

WHAT MAKES AN ACTRESS

A DIRECTOR OF DRAMATIC ARTS
GIVES THE REQUIREMENTS.Acting Does not Come Naturally—It Must
be Taught—Society Women Not a Success
Upon the Stage—Some of the Re-
quisites of the Dramatic Profession.

ACTING is an art which must be learned by hard study both on and off the stage. It requires much and varied preparation. Of course natural gifts are a power in themselves, but it requires

experience to ripen them, and it is only by study that even the simplest effects can be properly reached.

To be natural on the stage is not a matter of casual mood, but of a trained habit.

A young woman may be exceptionally well gifted. She may be pretty, have a good facial expression, a fine speaking voice, a commanding stature and have the necessary physical conditions, and yet be unable to portray the emotions of the human mind in such a manner as to be entertaining and intelligible to others.

Let anyone go upon the stage before an audience and say the same things and act the same deeds which ordinarily occur in every-day life, and he will appear wholly stupid and uninteresting. It will be no more entertaining to an onlooker than is any commonplace visit into any ordinary family, such as occurs every day. No one is particularly interested or entertained.

People must be taught how they should act, move, walk, speak and sing, if they are to do these things as perfectly as to please others.

Long ago, nature might have been so lavish with her children that each man and woman said and did exactly the right thing at the right time, and with exactly the right expression. But all that has passed away. We are taught in etiquette books and in society to conceal our emotions. A lady-like monotone with smooth and even accent and a voice that never rises or falls beyond a certain pitch, are things ordinarily to be cultivated. Never, in ordinary parlor conversation must the face express extreme emotion. Passion, rage, anger, disgust, contempt, pleasure and surprise, must all be veiled beneath an outward mask of serenity. The woman of breeding will never show by the lifting of an eyelid that she thinks a person is bad tempered, unkind or even cruel. At all times a beautiful calm overpreads her features; she walks slowly, speaks deliberately, and whatever effect she may wish to produce she does entirely by means of little ways and actions that are pretty, rather than effective. In a parlor this may be quite agreeable, but upon the stage the effect is lost and the woman would appear inane and lifeless.

In examining candidates for our school of acting, I frequently have young women come to me and mention the fact, as a point in their favor, that they are never nervous when appearing before the public. They say that they are always calm, cool, collected and unimpressible. When I satisfy myself that this is really the case, and that a young woman cannot be nervous, I at once make up my mind that she is wholly unsuitable for the stage. A successful actress must be highly nervous, she must be scared when she goes behind the footlights, her heart must beat faster as she sees the audience. There must be a state of nervous tremor and she must feel in sympathy with the audience, or she will be wholly unsuccessful in catching their at-

SUPPOSE THAT OPPOSITE YOU STANDS
YOUR LOVER.

tention and holding their interest throughout the part.

One of our first tests in examining candidates is to put them upon the stage and after picturing a dramatic scene and locating the characters, ask them to say certain lines. I say to a young woman, "Suppose that opposite you stands your lover, between you and him is your father, who objects to your attachment for your lover and seeks to estrange you. A woman who is the heavy villain of the play stands in the background, scowling and lowering upon you. Your lover says: 'I was wrong. Forgive—forgive.' How would you reply and where would you locate these characters?"

Now, a young woman with the true dramatic instinct will locate all these characters, put them in their right positions upon the stage, and, keeping each one in her own mind, will say her lines so vividly that you can see in your mind's eye each and every character. She may not, being untaught, say the lines with proper inflection, but you can plainly see that she realizes how many people are upon the stage, where they are, and to whom she should look when making an appeal.

Another girl, with a good voice, and apparently the same dramatic properties as the other, will have a vague look in her eyes, and will say the lines looking here and there and yet nowhere in particular, thus robbing them of all interest.

What kind of a girl do we like best to train for an actress?

Well! It is hard to tell exactly, because the subtle element enters into the composition so largely, that given all the qualities which I am about to enumerate, a young woman might yet come to us and be refused a mission. We first consider her nationality. The French and Irish are the best, as they are the most adaptable, and susceptible. The Germans are next, it we except Americans, who, being a mixture of all nationalities, are brightest of all. There are roles upon the variety stage which make Americans invaluable, and their ready wit makes them quick to learn a part and notice those points which upon a first night take best with an audience. The English, especially English men, are good in society plays.

Among the Americans the down-easters are the hardest to train. They are brainy and smart, and have a natural business faculty, but they do not do well in roles of sentiment. It is the southern girl, with her sensitive temperament, emotional nature and dreamy eyes who can move her audience and carry her hearers with her through all the varying lights and shades of domestic life inwrought with unhappiness and tragedy.

As to height, it is a great disadvantage to be short, because however artistic one may become in adding an assumed height to one's own stature, the actor can never quite overcome the defect with which nature has handicapped him. If an actress, she will always find that it is difficult for her to play stately or commanding parts.

Vocal quality, vocal expression and pantomimic action must all be taken in account in examining the qualifications of aspirants. Some people have naturally a good voice, a good walk and an expressive face. Others have to acquire these. The former are fortunate, while the latter are not, but these things are wholly aside from the dramatic instinct. Without this last an actress



"IT IS NOT SO."

is never a success, beautifully gifted though she may be. But give her this instinct and she is a success from the beginning, because she had that which cannot be acquired and to which all other things are subservient.

Ordinarily, with people who lack training or stage experience, expression is conveyed by the face. At best, the hands are brought into use, but rarely is the rest of the body called upon to perform any office other than that of a vehicle to hold the head and arms. Now this is entirely wrong. The body must talk, and one should be able to show by the movements of the body whether one is pleased or unhappy, and whether one is agreeing with the speaker or disagreeing.

Take the simple sentence, "It is not so." Think of how many ways there are of saying that without uttering a sound. Let us leave out all except the one sequence that comes with emphasis. To begin with, suppose you wish to say simply and as quietly as possible, "It is not so." Without speaking a word, a closing of the eyelids and a slight drooping of the mouth expresses this sentence. We repeat the thought more emphatically. This time the eyes are closed, the mouth droops, the nose contracts slightly, very slightly, and the head is turned a little to one side. There is a slight closing of the hand.

Again, "It is not so." The right hand sweeps across the body with a negative gesture toward the right, the back of the hand is uppermost and the head moves toward the left with a negative turn that is almost a shake. Once more, "It is not so." And now the whole body moves. The hips, shoulders and head seem to be turning violently away as if in utter abhorrence of the idea, while the hand sweeps away as if it were brushing all thought of the object from the mind.

But one more way remains, without actual speech, and that is, to rise with all these negative gestures, to rush from the room with the long stride that indicates grief, disgust, denial and despair.

A young woman or young man wishing to judge of eligibility to a school for acting cannot be his own critic as to points of expression. The only thing that can be self determined is a natural fondness for the work, and the knowledge that one has the ordinary requisites for the stage, to wit: a fair education, sensitive temperament and no serious physical defect. As to age, we prefer scholars from 23 to 30. For special rolls (character parts) they are eligible beyond those years.

An actor should possess many accomplishments. He should be able to sing, dance and fence, have an eye for color and form, as in costuming, an ear for every shade of dialect, much business faculty, and a mind well stored by observation, study and experience. The larger the knowledge of other arts, the better.

Dramatic training first strengthens and tunes the actor's instruments—the body and the voice. It educates the mind to a fuller realization of the power and qualities of action, diction and stage effect than the experience of real life afford. Careful training helps and develops not only the technique of the stage and dramatic effect, but also the very spirit of the different parts in the play.

FRANKLIN H. SARGENT.

FASHIONS IN MIDSUMMER

THIS IS A SEASON WHEN ALL WOMEN
LOOK INTERESTING.They Wear Shot Silks and Flower Brocades
and Blossom-Covered Hats and Hip
Flounces and Paniers—Costumes on the
Tennis Field.

I like to go about this summer because people look so interesting. That is a very different thing, as you know, from saying they look beautiful. In fact, they don't look beautiful, because hip flounces and mud ruffles are not commonly becoming; but the flower brocades and the shot silks and the blossom-covered hats and the paniers and the parasols are certainly interesting.

The frock the artist has sketched for you



MIDSUMMER MILLINERY.

was worn by a woman with eyes like a Jersey calf's; that is to say, handsome than the average run of eyes. Its fabric was a shot silk in dull yellow, with a hint of green. Larch twigs with small brown cones were printed upon it, but the feature of the dress was its lavish use of velvet ribbon to trim the bodice; the ribbons were wide, and they were of a deep brown; they crossed upon the back, coming over the shoulders and under the arms, and joining company between the shoulder blades in a great bow. There was more velvet at the waist, and it, too, tied behind, matching the upper knots and ends. This flowered dress opened behind over an under dress of brown muslin, laid in fine plaitings. It was worn with wrinkled muslin sleeves and with a brown muslin hat trimmed with larch twigs, brown velvet and yellow leathers.

It makes one feel as if midsummer were really approaching to see what an amount there is of maize yellow. It flaunts everywhere in flowers and in ribbons. I noted it, even in the excitement of a finish upon a large lot of horsehair lace. The hat was white but its ribbons were of corn yellow and very wide; they were edged with gold embroidery.

I noted it again in a dress of soft maize-colored muslin, made up over a foundation of silk of the same tone. The muslin had pale yellow and deep crimson nasturtiums printed upon it, their flaming hues toned down by their round shield-like leaves. The hem was tucked, and between the tucks ran rows of yellow moire ribbon, of lighter tint than the gown. The front of the corsage had a broad flounce of the pale coffee-yellow lace, that is the latest lace out, and is called Marie-Amelie; this was shirred over fine plaitings of yellow muslin, and



A TENNIS DRESS.

drooped almost to the narrow watered ribbons that gathered the front and tied in small bows, and imitation of a peasant bodice, in the middle of the corsage. The wearer of this muslin wore also a deep, corn-yellow straw hat, turned up behind with corn-yellow feathers. A twisted garland of nasturtiums was set about the crown, and hid itself from the eury rays under a parasol of corn-yellow muslin, shirred and edged with a flounce of the coffee colored lace and rejoicing in a handle of gold and enamel.

This morning I have been watching the tennis players; not for the tennis, for the practice games are not thrilling, but for the joy of the light young figures and the pretty faces and the gay colors and fluttering ribbons. Some of the girls wore flowered cambrics cut on the cross and literally folded about the figure over a deep yoke of lace. Others wore bodices gathered from neck to waist with the flimsy fabric frilling out around the hips, and with wide ribbons fastened under each arm to cross in front and at the back, and to lie in a big bow with long ends that fluttered in the breeze and were tremendously in the way.

One slim brown girl wore pink holland,

laid in narrow plaits from waist to feet, and having a soft, unstarched holland shirt with pink and white striped frills.

The young woman whose attire is sketched for your criticism wore white serge with a bodice folded in Japanese fashion and trimmed with inch wide black velvet ribbon. Her cap was of the same serge with an eagle feather and ribbon velvet trimmings.

The best player, and the girl who on the whole looked most comfortable in her clothes, wore yellow pongee. Her blouse was cut in sailor fashion and the skirt was plain and trimmed with a band of striped blue and yellow foulard.

Some of the new dress bonnets are brilliant with gold thistles, rearing their prickly heads amid clouds of tulle or spangled



DULL YELLOW WITH A HINT OF GREEN.

gauze. For garden parties, little caplike bonnets are worn well back upon the head with, when the state of the atmosphere permits, a fluffy mass of front hair. Snow-white spirea trimmed a pretty example noticed yesterday. Wild honeysuckle with pale green leaves was the adornment of another. A blond woman wore a twist of brown velvet about her yellow hair with a sprig or two of heliotrope for garniture.

The hats shown in the illustration are quiet but attractive bits of summer headgear. One is in lace straw, with bows of chiffon and wings, another in hedgehog straw, trimmed with rosebuds; bonnets in black and gold lace are among the most popular things of the season. Gold osprey aigrettes decorate them.

The summer colors are bright and varied. From my window I have but to look out to see mauve, pale tan, blue and rose color go by. Mignonette, raspberry, red, silver blue, Argentine gray, peach color shot with gold, amber brown and daffodil yellow; foulards printed with cactus blossoms and pomegranates muslins tinted with blush rose, golden, willow, gray and gold and magnolia white; Spanish looking dresses of yellow organdie, scattered all over with brilliant blossoms, and frocks of the soft eury of undyed linen present themselves every hour to catch my eye.

ELLEN OSBORN.

An Elephant Duel.

About 700 or 800 yards below the crowd watching the fight were two tuskers. The one somewhat nearer us, a burly, stout built beast, with short, powerful tusks, was evidently getting much the worst of the combat, and the turrows in his sides and rear plainly indicated seams run by his antagonist's tusks. On the rise of the hill was his rival, a still larger animal, possessing the advantage of gleaming tusks. It was a lost fight, and in a few minutes the victor, with a quick rush at the other, made a good thrust at thrust at the side, and, though there was a severe struggle, the tusk went in its full length. The wounded tusker's roar of pain and rage was pitiful to hear, and though he would have escaped if he could, the other kept close behind and administered thrust after thrust, but not in any vital part. Presently, wheeling around, they came together with a mighty smash. This was about the only stand made, and the weaker was quickly overpowered by the more powerful and fresher victor. The thrusters, now put behind the shoulder and into the body, quickly disabled the poor brute, and in a few minutes the great beast rolled over, dead.

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