WINTER COATS

TRAGEDY ON THE MINIC STAGE

An Amateur Actor bact by Mis Isrother in a Play in a Country School House. Makanda, a little town on the Illinois Central railroad, a few miles south of Carbendale, Ill., was the scene of a painful accident, not unlike that which occurred in Cincinnati. Several of the young mer of the place, in casting about for some-thing to amuse themselves with during the winter, hit upon a dramatic organiza tion. A meeting was held and outside aid enlisted. One of the boys was selected to write the play, and the village school house was engaged for the rehearsals and for the final exhibition as well. The youth whose duty it was to produce the play had been a close reader of the fiery fiction of the day, and the result of his labors was a play in which the num-ber of people massacred in cold blood was limited only by the strength of the company cast for its presentation. The boys studied their parts diligently and rehearsed with great frequency, taking much pleasure in their labors.

The play was presented to the public for the first time in the school house on Saturday evening. There was quite a large gathering of rustic youths and maidens, with a few adults. The performance went along smoothly enough for a time.

In the third act, one highly virtuous young
man is made to fall a victim to the murderous passion of a desperado. John Perk assumed the character first mentioned, and his brother James personated the other. The conflict between the two was very desperate, and as wickedness exhibited signs of triumphing over virtue, the howls of the audience became long and deep. While the excitement was at its height, James Perl drew one of the big revolvers which ornamented his person, and fired at his brother John, who, as laid down in the play, was to expire im-mediately. Both boys knew that the revolver was loaded with ball cartridges. and before the performance John had called James' attention to it. James had promised to remove the balls, but forgot to do so. He fired point blank at his brother, who fell with a bullet in his head. For an instance it was supposed that it was all in the play, but James Perl recollected, when too late, that he had not withdrawn the bullets, and he knew that his brother was wounded.

When the truth became known the scene was a very sorrowful one. A physician was summoned, who soon ascer tained that the ball had entered the head just back of the left ear, and ranged upwards into the brain. The wounded boy was borne behind the improvised curtain, but he remained unconscious until he died, three hours later. An inquest was held yesterday, the jury bringing in a ver-dict of accidental death, and exonerating James Perl from blame. James was 15 years old and John 18.

BAY CITY, Mich., Feb. 3, 1880.

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