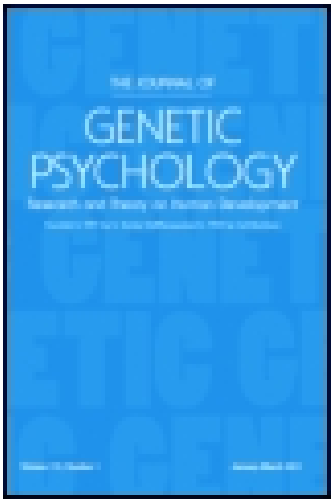

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The Dramatic Instinct in Education (A Preliminary Study)

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THE DRAMATIC INSTINCT IN EDUCATION

(A PRELIMINARY STUDY.)

By ELNORA WHITMAN CURTIS

The psychological elements from which drama has developed have their roots far back among primitive peoples, for drama is one of the oldest, if not the oldest of the imitative arts, and has played a greater part than any other, perhaps, in the development of races. It is well to remember this in any consideration of the theatre as an educational force to-day, and to emphasize the fact of the universality of the dramatic instinct. From earliest times man has felt the need to give vent to pent up emotions; to express joy of living, to relieve the overweighted exuberance of spirit, to create, to imitate. Savage peoples have satisfied this desire by their songs and dance-pantomimes, Orientals by their story telling, ancient Hebrews by dramatic dances, while in the song and dance of the ancient Greeks are found the elements out of which drama, essentially as we have it now, took form.

Dramatic instinct, too, has manifested itself in the imitative games and play of primitive man, and to-day many of the games of modern children carry us back to the childhood of the race. As man has become civilized, the primal emotions have come more and more under restraint and regulation. They have been suppressed, subordinated, but could not be stifled, and teachers are coming to believe more and more that they should be taken into account, directed and utilized educationally.

That the restraints of social life grow irksome at times, that the need is felt of throwing off the "burden of civilization" is evidenced not only by man's creative efforts, but by the different ways in which he seeks excitement and emotional experi-

ence; for example, in the satisfaction of curiosity frequently morbid, in the witnessing of accidents, executions, attending funerals, taking part in revivals etc., and particularly, perhaps, by theatre going. Here we see the response to a need and desire felt everywhere and in all ages—the desire to feel what others are feeling, "to get experience by proxy, to get the enjoyment of borrowed pain, to put into practise the Aristotelian principle of Katharsis." If this is true of man, it is particularly true of the child or youth, alive with surplus energy and a craving for excitement and for what is novel.

It has not been customary until recently to study seriously the emotional needs of children in relation to educational problems. Little attention was paid to the psychology of feeling before Rousseau wrote his Emile.

The introduction of kindergarten into the schools marked an epoch in the direction of giving the child more opportunity for self-expression, and recent pedagogical developments have shown a disposition to consider the claims of the emotional nature as well as those of body and intellect. The tendency of modern opinion on this subject is expressed by two of our educational authorities as follows: President Hall tells us that the sentiments constitute three-fourths of life; that teachers should be made to feel themselves guardians of emotional sentiment; that as the education of the past has been of the head and the education of the twentieth century will be of the heart.

President Eliot says: "The child is still governed by sentiments and not by observation; acquisition and reasoning and material greatness and righteousness depend more on the cultivation of right sentiments in children than on anything else."

Statistics of frequency of theatre attendance among children. That the craving on the part of the child for expression is strong, that he longs to see a show and to take part in one, to imitate either unconsciously as spectator or consciously as actor or creator, is not theory only. Millions of dollars are expended annually on theatres which are daily visited by vast crowds, among which are children who attend performances not adapted to their needs or powers of comprehension. Teachers, settlement workers and sociologists have had some idea of the extent to which this need of the child, especially the child of the poorer classes, is seeking satisfaction by theatre going. The general public, however, has until recently had its attention but little directed to the matter. In fact the excessive indulgence of the theatre going habit among children is of comparatively recent date.

While a few years ago a ticket for a theatrical entertainment cost $.25, or in many cases $.50, admitting its bearer to the top gallery and more or less questionable company, or to

standing room only, the same amount now expended, and often a mere fractional part of it, entitles its bearer to the best seat of the theatre. The vaudeville show, at first of exceedingly questionable character in this country, worked its way up to comparative respectability, and from the start was more reasonable in price than even the cheapest melodrama had been. Moving pictures, at first merely a part of vaudeville, have come to be entertainments by themselves, having passed through a similar evolution, replacing Chinese opium den scenes and others of similar character by those of educational value, such as the Yellowstone Park pictures shown in Boston recently. As this form of entertainment is now the cheapest and, save perhaps for some hygienic reasons, less objectionable than many offered by theatre managers to the public, it is reaping the harvest that might naturally be expected to result.

There has been an increase in the number of stock companies now established in different cities, small as well as large, due possibly to the competition of vaudeville houses and nickelodeons with legitimate drama and melodrama, for the expenses of the road being eliminated, plays can now be produced in the smaller places at lower rates than were possible a few years ago. Thus the theatre has been brought within reach of the poor man's pocketbook and no longer ranks as a luxury, strictly, for his family.

Another reason for the increase in theatre going may be due to the fact that our population is made up to a greater extent than formerly of people in the habit of indulging pleasure-loving propensities. With less than half of the people in New England, for example, descendants of Puritan forebears, such a change of feeling towards pastimes once proscribed here is hardly to be wondered at.

The theatre, then, has ceased to be an event in the life of the child. If not a weekly indulgence, and in cases it is such, if it claims fewer hours of the child's life than does the school, it is nevertheless true that it is exerting an influence which, though subtle, is hardly less powerful as an educator. Certain events and recent investigations have brought out rather startling disclosures in the matter of attendance of city children at theatres. For example, at the time of the enforcement of the law prohibiting children under sixteen unaccompanied by parents from patronizing theatres, eighty out of eight hundred and sixty theatres which had moving pictures were closed in one week in New York. It has been stated that these shows are frequented in that city by from three hundred thousand to four hundred thousand people and from seventy-five to one hundred thousand children daily.

As the result of a lecture on "The Child and the Theatre,"

given by Prof. George P. Baker, of Harvard, before the Public Education Association of Worcester, a committee headed by Dr. Samuel P. Capen, of Clark, started an investigation last year on the theatre going habits of Worcester school children.

A set of questions was given to children of the graded schools, which resulted in some rather surprising statistics. Reports were received from 2,461 girls and 2,459 boys. 26% of the girls and 19% of the boys said they did not go to the theatre; 46% of the girls and 57% of the boys were found to go once a month or oftener; while 20% of the boys and 30% of the girls went once a week. The girls were found to go less as they grew older and the boys, more. The majority of the children claimed to have spent $.40 a month on theatre tickets; some said $1.00 and a few as much as $8.00. Vaudeville was the choice of 62% of the girls and 65% of the boys, 45 girls and 67 boys going nowhere else.

Reports on the kind of plays preferred showed that many girls liked serious plays, the taste for comedy increasing as they grew older, and that the younger boys liked comedy, older ones preferred vaudeville; 34% of the girls and 32 % of the boys liked drama. Of the younger pupils, five boys liked plays in which there were running, shooting and murders, and three girls liked murders.

Taste for moving pictures was found to decrease as children grow older.

The Civic Department of the Worcester Woman's Club also made a study of "The Child and the Theatre" this past year. Members of the department visited play-houses in order to get an idea of hygienic conditions, the class of plays presented, etc. Dr. Capen addressed the Department at one of its meetings and gave his statistics on the theatre going habits of the child; and carrying out the work of Dr. Capen Miss Helen Ball asked teachers in two public schools on the east side of the city to have pupils write essays on what they had seen, liked, etc., at the theatre. About 300 replies from children were received, 190 from those of 4th to 8th grades, and 97 from 9th grade pupils. 4 children had never been to the theatre; 2 had been to moving pictures only; 82 liked moving pictures best; 12 animal shows, and 17 vaudeville; 48 liked drama, a number of plays of the poorer type of melodrama being mentioned; 12 liked comedy and 5 liked tragedy.

In the matter of taste, Miss Ball found little difference between boys and girls. A few of both objected to shooting and killing, but the answers of others plainly indicated a relish for morbid excitement. The plays liked best by these children were, "Black Beauty," "Uncle Tom's Cabin" (which 17 had seen) "Billy the Kid," and "The Drummer Boy."

Miss Ball found that the children whose papers showed most imagination were those of foreign-born parents. One of these papers (that of a 7th grade girl) interesting from a number of points of view, is given here verbatim as illustrative of the possible effects of indiscriminate theatre going on a child's moral attitude.

"THE NAPOLITAN'S REVENGE."

(Seen in moving pictures.)

"At a table in a yard sat a man and woman talking. On a doorstep sat a small boy playing. The costume of the woman is a shirt-waist and a square piece of stiff cloth on her head from which fell a long thick veil. The man had tights and a wide girdle. Soon he went into the house and brought out a decanter and glasses. As he went in a man came and handed her a letter, which, as her husband came out she thrust into her bosom, but it slid out and when they finished drinking she went into the house and the husband went off. The boy found the letter which dropped and his father took it away from him and read it. The letter read (it) as follows: 'Dear Solo: meet me on the rocks to-night. Lovingly, Randolph.'

Scene 2. A field along the seashore with a man standing near the water. The man's costume was a overalls turned up to the hips.

Soon the woman whom we had seen in the yard came and he went to help her. They walked all around and finally came to a round, high and large, such as we see in deserts. Here he attempts to kiss her face but she won't let him, so they go on.

But! We have not noticed the third man who has followed them all the way and heard all they've said; who is he, and what has he in his hand? In his hand he has a dagger and he is her husband. But they are out of sight, where have they gone? here they are just entering the home owned by him whom she has run away with. She brushes her dress as he on his knees makes love to her. Who is following still? Her husband. He goes in after the culprits. He forces a dagger deep into the man's heart and he lay on the floor writhing in pain and the husband takes a long rope and binds his wife to the chair so she can hardly breathe. He then takes clothes, straw, the lace draperies and soon the beautiful mansion was in flames. The man goes home, his son runs away. What joy has he now?"

In order to obtain further information concerning the theatre-going habits of children, the character of plays patronized and preferred, the frequency of attendance, some idea of cost, etc., but particularly the moral and intellectual effect upon children—those taking part in plays as well as those witnessing

them—a questionnaire was put through some of the public schools of Providence, Rhode Island. Schools of that city were chosen for a number of reasons and children of grammar grades examined on these points.

A part of the questions were addressed to teachers and related to the number of absences noticed, due to attending theatres, the effect of theatre-going upon school work and compositions, upon character, ideals, conduct, manners, and to the practice of giving school plays. The questions to teachers brought chiefly negative results—apparently few had given thought to the subject; 17 answered and of these 13 had had no absences and had noticed no effects on pupils from theatre-going. One teacher reported one, another two cases of absence. None had had stories acted; none had given school plays. Remarks and opinions of some of the teachers who answered are here given.

Seventh grade. "I have noticed no effect of theatre-going in the school work of my pupils. In a few cases I have traced a pupil's great use of slang and general low moral tone to attendance at cheap theatres and the reading of dime novels."

Fifth grade. "The effect I have noticed is less refined language."

Seventh grade. "Among those who attend most often I find one is always tired, while the other two are among the most careless pupils. I have noticed that the boys who are inclined to read the cheap novels are those who attend the cheaper theatres."

Seventh grade. "Cannot connect poor work with theatre-going positively; in fact, I believe trashy reading has had a greater effect. Two pupils who go much have been indifferent pupils but I know they read trash. One who has been most is a perfect gentleman and earnest in work. The street for playground has a greater effect on manners than theatres; in fact 25% have not been and many only once."

Sixth grade. "In regard to conduct, manners, etc., the pupils may be influenced, indirectly from the theatre, by imitating older ones of the family who do attend. I have never had the pupils act out stories because the time allotted for the regular school work has been fully employed in teaching the necessary branches."

The data obtained from answers of pupils, affording as they do results obtained from the examination of a comparatively small number of children of a few schools in one city only, are offered not, of course, for quantitive or statistical value, but merely for their suggestiveness. Any one familiar with the questionnaire method will realize the difficulty of obtaining satisfactory replies from children. While in many cases answers are evidently given with perfect sincerity, in others there is a lack of it, especially in questions relating to expense and number of performances attended.

Some allowance has to be made for children of foreign parentage, who either misunderstood the questions, or failed to express their meaning in answering; some also for cases of too vivid imagination as marking the prolongation of that age when strict adherence to truth has not become habitual. A

good deal of allowance, too, must be made for the inhibiting influence of the schoolroom and for the giving out of these questions much in the form of a school examination. Some of the pupils may have had an idea of hitting upon the answer desired or expected of them—but in most instances childlike naïveté prevailed.

725 children were examined. Of these 377 were girls, 348 boys,—their ages ranging from 9 to 16.

208 children (140 girls, 68 boys) had not been to the theatre from the time extending from the beginning of school, September, 1907, to the early part of the following March.

171 girls and 220 boys were found to go afternoons; 175 girls and 216 boys, evenings. The total number of performances for each is not given here, owing to the fact that some children professed to have been several hundred times—a manifest impossibility for the time mentioned, also because the totals given did not tally with number of afternoon and evening performances. 192 girls and 111 boys stated that the money for their tickets was given to them; 22 girls and 93 boys used their own spending money, and only 1 girl and 5 boys stated that they themselves had earned the money. 181 girls and 121 boys said they were in the habit of going with older people and only 2 girls and 12 boys mention going alone—this not taking account of those children who go sometimes alone, sometimes with older people and sometimes with companions of their own age. 109 girls and 38 boys mention sitting "down stairs;" 63 girls and 123 boys "up stairs;" 45 girls and 84 boys giving different places, ranging from box to gallery, but few mentioning the top gallery or second balcony. Three girls said they had been once a week—one of these sometimes twice; one girl had been 25 times, others 27, 29, 40 and about 40 respectively.

Five boys had been every week; 2, every other week; one twice a week; one every night; one "went every night." Four had been 25 times; one 26 times; two 27 times; one 28 times; one 30 times. Two said that they had been 50 times; one about 70 times; one 75 times; one about 125 times, and one *425* times. Various other large numbers, manifestly incorrect, ranging from 175 to 290, were given besides indefinite answers such as "many" and "too many to count."

Prices paid for tickets were all the way from $.05 to $2.75. Few gave $.05, however, although this is the regular admission price for moving pictures. 175 girls and 189 boys had spent $.25 or more. These returns did not show as did those of Dr. Capen's from Worcester children, a decrease in theatre attendance in girls and an increase in boys of upper grades.

134 plays were mentioned by these children, besides vaude-

ville and moving-picture shows, and while special acts and scenes were liked in the latter shows, plays seem to have made more impression and, on the whole, to have been preferred.

In the list of plays attended there is a wide range extending from classic and standard plays to the cheapest if not most pernicious types of melodrama. Mention is made of Julius Cæsar, Hamlet, Faust,and of representations of the better sort of romantic drama such as "When Knighthood was in Flower;" also plays which entertain and, at the same time, impress valuable truths or lessons, old-fashioned melodrama, like "Uncle Tom's Cabin" and "The Drummer Boy," and those of a cheaper grade (if one may judge by names) such as "Lottie, the poor Sales Lady," "The Hired Girls Millions" and "Nellie, the Beautiful Cloak Model." Though the list includes a few standard dramas, by far the greater part of those mentioned must be classed as uneducational if not distinctly detrimental in influence. Uncle Tom's Cabin was the play preferred by most children, being first choice of 30 girls and 12 boys and the second choice of 6 girls and 9 boys.

Other popular plays were, "The Night before Christmas," "Tony, the Bootblack," "From Sing Sing to Liberty," "Way Down East," "David Higgins' Last Dollar," and "Convict 999." Moving pictures were mentioned by comparatively few children and in cases where plays had been also seen, were not first choice. Vaudeville was first choice of 9 boys but no girls; second choice of 9 girls and 15 boys; third, of 8 girls and 6 boys,—but of these a number had not been to plays.

Answers to questions of what was liked in the different plays, brought out the fact that a large class of children were undiscriminating, owing to confused memory, lack of descriptive ability, etc. 113 girls and 122 boys failed to offer comments on what they had seen, saying they had "forgotten" or "liked all." Of those who did discriminate, by far the largest number of both girls and boys liked special scenes, next came special characters in plays, then music and dancing, then tricks and juggling (the choice of a number of boys but few girls); after these "things that were funny" followed by animals' performances; and lastly, things liked for their æsthetic value—this appealing to few of either sex.

In the special acts or scenes mentioned, the exciting and emotional led.

In studying the children's expressions regarding different scenes, various points of psychological interest are brought out, and the excerpts have been roughly classified in accordance with the most prominent characteristics, though others are often included, since the exact wording, spelling and punctuation of the comments have been preserved throughout, as the

effect of theatre-going upon language is a pedagogical question.

A taste for excitement and in some cases for the morbid is shown by the following:

M., 12, 6th Gr. "The first I liked best was the shooting of Indians."
F., 13, 7th Gr. "I like best where they shoot the men."
F., 14, 7th Gr. "(I like best the man with several wives) I like where the man kills is wife."
F., 13, 5th Gr. "I saw them shooting and some other things; I saw the best the girl got drowned."
F., 12, 8th Gr. "I liked the scene where Brutus killed Julius Cæsar."
F., 13, 8th Gr. (In Soldiers of the Cross.) "I liked the scene of the Eruption of Mt. Versuvius."
M., 13, 8th Gr. (Wizzard of Oz.) "I liked the hurricane in the last act."
F., 12, 7th Gr. (Cowboy and the Squaw.) " The engineer pulled the bell to clear the road and save the people in the burning train. The squaw saved the cowboy on the cow"(catcher?)"and they became friends."
M., 13, 5th Gr. "I loved best where the hero saves the girl and his child from bein(g) eating from the lion and I loved went the man dives in the water, chains over him."
M., 12, 6th Gr. "In the first (The Man Monkey.) I liked the thundering scene."
F., 12, 8th Gr. (Wizzard of Oz.) "The cyclone."
M., 13, 7th Gr. "When the Man Monkey escapes and when he fights with the villain and kills him."
M., 14, 7th Gr. (His Last Dollar.) "I liked the race." (Uncle Tom's Cabin.) "I liked when Eliza escapes." (The Merry Widow.) " In the third I did n't like nothing."
M., 13, 5th Gr. "I liked where they gamble for the girl."
M., 10, 5th Gr. "I liked where Maria (Eliza?) ran across the floating ice."
M., 12, 5th Gr. "I liked the Great Express Robbery where the train gets robbed."
M., 12, 5th Gr. (Nathan Hale.) "I seen about when hale to Brihade was hang."

A taste for the mysterious showed itself in a few of the comments, as for example:

M., 13, 7th Gr. (Hamlet.) "I liked the ghost."

Interest for the melodramatic is indicated by:

M., 14, 8th Gr. "I liked where Annie went out into the storm."
M., 14, 7th Gr. "I liked where the little lord meets his grandfather in the mansion."
M., 13, 7th Gr. "I liked where Alice recovers her sight."
M., 11, 6th Gr. "I liked where the Man Monkey said: 'And if you shall kill me, the secret shall die with me.' "

A number of children showed a liking for the sad and pathetic.

F., 14, 6th Gr. "I liked where little Eva goes to Heaven."
F., 12, 8th Gr. (In Faust.) "I liked the part where the young lady dies." (girl.)
F., 13, 7th Gr. (Way Down East.) "I liked the sad part."

Remarks on special characters liked include the following:

F., 13, 7th Gr. (In Uncle Tom's Cabin.) "I liked Eva best, I liked the villain, I liked Uncle Tom."
F., 13, 5th Gr. "I loved Cinderella."
M., 13, 8th Gr. Lincoln at the White House, July 31, 1861. "I liked the character of Pres. Lincoln best in each of the plays."
M., 13, 8th Gr. "In Way Down East I liked Hi Holler."
M., 11, 5th Gr. Mr. and Mrs. Baker. "I liked Mr. Baker best because he represented a fast express and a drum."
F., 13, 6th Gr. "I have seen every play from the 'Night Before Christmas.' I like 'Cunning from Sing Sing to Liberty' best. The passing convict Cunning was the best of all. His right name was Jack Doris and Sing Sing to Liberty. I have the book besides."

Preference for music and dancing was shown but without detail.

F., 12, 6th Gr. "I liked singing, playing on instruments and dancing."
M., 16, 7th Gr. (Il Trovatore.) "I liked the music, which was solemn and grand."
F., 13, 7th Gr. "I liked 'Robin Hood' because they had fine music."
F., 13, 7th Gr. "I liked vaudeville next because there was lots of singing."
F., 10, 6th Gr. "I like the modelling (yodeling) best, I liked dancing tricks and singing."
F., 14, 5th Gr. "I saw singing and dancing. The plays I liked best were first dancing, gogling (yodeling), acting moving pictures. The play I liked best was singing."

Appreciations of the comic was shown, but not in any specialized form, such general expressions being used as

"I like the plays that make you laugh."
"I liked the fun in the office."
"I liked 'Charley's Aunt' because it was funny."
"I liked the funny men best."
"I liked Topsy because she was so funny."
"In 'The Orchid' I liked the funny things and in Russell Bros. the funny makeups."
"I liked 'The Hired Girl's Millions' because it was so funny."

The comments upon animal performances were expressed in more detail, indicating that this interest when shown is of a deeper nature than that aroused by some of the other forms of entertainment.

F., 10, 6th Gr. "I liked the animal show at Keiths. I liked best dogs running in and out of wheels of a carriage and the lion and the girl."
M., 13, 6th Gr. I liked trick-ponies at Keith's."
M., 11. 7th Gr. "I liked elephants and ponies best. The elephants stood on their heads and the ponies done tricks."
F., 10, 5th Gr. "I liked the lion in the cage and the girl dancing in it."
M., 13, 5th Gr. I saw the Fair in Boston. The place I like best are animal first, next dancing, third singing. In animal I like the lion and the monkey."

Very few children showed any æsthetic appreciation, and this was confined to such vague statements as

"I liked it for beauty of scenery." "I liked the scenery best." "I liked the way the girls were dressed." "I liked the scenery in the Great Divide." "It was a Irish play. I liked it because it was pretty."

In addition to comments which can be classified are a number of miscellaneous remarks such as:

M., 11, 5th Gr. (Empire.) I liked it because it was kept clean.
M., 11. 6th Gr. (Graft at Keith's.) I fell asleep at Graft.
F., 13, 5th Gr. The play I like best was Eagle Park. I like best new nickle show, York, New York. I did n't enjoy it because I have go with my aunt.
F., 13, 7th Gr. I liked love-making best.
I liked the moral and acting.
M., 11, 7th Gr. I like first best. I feel like doing it.
F., 11, 5th Gr. I liked the story of the play.
F., 15, 8th Gr. I liked the moral in "Ninety and Nine;" the acting in Child of the Regiment.
F., 13, 8th Gr. I liked the dancing, singing, and the clothes the best.

From the consideration of the child as spectator, we now turn to the child as actor. 50 girls and 65 boys said they had taken part in plays. Of these there were but 2 girls and 4 boys who did not enjoy it and these make the following comments:

M., 13, 7th Gr. ("Singin Skewl.") I did not enjoy it because I had to many "oncors."
M., 14, 7th Gr. (Cinderella.) Did n't like it.
M., 11, 6th Gr. I have taken part in a play. It was The Canabol Islands. I did not enjoy it because they blacked me up and I could n't get it off. I had to go home with it on my face.
F., 12, 7th Gr. (The Letters.) No, I did not enjoy it, because everybody looks at you and talks about you and if you make a mistake they laugh at you.
F., 13 yrs., 7th Gr. I cannot remember the name. No, I did not enjoy it, because I was ashamed.
M., 12, 7th Gr. (The Mother-in-laws Visit.) I did not enjoy it, you have so many rehearsals and have to learn so much.

Seventeen boys gave no name but said they enjoyed it, without making further comment; 3 boys had forgotten the name; 12 boys liked it because they took part in it; 12 girls made no comments but enjoyed it; 3 girls had forgotten the name; 4 liked it because it was nice, and 4 liked it because they had taken part in it.

Specimen excerpts from those answering in the affirmative are:

1. F., 9, 5th Gr. I have taken part in a play myself. I had to ring the bells. I enjoy the plays because the lady wanted to wake me.
2. F., 12, 7th Gr. Yes, play in my cellar. Yes, because the robber Marie, and he wanted something to eat and drink and two policemen went in the refrigerator and then were very cold and were crying.
3. F., 12, 8th Gr. The Backward Child. I enjoyed it because I was the backward child.
4. F., 13 yrs., 8th Gr. In a play twice. Both times we dance the minuet in the intermission. It was at my summer home. The play

was "The School at Blueberry Corners." I enjoyed it very much. The people were dressed so old fashioned it made it very funny.

5. F., 14, 5th Gr. Vaudeville. Yes, because it shows us something and shows us how to talk.

6. F., 14 yrs., 9th Gr. Yes, Aunt Kate's Gooseberries. I enjoyed it because we had some fun practising.

7. F., 10, 7th Gr. "Singin Skewl." Yes, because we were all dressed up and had funny names and a funny man was the teacher and he said funny things.

8. F., 13, 7th Gr. In different plays. Can't remember the names. I did enjoy it. I had a great deal to do in all.

9. F., 14, 6th Gr. Yes. Imitating Gentleman Jim, the diamond thief. Yes, I enjoyed it very much, there was killing in it.

10. M., 10, 6th Gr. I took part in a play and it was a church affair. I liked it because you got lots of praise.

11. M., 11, 6th Gr. Sketch of Vambilar. Enjoyed it because I was dressed like a girl.

12. M., 16, 7th Gr. The Death of the Old Year. Yes, because I like to speak.

13. M., 14, 7th Gr. King of the Cannibals. I did enjoy it because it was a comical play and I took the part of a servant of the king.

14. M., 13, 5th Gr. Cinderella and Millionaire Detective, Cowboy and the Squaw. I enjoyed these plays because I had the best parts.

15. M., 11, 5th Gr. Cinderella, Singing. I did enjoy it because I got lots of money and the best part.

16. M., 10, 5th Gr. Red Riding Hood. I liked it very much the wolf was very funny.

17. M., 14, 6th Gr. Country School. Yes, because I was one of Miles Standish's soldiers.

18. M., 13, 7th Gr. Yes, the Black Hand. I enjoyed being in it because I was kidnapped in the second act.

19. M., 14, 8th Gr. In Boston. It was called the Prada. I enjoyed it because the other persons were about my age.

Seventeen boys and 5 girls had taken part in plays in their cellars or attics (chiefly cellars), imitating plays seen at the theatre, presumably.

The comments of children who have taken part in plays bring out various characteristics which are of interest. Some of the children lose themselves so completely in the story of the play that they fail to enter into particulars, but simply enjoy the impersonation of a part, as in 1, 2 and 18. The egoistic desire for self-expression comes out in other remarks as in 3, 8, 10, 14, 15, 17. The dressing-up instinct which is so strong in all children is illustrated in 4, 7, and 11. Two children recognize the benefit of training in expression as shown in 5 and 12, while a few show gratification of the social instinct as in 6 and 9. Desire for praise comes out in 10 and in one case a mercenary spirit is shown. A large proportion of children show the strength of the imitative instinct, for in addition to the plays in which they have been trained in their parts, characters and scenes which have made an impression upon them at the theatre are reproduced spontaneously by them in

their play. This is illustrated in 9, which is typical of the class of ideas which seemed to appeal most strongly to the imagination.

While a few of the illustrations given show individuality, the greater number were selected because they are representative of ideas which occurred again and again, sometimes in slightly varying forms of expression, but often in almost identical wording

Psychological aspects of dramatic entertainment. It will be seen from these statistics that the theatre is a force to be reckoned with in the life of the child. It meets a need; it satisfies natural curiosity, a craving for excitement, a love for excursions into the world of the imagination. The more restricted and colorless the life of the child the more the need is felt. Settlement workers say that young people of these neighborhoods will go without their supper to get tickets for the theatre, and The United Hebrew Charities of New York is often asked to procure reduced rate tickets for children apparently more in need of food and clothing.

The manager of one of the large vaudeville theatres in a New England city says that boys stationed themselves outside his theatre and begged to such an extent for pennies with which to buy tickets that he was obliged to have a special officer detailed to keep them away.

In an article on boys' gangs, J. Adams Puffer, of the Lyman School, says: "The boy has a raging passion for the theatre. In the truancy record thirty-six out of sixty-four mention going to shows and five out of twenty-four ran away to go to them. Often, boys steal money or pick things out of the dump to sell in order to go to shows."

In this same connection Dr. D. P. Macmillan, director of the child study department in the public schools of Chicago, writes: "Every child who comes in for a psycho-physical examination from the Juvenile Court, either on a charge of delinquency or truancy is found to be a chronic frequenter of the cheap theatre." Even in the spring when the impulse to be out of doors is strong, moving-picture shows will be found crowded with boys. It would seem from this that plays chosen with discrimination might become a powerful factor in the education of the child.

But granting, as one must, the perennial attraction of the theatre, even admitting that theatrical nutriment is beneficial or necessary for young people, the question may well be asked, "What is being done to regulate the dietary?" Theatre managers have not been slow in turning to account the child's need to find satisfaction for the dramatic instinct, but what are educators doing to utilize it?

To say that the theatre does not occupy a high and dignified position to-day is to utter a common-place, and that the stage needs uplifting, a platitude. Writers on the subject have discussed various means of bringing about improved conditions, but interest has until recently taken the form of but little organized effort and that little has been limited to few directions.

It has been truly said that to elevate the theatre the people must be elevated, and that to elevate the people the theatre must be elevated. Many persons have thought that the establishment of national or art-theatres would do much towards bringing about the needed reform. In this way the theatre would be freed from the spirit of commercialism. Others maintain that it is impossible to force upon the public that which it does not want, however good it may be, and that the desire for something better must first be created and the taste of the people cultivated and uplifted.

It is in this connection that the theatre touches one of the educational problems of the day—the old question of how far cultural studies may be crowded out of public school work with impunity to give place to so-called practical subjects. The schools educate the people who create the demand for drama to-day, but how far they are educating them to appreciate the beautiful and artistic, the class of plays which appeal most to the general public goes to show.

"Your educational institutions do almost nothing to develop the dramatic or even the artistic sense. The purification of Aristotle is almost entirely overlooked," says Ordway Partridge, in the Journal of Science, 1886.

Thomas Davidson, writing on "The Place of Art in Education," says: "That dramatic work should form a branch of common school education, I have not the slightest doubt. So long as the theatre forms one of the chief amusements of the great body of our people, it is most essential that they should be taught in schools to appreciate a good drama and to reject a low-toned inartistic one. . . . The reason that so many from the classes seek low pleasures and coarse sensual delights, is that our schools, by neglecting their æsthetic education, have left them without means of finding amusement and delight in a rational way."

Arthur Henry Jones, one of the best modern English dramatists, writing on "The Foundation of a National Drama," says: "No other art is so intimately and vitally concerned with daily national life. No other art so touches and shapes conduct and practice—so swiftly moves thoughts, feelings, stirs passions, inspires and directs actions. What instrument so swift and surely operative? It is a powerful teacher either of bad or good manners, literature, habits."

Lombroso, the Italian criminologist, and other alienists have studied the evil effects of vice and crime as depicted in literature or on the stage.

Charles Klein, one of our best American play-wrights, in an article, "The Psychology of the Drama" emphasizes the moral effects of the drama. "It is a metaphysical fact," he says, "that mental pictures of vice seen on the stage act as suggestion to immorality, to vice, to false thinking, creating harmful impulses in the minds of those who are incapable through mental or physical weakness of resisting suggestion, or who have criminal tendencies." "The manager cannot and will not take this view," says Mr. Klein. He then goes on to tell how a manager in speaking of one of his (Mr. Klein's) plays, said: 'that's a good play, a very good play; it has splendid characterization, brilliant dialogue, good situations and all that, but there's no sexual interest.' He meant, says this writer, "nothing that appealed to the sex instinct of the audiences." "The general critical attitude is," he adds, "that plays should not be written for young ladies. It is a fact, nevertheless, that young people do go to the theatre. It is a fact also, though not generally understood, that psychologically considered, it is most dangerous in its effect on character to appeal to instincts of the young rather than to the reasoning faculties." He goes on to say that police authorities claim that crime is most prevalent, when the newspapers are full of crime and its punishment, and believes that vice on the stage should either be shorn of its gilding or eliminated. In speaking of ten or fifteen theatres and music halls in lower New York which give objectionable exhibitions, he says: "they are given to precisely the specimens of mankind least able to resist the suggestion to crime, arising from auto-suggestion created in an audience by false mental images derived from the stage, and when they realize the enormous iufluence of mental images good or bad, on character, they will seek intelligently to regulate the theatre.

"I believe the elevation of the standard will come not so much from the establishment of art-theatres and the like, but through the developing knowledge of physicians, metaphysicians and psychologists. . . . The psychological aspect of the play is its most important one."

To quote an older writer, Coleridge has said that there is an intimate connection between public morality and public taste.

"The moral and intellectual tone of a nation depends more or less on the way it spends its leisure. Given the amusements of a people, it is not hard to tell its character," says W. F. Ainsworth in an article entitled "Drama as a Teacher."

In early times the educational value of the theatre was rec-

ognized. The Greeks more than any people realized the power of dramatic art to inspire and elevate and wherever they carried their civilization built theatres as well as temples, and in the time of Pericles admission was furnished common people at the cost of the State.

In the Middle Ages the mystery plays were used as a means of spiritual and moral instruction, uplifting and educating the masses while seeming only to amuse.

The effects of theatre-going may not be immediately apparent oftentimes, since they are frequently too subtle to be traced definitely to their source. Nevertheless it is well to remember that the theatre is always educating either upward or downward, even though the educational feature of drama has little place in the thought of the majority of play-goers.

Miss Elizabeth McCracken, in an article "Play and the Gallery," tells of lessons learned at the theatre—how the remembrance of certain plays or characters of plays has helped people over critical places in their lives. One girl, when asked how she liked Cyrano de Bergerac, said she thought "all the trouble came because they cared so much for looks." Later, this girl comforted a child who had been badly burned and was likely to be disfigured by saying, "Well, it won't matter much, dear. Looks aint what count. It 's what we do that counts." She tells of a woman who had seen the Merchant of Venice and remembered Portia's famous mercy speech and remarked "and I don't want to be mean, cause of her." Another woman said that Othello believed everything he heard, and so remembering how *he* ended kept her from believing lots *she* heard. "These people," says Miss McCracken, "are unconsciously making a plea for the theatre." She mentions certain plays the influence of which has been harmful. A girl who had seen Nell Gwynn said "She was n't a good woman, was she? But in the play she seemed better than them ; she gets along best. But even if she did n't, if they used to think her bad why do they think her good now?" Of "The Gay Lord Quex" a boy said, "The worst is the best and they gets out best." Miss McCracken remarks that the boy had seen Hamlet aright, so probably did this.

With these examples of Miss McCracken's in mind an attempt was made to find out what effects of the kind plays had produced on a certain young working girl who is an inveterate theatre-goer. She was unable to give any instance of application in her own life of lessons gained at the theatre, but some of her judgments and opinions are of interest. At first she could not recall anything that had moved her particularly, except that after seeing Uncle Tom's Cabin she "kept thinking of Eva's death all the next day." Given time to think back,

however, after a day or so, she offered comments on other plays. "As Ye Sow" had made an impression. "Mr. St. John," she said, "was on the shore. He was to be married; all the guests had arrived, the bride was dressed for the ceremony, but a ship was in danger at sea, and he was willing to pledge his own life." It was a good lesson she thought in unselfishness. He had to put back the date of his marriage to rescue the people. "It was very sad; the rain was pouring down on the stage." After a tragedy she was affected for ten or fifteen minutes. She criticised a certain actress in the rôle of Camille. "It was not as effective as it ought to have been." She had more sympathy for the woman in the story which she had read. "But do you think you ought to have sympathy for her?" she was asked. "Well, I think I ought," was the answer, "if it wasn't her fault—if she did n't have a mother and was led in and no one to lead her out."

For a number of reasons children are crowding theatres and places of amusement, as never before. That the theatre is now playing an important rôle in the education of the child, presents a problem which every school-board and organization which stands for good citizenship is bound to face in the near future. Heretofore interest has been directed to prohibiting what was actually bad: work has been remedial rather than preventive. Posters have been allowed on bill-boards until complained of by individual citizens; plays licensed for which little excuse could be offered when remonstrances were made to authorities. A disposition to please and to act in accordance with the demands of public will and taste, rather than up to a cultural standard, seems to characterize the decisions of those in charge of licensing shows in some cities.

A word may be added, however, in defence of those same officials, for in the constant exercise of the discriminating faculty, a play of necessity will be judged not as a single play, but relatively, being accounted tolerably good in comparison with those that are viciously bad.

How the power of discrimination may become weakened by frequently seeing what is low is evidenced by the case of the president of a "Watch and Ward Society" in a certain New England city who tried to guard public morals against offensive bill-boards and to inform the police of things which might go on that were of improper character. Pictures in art stores at one time were subject to investigation; also penny pictures, and it was agreed that the Society's representative should pass judgment on these. This agent, a clergyman, also agent for a Temperance Association and Public Purity Association was employed to go to theatres and listen to and criticize plays. It was understood that anything to which he objected should

be cut out by the police. He said that many times actors had had their cue when he was present and certain things usually given in a performance were suppressed in consequence. This man is said to have stated with "evidence of pain," that his taste had become vitiated, and the chairman of the police-commission would seem to have corroborated this view, when laughing about a controversy over some of the pictures he told how he had thrown out twelve that this clergyman had passed. If a clergyman and citizen of recognized good standing acknowledges a vitiation of his taste from constantly seeing vice depicted on the stage, it is well to realize the significance of its effect upon impressionable young minds and hearts. To guard such, to face the problem of the day, is not to employ destructive methods only, such as a more rigid censorship and the like, nor even to keep children from the theatre but rather to turn one's energies to work of more constructive character. Judgment should be exercised, not only as to the kind of plays given to the public, but having decided upon these, the sort suitable for children and for children of different ages.

To make the theatre educationally effective, the support and co-operation of the schools is necessary. Too much time and attention are given now to mere form and technique it would seem; too little stress is laid upon the interpretation of character, motives, etc., and upon moral values. Right here is a great opportunity for teachers, which may be turned to the advantage of that much discussed question of moral instruction in schools.

That more constructive work of the kind should be undertaken seems evident, but the fact that organizations that stand for public welfare (women's clubs, civic clubs, twenieth century clubs, public education associations and the like) are interesting themselves in the matter is a hopeful sign, pointing the way no doubt to greater consideration of the subject by the general public.

Dramatic Work in Schools. At present there is almost an epidemic of interest in dramatization as a part of primary school work. In the lower grades of public schools, teachers are having children act out stories, which have been read or told to them, for the purpose of gaining greater freedom and spontaneity of expression. It is difficult to say where this practice started, but certain it is that it is becoming widespread and that it has had a phenomenally rapid rise. It is, it would seem, one of the most recent developments of interest in child nature and follows naturally on that which was aroused in kindergarten work and school hygiene, and later the establishment of playgrounds and oversight of children's play, both in recreation and school hours.

In many cities, including Worcester, the introduction of this work, as well as the amount of time given to it, has been left largely to the discretion of individual teachers; in other places it is compulsory and has been reduced to a definite system.

It can be seen to best advantage, perhaps, at least in connection with such a system, in Newton, Massachusetts. Hundreds of teachers and interested visitors flock to the primary grades there, to see the system in practice and obtain points for carrying on similar work elsewhere. Dr. Spaulding, the superintendent of schools, and Miss Bryce, the supervisor of primary schools, have introduced dramatizing as a part of a method for teaching reading which they have been making out for some years with great care. This method is the result of experiments which were made in the schools of Passaic, New Jersey, some eight years or so ago. Dr. Spaulding and Miss Bryce, with the co-operation of teachers and principals, later developed and perfected it in Newton. They have recently published a manual for teachers and are now getting out a series of readers based on this system, several of which have already appeared.

While acknowledging that dramatization is "play, recreation, agreeable and healthful exercise of mind and body—and as such of value in the economy of the day's work," the manual states that it is more than a pleasant pastime, that "it plays an integral and important rôle in the successful teaching of reading" . . . that "it is more than a mere preparation for reading; dramatizing is reading in the fullest sense."

Not to go into a detailed description of this reading system, the bare outline of it is as follows. It begins 1st. with the story; 2nd. introduces rhymes which are to furnish the stock in trade of words; 3rd. supplements the printed matter with pictures, then comes 4th. dramatizing, that is the simple acting out of poems and stories told by the teacher. The idea as stated is to fill the children so full of the story that they will want to act it out, but not to have them memorize as a preparation. So long as the spirit and idea of the story are preserved, the child may use his own words to reproduce it. To what extent children avail themselves of such a privilege is illustrated by a Worcester child, who in acting "Red Riding Hood" cried "Oh my God—the wolf." It may be remarked in passing that the particular form of expression is a reflection of the environment, not of the method. The children need not only suggestion, but help, and a good deal of help, at first, in this work. Gradually, however, this is withdrawn, or should be, if the teacher is alive to the pedagogic opportunities of the situation and is bent on having her pupils acquire freedom, confidence and independence.

Many teachers, being entirely inexperienced in this work, have difficulties at first, and the tendency, in some cases, to

make a mechanical thing out of something the primary importance of which is spontaneity is all too natural. There is great temptation to seek a finished product and many an excuse or apology is offered to visitors for crude performances.

Both in the dramatizing as carried out in the plan of Dr. Spaulding and Miss Bryce, and when dramatic work is introduced independently of a system under other superintendents, those who best understand the aim and purpose of the work emphasize the fact that parts and time should not be divided mechanically; that the same thing should not be given out for dramatization too frequently, and that the same children should not be chosen for the same parts. The individual differences and mental attitude of the children are to be considered, the over-forward or supercilious child judiciously dealt with, and particularly the awkward, bashful, sensitive child, brought out, encouraged, given confidence and stimulated to wholesome competition.

The influence of the schoolroom is almost invariably inhibitory, but if there is a time when this is less manifest it would seem to be when the acting of a story is in progress. To see faces instantly kindle with animation, hands wave frantically when a teacher says, "Now would you like to act out something?" to hear one voice say, "O, yes;" another, "Just love to;" to see the eagerness to be chosen for a part—all this is to see interest aroused, such as is without rival during school hours—an interest which relegates even that favorite school diversion of many generations past, the spelling match, to a place far in the background. A shade of disappointment inevitably appears on the faces of those not chosen for rôles, but it soon changes for a look of absorption in what is being done by others, and not infrequently all the children of a schoolroom can take part in a play, such a play, for example, as "The Pied Piper," when as rat or child the motor energy of every young aspirant finds expression.

Surely when one sees the joy and delight this acting is to children, considered merely as play or healthful exercise of mind and body, this practice of introducing dramatization as a part of school work could find no small amount of justification. Something more, however, than the assurance that it is adding to the child's joy of life and making the schoolroom more interesting may be said in its favor, though it is too early yet, perhaps, to formulate definite conclusions about it. The practice is recent, but some results may be noticed. In many places where the work is being tried, children are new to anything of the kind; what is more of an impediment to good results, teachers are new to it also, and some of them, because of the very lack of such training in their own youth, are stiff and mechani-

cal in method. It is the teacher who must lead in breaking through the restraint and conventionality of the schoolroom. The teacher who is not sensible to the advantages of delicate sentiment and suggestion, who bases her instruction on hard, definite statement of fact only, who would sacrifice spirit and originality for over-exact reproductions of content is little likely to succeed in work of this character.

That some teachers are introducing this work because it is prescribed, working at it as something which they wish to bring up to the standard of efficiency of other required school work, but the importance of which pedagogically they have not grasped, may sometimes be very apparent and is an inevitable result of an often too great mechanization in school curricula.

Ask teachers what effects they have noticed from the work and for some of them the question seems to be raised for the first time. Others, however, say that they have noticed greater freedom in the use of English both in reciting and in conversation. This would seem to be especially true of foreign-born children. One teacher said that two Norwegian boys who had never amounted to anything in school got their start from dramatizing and had been able to do good work ever since.

Some teachers, enthusiastic over this work are perhaps overemphasizing one phase of it, making such a point of expression as to produce a result, possibly temporary, a little verging on the unnatural or artificial. The pendulum must swing far both ways at first, doubtless, before teachers adjust themselves to a method for which natural endowment and education may have sparingly equipped them.

As the grades ascend, one finds less and less dramatizing introduced into primary school work, and when the grammar grades are reached, attention paid to it amounts almost to a minus quantity. There are so many required studies that time is lacking for work not yet standardized, and that which is relatively unimportant because not demanded for promotion can receive little attention. That the age of self-consciousness begins after the first primary school grades are passed, is a reason, perhaps, why precisely the same sort of dramatic expression should not find place in grammar schools, but that all dramatic work should cease until high school is reached, when it is quite the practice in many cities to give school plays, is unpedagogical, as irregular and unsystematized practice is of little benefit. That there should be such a break and no tiding over the awkwardness that is coincident with higher grades and that what has been gained in the first grades should be allowed to lose much of its effect through neglect, is to be regretted since it is difficult and in some cases impossible to revive an instinct which has once degenerated by disuse.

Even the practice of play-giving in high schools in many cities where it is the rule, needs reconstructing in many instances. The best students in English are chosen, usually, for the play. Mildly suggest to a teacher who acknowledges this, that the poor students of English may be the ones who most need the work and you will be answered that these cannot afford the time for it. Then too, the idea of the finished product is so much in mind that a play is cast with reference to it and with some justice, as regard must be had for the benefit to be derived by pupils who are spectators as well as by those actively taking part. To obviate this difficulty, class work with all taking part, then an assignment of parts or competition for them may be suggested.

In one high school known to the writer there is an English club of quite limited membership, only the best students in English being chosen for it, and this club gives occasional plays. Play-giving was found a necessary condition, in fact, of the club's existence, as interest in its work could not be kept up, otherwise. A teacher of the school in question, stated that the effect of the few members of this club upon her whole room was leavening; they acted as leaders, in a way, and their good reading, marked by freedom and self-confidence, gave confidence to others.

That individual teachers are fully alive to the value of dramatic work in education, is quite as true as that many of them are indifferent to it. One has only to talk with grammar and high school principals to discover that at least three points of view are current: First, quite a large number of these principals have given the matter little thought and attention; second, a number have considered it but are opposed to it; third, still others believe thoroughly in the practice of play-giving in school, introduce it into their work, and unlike some of the primary school teachers, are ready with their reasons for thoroughly believing in it. In the first class may be mentioned a grammar school principal of a New England city who when interviewed, laughed and said in substance: "Why yes, I believe in anything pupils can do that is pleasant; I do not object to anything in the line of school work, which does not impede the natural development of the child. If under good influences and they do nothing but play, it is all right. I agree with Hughes, of Toronto, that children have a good deal to contend with—who have to go to school." So very broad a view, however, can hardly be given as typical of any considerable class of teachers. Of the second class, I cite a grammar school principal who said that he did not believe in school plays nor theatre-going, for the main reason that children's minds are so much taken up with outside work. School

work should be kept in steady lines, he thought, otherwise there was dissipation of energy. Another principal said that he had a play given annually in his school, choosing one for its value in historical suggestion, moral influence, dramatic merit, etc., but he guards his young people carefully, as he has noticed elsewhere the bad effects of adolescent boys and girls practising together. They have outgrown the innocent, unconscious age and need most careful oversight. It is, he thinks, a dangerous time to bring young people of opposite sexes together, nor does he believe in taking the emotion, which should be the most sacred thing in life and making it artificial. He would, by judicious teaching and restraint, stimulate young people to highest regard and love of the opposite sex. A boy who had left school because of his inability through interest in the other sex, or rather in one of his girl companions, to apply himself properly to his studies, re-admitted to the school, said he was "over it." Taken at his word he soon proved his ability to do good work. A premature love affair had absolutely barred progress in school. There is always an element in every school that inclines towards the bad, and this principal does not believe in putting much in the way of boys that can be misinterpreted.

Under the third head may be placed a ninth grade grammar school teacher and principal who said in speaking of dramatic work, "I think it revolutionizes a class as nothing else will." She continued, "I think that any teacher can find time in school for work that she really thinks important." This teacher, on my visit to her school had her class go to the hall at the top of the building, where some of the pupils gave for my benefit, scenes from several plays they had been studying. The pupils chosen for this had never rehearsed together, as she does not ordinarily throw boys and girls together for rehearsals. These children had learned a great many parts. The scenes called for at this time were from the "Merchant of Venice" and "Julius Cæsar." In choosing the characters for one of them, she said, "For the first part let——(naming a boy) go on; then after a while——(naming another boy), may take his place." The boys arranged with each other at what point the change should be made, and the acting began. In learning the parts, the girls and boys take those of men and women indiscriminately.

In speaking of the effects of this work upon children, this teacher told of some of which she had learned, from parents. A mother said that so great was the interest of the child in dramatic work, that everybody in the family had been made to act. The father could not get away for a trip to New York, the servant girl had to act, and finally even the baby was made

to represent "a dirty little pig." In another family everybody had become interested in the dramatic work which was engrossing the child of the household except the father and one day *he* was found in his room reading "The Merchant of Venice."

In another case, a father who had been interested in drama and the theatre in his youth, to the extent of being "super" for great actors on several occasions, after his marriage to a woman whose tastes ran in different lines, had lost his taste for high class drama and had since gone to the theatre only for amusement. When his son one day began the speech of Antony, the father took it up, reciting it to the end, and from that time on showed an interest in his son's progress and recited with him. Later even the mother's interest was aroused and she rehearsed with them.

Perhaps the most interesting case of all those told at that time, was that of a boy whom the school had utterly failed to reach. He scuffed his feet, and did everything to annoy. His teacher thought "Must I go through the year and never get at that boy?" But there seemed to be no way of appealing to him. Finally he took part in a play making a great success of his rôle, a comic one. The teacher laughed heartily at his performance, and from that time the boy was won over. He lost his sullen look and showed quite a different side of his nature. After his promotion to high school he remained the firm friend of this same principal.

The enthusiasm shown by this ninth grade teacher and her manner of exhibiting the dramatic work of her pupils to a visitor within regular school hours finds almost a parallel in an incident which especially impressed Mr. A. Caswell Ellis on his visit to French schools, which I quote from his article. A principal of a common school in Paris broke up several classes to have a large number of pupils go into the auditorium and give a play they had themselves written. The children, he says, were from ten to fourteen and had written the play, of rather heroic and classic type, with a little help from the teacher, and had planned the stage setting, made helmets, breastplates, etc. They acted it out, he says, after their own ideas with great enthusiasm and intensity." The principal of the school was most enthusiastic about it and said, "Ah, it takes a lot of time but it is of more worth than the learning of whole pages of some literature book. What we want is to make these boys sensitive to the things around them, to the beauties of plot, of expression of thought; and this attempt to do something themselves and their appreciation of the beauties of their own work will make them more sympathetic and more sensitive to the beauties of the great masters."

Dramatic work in Colleges. In recent years there has been

a development of dramatic work in colleges and universities that has tended to raise it from the level of mere amusement and pastime to an educational factor and to give it a dignity and importance which it has not hitherto possessed. For years students have been in the habit of giving farces for their own amusement and for the entertainment of their friends, and have had clubs which existed for the purpose. It has been customary, too, for different academic departments to give plays at intervals, and for graduation classes to make them features of their commencement programmes. These attempts have been oftentimes of an ambitious character, and in many instances so creditable in result as to receive approval and commendation from college faculties. Most of us are tolerably familiar with work of the kind in our principal universities and colleges.

Harvard has its societies which give old English as well as French and German plays, and was the first college to attempt a Greek play on an ambitious scale. The work of the Cercle Français has become well known there. For sixteen years it has been giving French plays and its reputation for these has been carried across the water. In a recent book "Le Théatre au Collège du Moyen Age á nos Jours," M. Gofflot, the author, devotes a good deal of space to an account of what had been done by this society, and M. Jules Claritie says in the preface of the book, "M. Gofflot has wished to show the decided influence of the theatre on education, and it is by the theatre that the Cercle Francais of Harvard, next to professors and lecturers, has spread and popularized our French language."

At Yale, students take an active interest in play-giving. They have an association which was formed for the purpose of giving classic plays, and which furthers in every way the efficient study of drama. It is instrumental in the matter of procuring distinguished actors and students of drama as lecturers, engaging the Ben Greet company to give performances there, etc. Some idea of the popularity of the club may be had from the fact that awhile ago there were one hundred and fifty applicants for membership when only twelve vacancies were to be filled.

The University of Pennsylvania also gives serious study and work to the matter of play-giving. It produces a number of plays during the year and at Easter, one that runs for a week, and some years ago gave a play in the largest theatre of Philadelphia.

In the University of Ohio there is great interest in play-giving, second only to athletics, and felt by a rather more serious set of students, it is said.

The two universities of California have done as much, if not more, than any in the country in the way of play-giving and

offer prizes for the writing of farces. The University of California has an out-of-door theatre, modelled on that of the Dionysian theatre in Greece. A graduate of the Sargent Academy of Dramatic Art, a former actor, is in charge of the dramatic training there and the head of the English department is a well known student of drama.

In a number of the colleges for women, plays are given by student societies during the year and those of graduating classes are of a high order. The outdoor plays of Wellesley are now famous. A unique feature of commencement week there is the picture dancing which is a development of the educational dancing which Miss Hill has striven for years to make an expression of the play instinct, bringing back something of the spirit of the lost Terpsichorean art of the Greeks. Smith College, since it gave its Greek play nearly two decades ago, has had performances of an ambitious character each year since. A professional trainer is employed and the senior dramatics have become an event which draws critics of drama annually.

Commencement plays in many universities are among the pleasing features of the graduation programme and represent careful and conscientious study, usually of a masterpiece, for while faculties do not insist upon it, they of course favor the giving of something really worth while. The character of some of the literary courses offered now by colleges is significant in this connection. Some of the universities include practice in writing farces, the criticism of plays and a study of modern plays.

The University of Minnesota gives practice in play-writing in composition courses.

Professor Baker, of Harvard, has introduced the study of modern plays into his work and the acting of plays, putting into practice the belief which he voiced at a meeting of the League of Political Education in Hudson when he said, "I would suggest that the institutions in which our boys and girls are being trained should teach them that plays are plays, and not merely literature or poetry."

Professor Dodge, of the University of Illinois, in an article which appeared in the Nation, 1905, said, "No branch of English work has shown more marked advance in recent years than the study of the drama. This is also true of French and German. The interest in drama as a distinctive literary type is shown by the number of revivals of early English plays." Professor Dodge makes a plea for more consideration from theatre managers in the case of university towns. "These towns," he says, "with their representatives from different parts of the country offer splendid opportunities for the adequate performance of standard plays. This has always been

recognized in Germany, where special rates are given students," and again he says, "It is not unreasonable to hope that our leading managers may consider the claims of university towns, thus providing laboratory work in the drama that is essential to its proper study. A university population of three thousand ought to be able to satisfy the demands of the most exacting manager, and in the English department of each university will be found not one, but a dozen advance agents with enthusiasm the more convincing because of it ssincerity."

In none of the colleges does dramatic work yet find a recognized place in the curriculum, but there is a near approach to this in some cases, as for example, at Harvard, and the fact that the subject has been under consideration and has met with the approbation of individual professors is perhaps encouraging. It would be a great deal to expect of any college faculty, considering the ideas that prevail as to what is or is not academic, that it should offer in its catalogue courses in play-acting. Under a more euphemistic head, however, such as elocution, oratory or practice work in connection with drama courses, it is not impossible that it may yet figure.

Miss Mabel Hay Barrows (now Mrs. Mussey) did some interesting work in schools and colleges a few years ago, in the way of play-giving. A college graduate herself, her opinion in regard to the effect of dramatic training on students would seem of value as compared with that of the professional dramatic coach.

Besides giving Greek plays in universities she presented Latin plays in many preparatory schools. A letter received from Mrs. Mussey is here quoted by permission. The list of plays given in schools is included here and the mention of those given by native Greeks which, though not coming naturally are under this section of interest in connection with the general subject of this paper.

"Latin plays, 'Feast of Dido' and 'Flight of Æneas' my own arrangement from the Ænead, I have given in the Girls' Latin School, Boston, Hotchkiss School, Lakeville, Connecticut, The Hill School, Pottsdam, Pennsylvania, Phillip's Academy, Andover, Massachusetts. The same play, or rather the Flight of Æneas was given in Dearborn Seminary, Chicago, and Rochester, New York. These I directed by correspondence only.

"Of modern plays I gave 'En Marque' by Josephine Preston Peabody, in the Girls' Latin School, Boston, and 'The White Butterfly' (one of my own plays) in the Staten Island Academy, New York.

"Of Greek plays, I gave my own dramatization of the Odessey 'The Return of Odysseus' at Radcliffe, Brown University, Iowa

College (Grinnell), Colorado College, University of Minnesota, Toronto University. 'The Feast of Dido,' I should have said was also produced from my notes and directions, but not under my management at Boston University.

" 'The Ajax of Sophocles' I produced in the open air Greek theatre at the University of California. I produced the 'Return of Odysseus' in two successive years in Chicago, once at the Hull House theatre, and once at the Studebaker, with native Greeks as actors. Also, with Greeks I gave the 'Ajax' at Hull House and in New York City. That is all I seem to recall, though I gave my 'White Butterfly' at Teachers College, New York. . . . . .

"Almost everywhere I think faculty and students agreed on the great advantage of the training. My experiences in the different schools and colleges were very varied, of course. One thing I always insisted upon; the preparation for the play must never interfere with school or college work. The time given to it by the students must be taken from their recreation time. Consequently the faculty were never asked to take the play preparation as an excuse for absence, or lack of study. . .

"Almost everywhere I think faculty and students agreed on the great advantage of the training to the actors. Where the parts were thrown open to competition there were often three or four competing for each part. I would frequently have fifty or sixty students practising the dancing though all knew that not more than fifteen or twenty could be chosen. It was usually surprising to the faculty to see how many of the students they had not specially noticed were 'brought out.'

"I made a special point of training them all first in *carriage* and *poise*. Where men were to take the part of women I made them walk daily for an hour at a time, up and down long corridors dressed in flowing robes (made of stalwart unbleached cotton). I gave them all "setting up" exercises. Even the principals had to take some dancing to limber them up. The course in dancing was so thorough that a football player has gone home and tumbled into bed quite tired out! I also taught them what I could of the theory of action on the stage, but tried very hard to make the play so *real* to them that it would not seem play acting. I think a large part of our success was due to this, that the actors so truly felt their parts that the whole performance was very sincere, simple and convincing. I usually avoided if possible having any actors who had ever been in college plays or other amateur theatricals. I also gave them special voice-training, and the results of that the teachers were not slow to see.

"While I had countless letters and expressions of thanks from the faculty members, I have not known of any *permanent*

effort to have such dramatic work count as a regular study. Only once or twice did I hear of students getting any college 'credit' for their work in the play, but they got something much more valuable.

"I heard the other day indirectly, of a young clergyman of distinction, who said the best thing that ever happened to him was the training he got in one of my Latin plays.

"It used to be quite astonishing to see what one could do with many of the students, and to see what very surprising and delightful things happened as a result."

Place of the drama in German schools. We look naturally to Germany as a leader in matters pertaining to education, and it is interesting to note what is being done there, to satisfy the dramatic instinct of the child, and turn it to account educationally. Something which Professor Münsterberg said in a lecture in Worcester this past year gives an idea of public taste and demand for drama in that country. Speaking of the theatre he said: "It means quite a different thing from the American theatre. There it is placed beside the school and the church as the greatest cultural factor in the inner life. The question of the theatre is the question of the deepest life of the whole community. In America the stage is superficial, life is so serious that they go to be entertained. That spirit, of course, grows. At least six or eight serious and good plays are given in a German city throughout the season and they keep changing. Berlin alone gives more Shakespearean plays than the whole of the United States, and if that is true of Shakespeare; it is true of the best modern dramatists." Continuing, he said: "Chamber plays are now being given after the plan of chamber concerts and a new theatre has been built in Berlin for them."

To supplement these views of Professor Münsterberg, I give here some statements recently made by a German resident of Berlin, in answer to certain questions which had been sent to Germany.

These questions were as follows:

1. To what extent are theatres in Germany subsidized by the government?
2. What sort of censorship of plays is there?
3. Are plays written for children to any extent and are plays given for them expressly?
4. Are plays given in schools?
5. Are children encouraged to go to theatres?
6. What is the attitude of clergy and educators toward theatre-going?

These were the answers received:

1. "In all the capitals of Germany with but very few excep-

tions, if any, there are theatres belonging to the crown or state, subsidized by either of the two or by the respective municipalities. In Berlin three play-houses: "The Royal Opera," "The Royal Play House," and "The Royal New Opera Theatre," belong to the crown and their expenses which considerably exceed their receipts, are borne by the king of Prussia, the Kaiser.

All the other theatres or the like play-houses, of which there are about forty, are private ventures and in no way subsidized.

2. The censorship of plays is in the hands of the police, against whose decrees the ordinary law courts can be appealed to.

3. No plays to any extent are written for children, but performances of plays, chosen expressly, are given for children periodically or in pursuance of their licenses.

Thus by command of the emperor performances are also given in the royal play-houses, and by a more recent command performances are given once a month in the Royal Opera Theatre, expressly for the families of the working classes.

4. Plays are given in schools on special occasions, school periods and the like, but only by the pupils of the higher classes, and, as a rule, before an invited audience of relations and friends of the school pupils.

5. Children are not encouraged—if not, indeed, even forbidden—to go to theatres by themselves; they are, however, periodically taken in classes by their principals to plays expressly provided for them in the respective theatres licensed by the authorities.

6. The attitude of the clergy, generally speaking, is averse to theatre-going; that of educators, however, is, on the contrary, particularly favorable to it."

An article by Raphael Löwenfeld, in "Das Buch vom Kinde," published last year in Berlin, gives further information concerning free performances for school children in various German cities. In Hamburg, through the instrumentality of the Teachers Association, arrangements have been made for special performances of classic plays in the Stadt Theater for pupils in the peoples' schools. The cost of them is borne by a private individual. In Bremen, the Teachers Association has done the same thing and here, also, through the generosity of a private individual. In Dresden, through the influence of the Teachers Association, there has been established a series of royal performances for the upper classes of the peoples' schools. Sixty pupils are taken at a time and it is decided by lot which shall go each afternoon. The performances are given regularly in the spring months. The time for them is taken from that devoted to the German language. Each teacher and child pays 25

Pfennige (6 cents), but the principal part of the cost is borne by the crown, 1,000 marks being paid from the royal exchequer. For the higher schools, tickets that are left over for the best classical plays are sold to pupils for one *Mark* apiece. In Berlin the Schiller Theater for the last five years has been able, through the co-operation of city officials, to give ten performances yearly for about 12,000 pupils of the common schools. The cost here is defrayed from the interest of a fund devoted to useful or artistic ends, which is under the control of the *cultus* minister. In Charlottenburg two plays yearly are given to 1,200 pupils, and here the cost (840 marks) is included in the annual school budget. This is probably the most decisive step of any in the matter of providing plays for school children at public cost.

Among the Germans who advocate dramatic training and theatre-going for children may be mentioned Dr. Rudolph Blümner, who in an article on "The Child and the Stage," says, "One has only to watch children play to know how great a rôle dramatic art plays in the child's life." The great effect on the imagination is shown not only in the play of the child but in the fact that robber and murder plays actually lead to juvenile criminality." The number of German plays fitted for school children is very limited, says this author. The plays of Schiller, Lessing and Goethe are given—those most commonly produced being "Wilhelm Tell," "Jungfrau von Orleans," "Minna von Barnhelm," and "Götz von Berlichingen." These, and in some cases, "Maria Stuart," were the plays given under the auspices of the Teachers Associations, already mentioned. After the first of these plays had been given in Hamburg the children were examined carefully on them, with a view to finding out those best understood and of most value for the pupils, and only one, "Wilhelm Tell," was thought by all to be entirely suitable.

Löwenfeld also comments upon the lack of plays suitable for children. "Only recently," he says, "have attempts been made to arouse imagination by means of poetic representations." He criticises the fairy-tale performances usually given and says, "If they would have regard for the real value to the child, supporters of the theatre should consider the giving of these in something else than the silly fashion which has nothing to do with the need of the child." He speaks of the value for older children, those from twelve to fourteen, of seeing German masterpieces on the stage, after they have studied them in school, and says that "theatre-plays for children ought to become an institution." "Everywhere," he says, "that it is possible, and where is it not possible in Germany to-day, the parishes should introduce theatre-pieces as part of the school

instruction in the free course. Discount can easily be arranged for with managers, and those parishes which support a theatre will be able to make school performances a part of their duty, and so the means and ways will be solved."

In deciding which classes shall attend these performances, he thinks the opportunity should be restricted to those children old enough to read a dramatic poem, *i. e.*, to those of the upper classes of the common schools, for "to children not so far advanced, the stage says nothing or not the right thing."

Speaking of the effect of the acted play on children, he says: "The first visit to the theatre must, for every normal child, be of overwhelming influence, but for that must be presupposed a great poem and ripe receptivity of the appropriate age. What the child has read, again stands before him in light and color as he knows it in the actual. Men of other times speak to him in the lofty speech of poets. Deepest feelings find echo in the childish heart and higher thoughts, which everyday life does not bring to him, now appeal to his understanding." Again he says, "In the positive experience of the first day's impression lies the starting point of a spiritual development and an increase in the joy of living, and the negative result is of inestimable value for moral development. This is easily attainable for the children of the rich, who see too much rather than too little, which is unconditionally harmful, for impressions become less strong, but for the poor, friends of art, education, associations and the municipality, should provide."

Dr. Blümner pleads for the dramatic education of the child, thinks early training is necessary and says the capability of declaiming a poem is not a talent turned towards acting, but is acting, and that dramatic art of all others is the one that should be and is, earliest cultivated.

All little children, he says, are taught poems, but attention is all put on mere memorizing. The result of slovenly speech in schools, he thinks, appears later in public professions.

He speaks of the significant rôle the development of drama and theatre formerly played in education in Germany. Everyday enjoyment of the theatre, in his opinion, is not suitable for children. It should be a special event, otherwise it takes away from the experience that ought to belong to later years. It is often believed, he says, that children are not taken to see classic pieces at the theatre often enough. This is a mistake. The too early introduction to the best is almost as dangerous as literary worthlessness, for as Grillparzer has said, 'The theatre is no trivial school for the unripe.'"

Dr. Blümner speaks, too, of the lack of dramatic literature for children and says there is only one really significant child-tragedy, "Frühlings Erwachen" by Wedekind, which has for

a subject what he considers the most important problem, the sex-awakening and sex-life of the child. Though the best tragedy Wedekind has written, it does not reach, he thinks, the standard of true drama. A series of other struggles of the child soul, for example, the awakening of the feelings of honor and of guilt, school difficulties, etc., have been treated, by Robert Saudeck, in a number of plays, but they do not really reach the real psychological problem.

The place that the puppet-play has held in Germany and other countries, its significance in childish play and its important rôle in the lives of great writers is a point worthy of note. Much German drama has passed through the puppet-theatre, and some of the writers of to-day, Schnitzler, Maeterlinck and Hugo von Hoffmannsthal have thought some of their pieces suited for it. The puppet-theatre from its smallest form in the play-room, the wandering little theatres, and those permanently located in large cities, not only in Italy, where the puppet-theatre has long been a source of enjoyment to the people, but also in Paris and Munich, have played an important rôle in the life of children, the one in Munich run by "Papa Schmidt," being well-known to travellers. In Germany as in America there is a lack of dramatic literature for children, and nothing analogous to the literature of the puppet-theatre exists. There is an inexhaustible treasury of tales for boys and girls, but drama for young people is lacking. This is partly due to the nature of drama. Things which children can understand are not suitable for it. This would seem to show that there is an age when folk-lore and stories are the best food for the dramatic instinct.

There are a large number of children's comedies, but they are of little worth, though the material of these is worthy of better treatment. There are fairy-stories dramatized, which do well for young children but better for older ones, but between these and dramatic repertoire, there is a great break.

It has been supposed, by many people, that a children's theatre was an extremly modern institution. In reality one was started in Berlin a little over fifty years ago; though for a different purpose and under widely different conditions from those governing the rise and development of a children's theatre in our own country, "The Children's Educational Theatre" of New York.

An account of this German children's theatre may be found in the Jugendschriften-Warte and is briefly as follows: The originator was the poet, Baron Anton von Klesheim, author of the "Mailufterl," a collection of folk-songs. He seems to have been a thoroughly original nature. He was born in 1816 and at an early age went upon the stage under the name of Platze.

In 1846 he appeared under his own name as reader of his dialect poems, and made them the fashion. His first attempt at drama was a child-comedy, "Der Erdgeist und die Wasserfee," which he wrote in his fiftieth year, and for the production of which he chose Berlin. There were many difficulties in the way of carrying out his plans, for Berlin was then small; he needed a hundred children and these were hard to obtain, for he wanted only beautiful children, beautiful in form and face.

Out of ten or twelve actors of first rôles he wished to make miniature artists.

The first performance was given in the theatre hall of one of the well-known hotels, and all the prominent people of Berlin were present. The cheapest seat was $1.00. The success of this was beyond all expectation. No expense had been spared in the matter of stage setting, costumes, orchestra, etc., and the little people, after the first, played wonderfully. The children's chorus was especially charming. The young performers were nearly buried in bonbons, flowers and oranges. At the close, living-pictures of the poets' own arrangement were given. For weeks all Berlin spoke of nothing but the "Children's Theatre." The content of the play, easily understood, was spread through all Berlin child-world by these one hundred children and reproduced everywhere, when half a dozen of them came together. Even in school at recess it was the favorite game.

Parents seemed to go wild. In the prominent families it was considered as the greatest honor to have children chosen. For the most part this desire was not fulfilled, the writer adds.

The theatre ran five months, but in spite of its great success was a personal loss to the baron. Notwithstanding this he gave valuable presents to the children when they left.

The writer says that this was the last "children's theatre," but in an editor's note the statement is contradicted and the historical plays which were given under the direction of an Alsatian pastor, Herr Pfarrer Siegfried in a schoolhouse by boys, on five or six successive evenings, are mentioned.

An interesting point is brought out here. This pastor asked one of the peasants of the parish before a performance, why they had to "carry on" so in the village, and was answered, "Because there is no theatre."

This the pastor tried to remedy by good books, magazines and festivals.

The Peoples Institute. While we have nothing in the United States which parallels the work of the Teachers Association in Germany, there have been during the last few years various movements which, though differing in form, are similar in spirit, in that they recognize the psychological need of some

form of dramatic gratification. In illustration of these movements which are constructive in character, those furnishing something of educational value to substitute and counteract the influence of cheap shows, may be cited the work which is being done by the "Peoples Institute," a philanthropic enterprise started two years ago in New York. The aim of this organization is, according to its constitution, "To furnish the people continued and ordered education in social science, literature and other subjects and to afford opportunities for the interchange of thought." It has its headquarters at Cooper Union, its field of labor is East Side New York and at its head is Mr. Charles Sprague Smith, who for eleven years was professor of literature at Columbia University.

Of all the work undertaken by the Institute, that of its dramatic department has shown as favorable, perhaps the most favorable, results of any. Growing, as it did, out of an effort to supply entertainment to a few hundred people assembled occasionally in a small lecture room of Cooper Union, its scope has so enlarged that it now offers to thousands of persons of limited means, opportunities for seeing the best that the theatre affords. An outline history of the work as developed by this department is as follows: In the spring of 1901, Mr. Smith engaged Marshall Darrach to give at Cooper Union a recital of "The Merchant of Venice." This was so enthusiastically received by his east side audience that it was decided to continue Shakespearean recitals. For three successive seasons the audiences for these so increased in numbers, that finally even the great hall of Cooper Union was inadequate to the demands made upon it. In consequence of this success it was decided to give regularly staged plays of Shakespeare. Accordingly, Mr. Smith engaged the Ben Greet Company for a series of performances, including a matinee for school children, tickets for this being reduced to twenty-five cents. A single school purchased 700 tickets.

Mr. Smith next tried to organize a company to give a Shakespearean play, and under the direction of Mr. Franklin Sargent, of the Academy of Dramatic Art, "Romeo and Juliet" was given. The cost of such a production, however, and the difficulty of obtaining a suitable cast with the limited means available, caused this plan to be given up.

The directors next turned their attention toward interesting stage managers and obtaining reduced rate tickets, not only in the case of Shakespearean drama, but for other good plays.

The eagerness with which, not children only but members of various groups, labor organizations, department stores, etc., availed themselves of such privileges, when offered, and the fact that as time went on, an increasingly large number of plays was presented to the Institute for approval, led to the definite

organization of its dramatic department. A general committee was formed, consisting of fifty prominent New York citizens; also an executive committee of twenty well-known men and women who should pass judgment on the plays.

A system was organized by which plays were subjected to a standard test, and arrangements made directly with managers for reduced prices. A play might be rejected for one group though offered to others as, for example, comparatively few, suitable for adults, could be recommended for school children of the lower grades. Last year 60,000 people in New York, it is claimed, saw plays at reduced rates, and in one-fourth of the year, as many people had used their reduced rate tickets, as in the whole of the preceding year. There are over 600,000 teachers and pupils in the New York schools and half a million or so of people represented in other groups using these tickets, so that with the increase in the work of the Institutes' dramatic department which one is led to expect, it is easy to see what a tremendous influence it is likely to exert upon the population of New York. Not only has this work enabled those of limited means to see good plays at the price of poor ones, but it is an encouragement to theatre managers to offer better productions. Indirectly, the success of some plays has been made, it is said, by the patronage of the Institute.

As the work of the organization becomes better known, other cities may follow the example set by New York. So far as known exactly the same sort of work is not carried on elsewhere as yet, though something like it has occasionally been undertaken in Philadelphia and Boston. Frequently where a company has gone from New York to these cities, the Institute has sent information to certain people there whom it has tried to interest in the matter with a view to their starting similar work in these places, but not much has come of it.

The Public Education Association of Worcester has a committee which has entered a little upon work of somewhat the same nature. It has given approval to plays in a few instances, and in one, that of the Ben Greet performances, secured reduced rate tickets for teachers and school children.

Dramatic Work in Settlements. Since the establishment of social settlements, dramatics have come to be used more and more in their work as a method of education. It has been found that a play furnishes oftentimes the necessary incentive to effort on the part of young people and children, who will work for this as for nothing else. Many a settlement has its record of plays, more or less ambitious in character, which have been successfully produced. Classics, even, are attempted, and this is not so surprising in view of the fact that the personnel of settlements includes many college men and women

who have taken with them the high standards and ideals which have come to prevail in connection with college dramatics.

It is not possible here to go into the work of the different organizations which in their efforts to uplift and teach the masses in varying degrees are making use of dramatics as a means of accomplishing their ends, but that of a few may be mentioned to indicate the character of what is being done by them.

Many settlements have regular dramatic clubs and others give plays occasionally.

Hull House has several dramatic associations, senior, junior and children's, which give plays of Shakespeare, Ibsen, Shaw, melodramas, dramatized stories and fairy tales, in accordance with interests represented by different groups. Among the plays of especial interest given recently at Hull House, was a dramatization of a story, "The Wife of His Youth," by the colored author, Charles W. Chestnutt, which was given by a company of young colored people. Groups of Greeks and Italians have given plays in their native languages, the management of Hull House believing that the best way to transform members of our foreign population into good American citizens is to preserve and ennoble their national characteristics.

Hull House has also a moving-picture show or five-cent theatre which was started a year ago. On its films are pictured, fairy-stories for children, foreign scenes to delight the emigrant populations, incidents of stories which portray acts of heroism and convey moral lessons.

Settlement workers would seem to have recognized the educational value of drama for both sides of the footlights. Not only do they use it as wholesome entertainment, but it is also a medium now for training speech, manners and taste, a means even of intellectual and moral development.

Miss Madge Jennison in a recent article in the Atlantic Monthly, shows something of the actual workings of the method. She brings out a point too often neglected by teachers in the giving of school plays when she says that one must remember that the play is for the club, not the club for the play, and speaks of the harm that might result from the acceptance of failure in a part, and the benefit that comes when a child really "arrives" and does something she was sure she could not do. She tells how conversation is carried on in terms of the play and of how taste is influenced; for though tears may be shed at the very idea of giving up a "pompadour," or wearing an old-fashioned gown in place of one with a pretty yoke, yet how in the end *esprit de corps* prevails and the individual learns to subordinate herself in the interest of the group.

Denison House in Boston, has also done some excellent work in dramatics. It has given a number of Shakespearean plays, "Richelieu" and other classics, with great success in Boston, neighboring towns, and at Wellesley College.

In the dramatic work of Henry St. Settlement, New York, the same ideal prevails as at Hull House, that of preserving the traditions of the different nationalities represented in the neighborhood, by having the children express these in a reproduction of various national festivals. In the May festival given annually there, there is an attempt to reproduce their ancestral dances and customs. In celebrating these they are in reality reviving a primitive impulse, going back to the most ancient form of drama, which found expression in the rites and ceremonies with which man, far back in the history of the race, expressed his awe and wonder at the changing seasons and celebrated the rebirth of spring.

The Children's Educational Theatre. Similar in spirit to the dramatic work of settlements, but quite different in its inception and organization, is that of the "Children's Educational Theatre." This theatre, like the Peoples' Institute, represents a movement in the direction of counteracting the influence of cheap shows by furnishing a substitute of educational value to people of East Side New York. It stands, however, for something more than the mere substitution of worthy for unworthy drama; it aims not only to meet the need of the child as spectator; it is alive to that of his growing imagination and unabsorbed energy, the need to express himself as creator or as actor.

The theatre was started five years ago and since then has been under the auspices of a Jewish charitable organization, "The Educational Alliance, which has its headquarters in the Russian-Jewish section of the city. It accomplished its good work very quietly at first; only recently has public attention turned in its direction. With the last year or two several magazine and newspaper articles have attracted attention to its work and it received particular notice when, last November, during the run of "The Prince and the Pauper," with which the theatre opened its regular season, an invitation performance was given in honor of Mark Twain. On that occasion President Eliot and other guests made speeches, and letters from President Hall, Professor Brander Matthews and Professor George P. Baker, commending the work of the theatre, appeared upon the printed programmes. Not long afterwards it again attracted notice when on the enforcement of the Sunday law its Sunday afternoon performances had to be discontinued.

The theatre owes its beginning to the time when Miss Minnie Herts, its manager, filled a vacancy on the entertainment com-

mittee of the Educational Alliance, and in an attempt to improve upon the character of entertainments previously given then conceived the idea of training better than anything they had had previously, and something which should be at the same time of educational value.

Amateur clubs of the locality had given plays, but not successfully, according to Miss Herts's standard. The importation of outside talent was not practicable, yet to utilize East Side material in the production of a literary masterpiece was an undertaking of no small proportions. The play finally decided upon was "The Tempest."

To begin with Shakesperean drama in a locality where melodrama, vaudeville and moving-picture shows had been the rule was, indeed, a departure.

Mrs. Emma Sheridan Fry, former actress and teacher, was put in charge of the dramatic training, and after much serious work and study the play was produced. That it was an artistic success might well have been considered cause for congratulation by those who had attempted so arduous an undertaking. It meant something more, however, than the creditable production of high-class drama; an educational work had been inaugurated, the possible scope of which could hardly have been foreseen! The immediate effect of the play upon the neighborhood was electrifying. This, more than its artistic success, gratifying as that was to the management, showed the real value of the experiment. It was discussed on street corners and doorsteps, in factory and tenement; it was acted out in homes. These people, who during the week diligently plied their humble trades, trundling their push carts along the narrow alleys or toiling in sweat shops, had shown themselves capable, with a little guidance, of response to the humanistic appeal of a great drama. Shakespeare had entered the hearts of East Side people. Their contracted horizon had been widened. No matter how sordid or dreary the surroundings, pictures of beautiful scenery were in their minds, new ideals appealed to their imaginations. Interests which had been aroused or stimulated by this experiment in "higher dramatics" were not allowed to languish.

"The Tempest" was followed by other plays. "The Forest Ring," "Ingomar," "As You Like It," "The Little Princess," "Little Lord Fauntleroy," "Snow White," and "The Prince and the Pauper," were given as Sunday matinees for these Jewish young people and children, with occasional evening performances for adults, up to the time when conformity to the Sunday law made the continuance of matinees impossible, when a succession of one-act plays was put on regularly on Saturday evenings.

It is not too much to say that the success which attended the giving of the Tempest marked the productions of the plays that followed it. Not only was this true in regard to their artistic excellence, but more and more as time went on, changes for the better in the neighborhood became apparent.

How thoroughly the children of the audience entered into the spirit of the play was indicated by their excited exclamations at critical junctions, their warnings to avoid impending catastrophes, their lamentations where these were unheeded.

The speech and action classes for those engaged in the study of a play always numbered many more members than the cast of any piece demanded, and these classes became the very strength and foundation of the whole work as it developed.

A play was first studied as a whole, then the different parts were taken up in detail, and later the assignment of rôles made by the vote of the young people themselves, their choice being subject to the decision of the management. The possibilities and responsibilities of the situation became apparent in the opportunity afforded here for indirect teaching. Each play was studied not only with reference to literary and dramatic merit, its historical teaching, etc., but motives governing the characters were considered, behavior analyzed, comparisons drawn and in so far as possible morals pointed and ethical principles inculcated. In the choice of every play not what would be of general educational value was alone considered, but also what particular lessons needed especially to be impressed upon members of the class in training, upon spectators or the neighborhood in general. The value of such productions for East Side audiences was apparent, but fully as important was the effect on the young people taking part in plays. The greater number were reached in audiences, but each part was studied by several young people, so that in the case of a long run of a piece, the burden would not fall too heavily upon one cast.

The same methods which facilitate the smooth workings of a business enterprise have served here for the training and development of certain desirable qualities and characteristics.

Responsibility has been developed in many of the young people. They have learned to systematize the part of the work which falls to their share. Frequently when for some reason their absence is necessary or they wish to see a play from the front, the actors themselves train their substitutes for parts. They are made to feel that they must aim to make their substitutes outstrip their teachers.

This past winter a one-act play was staged by the young people themselves, and the instructor, seeing it for the first

time after it left class work, found few corrections to be made.

Punctuality is another trait which the theatre is claimed to have developed. In a neighborhood where, it is said, the meaning of the word was unknown, the curtain of the children's theatre has never in four years been rung up one minute late. Scene shifters have become so proficient in their work that one of the features of an invitation performance was an exhibition of their accomplishments in this line, the curtain being rung up for the purpose during an intermission.

Throughout there is a spirit of co-operation. Consideration of self must give way in making for a common ideal. The hero of one play is expected to take a subordinate part in the next, if occasion demands it.

It has been questioned whether the wearing of fine clothes necessitated by some parts might not make poor children discontented with their own, but this has been answered in the negative. It is claimed, moreover, that having to care for their stage costumes teaches the children to care for their own clothing. It is said, also, that new standards of taste in dress result. Miss Herts tells of a case where a number of little girls were to wear simple white dresses. Some of the parents of these children wished to dress them in their own cheap finery, but this was not allowed. So pleasing, however, was the effect of the costumes on the night of the performance, that later came requests to borrow these same dresses that the children might have their pictures taken in them.

The children learn, too, that some clothes are suitable for certain occasions only, and for certain situations in life. Wealth and rank tend to assume their proper proportions. It is the kind heart and feeling that is appreciated in the little prince, the little pauper, and in little Lord Fauntleroy under the change of circumstances which they experience.

The dressing-room is in charge of a little wardrobe mistress who rules her small domain with a firm hand, requiring method and order in all that comes under her supervision. When one sees this alert, bright-eyed little business woman, it is difficult to realize that when she cameto the Children's Theatre she was, to quote one of the management, one of the "most wizzened little creatures that ever was."

To further illustrate what the Children's Theatre has done for this same child when, a little ago some one of her family was seized with a severe illness, and other members of the household proved unequal to the emergency, this little girl showed such cool-headedness and capability that the physician in charge asked "What training has she had, to what is all this due?"

This is but one instance of many in which the training of

the Children's Theatre would seem to give self-reliance and poise—better fitting young people for life. Visitors to the theatre have been much impressed by the ease and grace of its young performers, and especially by their flexible English. Mrs. Burnett noticed it when she saw their presentation of "The Little Princess;" and Mark Twain, who has taken an active interest in the progress of the Children's Theatre, commented upon it. He is reported to have said "And now it seems that we Americans may learn to speak the English language from the East Side, nearly all of whose citizens came to this country unable to speak the tongue of which they so soon became master."

The Jews are said to be a polite people and all these children are Jews, but surely the noticeably good manners in some cases may be traced to the influence of the Children's Theatre. There is no other conclusion to be drawn when, for example, a small boy stands because Miss Herts is not seated and on having this commented upon, explains that in the play of Little Lord Fauntleroy he "noticed that the Earl of Dorincourt did." Changes of this nature, however, which impress outsiders, important though they are, seem less remarkable than those wrought upon character, to members of the management who have been witnesses of the process of transformation. To see shoulders straighten, erect carriage take the place of crooked shoulders and shambling gait; to see faces brightened by hopes, aspirations and interests hitherto undreamed of, is, it is claimed, to behold the work of the Children's Theatre. The transformations that some of the young girls have undergone were well illustrated when "Hop o' My Thumb" was put upon the boards there last season. For the parts of laundry girls, modulated voices, dignified carriage and the quiet manner that had been acquired were to be discarded; strident tones, loud laughter, tilted and protruding chins, hip and elbow movements were to be assumed. The girls were to copy, in short, something very like what for each one was near and personal history. For this very reason, it was with no small amount of apprehension on the part of the management that the play had been selected. Fear was entertained also as to the manner in which some scenes would be received by audiences, such, for example, as the one between Amanda and the hero of the drama. Instead, however, of a cheap interpretation of this young girl's attitude toward an ordinary trifler, the pathos of the situation seemed to be entered into and appreciated.

It has been asked whether the training of this theatre would turn young people to the professional stage. It does not aim to do this. Rather it gives an outlet to the adolescent desire

for dramatic expression, frequently disillusionizing the young aspirants for professional stage life, and without withdrawing them from their vocations, fitting them for better citizens. It is said that not more than one out of a hundred of them have real dramatic talent. Stress is laid upon hard work and careful study in the preparation of a play, to such an extent as might rob the stage of its attractiveness as an occupation for some young people who might otherwise have thought only of its glamour. This past year when Miss Herts's secretary, a young girl who had made a great success as heroine of one of the plays, was urged by managers to become a professional actress but she refused their offers and returned quickly to her typewriting.

It has also been asked what the effect might be of bringing young people of opposite sexes together at this exceedingly impressible age for rehearsals and dramatic situations involved, but according to the management there have been no bad results from this.

The theatre has been run to some extent on professional lines and a certain amount of business training has been an incidental result. One of the boys has charge of the box office, and when hundreds of children are to be turned away—for there is never room for crowds that would see the play—must remain invincible to any plea of there being room, simply, for "just one more." An orchestra of boy musicians furnishes music between the acts, doing this in return for the instruction in music which they receive. The theatre, though run as far as possible on business principles, and, as has been said, to crowded houses, is nevertheless far from self-supporting. When one learns that the admission price is $.10 this seems not surprising. Tickets at first were $.05, and when afterwards the price was doubled, no difference in attendance could be noticed. The expenses, which far exceed receipts, have been borne so far by the Educational Alliance, and now when the theatre is to enter upon an existence of its own, this organization will still lend its help (this coming year at least) by having a series of plays presented in its auditorium for which a fixed sum will be paid.

Visitors to the theatre have been much impressed by the ease and grace of its young performers. This little theatre, which has done so much to brighten the lives of hundreds of children and young people of its locality, after a successful record of achievement covering the five years of its existence, is now about to enter upon a new and wider phase of activity. Up to the present time, after the manner of social settlements, it has reached a particular neighborhood, utilizing the dramatic instinct, but with even more system and regularity. It has

changed its locality and proposes to enlarge the scope of its work. A new feature has been added in that it proposes to demonstrate its methods by giving performances occasionally in other cities under the auspices of various associations interested in social education and advancement. It is too soon to prophesy what will be the actual results of this change of policy. It has now become a regular incorporated institution under the name of "The Children and Young People's Educational Theatre," with the following board of directors: Samuel L. Clemens, Percy Stickney Grant, Alice Minnie Herts, Robert J. Collier, and with President G. Stanley Hall as one of the advisory committee. The theatre remains under the same management: Miss Minnie Herts, director, Mrs. Emma Sheridan Fry, dramatic director, Mr. Jacob Heniger, stage director.[1]

Art Theatres. This past year has seen the beginning of the realization of a project dear to the hearts of art lovers and public-minded citizens who would see the stage raised to what they consider its rightful dignity as an acknowledged educational force. For more than a decade the establishment of art theatres in our country as well as in England has been much under discussion, sides being taken as to the salutary effects which might result not only in the matter of elevating public taste and morals, but in helping also towards the establishment of a national drama.

About six years ago a tentative movement started in New York, men and women of the literary and theatrical world being interested in it. Mr. Heinrich Conried was prominent among them, and two years later, after he had become manager of the Metropolitan Opera Company, a number of the stockholders of that organization subscribed a large sum towards realiziug the undertaking. Nothing definite came of this for a time, but an interval of two years having elapsed, plans for the theatre were again taken up and after these had undergone considerable change the "New Theatre Organizations" became a reality. Some of New York's wealthiest and best known citizens are back of the enterprise, headed by Mr. Charles T. Barney. Operations for the practical carrying out of plans on a large scale are already on the road to completion. The theatre is on Central Park West and is to have in connection with it a large library and training school.

[1] Other children's theatres have been started in this country within the past decade: That by the Carnegie Lyceum in 1900, ran for a number of seasons, while a children's theatre in Boston ran for six months. Mr. Alexander H. Ford, in an article entitled "New England's Stage Children," mentions a children's theatre of Burlington, Vermont, which had a brief career and "others of our great country." None of them have ever become permanent institutions and they have differed in character and purpose from the one just described.

Not only classic plays but those of modern writers are to be given, translations as well as works of English and American authors finding place in its repertory.

The movement which has resulted in the starting this year of a Boston art-theatre, like that for the New York theatre, dates back several years and owes its inception to the time when three years ago a few of Boston's prominent and public-spirited men leased the Castle Square Theatre and in order to get experience in the practical running of a theatre before launching their enterprise operated it on business principles, Mr. Forens S. Deland acting as manager. The ordinary run of plays was given, except for a time when after the Twentieth Century Club of Boston had hired the theatre of its lessees for a series of Shakespearean plays at reduced prices, the work which this club had started was continued for a time, tickets being sold at reduced prices for the benefit of public school children. The new theatre is to be located on Boston's Back Bay.[1]

Conclusions. Although no positive conclusions can be drawn from a preliminary study, the following points may be indicated.

It will be conceded, perhaps, that the dramatic instinct normally present in children, is seeking gratification by theatre-going to an extent which makes it a matter for serious consideration on the part of educators.

While observation, investigations, and study show the prevalence of the theatre going habit, it has not yet been connected to any extent with backwardness or poor work of school children. Some correlation, however, between the frequenting of cheap shows and juvenile criminality, is suggested.

That much worthless material is offered theatre-goers is a fact few people will deny, plays which would come under the head of those that are uplifting or educational forming but a small proportion as compared with those of cheap sentimentality and of low cultural order besides those being distinctly immoral. Nevertheless a tendency toward improvement in certain classes of entertainment offered to the public has been noticed within the past few years, notably in the cleaner character of vaudeville shows and the marked change in moving picture exhibits.

Education seems to be slowly awakening to the importance of the question, not only recognizing its responsibility in theatre-goers of the future but realizing that the child's demand for emotional experience will seek satisfaction in what is harmful if unprovided with proper means for gratifying it.

Psychologists here and abroad recognize the fact that the

[1] The subject of establishing a National Art-theatre in London, as a Shakespearean memorial, in 1916, is now under discussion.

theatre is performing a certain function even under present conditions in merely affording the child an outlet for emotional discharge.

Pedagogues are coming to understand more fully what an opportunity is presented for turning to account educationally the dramatic impulse and training it to the better development of the child's heart and mind.

Need of co-operation of school and theatre is shown in the comments and opinions of children brought out either by essays or examinations on what they have seen and enjoyed at the theatre—these affording evidence as to what conclusions and view points are to be expected when the taste of children is left unguided and their minds unprepared by intellectual and moral training for interpreting aright.

Efforts along old lines to improve conditions governing the status of drama and the theatre, have resulted this past year in the definite organization of two art-theatres, one in New York, the other in Boston.

Other constructive educational efforts of recent years may be noticed which are more in the nature of departures.

Dramatic work has been introduced into primary schools, and an increase in the amount and in some cases a change in the character of dramatic work in schools and colleges has been effected.

The Peoples Institute, the social settlement, dramatic clubs, and the Childrens Theatre illustrate other efforts in the line of definite constructive work, and point the way to similar experiments, or perhaps applications of the principle along different lines.

The German movement which is in closer connection with the school system than is anything of the kind in this country, seems to suggest further possibilities along this line of making dramatic art a moral and intellectual inspiration in the education of the child.

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