

AMATEUR ACTING.

It Is Becoming a Popular "Fad" in Society Circles.

SOME POINTS FOR BEGINNERS.

Calumny Lights and Curtains—Don't Turn Your Back to the Spectators—Lots of Fun and Considerable Hard Work—The Elaborate Efforts of the Big City Associations.

Notwithstanding the fact that the wit of the paragraphs and the mores (perhaps hidden, but none the less) of the professional are often turned against amateur actors and acting, the fact remains that amateurs really do good work sometimes on their improvised stages. That they often do bad work is not to be wondered at, for few of these have any training worth mentioning, and fewer still sleep at night long enough to benefit by an extensive experience.

Another argument in favor of the amateurs is that there is more fun in the square feet in most of their rehearsals and performances than there is in any other amusement they could find. What could be more conducive to hilarity, for instance, than the efforts of the "leading man" (who is generally very funny) as he turns around and keeps falling over his feet during the first rehearsal. The "leading lady," too, invariably has trouble with her train (what a bothersome mass of silk it is, to be sure) for the first four or five times. The "pretty housemaid" can't help looking downward every minute or so to be sure that her dress quills reach the tops of her shoes. But the funniest of all is the comedian. That is, he is funny in those parts where the audience is to be. Nothing could equal the delectableness of his appearance at other times.

When at last the rehearsals are ended and the eventful night is at hand, the fun waxes fast and furious. Not that the participants think it is fun then—oh, no, it's a very serious matter then—but when a week, or a month, or a year has passed, they look back upon the night with a kind of pleasurable retrospection which they feel in regard to nothing else.

The stage manager is a very important personage among amateurs as well as among professionals, and it is said by his credit, he seldom fails to appreciate his own position.

If he has a little ingenuity he can add considerably to the merit of the performance. He can make a substitute for the calcium or lime light of the "real stage" by putting a bright reflection behind an ordinary kerosene lamp, and passing before it slides of different colors. Little wooden frames, on which tissue paper of the required tint is pasted, form a very effective substitute for the more expensive material used on the "real stage." By using such a contrivance judiciously, the attractiveness of tableaux and the like is greatly increased.

This light should always be placed in the "cove" at one side of the stage, and the performer, for, if it is located in the rear of the audience, stupendous shadows of the individual heads belonging to said audience are apt to be cast upon the stage and players. Such a circumstance is a most depressing effect. In moonlight scenes a dark blue slide is used. Avoid green slides. They make the people illuminated look like re-venanted ghosts. "Spotlights" should always be well screened. From the point of view of the audience, and some sort of a guard should be provided to keep the dresses of the female performers from touching the flame, should they be in a moment of forgetfulness, or a frenzy of genius venture too near the front of the stage.

A rolling curtain is apt to get stuck half way up or down and leave your admirer in a state of ecstatic contemplation of a row of headless skirts and legs. This is unpleasant, and can be prevented by having hanging curtains—the division in the exact center of the exact center of the exact center.

Do not slide them, but fix a pulley at the upper corners of the stage opening, and run a cord gracefully, and about midway between floor and ceiling on the edge of a each curtain.

Do not pull the curtain will rise upward and outward and attach to the lower corner of each curtain will draw the swinging ends out of sight in a jiffy.

It is a good rule (although by no means a rigid one) to avoid turning one's back toward the audience. Profoundly seldom do it, sometimes straining a point in order to avoid it.

There are a thousand and one little points to remember if one wants to have the performance go off smoothly, but one careful reading of any of the many "guides" and books that have been written on the subject will generally fix these in the mind.

In the big city amateur acting has become very much of a "fad" in society, and performances are occasionally given before select audiences by the amateurs, with stage fittings and costumes rivaling in perfection those of the professionals. Philadelphia has her Wheatley Dramatic Association (now turned into a purely social organization, from which many first class histrions have graduated). Its performances are artistic and popular.

In New York the amateurs have a home of their own—the Berkley Lyceum—as cozy and completely fitted a little theatre as one would wish to see. Some of the performances in it are worthy of the highest praise. Not long ago the New York Herald published a page article on the amateur actors and actresses of the metropolis, with portraits, and from it the pictures accompanying this are reproduced.

SAMPSON AND SANDOW.

They Are Called the Strongest Men on Earth.

The mighty giant has fallen. Sampson, once the strongest man on earth, has been forced to leave his home to Eugene Sandow, the young Pomeranian Hercules. It happened this way. For some time past Sampson and his pupil Cyclops had been giving nightly exhibitions through the metropolis of their strength in London. Sampson of

ferred £100 to any one who could equal Cyclops' feats, and this was really won, Oct. 25, by a young athlete named Eugene Sandow, of Kensington, Pomerania. After the defeat of Cyclops, Sampson offered

him as a representative, as one of the leaders of his party in the house, and as the friend and champion of many worthy interests and measures. For several years he devoted to the betterment of the country an amount of labor equal to all that performed by the average congressman, and now the grateful letter carriers are to build him a monument.

Of his habits of work Mrs. Cox said a day or two ago:

"When I came to look over Mr. Cox's desk, I found no unfinished business. Everything he devoted to the day of his death, excepting three letters which he had promised to write for friends who were seeking places in the New York city government. For these three letters I had addressed the envelopes, as I was in the habit of doing for all his correspondence, but he was too sick to write the inclosures."

Mrs. Cox added:

"Few people know what a hard worker Mr. Cox was, and how much he was able to accomplish. I once asked him to sit down and make me a memorandum of the important legislation in which he had borne a part, simply by way of record of his life work. He replied: 'No, I cannot do that. The present is too lively and the future too tremendous to bother with the past.'"

Secretary Blaine was one of the guests at the dedication of the new Catholic university in the outskirts of the city. Among the newspaper correspondents present was a young woman society reporter who has not been long in the business, though she is as bright as a new silver dollar. Fearing that she might not be able to get anything to eat till her return home at night, she put up in a very small and very neat parcel a slice of bread and meat, with one piece of cheese and two pickles for relishes. To her surprise and delight she was invited to the dinner given the notable guests, and charged to occupy a seat directly opposite Secretary Blaine. But what to do with that luncheon! The absurdity of carrying a bread and meat lunch to a banquet so impressed the young woman that she laughed immoderately, and finally, becoming desperate, she tossed the now obnoxious parcel under the table at her feet. As the dinner was concluded and the guests were rising, the secretary of state happened round to the young woman's side. Smilingly he held out to her a fragment of her own bread and meat and pickle, saying, with a mischievous twinkle in his eye:

"Better put this in your pocket to eat on the way home if you get hungry. I have tried the bread, and it is very, very good. Who made it?"

WALTER WELLMAN.

PARLOR ENTERTAINMENTS.

HERE IS A GOOD ONE CALLED "THE OLD MAIDS FROM ALASKA."

It Was Given in a Big City and It Netted the Projector Some \$300 for a Charitable Cause. It Can Be Replaced Anywhere and on a Smaller or Larger Scale.

HE entertainment here first described was arranged and carried out successfully, in aid of a charity, by a young girl not 19, at which she netted nearly \$300, and all her performers were children with two exceptions. There was a little miscellaneous music, violin, whistling, etc., preceding a very clever sketch, which she wrote herself, calling it "The Old Maids from Alaska." During the performance the young children, dressed as old maids, went through an umbrella drill, and each recited, danced, sang or did something in a specialty way, one making a speech in deaf and dumb alphabet.

This idea could be carried out anywhere. The head one is the chief of the society of these old maids, and she has a long roll of paper which she reads off, which can be made to contain many local hits. This serves to introduce each one in her specialty, while appearing to tell why they have all decided to forever marry matrimony. Their dress is black paper caubric, with white Bishop sleeves, and they wear black Bishop caps. It requires a chair and an umbrella for each. There can be dental drill also added to this, and any other taking business, and it was a genuine success. Dumb bell drills and broomstick drills, as well as Mrs. Jarley's waxworks, "singing skewers" and spelling bees all afford a good quota of entertainment; but they are not very novel, and should be judiciously mixed with other things. A doll's parade is a very queer affair, and requires children of about 10 to 12, and they are to move about as if worked with springs and wooden joints.

There are two or three operettas which give a chance to bring in perhaps a hundred children in marches and ballets, and these are long enough to occupy an entire evening, but cannot well be undertaken except in places like Newport or Saratoga in the summer, or some very large house in the city in winter, or in school entertainments.

A very pretty and almost impromptu entertainment can be gotten up—always

only show the perfect movements—not the cause; a pair of scissors, cardboard, pins and sticks are all these need.

After this little exhibition is over, a very pretty and effective tableau is shown. How, leaning upon a post of board anchor, in a classic costume made of two sheets and a white wig. Then some more music, after which a song can be sung if there happens to be a singer there. In the meantime, behind the scenes, preparations can be going on for charades. For these the ordinary "properties" of household use can be utilized.

For the charades the thoroughbred of the different racing organizations have surpassed those of former years. Some of the performances of the many brilliant equine stars have been, to say the least, sensational and extraordinary. The New York Sun, of a recent date, gave an exhaustive recapitulation of the season, of which the following is the gist:

The sum of money hung up in stakes and purses last year amounted to between \$1,000,000 and \$1,500,000. This year's list amounted to fully \$2,000,000.

During 1889 four new associations were opened to the public in the vicinity of New York, the Westchester county racing club, \$1,000,000, and said to be the finest in the world, being one of them.

The winnings of some of the principal stables have been very large. As usual, the Dwyer Brothers, of Brooklyn, head the list with \$149,922.50. These young Irish-Americans have been very lucky since they entered the racing world in 1870. The public has ceased to expect anything but the best from the list in purses and stakes won.

The Dwyers had a greater number of horses in training than any of their competitors, and their year-old equine expectations, their winnings would have been over \$200,000; but the youngsters, with one or two exceptions, are deplorable failures so far, and the bulk of the money was earned by the three year olds and older division of the stable.

Of the 32 horses which they started in 305 races, and which help to make up the total amount of earnings, the following four are very conspicuous:

Horse	Started	Won	Amount
Longstreet	20	5	\$38,800
Kingston	12	14	22,827
Magnum	10	8	15,770
Inspector B.	9	7	10,310

Mr. August Belmont is a strong second on the list of winning owners of the Dwyers this year, and no follower of the year is more when it is said that Mr. Belmont deserves all the success his exertions realized. Unlike other prominent owners who made money this year, with the exception of Col. Scott, Mr. Belmont's year-old horses were the winners, his sons of St. Blaise and III used carrying everything before them in the early part of the season, such as Mr. Withers' youngsters did in the latter part of the month past meeting. St. Carlo, while the largest winner, being credited with \$28,133, was an unfortunate colt, inasmuch as he lost the \$60,000 Futurity stakes by a neck.

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Raceland proved that he is worthy of a place among the best horses of the year by winning the Suburban handicap and other classic events, which netted a total of \$25,000. Fides, Belinda, Prince Royal and others increased the fund until it reached the sum of \$125,000, which is a large amount yet won by the Nursery Stable on the turf.

A recapitulation shows that the stable started 23 horses in 162 races, was first in 36, second in 30, and third in 26.

Congressman W. L. Boy of Erie, has no reason to regret his return to the turf, as with a stable composed entirely of twelve 3-year-olds he won \$105,815, his chief broad winner being the chestnut colt Chase, who won the Futurity stakes at Coney Island, and the Coney Island handicap at Monmouth park, in addition to a sweepstakes at Coney Island in the spring. His total earnings amount to \$63,500, putting him far in the van of the 3-year-olds of the year.

Mr. Scott started 13 animals in 83 races, of which they won 12, were second in 5 and third in 10. His total winnings amount to \$10,815.

James B. Haggis, the copper king and millionaire banker, has had wonderful success for the few horses he had in training in 1889, his earnings netting \$106,833.

The main stay of his string were the pair of 3-year-olds, the colt Salvo and the 5-year-old mare Firenze. The former started eight times and won \$71,180, which is next to Hanover's \$99,000, the largest sum ever won in a single season by a yearling.

He is next to the list of the best of the season, and always carrying the top weight, and suffered defeat only once, that being in the Omnibus stakes at Coney Island, when the 3-year-old colt, Proctor Knott, headed him in one of the greatest races of the year.

Although Capt. Sam Brown was not often seen on any of the tracks, save when he had a race, he has had a very successful year, his total earnings amounting to \$111,000. With his 3-year-old Senorita, Reporter, Cortez, J. A. B., Budlight, Pat Morris, Galop, and several others, he has won \$100,000. His 3-year-old Senorita, Reporter, Cortez, J. A. B., Budlight, Pat Morris, Galop, and Blue Wing, he captured \$83,737.

The temporary retirement of Mr. Alexander J. Cassatt from the turf was a surprise to nearly everybody save Trainer John Huggins and a few of the turf's regular friends. He was fairly successful on the turf this year, capturing \$91,597, although he had but one stake horse, the tricky but speedy Eurus. Tarpon, Madison, Eric, and Now were his other stakes horses, but Eurus was able to hold his own with the best of them, and was next to the Bard, the best horse that ever bore the tricolor.

David T. Fisher, the famous sportsman, who has for many years been one of the most successful of the turf's regulars, would feel more grateful had the fates willed it that Hamilton could have ridden Tamy in the Beaulieu stakes.

This would have meant some victory and \$100,000 more added to Tamy's credit, but Mr. Fisher will try to struggle through the winter on \$47,337, contributed by Tamy, Brother Ben, Grimalkin, Panster, Jr., Coats and Sir Joseph. The erratic but phenomenal sportsman has had a very good year in his equine household, his earnings amounting to \$38,310, in six sixteen races.

Mr. Theodore Winters, of California, the owner of the phenomenal El Rio Rey, whom many regard as the best horse of the season, has ever appeared on the American turf, is a very comfortable winner, although his stable is a small one, numbering four in all.

His winnings amount to \$65,155.99, of which El Rio Rey won \$11,000, and the rest was made up by the other three horses. The contribution of the lion's share, his seven victories netting \$47,495. Senator Heart began the season with five a string of 25-year-olds on the turf, but all but one failed, and he failed to win more than \$32,682. Tournament won \$14,517, including the Great Eastern handicap at Sheepshead Bay.

The racing stable of Messrs. J. A. and A. H. Morris pockets \$67,132 as its share of purses, Cayuga and Civil Service were the best winners of the string.

William Lakeland of Brighton Beach, as usual, made money on the turf, his stable of seven winning \$44,421. Eagle, the winner of the Brooklyn handicap and other good races, heads the list with \$12,425 to his credit, but he is hard pressed by the Dwyer cast-off Tea Tray, whose earnings amount to \$11,000.

D. D. Withers did not do very well this year. He started 23 horses in 162 races, won 21, secured second in 35, third in 21. His earnings are \$44,498, of which King Ernest is the largest contributor.

Lucky Baldwin has been unfortunate, having both the Emperor of Norfolk and Volante on the retired list. His winnings are \$29,117, against \$108,000 of last year.

There have been individual horses which have been good winners of their owners, as for example Wamke & Son's Redera, who won \$29,715 in stakes. H. E. Campbell's Protection, which won the Junior Champion stake at Monmouth, was the best of the Montana stables, won \$25,439. McClelland & Co's Balgo won \$19,248. The number of thoroughbreds which raced this year is in the neighborhood of 3,000.

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