Rose for the Queen of the garden. All of the flowers, meantime, have become very penitent and beg Wild Rose to forgive them for having been so unkind. Wild Rose replies sweetly, "Nay, what's to forgive? The past is forgotten. In peace let us live," and all the flowers are very happy.

The children are really forming the picture in their minds and learning the story while listening to the reading of the play. Later the parts are assigned.

To help give "atmosphere," the children might sing "The Flow'rets All Sleep Soundly" (The Sandmännchen, by Brahms), before Pansy recites the charming prologue describing the garden. The dramatic director must impress on Pansy that the people in the audience have never seen the garden and she must tell them about it.

The scene opens with all the flowers drooping their heads in sleep, as Will-o'-the-Wisp steals in. No, no, Mignonette, you must not peep at Will-o'-the-Wisp; you do not see him at all. No one really

sees him, because he is a fairy, and, besides, you are sound asleep. Yes, he has a tiny lantern and he carries it in his hand so that he can see the flowers. He goes from one group to another, talking about each one as he looks at them. Of course he moves very quietly, because he says, "Hush! The flowers are sleeping." He looks at each to see that all are safe, for he is "guarding all the sleepers." Presently he looks up and sees the moon, and listens to the "grey owl's cry." Then he sees that the dawn is coming and says that he must "vanish with the break of day," and disappears.

The stage brightens, the flowers move slightly, Mignonette raises her head, stretches a little, sees that it is daybreak, and cries "Awaken! awaken! for lo, 'tis the dawn." Certainly she speaks loudly to awaken the other flowers, and she is so very happy because it is such a beautiful day that she cries out quite loudly, "Night-time is over." Poppy wakes up and stretches her arms,—no, not really *arms*, really *petals*; she yawns, oh, just a little, because she says "I *feel* I must yawn." That means that she feels like yawning, but does not do it very hard. Mignonette now speaks to all the flowers and tells them what a lovely day it is and how sweet is the air—"the air blows so sweet"—then she hears the birds and talks about "the clear bird voices." Yes, I think the Sweet Peas might pretend to take off their "night-caps" when Mignonette speaks about them, and perhaps put on their sun-bonnets which Prince Butterfly admires later on.

Now the flowers have a dance, a very quiet,

flower-like dance, and then they discover Wild Rose. No, of course they do not all see her at once. Yes, I think Lily and Iris would be the first to see her, for they are the tallest. Lily speaks first:

“Mignonette, pray you look! A new flower is here!” Yes, I think Poppy would see her last of all, because she is still a little sleepy.

Mignonette replies, “She doesn’t belong to the garden, that’s clear.”

To whom is Mignonette speaking? To Lily? Very well, let her speak to Lily, then, but she looks at Wild Rose. Try it and see. If you speak to me about Mary, you look at Mary, do you not? Oh, yes. Well, when you speak to Lily you look at Wild Rose. Then, too, remember Mignonette never saw a rose before and she is very much interested.

Poppy speaks next: “A very great liberty for her to take.” Poppy, I think, is not speaking to anybody in particular,—are you, Poppy? Little Wild Rose says timidly, because she is all alone among these strangers who are not cordial to her,—

“I’m just a Wild Rose—I strayed in by mistake last night in the dark. Oh, pray don’t think me bold, for gardens are very exclusive, I’m told.”

What does “exclusive” mean? Yes, that’s right. Wild Rose says it means everybody can’t come there. See how polite Wild Rose is: “Oh, pray don’t think me bold.”

Now, Sweet Pea, you must not stand like that, with your toes turned in. You always stand that way? Well, it looks very awkward for a little girl

to stand so, and for a graceful Sweet Pea it won't do at all. Oh, yes, now you look like a Sweet Pea; yes, that's just perfect.

Iris now speaks — yes, I think she would stand up very stately and hard looking —

“The flowers who grow here are flowers everyone knows,
But none of them ever have heard of a rose.”

One reason, probably, why they have never heard of a rose is that roses do not grow well with other flowers. That is why we have rose gardens. All the flowers now ply Wild Rose with questions about herself and comment to one another about her replies. They are very rude and unkind, until at last Wild Rose becomes a little indignant and says:

“I never have lived behind walls, it is true,
Yet we share, do we not, the wind and the dew?”

For a moment after this the flowers talk together, and then all begin again asking Wild Rose questions about her friends and her life. They are interrupted by the fluttering in of Prince Butterfly. All the flowers admire Prince Butterfly very much, and each one tries to arrange her petals and look her best.

Yes, of course Prince Butterfly has wings. He flutters his wings nearly all the time. All butterflies do, unless they are resting, and our Prince Butterfly is not resting at all this morning. He goes from one flower to another, making gay little remarks as he goes. When he comes to Sweet Pea he says.

" Ah, pretty Sweet Pea,
Pink sun-bonnets still are in fashion, I see."

Yes, I do think Sweet Pea might re-tie the strings of her sunbonnet and make a bigger bow. Certainly she would smile at Prince Butterfly when he called her "pretty Sweet Pea." Now he tells all the flowers the news about the Queen's coming to the garden. Oh, certainly they would gather around him to hear, and then each one would arrange her petals, and Lily would look anxiously at the sky when she says, "I hope it won't shower." Sweet Pea again gives a final pat to the strings of her sunbonnet, and Iris smooths her leaves. Prince Butterfly suddenly sees Wild Rose. Oh, yes, he knows about wild roses; he flies everywhere and knows all the flowers outside the high wall; so when the flowers call her "a weed," he replies:

" A strange weed, indeed!
None other than Wild Rose, than whom I declare
There is not a flower in the garden more fair."

This remark irritates the flowers and makes them very cross. They do not like to hear Prince Butterfly say that this stranger is more beautiful than they. They all show how jealous they are, and Iris retorts: "She says she's well born; but *we* know she grows wild." This makes Prince Butterfly very indignant. Yes, I think when Prince Butterfly is angry he might move his wings very fast, while he tells each flower in turn how foolish and naughty she is.

Away outside now we hear the Bumble-Bee com-

ing. Yes, buzz, buzz! Of course he has wings. Yes, let him buzz about from flower to flower; he says he is "busy as ever" and asks the flowers, "Which of you all has honey to sell?" Now, as he goes about, he sees the Queen coming, and buzzes:

"Hark, with my droning trumpet I boom;
The Queen is coming! Give room! Give room!
Down through your borders a pathway make,
For one of the flowers the Queen will take."

Of course the Bee must speak very loud, so that all the flowers can hear him. I think they would all whisper together, "The Queen is coming!" or else "The Queen! The Queen!" for they are much excited about it; therefore, the Bee has to speak louder so that they will all be ready to receive her. Now we see her approaching, smiling and bowing to all her subjects, who all bow deeply as she passes by. Here a song, "Hail to the Queen," may be introduced. The Queen walks very slowly, looking at each flower in turn. First she comes to the Lilies and says, "I'm weary of Lilies," and all the lilies look greatly disappointed; then she comes to the Sweet Peas, and they look very sad. Yes, I *do* think one might cry a little. She passes Mignonette and the Poppies, only remarking "Mignonette and gay Poppies all fail to please." Mignonette looks most unhappy, and the Poppy might frown and pout a bit, maybe, if she feels that is what she would do. Then the Queen spies the Wild Rose and stops,— "But here is a Wild Rose with petals of pink —" Wild Rose is very much

confused and says timidly: "I came in by mistake"—but the Queen is very kind and replies:

"No great harm, I think!
You speak of the country, of long summer hours,
Of dew and of sunshine, of shadow and showers."

You see, the Queen knows the country outside and likes it. Bumble-Bee is delighted and buzzes up to Wild Rose booming: "So honey-sweet, she, I can scarce keep away"; and now Prince Butterfly, waving his wings most gracefully, flutters up to Wild Rose, saying politely:

"I have heard Will-o'-the-Wisp and fairy folk say
That when a wild rose doth her petals unfold,
'Tis plain to be seen that her heart is of gold."

He crosses one wing over his heart and bows gallantly to Wild Rose. The Queen then chooses Wild Rose for the Queen of the garden, taking her by the hand and saying:

"Enough! then no longer I'll go on my quest
For this is the flower that I choose from the rest.
My garden without her would not be complete."

Prince Butterfly waves his wings gaily. "I vow she is charming!" he cries, and Bumble-Bee sturdily buzzes: "I swear she is sweet." This is the greatest compliment the Bumble-Bee can pay the Wild Rose, for he is looking for sweetness to help make his honey. Meantime all the flowers are looking and feeling very penitent, and hanging their heads with shame. The Queen then takes Wild Rose by the hand and leads her up to a little mossy

throne near the garden wall. Prince Butterfly and Bumble-Bee station themselves on either side, gently furling and unfurling their wings. Iris now speaks in a very sweet voice, while looking appealingly at Wild Rose: "I fear my fine raiment has rendered me blind." Mignonette bows her head, whispering softly: "A garden may often be narrow, I find." Lily steps toward the mossy throne and says with sweet humility:

"While a tall wall that hides all the world from our
view
Is not half so fine as horizon's wide blue."

All the flowers draw near, or stretch out their arms, or kneel and say:

"Forgive us, oh Wild Rose."

Wild Rose replies very gently, standing on the step of the mossy throne:

"Nay, what's to forgive?
The past is forgotten. In peace let us live.
Content without envy or rancour to grow —
For all of us started in Eden, you know."

The costumes for this charming little play can be very simple.

Flowers: Skirt of green paper or silesia, folded so that it stands out in a petticoat to resemble leaves; legs and feet encased in green, to resemble flower stalks. Over this, paper or silesia, cut in the shape of the petals of the flower represented. On the head, a frilly cap of paper of the same colour.

Will-o'-the-Wisp: Black and silver, or pale grey floating drapery of some thin, light material; carries a tiny light or lantern.

The Queen of Hearts: White robe and train; red cardboard hearts as decoration.

Prince Butterfly: A black, tight-fitting tunic, with wings of some light, thin material painted in butterfly hues, and with the tip of each wing fastened to the little fingers.

Bee: Black and yellow striped, tight fitting costume, black wings and a little yellow cap, with black antennae in front.

The play chosen for the High School dramatics is Shakespeare's "As You Like It."

First, the players are called together and the director reads aloud the *entire* play, explaining carefully the relationship of the characters one to another, and making clear any obscure points in the text. After this reading the director should carefully cut the play for this special production; then after a round and round reading, she may choose the players and assign the parts.

The entire first scene could be cut, beginning the play at Scene II, "Lawn before the Duke's palace," and this scene itself can be freely cut. The following idea of the work is given only as an example. Every director should follow her own ideas.

When the play opens, Celia and Rosalind are discovered, the latter leaning on a broad-topped wall and gazing sadly out over the distant country. Celia is seated on a garden bench nearby, busily engaged in tossing roses at her cousin to attract her

attention. Celia finally speaks: "I pray thee, Rosalind, sweet, my coz, be merry." Of what is Rosalind thinking as she abstractedly looks out over the country-side? Probably of her father, driven from his dukedom by his younger brother, away off there in the Forest of Arden, perhaps sad and lonely; a little, too, of herself and her changed fortunes, a dependent here in her uncle's court. Celia loves Rosalind very dearly. Le Beau says of them: "Whose loves are dearer than the natural bond of sisters." She, therefore, tries to make her cousin forget her troubles and urges her to "be merry."

Rosalind replies with a little natural sigh: "Dear Celia, I show more mirth than I am mistress of; and would you yet I were merrier?" That is, for Celia's sake she pretends to be even happier than she actually is, and asks how she can be merrier still?

"Unless you could teach me to forget a banished father, you must not learn me how to remember any extraordinary pleasure,"—she adds. These words prove where her mind has been.

Celia now rises with a little gesture of sympathy, and goes to Rosalind, and now we have that sentence that is such a lesson in pronouns:

"Herein I see thou lov'st me not with the full weight that I love thee. If *my* uncle, thy banished father, had banished *thy* uncle, the Duke *my* father, so *thou* had'st been still with me, I could have taught my love to take *thy* father for mine."

If a player does not understand this sentence, and says it without understanding, all the exquisite beauty is lost and it becomes almost comedy. Celia

must give her meaning and point the pronouns by emphasis and inflection; she must not gesture to herself or Rosalind to indicate what she means.

Rosalind, moved by this loving speech, puts her arm about her gentle cousin, and both girls walk quietly to the garden bench, which stands right centre,—Rosalind earnestly promising: “Well, I will forget the condition of my estate to rejoice in yours.” They sit down side by side. Celia’s generous nature is shown in her next words. She takes Rosalind’s hand and speaks strongly and with much feeling:

“You know my father hath no child but I, nor none is like to have; and truly, when he dies, thou shalt be his heir; for what he hath taken away from thy father perforce, I will render thee again in affection; by mine honour, I will; and when I break that oath, let me turn monster. Therefore, my sweet Rose, my dear Rose, be merry.”

Celia means this literally and her words carry conviction. Rosalind is taller and larger than Celia,—this fact we learn from the play,—probably a little older and more dignified, but in this speech Celia seems for a moment the elder of the two. Rosalind is much moved by her cousin’s generosity, and pauses a moment before replying, “From henceforth I will, coz, and devise sports,” and she keeps her promise.

Celia now cries happily, “Here comes Monsieur Le Beau,” much as one would say “Here comes the postman,”—for Monsieur Le Beau knows all the news and gossip of the Court and is, therefore, a welcome diversion.

Enter Monsieur Le Beau, followed by Touchstone. Celia and Rosalind rise and make the courtesy appropriate to the period. Monsieur Le Beau bows elaborately.

“Bon jour, Monsieur Le Beau. What’s the news?” Celia speaks French here in deference to Le Beau’s nationality, although he speaks almost perfect English, and also with a spirit of playfulness and an idea of making fun of Monsieur Le Beau’s social weaknesses. Monsieur Le Beau is very elegantly dressed; he has an affected, artificial manner, and a mincing gait.

“Fair Princess, you have lost much good sport.”

Notice that Le Beau speaks only to Celia, although, of course, he politely includes Rosalind in his second bow. Celia is the social leader of the Court; hence her leadership in this scene.

As the play develops and the two women are thrown on their own resources, the strength of character of Rosalind makes her the leader in their plans and doings.

“Sport! Of what colour?” Celia here means what kind of sport.

Le Beau does not quite understand her use of the word “colour” and replies vaguely, “What colour, Madam! How shall I answer you?”

Rosalind says gaily, “As wit and fortune will.”

Touchstone now leaps upon the garden wall, and, twirling his bauble which he always carries, remarks merrily: “Or as the Destinies decree.” Touchstone is also making a bit of fun at Monsieur Le Beau’s expense. Touchstone is extremely graceful, quick in his actions, witty and adroit. The office of

a professional fool was very lucrative; it required a particularly clever man to fill it, and it was considered an honourable calling. Touchstone had probably held his position a long time,—perhaps had been attached to the Court of Rosalind's father before he was banished by the present Duke. Le Beau pays no attention to Touchstone, but replies only to the ladies:

“You amaze me, ladies; I would have told you of good wrestling, which you have lost the sight of.”

Celia now seats herself. Rosalind sits beside her and they prepare to listen to the account of the wrestling. Rosalind urges gently, fearing Monsieur Le Beau may be offended by her former remark, and therefore refuse to tell them the story of the wrestling. “Yet tell us the manner of the wrestling.”

In Le Beau's account of the wrestling, each listener is impressed according to his or her individual nature. Rosalind thinks of “the poor old man, their father,” because her own father is dear to her and she is thinking lovingly of him. She is, therefore, deeply moved by the recital of this old man's grief over his three sons. Celia is sympathetic because of the natural sympathy in her nature. Touchstone is merely amused that Le Beau should call this “sport,” and especially “sport for ladies.” Le Beau speaks very deliberately and in a rather pompous manner:—

“There comes an old man and his three sons. The eldest of the three wrestled with Charles, the Duke's wrestler; which Charles in a moment threw him and broke three of his ribs,—so he served the

second, and so the third. Yonder they lie; the poor old man, their father, making such pitiful dole over them that all the beholders take his part with weeping."

Rosalind and Celia move closer together during this story, and Rosalind sighs "Alas!" It is this recital that tinges all the coming scene with Orlando, and makes Rosalind and Celia so earnest in their efforts to prevent Orlando from wrestling with Charles.

Touchstone slips down from the wall and says, a little sarcastically: "But what is the sport, Monsieur, that the ladies have lost?" Le Beau is slightly embarrassed by the question, but replies, "Why this that I speak of." Touchstone, twirling his bauble, retorts: "Thus men may grow wiser every day; it is the first time that ever I heard breaking of ribs was sport for ladies," and he laughingly turns away.

Celia calls after him, "Or I, I promise thee," as she rises from the bench with a little sigh. Rosalind also rises and addressing herself to Celia, says rather doubtfully: —

"Shall we see this wrestling, cousin?" Rosalind is not at all sure that she wishes to see it, but is willing to do so if Celia desires it. Celia says: "Yonder sure they are coming; let us now stay and see it." Le Beau also looks left, sees the court approaching and says, "You must, if you stay here, for here is the place appointed for the wrestling, and they are ready to perform it." He walks with great dignity across the stage to Celia and Rosalind. Now we hear trumpets sounded off stage to herald

the approach of the Duke. The effect of a trumpet can easily be gained by a little vocal practice in imitating the sounds of a trumpet. Duke Frederick enters with lords, Orlando, and attendants. Their entrance can be very elaborate or very simple. If elaborate, there can be a procession of pages, possibly heralds carrying trumpets; lords and ladies and several attendants; if simple, a few gentlemen and ladies of the court, Orlando, and possibly one or two attendants.

Celia and Rosalind courtesy deeply to the Duke, Le Beau bows magnificently. The Duke curtly acknowledges their salutations. He is a man with a mean and jealous nature,—even Celia says he has “a rough and envious disposition,”—and just now he is especially out of sorts because he is constantly hearing of many young men who are flocking to the Forest of Arden to live there with his banished brother. Toward Rosalind he has “ta'en displeasure,” as Le Beau puts it, “grounded upon no other argument but that the people praise her for her virtues and pity her for her good father's sake.” The Duke delivers this rude speech to those around him as he enters:

“Come on; since the youth will not be entreated, his own peril on his forwardness.”

Rosalind says to Le Beau, “Is yonder the man?”

Le Beau replies, “Even he, Madam.”

Celia looks sympathetically at the young Orlando, who, assisted by the attendants of the Duke, is taking off his sleeveless jacket in preparation for the coming trial.

Celia says: “Alas! he is too young! Yet he

looks successfully." At first Celia sees only his youth and pities it, for he must come in contact with the redoubtable Charles. When she looks again, however, she realizes that besides the advantage of youth, he has the look of one who will succeed.

The Duke now approaches the seat near which Rosalind and Celia are standing, saying: "How now, daughter and cousin! Are you crept hither to see the wrestling?" Rosalind answers, "'Ay, my liege, so please you give us leave." Rosalind is not aware of the Duke's feeling toward her, and the Duke of course does not show his feelings before all these people; so he replies, fairly courteously:

"You will take little delight in it, I can tell you; there is such odds in the man. Speak to him, ladies; see if you can move him."

Celia says at once, "Call him hither, good Monsieur Le Beau."

Duke Frederick agrees: "Do so; I'll not be by," and walks away to a raised seat up right centre. Touchstone follows him, and sitting upon the step of the seat, apparently tries to tell him some witty story. Le Beau calls, at the same time crossing toward Orlando, "Monsieur the challenger." Orlando looks up and crosses toward Le Beau, who continues: "The Princess calls for you." Notice how Le Beau speaks of only *one* Princess, whereas Orlando speaks, in reply of "them." "I attend *them* with all respect and duty." Le Beau now goes up and converses with the Duke, and Orlando crosses to Rosalind and Celia.

Rosalind now addresses Orlando: "Young man, have you challenged Charles, the wrestler?"

Orlando, modestly and with downcast eyes, replies: "No, fair Princess; he is the general challenger. I come but in, as others do, to try with him the strength of my youth."

Celia says gently: "Young gentleman, your spirits are too bold for your years. We pray you, for your own sake, to embrace your own safety and give over this attempt."

Rosalind adds her persuasion to Celia's: "Do, young sir; your reputation shall not therefore be misprised; we will make it our suit to the Duke that the wrestling might not go forward."

This speech of Rosalind's shows her thoughtfulness. She realizes that it might seem a cowardice on Orlando's part if the wrestling was stopped, unless some very strong and special reason was given for doing so. Orlando speaks firmly and a little sadly, showing by his reply how deeply moved he is by this sympathy and interest taken in his affairs by these lovely ladies.

"I beseech you, punish me not with your hard thoughts; wherein I confess me much guilty to deny so fair and excellent ladies anything. But let your fair eyes and gentle wishes go with me to my trial; wherein if I be foiled, there is but one sham'd that was never gracious; if killed, but one dead that is willing to be so; I shall do my friends no wrong, for I have none to lament me; the world no injury, for in it I have nothing; only in the world I fill up a place, which may be better supplied when I have made it empty."

It is probably this speech, showing the loneliness of Orlando, that first makes Rosalind "fall into so

strong a liking with old Sir Rowland's youngest son." Rosalind says very gently: "The little strength that I have, I would it were with you"; and Celia says, not quite so earnestly but still very warmly, "And mine, to eke out hers."

The wrestling scene may now be given on the stage, provided one of the players can take the part of Charles. It is difficult to find a player who is able, physically, to act this part, and, of course, with a caste of all girls it is impossible.

The scene can be given quite as effectively off the stage, arranged in this way:

The Duke rises and says: "Come on," leading the way out. All the men follow, leaving Rosalind, Celia, and the ladies of the Court on the stage. They apparently watch the wrestling going on outside and are much excited. Rosalind says presently, in a tense voice: "Now Hercules be thy speed, young man."

Celia, clasping and unclasping her hands, cries: "I would I were invisible, to catch the strong fellow by the leg."

A pause ensues filled by the excited pantomime of those on the stage; then Rosalind exclaims: "Oh, excellent, young man!" Another pause follows, interrupted by Celia: "If I had a thunderbolt in mine eye I can tell who should down." A shout is heard from outside. "Charles is thrown!" The two girls are triumphantly joyous. The men return.

The Duke, walking with Orlando, inquires, "What is thy name, young man?"

Orlando courteously replies: "Orlando, my

liege; the youngest son of Sir Rowland de Boys."

All the Court are much excited and listen eagerly, thinking, of course, that the Duke will reward Orlando with some handsome gift, but are much chagrined and disappointed at his changed expression and churlish reply:

"I would thou hadst been son to some man else;
The world esteemed thy father honourable
But I did find him still mine enemy;
Thou shouldst have better pleased me with this deed
Hadst thou descended from another house.
But fare thee well," and, as he turns to go,
"I would thou hadst told me of another father."

During this ungenerous speech the lords and ladies look at one another with marked disapproval, and as Duke Frederick prepares to go, follow him reluctantly and disappointedly.

This scene must be worked out with much care, as the actors must feel the entire change of key in the emotion of the scene, and show their various feelings by their changes of expression.

Orlando turns away and begins to put on his jacket, preparing to depart. He is naturally very much abashed and somewhat indignant. Celia and Rosalind do not follow the other ladies, but stand together watching Orlando. Finally Celia speaks:

"Gentle cousin, let us go thank him and encourage him. My father's rough and envious disposition sticks me at heart."

Orlando is now about to go, but Celia comes forward to him saying graciously: "Sir, you have

well deserved. If you do keep your promises in love but justly, as you have exceeded all promise, your mistress shall be happy." Orlando is very grateful, and when Rosalind comes forward he involuntarily kneels as she takes a chain from her neck. Lightly throwing it over his head, she says:

"Wear this for me, one out of suits with fortune. That could give more, but that her hand lacks means." She pauses, and Celia touches her gently on the arm to recall her. Rosalind immediately responds with, "Shall we go, coz?" Orlando rises and bows and both girls slightly curtsey. Celia says, "Ay" (this to Rosalind), then to Orlando, "Fare you well, fair gentleman," and leads the shy and reluctant Rosalind toward the exit. Orlando is so moved that he cannot speak, but, fighting down his emotion, says to himself, "Can I not say 'I thank you'?" My better parts are all thrown down, and that which here stands up is but a quintain, a mere lifeless block."

Rosalind stops at the door, holding Celia's hand. Shyly she says, "He calls us back. I'll ask him what he would." Of course, Orlando has not called, but Rosalind sees his embarrassment and with gentle courtesy tries to help him by saying, "Did you call, sir? Sir, you have wrestled well and overthrown more than your enemies." Celia pulls at Rosalind's hand, "Will you go, coz?" Rosalind replies, rather impatient at Celia's insistence, "Have with you." And then to the speechless Orlando she says, "Fare you well."

Both girls curtsey as they go off and Orlando instinctively bows, but seems rooted to the ground,

gazing after the two girls. When they are quite gone he moves toward their exit, as if looking after them, and then says:

“I cannot speak to her, yet she urg’d conference.
O poor Orlando, thou art overthrown!
Or Charles or something weaker masters thee.”

At this moment Le Beau re-enters and counsels Orlando to leave, owing to the displeasure of the Duke. This ends the scene.

CHAPTER IX

THE USE OF THE VOICE IN DEVELOPING A PLAY

Text — Reading — Speech — Breath — Articulation — Diction — Word colouring — Emphasis.

Text: After choosing your play, one of the first things to be considered is the text. In the text are the facts that are assembled to make your play. It is in your text that you find materials to make your play. To use a homely simile, it is like making a bouquet: you assemble your flowers and leaves and put them together, and presently you have a bouquet. The bouquet is your play, as it were. To assemble your facts, you ask questions: What does the text tell? What does it leave open to probability? What to possibility? The text says, "I am your king." Merely words. Is there a speaker? Yes. What does the text give out? That he is a king. Probability is, he is grown up; possibility, he might not be. Immediately interest awakens and all sorts of possibilities cluster around the idea conveyed by the words. By reading on still further, searching and questioning, and by close analysis, we build up the idea until finally the players are *doing* the scene, instead of just reading it. They are beginning impersonation,— suggesting the person, acting like the person. Then comes char-

acterization, which is the acting. By working out the idea conveyed by the text,—the inner thought of the part,—the player has become the character itself, and the result is one of those satisfying performances, full of educational benefit to the actor and of entertainment value to the audience.

Reading: In reading the text, the whole task of the reader is to read the lines for the listener. The listener must understand. Unless you get your message *over*, so that the idea is clearly conveyed to your audience, you have not succeeded. One way to accomplish this is to make sure that the reader fully and completely understands the play and the lines. Questions bring this understanding. What is the play about,—its subject matter; its theme? What is the story of the play,—the plot? What do the characters have to do with the theme? They develop the theme through characterization. What do the characters have to do with the plot? They develop the story through the action.

In reading, the object is to bring out the play. The play must tell its story, and the reader must tell it. This is the main purpose in reading. Sometimes, when the analysis of a character is not perfectly clear to the player, an excellent plan is to read the one character through an entire scene or play, and follow his continuity of thought. Take, for instance, Viola's scene with the Captain, in "Twelfth Night," Act I, Sc. 2.

"What country, friends, is this?"

"Know'st thou this country?"

"Who governs here?"

“What is his name?”

“Is he married?”

“Can I serve him?”

Who is Olivia? Can I serve her? Finding she cannot, her final decision is, “I will serve this Duke.”

The whole trend of Viola's thought is here shown: What shall I do? How shall I live? It is the dominant note in the scene,—running all through it.

Speech: The next point seems, naturally, speech. The difference between “speech” and “reading” is that reading names the words on the page, and these words, by analysis, are made into speech. Speech is, therefore, a form of expression, and the form it takes is determined by the meaning conveyed to the speaker by the thought in the words. To put it another way: the speaker analyses the words and sentences he is about to read or speak, until the meaning or idea behind the words is perfectly clear to his mind, and then he says those words and sentences in such a way as to convey clearly the meaning to the listener, and so express the author's idea. Of course this does not refer to spontaneous speech, but the speech used in dramatics or text speech.

Breath vocalized is speech. We must, therefore, first consider breath.

Breath: We have two sorts of breath: the breath that merely keeps us alive,—the involuntary and normal breath;—and the breath that is used

for speaking or singing,—or the forceful, voluntary breath. Involuntary breathing takes place without conscious effort, working unconsciously and continually as long as life lasts. Voluntary breathing involves a conscious expansion of the organs for inspiration and expiration, using such force as the speech requires. Life, health, energy, voice are all dependent upon breathing. The motor-power of voice is breath.

Breath changes with the feeling. There is the short, quick breath of fear; the panting breath of the hunted; the fierce, quick-drawn, angry breath; the breath that packs the body full when a fight is imminent; the sobbing breath of grief; the laboured breath of weakness or fatigue; and many more. All these are part of expression and come before speech. The voice used under any of these conditions is of the same quality as the breath. The words may be few. The fear breath may vocalize in an agonized sound, which presently forms the words "Help! help!" The pleased child may inhale deeply with surprise and joy, the voice may come in a chortling gurgle, and presently words form, such as "Good, good." Speech communicates that which we have already known and felt. We must have the feeling first, then breath, and lastly, speech. In real life speech is spontaneous. You do not know precisely what words you use, neither does the listener know the words you use; you give out only the idea. In text-speech, the words are learned by heart, but they seem to be words used for the first time, and, as in real life, convey to the listener only the thought and feeling

meant by them. Speech serves the mental concept, — the idea. It does not begin to develop until we know what we think. Sound may come, but not speech. Breath comes first,— it belongs to the vital part of us. Voice comes next,— it belongs to the emotional. Words come last,— they belong to the mental. The three are represented in speech. Therefore, if you only name the word on the page, you give only the mental. You must have the whole in acting, or else it is not good acting. You must have the thought first, and in-take the breath for it, then summon the proper voice for it, then give the words for it in speech. The word colours the voice. If I am enraged, my voice becomes guttural and hard. If I am loving, my voice becomes soft and sounds like a sort of chant. If you will listen to a mother talking to her baby in the next room, you may not distinguish the words she uses, but the voice will softly intone the vowels, gently caressing them, and the consonants will hardly sound at all. It is a love chant.

To remember words in the text, do not stop and try to drive the words in; just go back to the idea that gave the feeling for the words, and work on from there.

Speech must seem spontaneous. Pupils must cease as soon as possible merely to read the text, and this can be done by analysis, to bring out the idea; then the words will flow freely and naturally. Keep the player full by analysis, so that speech may overflow. The analysis makes the thought, or inner drama, from which speech that rings true must come. This inner drama is what the character in

the play is thinking, not necessarily what is said in the lines of the play, but what is thought by the character. An excellent plan to get this thought-action, is to write on the margin of the play, next to the printed text, the thoughts of the character who is speaking. This will give the inner drama. This inner drama must be complete, the players must be held back, the thoughts of the character must be sifted out, until finally thought is complete; not until thought is complete must the player speak. Speech is the final expression. To make text speech like spontaneous speech, so animate the players with the thoughts and feelings of the character speaking that the text satisfies the player as does spontaneous speech.

Articulation: Articulation is here considered only as a form of dramatic expression. The amount of force we use in the articulation of a word reveals the thought back of the word. Words are divided into consonant sounds and vowel sounds. The vowels represent the softer emotions. The words yield to them, as it were. Consonants represent the harder emotions,—the unyielding feeling in the words. We emphasize the vowels when we are loving and kind; we emphasize the consonants when we are angry. An explosive utterance of the consonants gives out a sense of contempt, anger or disgust. In the use of the words "You dog!" an emphasis on the "d" makes it much more scathing. In "Mary, please come!" prolonging the vowel sounds, makes it appealing.

“Mary, come down stairs!” Holding the consonants, makes it imperative.

Diction: Diction is also a form of expression. For example, the king's diction in the play must be perfect, because we have come to feel he is the highest development of culture and refinement. It is from the acting point only that we are considering it. Whereas Johnnie in his own person may say, “I am yer king, an' shull fight t' th' las' bret,” as a king he must say “I am your king and shall fight to the last breath,” as part of his character, refinement and education. Incidentally, Johnnie also improves his English speech.

Do not nag a player about his diction. If you do, it will develop self-consciousness. Gradually lead him to pronounce his words correctly, and do it by indirect means as much as possible. If you constantly correct a player in his pronunciation of certain words, and draw his attention to them, he will almost invariably go back to his original pronunciation on the night of the performance, owing to nervousness and self-consciousness about these special words. Once in a while, if necessary, change a word in the text to another, when a special word annoys the player. If the cast need work in diction, take it as a regular lesson, but do not point out the words in connection with the lines of the play. A good plan is to make a list of the difficult words and have a drill with all the players on all the words, whether they occur in the individual parts or not. This is a great help to all the

cast, and makes those whose diction is poor feel less conspicuous.

Word colouring and emphasis: This important part of the work embraces a wide field. First, the word must be mentally, emotionally and pictorially, as it were, understood, in order to bring out its full meaning in a sentence. Take, for instance, the word "rack" as used in "King Lear." Kent says, when Lear is dying:

"He hates him
That would upon the rack of this tough world
Stretch him out longer."

Of course, in Shakespeare's time, the "rack" meant something. An actor of his time could put the necessary feeling into the word to give it the fullest meaning, but in this day we must necessarily describe its horrors in order to colour the word as fully as Kent, in the play, would have coloured it. When a player has charming words, with long liquid vowels, such as "California," "glorious," "Romeo," "lovely," they must be uttered in such a way as to bring out their musical intonation and convey their beauty. Again in such words as "knell," "toll," etc., the bell sounds must be heard in the voice. The lulling effect can be strongly brought out in the verses in "A Midsummer Night's Dream," by softly clinging to the vowels:

"Philomel, with melody,
Sing in our sweet lullaby,
Lulla, lulla, lullaby."

Many of us have heard the sound of galloping in an effective reading of Robert Browning's poem beginning:

"I sprang to the stirrup, and Joris and he,
I galloped, Dirck galloped, we galloped all three;
'Good speed!' cried the watch as the gate bolts un-
drew;
'Speed!' echoed the wall to us galloping through."

Significant pauses help a great deal in bringing out the meaning of words, as, for instance, in the scene between Macbeth and Lady Macbeth:

MACBETH: My dearest love, Duncan comes here tonight.

LADY MACBETH: And when (pause) goes hence?

MACBETH: Tomorrow (pause) as he purposes.

Each pause is full of colour and expression. A pause, however, must always be a living pause; it must not be just a pause to mark time. Often a player will fail absolutely to get the important point across, by stressing or colouring the wrong word, or by failing to give the proper inflection. He will lay great stress upon a preposition or an unimportant verb, and it is most difficult to make him change. It can never be done by merely repeating it over and over, but only by going back to the analysis of the idea. In producing the fairy play, "The Golden Goose," for instance, the boy who played the part of Jack, the youngest brother, came on the stage bearing the golden goose. His entrance line was, "It was a golden goose," and, for some strange reason he emphasized *was*. "It *was* a

golden goose," said he. This emphasis was pointless for there had been no mention whatever of controversy about the goose. The director immediately asked the question, "What was it Jack found?" The boy answered "It was a *golden goose*," in a perfectly natural tone of voice and with the right word emphasized.

CHAPTER X

THE BODY AS AN INSTRUMENT IN AMATEUR DRAMATICS: ITS USE, FREEDOM, AND CONTROL.

The body a physical mechanism— Voluntary and involuntary movements— Actions expressive of the dominating emotion— Degrees of susceptibility of players— Difference in expressions of the same emotion— Origin of expression— Examples from Darwin— Expression a part of feeling— Developing sympathy in a player— Self-consciousness— Spontaneous performances— Enlarging the player's horizon— Spoken language— Limitations of imitation— Value of "letting the player alone."

NOTE. All words such as "physical mechanism," "voluntary and involuntary movements," "final common path," "direct action," in quotation marks, are the technical and scientific terms. It seems wise to use them in order not only to be correct but to facilitate future reading.

UNTIL ten or fifteen years ago, the charm that amateur dramatics had for the players themselves, although an acknowledged fact, was neither analysed nor utilized. Since then, however, it has become an established truth that the simplest and surest way to attract and hold the interest of children and young people generally is through the dramatic sense. This fact having gained ground with astonishing rapidity, there is yet an important side of amateur dramatics that is still little understood and given little consideration,— the great elemental truth that the body responds *automatically*

to any given emotion,— that it can be trusted to give unaided the right expression of an emotion, if the right idea is implanted in the mind of the player; that it is never necessary for a dramatic director to show how to make a gesture or how to read a line; in fact, that the method of imitation and demonstration but hinders the development of a natural, spontaneous performance. Many realize the necessity or advisability of “letting the players alone” but do not know that the reasons for doing so are fundamental laws of the body and its expressions.

Perhaps the most important of these laws, as regards amateur dramatics, is included in the modern theory, accepted by most eminent physicians and surgeons, of the body as a “physical mechanism.” Just like any other piece of intricate machinery, accomplishing the needs for which it is created when given the necessary fuel or stimulus, “man should be considered as a mechanism whose reactions under a given set of conditions are as inevitable as are the reactions of any other mechanism, such as a locomotive, for example.” Fuel is as necessary to the human body as it is to any other machine. Just as coal is used by the engine of a locomotive, so food, when taken into the body, is utilized by the “kinetic system,” the group of organs in the body which transforms food into muscular action, emotion, and body heat. It may be compared to the motor of an automobile. This system actually makes the different fluids that not only sustain life and make the framework of the body, but that cause all physical action,—the “voluntary movements,” as they are called, such as walking, eating, speaking and the

like, and the "involuntary movements," such as breathing, digesting, and trembling.

The "voluntary movements" are those controlled by the will, by the desire to do a certain thing, such as walking, eating, speaking. The "involuntary movements" are made without being directed by an intention, such as breathing, blushing, trembling, and it is not only impossible to suppress them by desiring to do so, but they cannot be brought into action simply by the will alone. On the other hand, when the will is temporarily or permanently weakened, the voluntary muscles fail before the involuntary ones. For this reason it is impossible to prevent the heart from beating rapidly under a given stimulus, or tears from coming into the eyes, for both the heart and glands are wholly independent of the will. The chest may heave and the nostrils quiver against the will, for the movements of respiration are only in part voluntary. Even the lips sometimes refuse to act under the direction of the will, and the voice cannot respond. By knowledge and practice, an actor may be able to use any of his "voluntary movements" at will and give adequate expression to any emotion so that the spectator may recognize it and understand what he is expressing, but this almost perfect technique often fails to move an audience. They realize that the actor leaves them cold but do not know that it is because he is giving them only *a part* of what his body is capable of expressing. When he is inspired with the thought and emotion of the character, the excited nervous system forces the "involuntary movements" of the body into activ-

ity also. It is only then that an audience is stirred by a complete interpretation of a situation or the portrayal of an emotion.

When a player comes into a dramatic instructor's hands, the "kinetic system," and the energy thus created, is supposed to be working normally and to be ready for impressions and actions. Her problem is how to direct this energy to gain the best results, not only for the good of the performance but for the individual player as well. It is the brain that directs the "voluntary movement" of the body and causes action, but before even that direction takes place, the brain itself has to be *acted upon* and that is done by "environment," by which is meant all the influences that surround an individual in life. If there were no influences around a physical body there would be no action whatever in that body—it would become inert. The body needs a stimulus of some kind to cause action, and usually the greater the stimulus, that is, the more the surroundings affect the individual, the greater the action. Delsarte says "Motion is the language of the emotions." How does the influence of what is going on around us reach the brain? By means of the "sense organs," seeing, hearing, tasting, smelling, touching, any one of which sends a direct message to the brain, if unmolested by any other and stronger message. The result of this first and strongest message will cause the body to act; that is, any idea that gains control of the straight road from the senses to the brain, the path of action, or what is known as the "final common path," will not only predominate in the expression but will exclude

the expression of all other emotions. By the same means, when the emotion fitting the situation and character in a play dominates the mind of the player, and so gets control of the "final common path," self-consciousness, the besetting sin of most players, and other smaller yet distracting emotions, are entirely displaced, for only *one* emotion, if of sufficient force, can pass over this "final common path" at one time from the sense organs to the brain. The dominant emotion in the brain *always results in action expressive of that emotion*, not only in the "voluntary movements," which the brain controls, but also in the "involuntary movements," over which the brain has little or no control.

Ordinarily life runs along in a peaceful, quiet routine, and the physical actions necessary to that life are brought about through this system of introducing emotions to the brain through the senses and the "final common path." When this routine is interrupted by some intense stimulation or excitement, what actually happens? The "kinetic system," which transforms food into energy, is impelled to greater activity, and there is an actual increase in all the fluids of the body, and so an increase of energy, and there follows increased action of some sort. In order that this energy shall be utilized to express the feelings and emotions needed by the character and the situation in the play, the necessity for directing it correctly becomes more and more apparent. This energy may, of course, develop into repressed, unexpressed emotion,— a state of mind and body that should be back of all repressed acting, but that is not advisable for amateur

players, for the expression of emotion in some kind of muscular action is a great relief and of more educational value.

No one can overestimate the value of gaining control of the "final common path," or the "*infallibility*" of these laws of the body and expression. The most wonderful and convincing examples are being given every day in the war. Soldiers are so dominated by an exhilaration of victory, or a realization of danger, perhaps by a feeling of fear, that no other emotion can gain access to the "final common path." Wounds and distressing conditions of all kinds, which otherwise would doubtless cause most frightful suffering, are not felt at all until the fight is over or there is safety or comparative quiet. This does not mean that the smaller emotions which are pushed aside by the dominating emotion are destroyed, for no impression that we receive in the brain is ever lost, even though it passes out of our memory. It disappears into our "subconscious mind," from whence it may emerge at any unexpected moment and affect our actions. It has been suggested that the "dramatic instinct," with which we deal in all dramatic work, may be the connecting link between the brain and the "subconscious mind." If that is true, it explains the "inspiration," which is an apparent fact in the best acting,—that unexplained power of the "inspired" actor to call up, almost at will, unseen forces, and to achieve results far beyond the usual ability of his intelligence and technique. He may, in fact, have only more power over his dramatic instinct and be able literally to use it as we use our hand in writing or our feet in

walking. Some such explanation might cover the child prodigy in mathematics, music, and the like.

If this response of the body to the right stimulation is so exact and infallible, then why is the response so much quicker in one player than in another? There is at the entrance to every one's brain what is known in medicine as the "threshold," which any emotion has to cross before it can enter into the brain and be turned into action. As water will wear away a stone, this "threshold" becomes lower and lower upon repetition of the same emotion. No two players can possibly be equally susceptible to the same impression, because the emotions and surroundings of their entire former lives were, of necessity, so diverse. It is exactly like learning a lesson. The more times it is gone over the easier it is. In the same way the dramatic director will find her players responding more and more quickly to her appeal. Dramatic directors will find some persons very susceptible (that is, their "threshold" is naturally very low) to pain and to fear and to other undesirable qualities, and it becomes the director's business in *educational* dramatics so to use the emotions and feelings of the characters portrayed in the play as to lower or raise the player's "threshold," or susceptibility, to such emotions as may seem best for his permanent development and growth in life. Just as the most complex and difficult movements of the body can in time be performed by athletes and acrobats without the least effort or consciousness, so the "threshold" of the mind can be "lowered" by repetition to admit cer-

tain feelings and emotions more quickly and easily. Physiologists say that "the *conducting power* of the *nervous fibres* increases with the *frequency of the excitement*," which applies to sensation and feeling as well as to motion. Darwin gives as an example, the case of a man going out of doors and putting on his gloves quite unconsciously; and though this may seem a very simple operation, any one who has taught a child to put on gloves knows that this is by no means the case. Even laughing and weeping have to be learned through practice, for very young babies do neither, although they are proficient in screaming from the beginning. As almost every physical movement of the body has to be developed through exercise, so the capacity for every emotion is developed. It is the business of the dramatic director to see that from play to play and from year to year, she so casts her players that they will gain the most advantage from the characters and emotions depicted.

How shall the dramatic director know that the player has understood the true meaning of the emotion of the character that he is portraying? By his physical expression of that emotion. But just as different players are not all equally susceptible to the same emotion, so the *form* of expression of emotion differs in different players. In actual life, one person, filled with surprise at meeting a burglar in the house, will advance to attack him, another will shrink back. If this response of the body to a given stimulation is so exact and infallible, why is this so? In this one instance it is because dur-

ing numerous generations men have endeavoured to escape from their enemies or dangers, not only by violently struggling with them, but also by head-long flight. With almost all emotions, the different expressions of them can be traced back and found to be either innate or inherited,—“that is, that they have *not been learnt by the individual.*” So little has learning or imitation to do with many of them that they are often beyond one’s control. One may not want to start back at seeing a burglar, or to attack him, but one does it just the same. All actions were, doubtless, first performed *voluntarily*, to accomplish some definite object. One generation after another, finding these voluntary actions of value, used them, until they have now become a matter of habit and are innate. “That most of them are inherited, we may infer from their being performed, in almost the same way, by very young children, by those born blind, and by the most widely distinct races of man.” These three greatly varying examples serve as definite proof that the form of expression is not controlled by each individual, but is the result of the selective struggle of the human species for generations to get the expression that best meets the situation, developing into more subtle shades of expression as life becomes more complicated for the individual. Beginning with the simplest forms of self preservation, developing into defence of all kinds from the physical to the spiritual and the intellectual. Beginning with the wild fight to obtain food, developing into the present keen business competition to get money to buy food and

other necessities and luxuries. Beginning with the simple desire to propagate the race, developing into the present-day subtleties of attraction, friendship, marriage, social intercourse of all kinds.

There are three principles for these innate actions of the body. The first is known as "reflex actions." These are actions such as coughing and sneezing,—actions which take place without any preliminary brain sensation or consciousness, although often such preliminary voluntary consciousness is present. These are caused by an undirected overflow of nerve force,—that is without the idea having been carried to the brain with a consequent movement following it. In fact, the wish and will to perform an action of this kind very often stop its performance. If one tries to sneeze or cough or yawn it will be found that something more than simply the will to do it is necessary. It is this principle that often makes it so difficult for some persons to swallow a pill. The more you draw attention to the action, and direct the conscious will toward it, the more difficult it becomes. The involuntary closing of the eyelids in anticipation of a blow is a reverse illustration of the same law. It may have been, that, in the beginning, these actions were all voluntary and directed and have become unconscious through inheritance and now take place whenever the same sensation is felt, even if in very slight degrees.

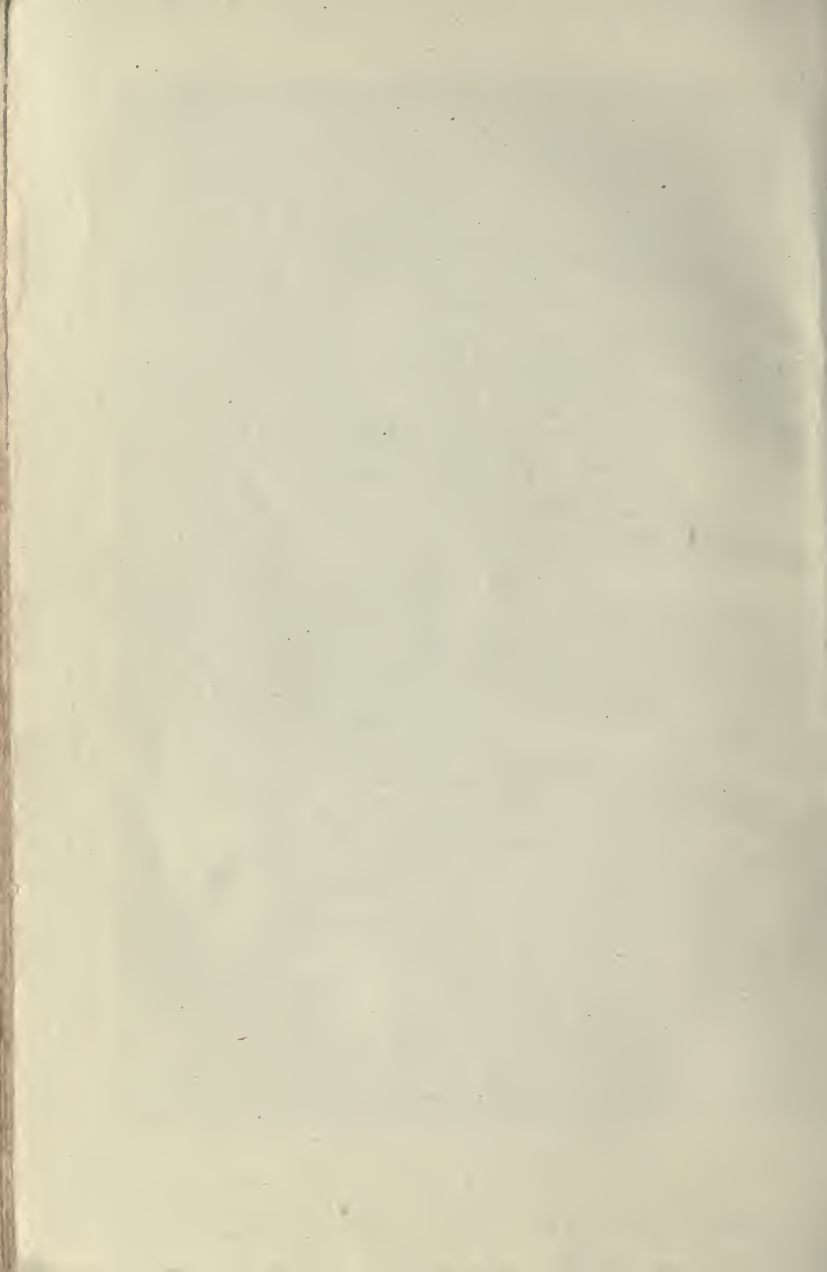
The second principle is that known as "antithesis." When the body has become accustomed to perform certain actions when certain sensations are felt, it will perform opposite actions when oppos-



Photo by
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GARRICK PLAYERS IN TAGORE'S "POST OFFICE"

Showing the naturalness and simplicity resulting from "leaving the players alone" in rehearsing



ing sensations are felt, even though these actions are of no use and have no other reason for being. The best instance of this is shrugging the shoulders as a sign of expressing impotence or apology or something which cannot be done or cannot be avoided. The action itself accomplishes nothing. It is but the opposite of the movements made in a bold gesture of any kind, where the shoulders are squared and the chest expanded. All the expression of joy of a dog at meeting his master is of no use, but is merely the contrary of the actions of fighting. Astonishment is often expressed by raising the arms, opening the palms, and separating the fingers, or by straightening the arms, extending them back, and opening the fingers, movements of no use, but the opposite of repose, when the arms and hands hang relaxed at the side.

The third principle is that of the "direct action" of the nervous system on the body, independently of the will and independently, in large part, of habit. As an example, when the mind is strongly excited it instantly affects the heart in a *direct* manner, causing rapid breathing and trembling, which are never of service to the body in that situation.

In order to become assured of how innate and exact these reactions of the body are, note carefully some of the following analyses of the relation of physical expression to mental emotion or feeling, which have been adapted for the most part directly from Darwin; get your players to assume, so far as possible, the suggested physical position and posture of face and body; and then try to express in words a *different* thought or emotion.—

1. Express astonishment by raising the eyebrows and opening wide the mouth and eyes. Then say nonchalantly, "Oh, I don't care."

2. Hold the body and head erect, square the shoulders and clench the fists, as when indignant or defiant, and say, softly and sweetly, "I love you."

3. Frown, or wrinkle the skin beneath the lower eyelids, as when considering deeply on any subject, or when trying to understand a puzzle, and say, brightly, "It is as clear as day."

4. As when in low spirits, depress the corners of the mouth, and raise the inner corners of the eyebrows by that muscle which the French call the "grief muscle." Then say joyously, "I'm so happy!"

5. Attempt to express good spirits when the eyes sparkle and the skin is a little wrinkled around under them, and the mouth a little drawn back at the corners, and say, sadly, "He died this morning."

6. Sneer or snarl, as when the corner of the upper lip is raised over the canine, or eye tooth, on the side facing the person addressed, and say proudly and without sarcasm, "He is the best son in the world."

7. Assume a dogged or obstinate expression by closing the mouth firmly, lowering the brow, and frowning slightly. Then say cheerfully, "I'll gladly do it."

8. Express contempt by a slight protrusion of the lips and by turning up the nose with a slight expiration, and say, sincerely, "I can't tell you how fond I am of him."

9. Show disgust by turning down the lower lip

and raising the upper lip slightly, with a sudden expiration something like incipient vomiting, or like something being spit out of the mouth, and say sincerely, as directed in the exercise written immediately above, "I can't tell you how fond I am of him."

10. Express fear by a heaving of the chest, hurried breathing and dilated nostrils, with the pupils of the eye apparently gazing into profound darkness,—or by shivering; and say, pleasantly, "I am having such a good time."

11. Show that you cannot prevent something from being done, or that you cannot yourself do something, by shrugging the shoulders, turning the elbows inward, extending outward the hands with the palms open upward, and with the eyebrows raised, and then say with determination, "I *will* do it!"

12. Nod the head vertically in affirmation, and say in a determined manner, "No, I will not do it!"

13. Shake the head laterally in negation, and say, convincingly, "Yes, I understand all this perfectly."

Expressive movements manifest themselves chiefly in the muscles of the face, partly because these nerves are nearest the mind. In fact, expression is part of the feeling itself. Along with the fact of inward feeling, there is an excitement over the bodily members. Feeling vents itself in body action, and whereas, in the beginning, actions often were of direct or indirect service or use, now, under like conditions, they are often performed through mere habit, although of no service, and hence merely ex-

press in outward signs an inward emotion whenever the same desire or sensation is felt as in former generations. "Most of our emotions are so closely connected with expression that they hardly exist if the body remains passive, the *nature* of the *expression* depending in chief part on the *nature* of the *action* which has been habitually performed under this particular state of mind."

The movements of expression of the face and body, whatever their origin, are in themselves of much importance to our welfare. They serve as a means of communication, of sympathy. They give vividness to the spoken word. The free expression of outward signs of an emotion intensifies it. Even the *simulation* of an emotion tends to *arouse* it in our minds.

The dramatic director must remember that *recognition* of the expression of an emotion is almost as instinctive as the producing of the expression. Many shades of expression are instantly recognized without any conscious process of analysis. There is only one danger, and that is that the imagination may cause the dramatic director to see an expression which is not there, simply because she expects to see it, knowing so well the play which she is rehearsing.

If the player is not able at first to put himself into the part which he is studying, often that can be developed by making him look at the character from the outside, and inspiring him with a feeling of *sympathy* for that person's joys or sorrows. Sympathy is an emotion distinct from all others and especially apt to cause tears and a breaking down

of self-consciousness. Once such understanding and fellow-feeling are established, it is a small step for the player himself in his character in the play to feel the same joys or sorrows.

One of the most difficult tasks is to make the player express the *humour* of the situation. Here it is well to remember that the mind or imagination must be *tickled* by the ludicrous idea, much as the body is tickled by a slight physical attack.

Any overflow of excitement or nerve-force undirected by any definite motive will take first the most habitual routes, and if those do not suffice, will next overflow into the less habitual ones, for bodily action *always* follows any feeling that reaches a certain pitch. The excited brain gives strength to the muscles and at the same time energy to the will. In amateur dramatics this nervous energy, created by becoming the focus of attention, first of the rest of the cast and then of the audience, if not carefully directed and sent into the proper channels, will develop self-consciousness. Once a player gets his mind turned to himself and becomes absorbed with his effect on the audience,— in other words, when once self-consciousness gains control of the “common final path,” a dramatic director encounters innumerable difficulties. Self-consciousness in the players is the besetting sin of amateur dramatics and ruins more performances than any other thing. It can be eliminated only by focusing the attention of the players on the characters they are portraying and on their emotions, thus developing a “naturalness” that is always enjoyed by the audience. It is one of the chief charms of very young children that

they think nothing about what others are thinking of them, so absorbed are they in what they are doing that they are entirely unaffected. Self-consciousness often results in overdoing the expression. It also often results in a false expression because there is no corresponding emotion of the body. Both of these impart a rather foolish look to the face and body and often make comedy out of a serious situation. A good example is that of the monkeys which have an almost incessant movement of the eyebrows, which gives them a senseless expression. Self-consciousness often shows itself in the players' asking the director such questions as: "What shall I do next?" or "Where shall I go now?" The director, not visualizing the whole scene and being absorbed in some detail of another player, may answer carelessly, "Go over there," or "You might sit down," or "Do anything until I have time for you again." No action of any kind should be suggested without a human reason for it. If you want a player in a certain place, *find a reason* for his going there before you ask him to go, and *never* tell him *how* to go. If he knows *where* and *why*, he will know how. By developing a real understanding of the situation in the players, a real interest in the progress of the action, the players' attention will never be diverted toward the audience or toward themselves, nor will they be "bad listeners," and so lose the interest of their audience. In fact, their bodies will be attentive and never self-conscious. A "bad listener" is a player who fails to show an interest in, or understanding of what the other characters are saying.

Free the body by good physical exercise *unrelated* to any definite piece of dramatic work, so that it may be able to respond easily and naturally. Imitating any one's else gestures has exactly the opposite effect.

With most amateurs it will be noticed that only about three natural, spontaneous performances of a single play can be given. A player has a tendency with repetition to imitate himself and to get out of his part, and his playing becomes stilted, especially as it has not the technique of the actor to rely upon. A few professional producers feel that first to get this spontaneous performance from an actor, and then to let him build up his own technique from such performances will be the successful schooling of the future.

This use of dramatics is in reality Froebel's idea of "Creative activity," reached by the exercise of fancy and imagination in the child's realm of "make-believe," carried into the years of adolescence and maturity.

All outward activity springs from the inmost nature and life. The deepest craving of this inner life, this inner activity, is to behold itself mirrored in some external object. In and through such reflection the child learns to know his own activity. Almost every one desires to "act out" some dream or phase of his inner life. Once the body having actually accomplished that, it knows its capability for such action and that it is free to push forward to more and more independence and personality in that direction. By such expression the player's innermost nature can be satisfied. Playing a part be-

comes a "mental experience." Every new part gives the player a new point of view, makes him capable of understanding that point of view when he meets it in "the other fellow," and develops in him unlimited sympathy for the other person. Playing a part that one creates, whose character is not imposed upon the player, gets him out of his shell, away from the environment in which he lives which is always contracting to his sensibilities. It is like taking a trip to foreign countries. Objects and ideas not yet known to a player may be introduced to him through the spoken word and the action of a part. By such simple means can a player's horizon become enlarged and he be given a genuine education for life.—"What a comprehensive instruction about life—about true life—taking the *whole human being* into consideration!" The whole purpose is to aid the player to express what lies within him, to bring the phenomena of the outer world nearer to him, and thus to serve as mediator between the mind and the world. "That he may fulfil and attain his destiny, man is endowed on the one hand with senses, the organs by which he can make the *external internal*; on the other hand, with bodily strength and limbs, by which he can represent his inner nature outwardly; therefore always by material means."

Think of the player's body as like a piano, and that the dramatic director plays upon it with just as exact a knowledge of what expression will result as the pianist has of what sound will come forth from the piano if the right notes are touched. As a piano may be out of tune, so a player may

be out of key with his surroundings. It is the director's place to know so well the reactions of the body that she can recognize in time what is wrong and bring it into normal conditions, just as a piano tuner tunes his instrument. The director must be both musician and piano tuner, must play upon the instrument, recognize its failings, and know how to remedy them. Just as the musician must strike the right key to get the right expression in sound, so the dramatic director must introduce into the mind of the player, through the senses, the right emotion in order to get the correct expression of that emotion in the body. Just as no sound comes from a piano which is not played upon, so there is *no* expression of life in any physical body that is not stimulated by an *outside* influence. The text of a play is the written music, and it is just as necessary for the dramatic director to know that thoroughly and intelligently as for the musician to know the notes. A false note on the piano is easily detected, a false note in a dramatic performance cannot be so easily detected, but the audience realizes it just as much, and the reaction is a lack of interest and attention on their part.

Once knowing what the correct expressions of the different emotions are, and how infallibly the body responds to them, the temptation to make the player do anything by imitation soon disappears. Bear in mind always these two simple recommendations:

1. Never show a player a gesture — if he feels the need, he will make an appropriate one.

2. Never say a line for a player and have him repeat it. Explain what it means, let him say it in his own way, and if he understands, he will say it correctly.

By such means a player is made to create a part. The spoken language is the only purely imitative expression of the body and for that reason there are so many who "Murder the King's English," yet whose bodies, having been left to grow, like Topsy, are free and graceful.

An actor, amateur as well as professional, should be allowed to create his part just as much as a writer his poem, or an artist his picture, or a composer his music. He has a much more marvellous instrument than any of them, for there is nothing more wonderful than the human body when it is inspired by sincere feeling and left free to express itself.

CHAPTER XI

THE STUDY OF DRAMATICS A HELP IN EARNING A LIVING

As equipment for teachers — As a specialty — Dramatic director — Reading plays aloud — Story-telling — As an asset for the business woman.

THE study of dramatics helps at so many points in the problem of earning a living, that it seems best to take the subject up in sections.

First, there is the great opportunity and the wide field opening up for teachers of dramatics. Every college, school, settlement, community, church and small town has its dramatic department, organization or club, and all these need help in the production of plays. More and more are these productions being taken very seriously by the players, and more and more is being expected of the dramatic director and of the cast. No longer does some one a little better versed in dramatic art than the other members of the cast take upon herself the stage management of the production. No longer is the clever reciter of monologues called in to drill the players, or the teacher of literature asked to help in the school production. A regular dramatic director is put in charge,— one who has been trained in the science of dramatics,— and under her guidance the play is brought to a successful issue, the

work made valuable to the players and the entertainment of interest to the audience.

Some time ago the school play or the play given by amateurs for some popular charity was not expected to be entertaining to the audience. The friends of the players attended the performance merely because of their personal interest in the members of the cast, and their unbounded and kindly wonder that their children had the power to act at all.

For the players there was very little educational value beyond the memorizing of lines and the self-reliance and poise that comes from taking a part and carrying it through.

Now, on the contrary, the audience expects a creditable performance, and the players expect some lasting benefit through the work. The dramatic director must, therefore, give more than a mere drill. She must understand the science of dramatics and have regular training to equip her as a teacher. Her work is no longer a part of the study of elocution, but a profession in itself, requiring a special sort of person to undertake it and a special training. The field is wide, and the opportunity for good teachers specializing in the subject, very great. It is a comparatively new field and its borders are enlarging every day. The Science of Educational Dramatics has been taught for only a few years; consequently there are no great numbers of trained teachers to be had. Yet, new as the science is, the demand for teachers who know and teach according to its methods is almost universal because of the difference a trained teacher makes in the charm of

the production, the educational value to the player and the entertainment value to the audience.

Next, take the reading aloud of plays — not with the idea of production or publication, but to make clear the literary value of the play and to enhance the interest of the listeners. Look at the number of splendid plays being written, and at the number of literary clubs and circles making a study of the drama. The plays studied in these clubs would be more interesting if they were read aloud before they were brought before the members for discussion. A new field is gradually opening for specialists in play reading to clubs and literary circles, and this work could readily be adopted as a profession. Any one possessing a good voice and dramatic imagination could easily be trained through the study of the science of educational dramatics to become a reader of plays, and could obtain many opportunities in this line of work.

Story-telling has long been a part of many teachers' equipment, but story-telling becomes an art indeed when it is coupled with a knowledge of dramatics in order to give the true-to-life quality it so often lacks. Story-telling raised to the standard of an art — by adding to it the dramatic element — may become a specialty whereby one can earn a living apart from teaching, or make the story-telling such an asset as to materially increase the salary of the teacher.

Again, take the profession of nursing. Story-telling should be a part of a nurse's professional equipment. Think of the convalescent and the many weary hours that would be brightened if the

nurse could tell really good stories in a really interesting and dramatic way. It seems as vital a part of the work as the knowledge of hygiene or cookery for the sick.

Story-telling is a special art and can be as regularly taught and studied as any other art.

Consider next the primary teacher. In these days of ring games, story games, dramatic readers and little schoolroom plays, the primary teacher must know something of dramatics if she hopes at all to cope with the new methods in her line of work. Why should she not go a step or two further and study the science of dramatics, thus increasing her usefulness and incidentally her salary? The teacher of literature can, of course, make the study ten times more interesting by a knowledge of dramatic values. Literature will then be vitalized instead of being the dead thing it so often is. The glorious stories will leap into vital, glowing, living pictures of real life, instead of being just dull facts which must be learned somehow because one needs to know them. We shall then no longer have the boy or girl exclaim when some fine piece of literature is mentioned, "Oh, yes, I read that thing in school and have hated it ever since." Literature must appeal to the imagination; it must be made beautiful if we are to learn to love it; and one way to make it beautiful is to make it dramatic.

In all the lines of work mentioned, the value of the study of dramatics seems perfectly obvious. Now let us take up other employments where the value of the study is equally great but perhaps not so patent.

The study of dramatics is of great use to the business woman. Take, for instance, a milliner, a seller of gowns or coats, or a woman engaged in any sort of work that brings her into direct contact with the customer. She wants to sell her goods, but she has an ungracious and ungraceful manner, a bad carriage, poor voice, and little understanding of the people with whom she has to deal. She studies dramatics. Having a good teacher, who understands her needs, she is given a part where gracefulness and graciousness are necessary. Through her part she comes to a realization of what an asset graciousness is in her business. By making an analysis of her part in the play and working it out like real life, she comes to a realization of what such graciousness may mean to her in dealing with people in every-day life, and she adopts it as her own. She begins to stand erect, because her character in the play calls for an erect carriage. Her voice improves under the skilful guidance of the teacher. Lastly she begins to understand other lives through her study of the characters in the play, and this enables her to understand her customers better. Her sales increase. Her salary increases. The study of dramatics has helped her practically in her business life.

Take the stenographer who fully understands her business and starts out to find a position. As a stenographer she is eminently capable, but because of shyness or self-consciousness she lacks the power to express herself,—to tell what she knows. She needs poise and self-assurance, and so opportunity after opportunity is lost. The study of dramatics

gives the power to express, to give out what one knows. It was the lack of this power that had held the stenographer back and kept her from obtaining the position she might otherwise have gained.

A young woman in a certain factory understood the work perfectly and was prompt and faithful in performance. The superintendent came to her one day and said, "If you only had the ginger I could put you in as manager of this room and increase your salary." The young woman happened to be in a dramatic class at the time. She appealed to the teacher, whose interest was immediately awakened. First, the part of the clown in "Twelfth Night" was given her, which taught her grace and quick poise. Next she studied the part of Viola, and gained quiet dignity and force. Her body began naturally to assume graceful lines, her breathing became strong and deep, her voice improved in depth and quality. Her outlook on life was changed. Thus she acquired the "ginger," which really means spontaneity combined with the understanding of herself. This enabled her to bring out that force which she had all the time but could not express. She is now "manager" and her salary is doubled.

Another girl was employed in an automobile establishment. Her business was to explain about the cars and try to sell them. She was not "making good." Her understanding of the automobiles was absolutely perfect; yet somehow she failed to interest and convince the prospective buyers. She joined a class in dramatics. For this class the dramatic director had been engaged for a term of

weeks, not only to put on a play but also to teach the players all that might help them along the way. The play chosen as the vehicle of expression was "As You Like It." Each player studied and analysed every part. The stiff-minded and stiff-jointed little automobile seller discovered that in the "Forest of Arden" one is serious and witty with Jaques, merry and clever with Rosalind, romantic with Orlando, graceful and quick with Touchstone, loyal and loving with Celia, vain and foolish with Phebe, awkward with Audrey, clownish with William, and fine with Duke Senior. She learned that the "Forest of Arden" is a little world, and that the people in the big, real world are very like those in the imaginary world. She took this lesson to heart and worked it out in her daily life, with the result that she became a splendid saleswoman and "made good."

There was a housekeeper in a small hotel. A fine looking woman, with a big, sympathetic soul, she was timid and self-conscious, and underestimated her ability to please. She entered a class, where the director began the work by giving real life-study scenes arranged by the pupils. The housekeeper gave bits of interviews with fussy boarders, and talks with managers and wholesale dealers in such things as a hotel requires. Gradually her diffidence and self-depreciation wore away, and these imaginary interviews gave her courage for the real interviews, with the result that she now has charge of one of the largest hotels in the city.

One could go on almost indefinitely telling case after case of this kind, proving that as a business

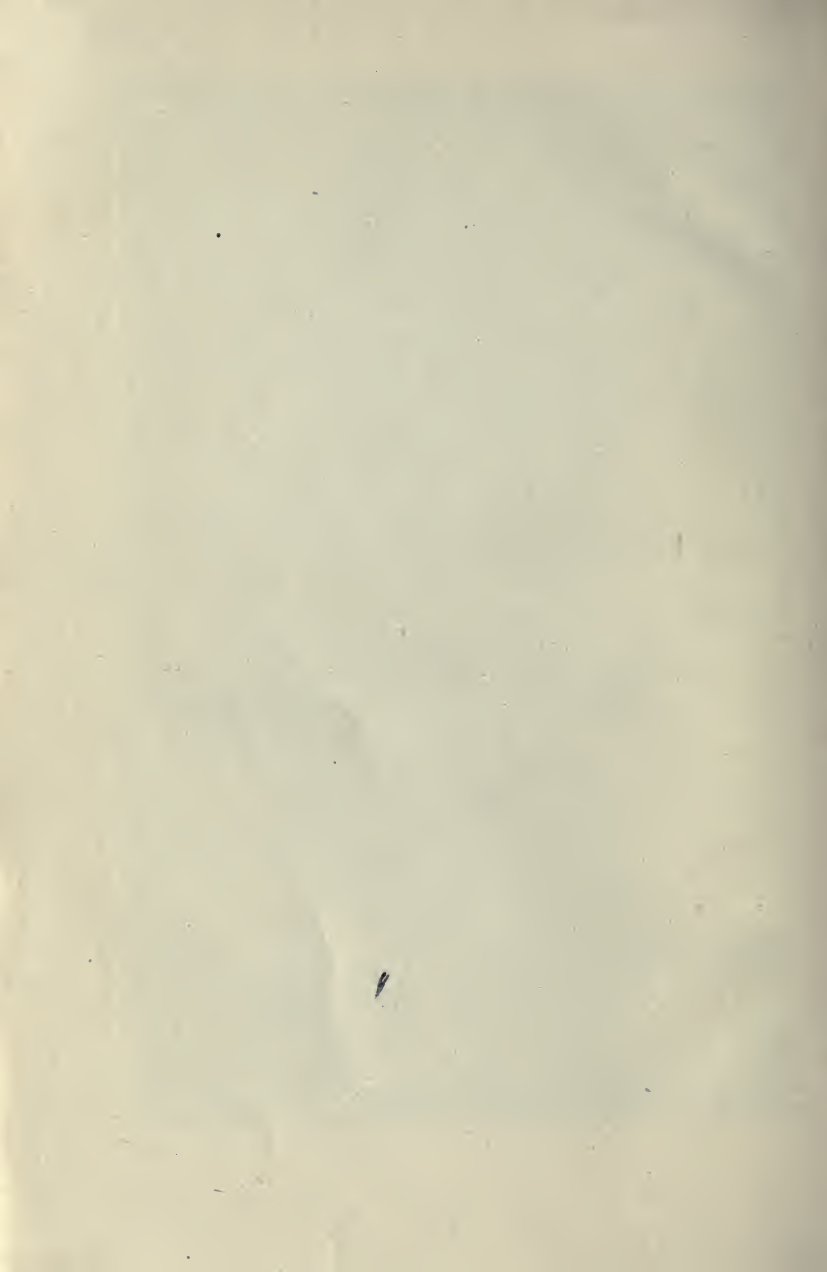
proposition the result of the study of dramatics cannot be overestimated.

The help the study gives is two-fold. First must be considered the help to the individual,—to the personality, as it were. The gradual elimination of faulty breathing and the consequent increased health and vitality; the strength and beauty given to the speaking voice; the help in articulation and the refinement gained in speech by the study of diction; the help in making the body erect, graceful and strong; the losing of self-consciousness, shyness and self-depreciation; the new power to express through gesture and voice the thoughts and emotions; the feeling of poise and power—all these things are of inestimable value.

Second, but of no less importance, is the enlarging of our horizon and the ability better to understand those around us, the men and women with whom we come in contact in our daily life; better to understand their motives, feelings and springs of action. This is a tremendous asset in the business world, and this is a part of the gain from the study of dramatics. It would take a long life and the meeting and knowing of many people to understand even a little of human nature, but in the best drama we find really all the types of men and women ready to be analysed and studied. We can go back to them again and again, and find them always there waiting to be studied, unchanged from the time when first we met them on the page. Then we can go out into the world of living men and women, find the counterparts of these characters, and understand them because we have met



Blind Boy Scouts in "The Making of Larry," by Harold Strong Latham, illustrating the enlargement of their horizon of life by a training in Educational Dramatics



them before in the play. By such study, too, we find that certain physical characteristics usually indicate certain mental or moral traits and, therefore, we know whom to trust and whom to avoid.

The science of educational dramatics is the study of mankind. That to understand humanity is a good business proposition no one can gainsay.

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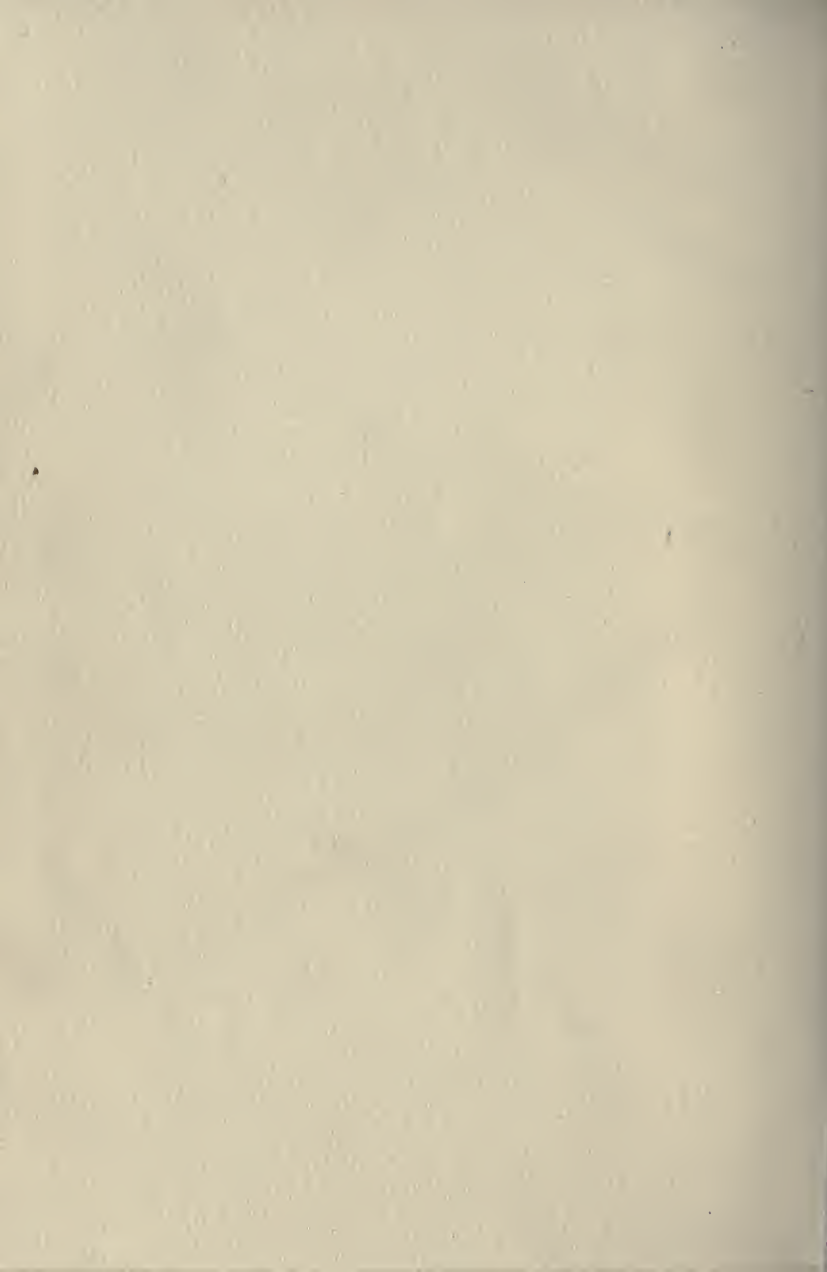
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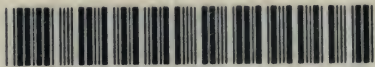
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