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E D U C A T I O N A L D R A M A T I C S I N E N G L A N D

I N T H E

S I X T E E N T H C E N T U R Y

by

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E D U C A T I O N A L D R A M A T I C S I N E N G L A N D

I N T H E

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PREFACE

"Educational Dramatics" is a term which has come into use comparatively recently, following upon the ever-increasing popularity of school and college theatricals. In its broadest sense it may be applied to any form of student theatricals, public or private, from the dialogue games and pantomimes used in Kindergartens to the vocational courses in Theatre arts offered to post-graduate students, and would cover such recreational activity as the undergraduate leisure-time play. In its strictest sense it should be confined to studies in the drama and tutorial experiments in the School Theatre, supervised by qualified instructors who aim primarily at liberal-culture objectives. Here recreational, commercial and vocational considerations are minimized if not entirely excluded.

To this strict sense of the term I have not always confined myself in the following study of "Educational Dramatics in the Sixteenth Century". It is doubtful, for instance, if the mature work of the most famous chorister companies, or the merry-making of the Law School students, which I have included, could be classified as "educational", since commer-

cial or recreational objectives seem to have predominated. On the other hand, the commercialization of the boy actors in Elizabeth's time was apparently fore-ordained because of the superior, and controlling position held by children in the stage world between 1550 and 1570. That is,- the semi-professional Blackfriars' boys inherit directly many of the traditions of the amateur schoolboy players. Again, the recreational aspect of much of the University and Law School theatricals should eliminate only their trivial work, for, whether or not the young actors and their dramatists and teachers realized it, they were often engaged in activity, the value of which to themselves and their audiences could be described only as educational.

However, if to complete the picture, I have introduced certain "unorthodox" features, these are subordinated. The two chapters entitled respectively "The Last Phase" (dealing with the Blackfriars Children) and "College Dramatists" contain, in outline, just sufficient material to provide a history that, I hope, is comprehensive without being unwieldy.

The purpose of this work is twofold. As one among many practitioners in educational dramatics, I wished to clarify my position by research into the very early history of the movement. I desired to discover aesthetic and educational precedents, examples good or bad, encouragement, direction, and stimulus,- curious to see wherein the academic Director

of the 20th century differs from the 16th century ludimagister. Hence a deal of space is devoted to outlining the development from early humanist paedagogy of the ideals of educational dramatics. This part of the work I have had to restrict more or less to the English field, but within its limits it is, I believe, sufficiently comprehensive. Moreover, so far as I can ascertain, it has never hitherto been attempted. The remainder of the Thesis is concerned with the dramatists who wrote for academic production. The intention here was, in the main, to trace the influence of educational dramatics upon the professional theatre of the late 16th and early 17th centuries. In this others have been before me. Still, a fair proportion of what I have to say is fresh and the sum total should help towards an understanding of the drama of the period.

If I convince others, as I have convinced myself, that the School Theatre can, and should, play an extremely important role in the development of a nation's culture, I shall, for the present at any rate, be satisfied.

.....

CHAPTER I.

THE ADVENT OF THE PROFESSIONAL THEATRE.

Some thirty years or so after the accession of Elizabeth to the throne of England, William Shakespeare, then a young man of perhaps twenty-six, left his home town to find, later, a new life in London. We may fairly surmise that he had felt within himself the urge for a literary career. It is possible that already his imagination and ambition had been directed towards the theatre by some experience with the touring troupes whose itineraries called for a one-night stand at Stratford-on-Avon. At any rate, in a few years the young man was prosperously settled in the London theatre and very busily engaged in acting, refurbishing old plots, and at times trying his hand at fashionable poetry and original plays,- indeed, an "absolute Johannes Factotum".

At once we are faced with that most provocative of literary puzzles. How was it that this new-comer, country-bred, and presumably but casually acquainted with the professional theatre, should so easily find immediate and lasting fame? Certainly the relative rapidity with which he mastered the accepted technique of his apprenticeship days and then forged ahead to perfect it, and still more certainly the astonishing productivity and skill of his pen which, so far as we know, had not hitherto been unusually exercised, all bespeak

intuition and articulate genius. But to solve the phenomenon of a strange and beautiful growth merely ^{by} postulating unusual virtue in the seed is to do injustice to the nurturing soil. Shakespeare is a rarely brilliant but not an isolated phenomenon. His age was prolific in genius. Indeed, in the retrospect of the years the fascinating story of his rise to eminence parallels that of the Elizabethan drama itself, - sudden, breath-taking, but still ordained.

When Shakespeare was born there was not a single theatre in London. A few unimportant and no doubt unsavoury companies of professionals toured with their moralities, near-moralities, and farces; mystery play and pageant were being given by guild players and amateurs commissioned by the rural councillors; in schools and colleges masters and pupils experimented with old, neo-Latin, or indigenous "vulgar" scripts; and once in a long while continental mountebanks afforded Londoners a glimpse of the tumbling and miming which was delighting the roadside public of France, Italy and Germany. In brief, the theatre was to all intents and purposes an undeveloped and amateur art. It was still in swaddling clothes.

During the next three decades it grew up. Three short decades, and it attained to honorable estate.

First of all, acting technique became expert as the professional companies grew in stability and reputation under the sometimes casual, sometimes active, patronage of

several play-loving peers of the realm. Then in May, 1574, to the annoyance of puritan authorities and zealous reactionaries, a royal patent was granted the struggling actor and his craft. "Knowe ye," proclaimed the Queen, "that we of oure especiall grace...do license and auctorise oure lovinge Subiectes, Iames Burbage, Iohn Perkyn, Iohn Lanham, William Iohnson, and Robert Wilson, seruantes to oure trustie and wilbeloued Cosen and Counseyllor the Earle of Leycester, to vse, exercise, and occupie the arte and facultie of playenge Comedies, Tragedies, Enterludes, stageplayes....as well for the recreation of oure lovinge subiectes as for oure solace and pleasure...within the Citie of London. Willynge and Commaundinge yowe and everie of yowe, as ye tender oure pleasure to permit and suffer them herein without anye yowre lettes, hynderaunces, or molestacion, anye acte, statute, proclamacion, or commaundment...to the contrarie notwithstandinge." (1)

Two years after the granting of this royal license, Burbage, mentioned therein, erected the Theatre, the first real home of the "arte and facultie" of acting in England. The Curtain soon followed, both theatres being outside the city limits to escape annoying civic restrictions. Both made money. Londoners, despite official frowns and

(1) Chambers: Elizabethan Stage, ii;87

clerical jeremiads, flocked to the shows. Returns were so gratifying that a third theatre, the Rose, was built about 1587.

Such was the physical growth of the theatre from the time when Shakespeare was born until he arrived in London. Its intellectual growth was almost as pronounced. A gradual perception and appreciation of form, combined with the introduction of classical, romantic, and realistic material, had lent sufficient stature to farce to warrant its being termed comedy. Melodrama, wearing loosely and flamboyantly the borrowed robes of Roman tragedy and experimenting with new prosody, was soon a popular vehicle for the swaggering actor who shared his audience's delight in sensational heroics and grandiose, far-ranging fancy. And the while Melodrama ranted on the stage, - in the tiring-room, quietly preparing for his coming entrance, waited Tragedy.

Thus had the professional theatre built itself a settled home. Thus its actors had raised themselves from vagabondage and were beginning to wax prosperous and sure-voiced. Thus had its plays become fairly intelligent and articulate, a medium lively, pliant, popular. Now, at the last, it gathered to itself, almost overnight, the man of letters. And when Thomas Kyd achieved a sensational success in 1587 with "The Spanish Tragedy", he proved both to doubtful manager and professional poet that the theatre needed and would substantially repay the lay author; and,

therefore, when Shakespeare, the "upstarte crow", entered on the scene shortly afterwards, George Peele, Thomas Lodge, Thomas Nashe, Robert Greene, and Christopher Marlowe - University poets all - had already been captured by the thriving art, while noble tragedy and agreeable romantic comedy were known and applauded by an audience which grew annually in numbers, enthusiasm, and intelligence. The theatre had come of age.

The germination and overnight efflorescence of the Elizabethan Theatre, as shown in this abbreviated sketch, should prove that national life and national habits in the amazing nineties of the sixteenth century were unusually propitious to warrant such a speedy growth. It should prove that the theatre had in some way become almost second nature to the Englishman. Consciously or unconsciously he had been storing a hoard of experience for just such a time. Somehow he had so patterned his taste and developed his imagination that creative activity, once started, turned delightedly, with instinctive deftness, to the medium of the stage. In the parlance of modern salesmanship, England was "theatre-conscious".

Why was this so?

In the succeeding pages we shall try to answer that question in terms of the educational dramatics in the 16th century,

CHAPTER II.

HUMANISM AND THE SCHOOL THEATRE

The theatre of the Middle Ages was a folk art, deep-rooted in man's mimetic instinct, his love of make-believe, spectacle, self-display. "The early Christian Fathers had attacked and destroyed the last vestiges of the ancient Theatre but they soon discovered that they could not destroy the innate theatricality of man. Modern drama was reborn in Christian ritual as inevitably as Greek drama flowered from the worship of Dionysus." (1) In this mediaeval theatre Biblical story, ecclesiastical history, Catholic ethics, and theological controversy were the dominant motifs, verse allegory the accepted form; but the taste of the audience gave these many a realistic touch, simple-hearted and charming.

The Elizabethan Drama was the culmination of this vigorous tradition which a century before had been given an entirely new direction and undreamed-of scope by uniting with the traditions of Italian humanism that dominated Tudor culture. And then, the pride and delight with which Englishmen discovered their genius for exploration and free-booting, and, in the stirring climax of 1588, their maritime invincibility, all this contributed to the more general

(1) Rosamond Gilder: Theatre Arts Monthly, Aug. 1937, 606

liberalizing forces of the Renaissance to fire every artist, warrior, and statesman, every commoner, merchant, and courtier in Elizabeth's great day.

Finally, there were the playwrights themselves.

The above summary is overly simplified. However, it should serve our purpose. It shows that it would be fatuous for me to try to explain away the Elizabethan drama in terms of the amateur and semi-professional theatricals in sixteenth century schools and colleges. Play production was only one feature, and a minor one, of the Tudor school system, and the Tudor school system was only one manifestation of English humanism, which, to complicate matters, derived directly from the Italian Renaissance and the German Reformation. Nevertheless, educational dramatics are a consideration,- a very important and curiously neglected consideration. If by a rather thorough-going analysis we can clarify it and bring it into the foreground, we may be nearer to a true understanding of the nature and development of the most exciting theatre the world has known.

To start with, we must try to answer this question: Why did the Tudor schools have school plays? For a moment we might think that the answer is obvious. The desire to adopt or feel vicariously a personality other than one's own is instinctive. That is clearly apparent in the imitative play of childhood. Thus, amateur theatricals in Tudor schools were as natural and inevitable as amateur

theatricals in Tudor towns. A great deal may be said for that answer. It is felicitous, but largely untrue. Theatricals may be natural and inevitable, but not to schools. Schools, unfortunately, are run by schoolmasters who are frequently quite unaware of or unconcerned with the psychological basis of the theatre. Were school plays common in Greece, in Rome, in Mediaeval times? Were they common in the 18th and 19th centuries?

No,- before the Tudor schoolmaster adopted drama and dramatics as his allies, he had to be convinced that they were educational and sufficiently decorous. By, roughly, the second quarter of the century he had become convinced. He had come to a number of new conclusions about education. These were explicit or latent in the canons of humanism that were being carried through Western Europe by returning students and the professors from the Italian universities, by northern emissaries and by learned ambassadors from the Italian courts. Somewhat belatedly these canons were listened to in England (Grocyn and Linacre were students of Poliziano), and John Colet, Dean of St. Paul's, accepting them as the tenets for his educational theory remodelled the old St. Paul's Grammar School and started selecting schoolmasters of sound humanist principles. His friend, William Lily, became first High Master of the school and in the course of events grandfather of John Lyly, first of the great Elizabethan dramatists. Colet and William

Lily may be said to have officially opened the era of humanist education and, incidentally, educational dramatics in England.

The first and supreme canon of humanism was virtually cataclysmic in its effects. It was sounded by the whole higher intelligence of Italy for upwards of a century and was still reverberating in the fulminations of Gabriel Harvey. Considerably modified it found its way into the French literature of the 17th century and was drowned out only by the noisier canons of the French revolution, foreshadowing the era of Romanticism. It is most succinctly stated in the epitaph of Boccaccio, "Studium fuit alma poesis."

This study of classic models was no mere scholarly exercise, no mere poetic dalliance. For the embryonic author it meant virtual imitation, a swallowing whole even of the language. No poet could hope to gain place or recognition unless he were sufficiently master of the classic style and Latin eloquence, that is not until Lorenzo de Medici began campaigning for Dante and the Tuscan tongue. For Dante himself, before the crest of the humanist wave swamped Italian thought, Virgil was "poeta altissimo". He preached (and practised) the Virgilian style. Boccaccio, the master of "vulgar" prose, could say, "le cose volgare non possono fare un uomo letterato", while Petrarch believed that he was writing for immortality only when he

wrote in Latin. There were far more rabid humanists than these. Everywhere in Italy elegant Latinity and patent evidence of neo-classicism were the acid tests of belles lettres.

And study was more than the nurse of poetry. She was the mother of statesmanship, social position, even of ecclesiastical power. Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini, who, it was said, assumed the title of Pius II in honour of "Pius Aeneas", wrote to the Bishop of Chichester: "Persevere, therefore, friend Adam. Hold fast and increase the eloquence (Latin fluency, elegance) you possess; consider it the most honorable thing possible to excel your fellows in that in which men excel other living creatures. Great is eloquence; nothing so much rules the world." (1)

"Great is eloquence; nothing so much rules the world." That was to become the basic canon of Renaissance education, the unwritten motto over every humanist school. "In the study of Latin and the great classic masters," quoth the Schoolmasters, "lie the latch-key to wisdom, the open-sesame to culture and art, the password to preferment." The Schoolmasters had another claim for the classics, particularly the German and English Schoolmasters. "In the great poems and histories of the past, judiciously chosen, are to be found", they averred, "examples of the highest piety and

(1) Trans. by Fletcher: Literature of the Italian Renaissance, 9.

virtue. An acquaintance with the heroic or sinning men and women of Greece and Rome will lead the student to right living and sound protestant morality."

Such were the claims of the humanists. No wonder that schools and colleges, springing up everywhere, entered on a Golden Age of paedagogy.

There is another side to humanism besides its neo-classicism. "Humanitas," says Professor Rand, is the quality that one acquires in the process of developing the best that there is in human nature. A man thus humanized will be mild, gentle, merciful, compassionate, benevolent. He will be loyal to duty, upright, virtuous. He will have the social graces, possessing tact, forbearance of others, savoir faire. In a group of cultivated people he will contribute his share to the conversation, master of the ready word, of wit, of banter, of urbanity. These diverse accomplishments, and others related to them...present the mirror of the gentleman." (1) In other words, we have the Cortegiano of Castiglione, Sir Guyon of Spenser,- the "universal man" of the Renaissance, the Lorenzo, the Sidney, poised, well-spoken, manly, urbane, experienced, curious, talented, versatile.

The ideal of the Schoolmaster was this perfect gentleman, one who had attained complete adjustment to the world of Renaissance learning, aristocracy, politics and culture.

(1) Rand: The Humanism of Cicero, Amer. Philos. Soc. Proceedings, LXXI, 4, 1932.

This ideal revolutionized his methods. Beyond any question of doubt the humanist schoolmaster conceived his curriculum in the image of the perfect gentleman. Bearing in mind the premium put by his age on eloquence, elegance, conversational ability, and rhetoric, he sought out those classics which provided the best examples for imitation and practice, - and what could be better than the magnificent orations found in Cicero, Sallust, Livy, the dazzling rhetoric and quotable epigrams of Seneca, the witty dialogues of Lucian, and the ^{versatile} brilliantly^ conversation of Terence, Plautus, Aristophanes? He sought those poets and prose writers who dealt with human passions and heroic deeds so that he could moralize on the fall of the mighty and the triumph of virtue. He might try to inculcate the social graces in his middle-class pupils who came from homes where Castiglione's "Courtier" was by no means a byword. He would be conscious of the necessity for physical training and graceful exercise, and might advertise his school as one where a sound mind in a sound body was cultivated. He might even make efforts to teach his Latin in a pleasant and genial way as would become a gentleman rather than a dull grammarian.

In short, the drama and educational dramatics seemed made to order for the English humanist schoolmaster of the 16th century. The drama provided splendid examples of eloquent and witty talk, and in the acting of it the talk would become thoroughly assimilated; the drama was full of moral lessons because it mirrored the evil and the good;

and what could be better for acquiring the social graces, poise, a good clear voice, savoir faire, the gestures of the orator than the amateur stage? And finally, since the new teaching should be sensibly aware of the pleasure of this world (as well as regardful of the next), what could be more good-humoured than the Roman comedies?

Moreover, the English schoolmaster had the example of the continent to follow. Germany and France, as we shall see, were very much alive to the possibilities of educational dramatics, while in Italy from the first days of the Revival of Learning there was apparent an alliance between the classroom and the theatre. Let us again cross three frontiers and leap the centuries.

Although it is difficult sometimes to distinguish clearly the boundary line between mediaeval scholasticism and Renaissance humanism, we are on safe ground in choosing the interest in classic comedy and tragedy as a product, by and large, of humanism. Very rare indeed was a knowledge of Greek and Roman tragedy in the Middle Ages. Latin comedy survived only in the plays of Terence which sometimes occupied a place in the curriculum and which were distantly echoed in the Miracle plays of Hrosvitha, the Benedictine nun of Gandersheim. Even this one strong voice from the classic stage was not understood by the grammarian. Terence's comedies were not viewed as something akin to the contemporary "ludum" and "miraculum". Students believed

that he recited his lines from a pulpit to an accompaniment of pantomime by two or three performers. The very term "comedy" was misunderstood. So was "tragedy".

Tragedy might be any lofty narrative with a sad ending, comedy any homely tale with a happy ending, or a Divine Comedy like Dante's. Dialogue and scene were not considered among the necessary and distinguishing characteristics of drama.

Early in the fourteenth century Seneca was disinterred by an Italian judge, Lorato de'Lovati, and became an author of increasing interest to the literati. Imitations began to appear from the pens of Albertino Mussato, L. da Fabiano, A. de' Loschi, and Gregorio Cornaro (author of the celebrated "Progne"). In 1427 twelve Plautine plays were discovered and these gave added impulse to the study of dramatic form. These classics and their neo-Latin prototypes were sometimes recited before learned gatherings, but as yet no one thought to act them. "It is not indeed in these regular dramas that the habit of acting Latin first re-established itself, but in a mixed and far less classical type of play. It is probable that in schools the exercise of reciting verse, and amongst other verse, dialogue, had never died out since the time of the Empire...Such also may have been the destiny of the 'elegiac' and 'epic' comedies and tragedies of which a fair number were produced from the eleventh to the thirteenth century. These are comedies and tragedies primarily

in the mediaeval sense. They are narrative poems in form. But in all of them a good deal of dialogue is introduced, and in some of them there is hardly anything else. Their most careful student, Dr. Cloetta, suggests that they were intended for a half-dramatic declamation by minstrels. This may sometimes have been the case, but the capacity and the audience of the minstrels for Latin were alike limited, and I do not see why at any rate the more edifying of them may not have been school pieces." (1)

Thus, in the very earliest stages of the Renaissance and before there may be discerned an affinity between the drama and the classroom. During the so-called "Dark Ages" it was the student and the schoolmaster who preserved and bequeathed the precious heritage of Terentian comedy. Later, as Sir Edward Chambers suggests in the above paragraph, it was the schoolmaster who attempted to perform the narrative Latin poems which were considered drama in the Middle Ages. And finally, as we shall see in the following quotation, it was the schoolmaster who first brought the regular drama on to the stage by experimenting with and then whole-heartedly engaging in the actual performance of the classics.

"It was doubtless the study of Vitruvius (writing on theatre architecture) which awakened the humanists to the fact that their beloved comedies had after all been acted

(1) Chambers: Mediaeval Stage, ii, 214.

after very much the fashion so long familiar in farces and miracle plays. Exactly when the knowledge came is not clear. Polydore Vergil is still ignorant, and even Erasmus at the date of the "Adagia" (1500) uncertain.....Performances seem to have been first undertaken by the pupils of a Roman professor, Pomponius Laetus. Amongst these was Inghirami who was protagonist in the revivals of the 'Asinaria' of Plautus and the Phaedra' of Seneca. These took place about 1485. Several other representations both of classical plays and neo-Latin imitations occurred in Italy before the end of the century; and the practice spread to other countries effected by the humanist wave, soon establishing itself as part of the regular sixteenth century scheme of education." (1)

We are now considerably nearer to a fair answer to the question asked at the beginning of this chapter: Why did Tudor Schools have school plays? As shown by illustrations from Italian literary history, the answer lies somewhere in the canons of humanism. In the next section we shall see how the English humanists rationalized and explained the tendency towards educational dramatics.

(1) Mediaeval Stage, ii, 214-5.

CHAPTER III

EDUCATIONAL THEORY IN ENGLAND.

For simplicity's sake I am not going to seek traces of the evolution of the theory and practice of educational dramatics in the writings and records of continental schoolmasters and tractarians. A great deal of interesting material could be found in the story of Vittorino da Feltre's famous school "La casa Giocosa", the "Joyful House", (founded 1423) where pedantry was taboo and where personality (expressed in the voice and bearing) and refined taste were esteemed as invaluable as classical learning; further details could be lifted from the expressed policy of the splendid Florentine schools of Guarino da Verona where snowballing, strangely enough, was accounted educational. And while Leo Battista Alberti, who in his "Il Trattato della cura della Famiglia" argues for training in aesthetics and rhythm, while Budé, Valla, Sadoletto, and Agricola, and, more specifically, Palmieri, Vivès and Castiglione would give us much to think about, and while Melanchthon would bring us nearer England and evoke a stricter grammatical and moral code, all the ideas of these men may be found in the treatises of the English humanists, or at least all the ideas that need concern us. Moreover, if we should carry our quest methodically through history, we might arrive back at Socrates and Aristotle, passing Quintilian on the way.

English humanism began in a very neighborly fashion. Linacre, Grocyn, Lily and Colet had all studied in Italy, and, with Latimer, had worked together at Oxford. More and Erasmus, pupils of Linacre and Grocyn, completed the fraternity. Truly a most amazing circle of friends every one of whom was to leave an indelible mark on the pages of history. One of them, Sir Thomas More, occupies a brief page in the annals of the stage. Another, Desiderius Erasmus, has been somewhat neglected therein.

If in More's "Utopia" we could find any references to the drama, our task might be made easier. But the Siphograunts did not sponsor the stage. Anyway the intentions of the "Utopia" were political and economic. More wanted to point out the flaws in the English and European bodies politic. He was for the moment but casually concerned with education and aesthetics.

But in his life More shows at times the apparently irresistible attraction of the humanist to affairs theatrical. Erasmus tells us that when More was a young man he wrote and acted plays. "We are also told by his son-in-law, William Roper, that when he was a page in the household of Cardinal Morton he was an amateur actor. He would 'Sodenly sometymes slip in among the players and make a parte of his owne there presently among them'. In Morton's service he doubtless came into touch with Henry Medwell, the Cardinal's chaplain, and author of our first known secular play,

"Fulgens and Lucrez". This play was printed by John Rastell, himself a dramatist, who married More's sister, Elizabeth. Their daughter, Joan, married John Heywood, the leading dramatist of the group. Thus Tudor drama begins as almost a family affair, with the genial, finely-tempered spirit of More presiding over it." (1)

The paedagogical expression of this "genial finely-tempered spirit" was the several tracts and texts of Erasmus. These, it may safely be said, represent the ideals of the whole early Tudor humanist fraternity.

Born in Rotterdam about 1466, educated at several schools in the Low Countries, Desiderius Erasmus left his early monastic life at the age of twenty-seven to devote the rest of his most cosmopolitan existence to the cause of education, literature, ethics and philosophy. And truly, to use Ascham's words, did he become "the ornament of learning in our tyme". Restless, curious, he travelled extensively. He paid at least five visits to England. On his third visit he remained at Cambridge for five years as Professor of Divinity. During this time he became intensely interested in the work being done at St. Paul's Grammar School which his friend, Dean Colet, had recently re-founded along humanist lines. In 1511 Erasmus sent Colet his famous tract, "De Ratione Studii", in which he summarized and extended current educational theory and practice. His pronouncements and advice in this

(1) Boas: Tudor Drama, 3.

and his other educational treatises (1) were greatly esteemed by schoolmasters in Tudor and Stuart times. Even to the teachers of to-day many of his ideas sound a timely and just note.

The outstanding feature of the "De Ratione Studii" is, as we might expect, the extreme importance given to the study of the classics, classic drama in particular. Like a typical humanist Erasmus announces, "Language thus claims the first place in the order of studies and from the outset should include both Greek and Latin. The argument for this is twofold. First, that within these two literatures are contained all the knowledge which we recognize as of vital importance to mankind....The Greek prose-writers whom I advise are, in order, Lucian, Demosthenes, Herodotus; the poets, Aristophanes, Homer, Euripides; Menander, if we possessed his works, would take precedence of all three. Amongst Roman writers in prose and verse, Terence, for pure, terse Latinity has no rival, and his plays are never dull. I see no objection to adding carefully chosen comedies of

(1) With the students of St. Paul's in mind, Erasmus wrote "De Copia Rerum et Verborum" (Latin composition), "Cato pro Pueris" (personal conduct), "Concis de Puero Jesu" (oration for boys), "De Constructione octo Partium Orationis Libellus" (Grammar-referred to later), and "Institutem Hominis Christiani" (after Colet's "Cathecyzon"). He also made a Latin version of a Gaza's Greek Grammar, and translations from Plutarch's "Moralia" (on Flattery and Health). His "Institutio Principis Christiani" and "De Pueris Liberaliter Instituendis" were translated into English and appear to have influenced Elyot greatly. Most important of his educational writings were the "Colloquia", to be discussed later.

Plautus. Next I place Virgil, then Horace; Cicero and Caesar follow closely; and Sallust after these." (1)

There it is in black and white for subsequent English masters to read,- Aristophanes and Menander (if we possessed his works) placed before Homer, Plautus placed before Virgil and Cicero; and Terence, -"Terence, for pure, terse Latinity has no rival, and his plays are never dull."

It was not from any particular appreciation of the theatre that Erasmus rated Terence, Plautus and Euripides so highly. The key to his selections obviously lies in his wish to take schoolboys along a very pleasant short-cut to correct conversational and literary style..He was much given to seeking and inventing amusing games and devices to lure the young into the mazes of literary Latinity by appealing to their tastes and utilizing material which was common to their experience. Just as to-day educationalists uphold dramatization as a delightful and sound aid in the teaching of certain dull subjects, so Erasmus realized that well written plays, by virtue of their interesting and often amusing subject matter set in a dialogue form which lent itself easily to class recitation and memorization, provided magnificent text-books for the young in an age when much of the material for the study of language was heavy and homiletic.

Ø1) Translation in Woodward's: Erasmus concerning Education, 164.

It is possible to discern another parallel between Erasmus's advocacy of the drama, and the modern teacher's advocacy of educational dramatics. To-day dramatization is believed to be a school method par excellence for the training of character, while Erasmus, in a slightly different way, believed strongly in the efficacy of the drama in moral education. Moral values were well-nigh supreme in his educational philosophy. "For instance," he says, "the Second Eclogue of Virgil must be treated as something more than a purely grammatical or literary exercise. 'The essence of friendship,' the Master would begin, 'lies in similarity. Violently contradictory natures are incapable of mutual affection. The stronger and more numerous the ties of taste and interest the more durable the bond.'....such methods of teaching a classical story, by forcing attention to the moral to be deduced from it, will serve to counteract any harm which a more literal interpretation might possibly convey."(1)

In the same section of "De Ratione Studii" from which the above was taken, Erasmus outlines his procedure in reading Terence in class. As would be expected stylistic and moral objects take precedence. "You begin", he says, "by offering an appreciation of the author, and state what is necessary concerning his life and surroundings, his talent, and the characteristics of his style. You next consider

(1) Erasmus concerning Education, 174-5-6

Comedy as an example of a particular form of literature, and its interest for the student: the origin and meaning of the term itself, the variations of Comedy and the Terentian prosody. Now you proceed to treat briefly and clearly the argument of the play, taking each situation in due course. Side by side with this you will handle the diction of the writer; noting any conspicuous elegance, or such peculiarities as archaism, novel usage, Graecisms...The last factor in the lesson consists in the moral application it suggests; the story of Orestes and Pylades, or of Tantalus are obvious examples." (1)

Here is clear enough direction and illustration. If followed, who can reasonably doubt that this method would lead pupils to some consciousness, however dim, of Terence's theatrical aims and technique, and his desire to mirror the life around him. That there is no place in Erasmus, or in many a teacher who might follow his method, for the actual stage is not so important as the fact that nearly one hundred years before the great era of English drama English boys were assiduously studying classic sources and sometimes, mayhap unwittingly, catching an occasional glimpse of the glory of the classic theatre. Therefore, it is not so surprising to note in this connection that when Shakespeare wrote "Hamlet" there was in nearby Blackfriars

(1) Erasmus concerning Education. 173-4

a thriving theatrical company, "an aiery of little children, little eyases", largely recruited from boys belonging to the very institution whose Dean had been the dear friend of Erasmus, his confrère in humanism, and the recipient of his advice here quoted from "De Ratione Studii".

In addition to being a strong protagonist of the inclusion of drama in the course of studies, Erasmus edited Terence and Euripides. His "Terentii Opera" was long a favourite with scholars. Likewise was his extremely successful text-book of elementary Latin which survives to this day, greatly altered, of course, in the Eton Latin Grammar. One other of his school texts had a phenomenal success, the "Colloquia". This book was intended to fulfil a triple purpose: to give practice, to teach general knowledge, to provide moral lessons. That it succeeded in its intentions is shown by its sale. It became the McGuffey Reader of the 16th Century. The University of Paris condemned the Colloquies as undermining the faith, and their action helped lead to its almost universal adoption as a text in schools influenced by the Reformation. No other work of Erasmus had so wide a vogue. The success of the Colloquies is, I believe, a consideration in dramatic history.

The "Colloquia", as we gather from the title, was modelled after Erasmus's favourite Greek author, Lucian. It consisted of a series of conversations, playlets, designed to interest as well as instruct. Dialogue, largely

question and answer, is one of the oldest of literary devices. Its popularity is strikingly evinced to-day in many an educational scheme. But never, perhaps, has dialogue been so strategically used as it was in the schools during the quarter century before Elizabeth and during her reign. Many an epigram or maxim, I am convinced, found its way into the Shakespearean drama via the Colloquies. By no stretch of the imagination could these dialogues of Erasmus be called theatric, but a primitive form of play they were, nevertheless, and beautifully and wittily written. There is every likelihood that Tudor children were brought up on them, or upon similar dialogues of the Spanish educationalist, Vivès, to say nothing of Lucian. Nor, as we gather from a remark by schoolmaster Hoole which shall be quoted presently, is it improbable that schoolboys acted them out in class, took parts, memorized them for special occasions; in short, through them got further introduction to the theatre.

With these remarks upon the "Colloquia" we conclude our brief study of Erasmus and his circle. As theorist, teacher, and scholar, as editor of the most popular classic in Tudor times, as author of some of the most widely-used texts, it is apparent that this great humanist occupies a position of paramount importance in school history. In dramatic history, too, he should figure modestly. As the advocate of classic drama in the curriculum, and as the

successful exponent of text-book dramatization he certainly warrants more attention than is accorded him. Although he and his fellow humanists knew but little about the theatre, the reforms they made in the course of study, reforms designed primarily to help pupils acquire "eloquentia", a fluent Latin style, these were destined to swell the main stream of the new art whose channels were being deepened and routed by the folk everywhere in festive or religious mood.

Passing by Elyot, for the moment, we now come to the next great humanist, Roger Ascham, "Scholemaster" extraordinary.

We do not find in this famous tutor to royalty the same delight in dramatic poesy that Erasmus has. He is farther removed from Florentine humanism, even hostile to Italian education, although the "Courtier" merits his approval. He is less genial in his learning, though not lacking in humour. The sheer fun of Roman comedy does not recommend itself to him as a schoolmaster, for nowhere to the same extent as Erasmus was he aware of a "play way" to learning. His tastes in texts are more serious, his methods often pèdantic. He believes thoroughly in "plugging" and heavy memorizing. Finally, and like Erasmus, he is a very sincere moralist.

In his choice of texts we find Ascham sometimes following Erasmus: "Then take this order with him: Read dayly unto him some book of Tullie (giving examples)...some Comedie of Terence or Plautus....Caes Commentaries, or some Oration of

T. Livius." (1)

For the subject matter of classic comedy Ascham has little use: "Plautus and Terence be like meane painters, that works by halfes, and be cunninge onelie, in making the worst part of the picture, as if one were skilfull in painting the bodie of a naked person from the nauell downward, but nothing else." (2)

But they are justified by reason of their style which should be imitated: "Plautus, for that purenesse of the Latin tong in Rome, whan Rome did most florish in wel doing, and so thereby, in well speaking also, is soch a plentifull storehouse for common eloquence, in meane matters, and all priuate mens affairs, as the Latin tong, for that respect, hath not the like agayne....Terence is also a storehouse of the same tong, for an other tyme, following some after, and although he be not so full and plentiful as Plautus is, for multitude of matters and diuersity of wordes, yet his wordes be chosen so purelie, placed so orderly, and all his stuffe so neetlie packed up, and wittely compassed in euerie place as, by all wise mens judgement he is counted the cunninger workeman." (3)

There is nothing in these quotations that points the way any more directly to educational dramatics than does Erasmus. Indeed we seem almost to be retrogressing. And there is still

(1) Scholemaster: 87
(2) *ibid.*, 142
(3) *ibid.* 142-3

nothing about the value of theatricals as distinct from drama; nothing, certainly, that would show why schoolmasters might favour play production, and more especially play production in the vernacular. Elsewhere, unlike Erasmus, Ascham brings in Seneca, Greek Tragedy and the precepts of Aristotle and Horace, but here he is talking for the benefit of mature students who may have ambitions to write dramatic poetry. He also refers to some original Latin productions at St. John's College, Cambridge, in a passage which I shall quote later in a more proper context, for he is still no nearer to a conception of educational dramatics. In short, wherever Ascham treats of the drama, he does so as a critic and moralist. Erasmus is a critic and moralist, but he is also something of a psychologist. To him the very format of the drama and dialogue appealed because it was fundamentally suited to the needs of the child.

Sir Thomas Elyot's "The Gouvernour" is much earlier than "The Scholemaster" being written in 1531, about one year after Ascham entered Cambridge as a young student. It has the distinction of being the first book on education written and printed in English. It is undoubtedly one of the really important publications of the century, and ranks in educational history with the collected tracts of Erasmus, and the works of Vivès and Castiglione. Elyot's Governor is, with certain qualifications, the "universal man" of the Renaissance.

Nowhere in it is there any reference to educational

dramatics, but that should not deter us. Elyot was formulating the ideal training for an aristocrat, not outlining class procedure. It would require considerable agility for a young noble and his tutors to put on a play. But as surely as schoolmen Vittorino and Palmieri, Colet and Lily, Elyot was surveying the route.

Like Quintilian, like Erasmus (compare "De Civilitate Morum Puerilium" and "De Pueris"), Elyot had deduced an instinct of imitation: "hit shall be expedient that a noble mannes sonne, in his infancie, haue with hym continually onely such as may accustome hym by little and little to speake pure and elegant latin. Semblably the nourises and other women about hym, if it be possible to do the same: or at the leste way, that they speke none englisshe but that which is cleane, polite, perfectly and articulately pronounced, omitting no letter or syllable as foolish women oftentimes do of a wantonness wherby divers noblemen's and gentlemen's children (as I do at this day know) have attained corrupt and foul promunciation. This industry used in fourninge litel infantes, who shall doubt, but that they (not lacking naturall witte) shall be apt to receyue learninge, when they come to mo yeaeres?" (1)

Besides Elyot's awareness of mimetic instinct, notice in the above his emphasis on what educational

(1) op. cit: 24

enthusiasts to-day would call "Voice Culture".

Elyot, too, would have his tutors try to understand childhood needs and teach youngsters with an eye to that which attracts and interests them. To-day we would call that, as I have already said, the "play way". Thus: "The office of the tutor is firste to know the nature of his pupil, that is to say, wherto he is mooste inclined or disposed, and in what thyng he setteth his most delectation or appetite." (1)

Such ideas as these would naturally lead to a choice of dramatic literature or dialogue for the first texts. Elyot does not advocate Latin comedy in the first years. He believes that young boys should be taught Latin by the direct method, through conversation with their elders, not by books and grammar. By the time they come to read they should have skipped, so to speak, the Terence and Plautus stages, and be ready for Greek. He would start with Aesop; then: "The nexte lesson wolde be some quicke and mery dialogues, elect out of Luciane, which be without ribawdry, or to moche skorning.....The comedies of Aristophanes may be in the place of Luciane, and by reason that they be in metre they be sooner lerned by harte." (2)

Terence and Plautus are to be studied later for moral purposes, Elyot having the very highest regard for the stage

(1) op. cit.: 36

(2) op. cit.: 36

as a preceptor: "Comedies...be undoubtedly a picture or as it were a mirrour of man's life wherein iuell is not taughte but discouered...And if the vices in them expressed shulde be cause that mindes of the reders shulde be corrupted; than by the same arguments not onely entreludes in eng-lisshe but also sermones, wherein some vice is declared, shulde be to the beholders and herers like occasion to increace sinners." (1) Then Elyot quotes both comic writers to show that they give "good counsaile". Today we may be very dubious of the efficiency of the drama for such purposes, and we may strenuously object to the stage being harnessed to moral issues, but there can be no doubt that in the 16th century Elyot's, Ascham's, and Erasmus's moral evaluation of the drama was to educationalists almost its highest recommendation.

By other than these familiar arguments did Elyot pave the way for widespread educational dramatics. Probably more than any other Renaissance theorist on schooling, he felt the need for physical and aesthetic training and pleads for a well-rounded course of study. He rails against idleness and shows how to make better use of one's leisure. Wrestling, riding spirited horses, hunting, hawking, swimming, archery, these are upheld and their uses instanced by innumerable allusions to ancient and modern practice. Music, painting,

(1) op. cit.: 58

sculpture, dancing, all are featured in his education of a Governor. Above all, dancing. He devotes about twenty-five pages to a most ingenious analysis of the spiritual significance of dance patterns. Unfortunately this long, involved, but most intriguing argument cannot be reproduced in excerpts. The continuity is essential. But in it Elyot defines somewhat circuitously that telepathic feeling for rhythm and harmony which in its effect upon men and women in company is so important and mysterious a factor in personality. (1)

This may be a very round about way of arriving at personality training through educational dramatics. But we cannot ignore it. Perhaps in Elyot's story of the young man who danced before Demetrius a more definite analogy may be found.

"Demetrius, often reproving daunsing, wolde saye that there was nothing therein of any importaunce...that the motiones were but vaine and seperate from all understanding, and of no purpose or efficacie.....The yonge man daunsed the aduoutry of Mars and Venus, and therein expressed how Vulcane, husbonde of Venus, thereof beyng advertised by the sonne layde snares for his wife and Mars: also howe they were wounded and tyde in Vulcanes nette; more ouer howe all the goddes came to the spectacle; finally howe Venus, all ashamed and

(1) The idea is found in Castiglione and derives, of course from Plato.

blusshing, ferefully desired her loue Mars to delyuer her from that perill, and the residue contayned in that fable; which he dyd with so subtile and crafty gesture, with such persoicuitie and declaration of euerie acte in the matterwith such a grace and beautie, also with a witte so wonderfull and pleasaunt, that Demetrius....reioysing and deliting cried with a loude voice, O man, I do not onely se but also here what thou doest." (1)

This was not pure dancing,- no "absolute rhythms" here. It was the pantomime of a disease, narrative choreography, voiceless monologue; and Elyot admires it tremendously. Again, when he quotes Socrates on the value of Dancing, "amonge the seriouse disciplines for the commendable beautie, for the apte and proportionate meuinge, and for the craftie disposition and facionyng of the body", we can see why Sir Thomas Elyot would have subscribed to the claims advanced to-day for dramatics in schools.

So far we have not heard these claims advanced in the 16th century. For drama, yes, but not dramatics. We have been discovering, however, why the whole educational "set-up" was favourable.

The first English schoolmaster we know of who wrote his opinion on the subject was an Eton Head. This Headmaster, William Malim, held his tenure at Eton between 1555-1575.

(1) op. cit.: 92

By no means did he begin the fashion for "playes in the Halle". There are entries of expenditure on productions in the Audit Books as far back as 1525-26. In view of these, Malim's words may be taken as an index of a long-standing humanist sentiment at Eton, and, doubtless, at many another public school. The occasion was a visit by a Royal Commission 1560 for whom Malim drew up a "Consuetudinarium". Sir Edward Chambers has disinterred one paragraph from this document for inclusion in his monumental four volume "The Elizabethan Stage." Gratefully, I reproduce it.

"Circiter festum D. Andreae (Nov. 30) ludimagister eligere solet pro suo arbitrio scaenicas fabulas optimas et quam accommodatissimas, quas pueri feriis natalitiis subsequentibus non sine ludorum elegantis, populo spectante, publice aliquando peragant. Histrionium levis ars est, ad actionem tamen oratorum, et gestum motumque corporis decentem tantopere facit, ut nihil magis. Interdum etiam exhibet Anglico sermone contextas fabulas quae habeant acumen et leporem." (1)

A curious thing in this Apologia is the absence of any linguistic motive such as Erasmus might have stressed.. But since another Master, Charles Hoole, whom we soon shall have occasion to quote, includes good Latinity in his arguments for play production, we should not believe that the 16th

(1) Elizabethan Stage, ii. 74

century schoolmen neglected it. Quite the contrary. It would be a paramount consideration in Latin plays. But if the absence of a linguistic motive is curious, it is also significant. It shows that play production was considered of educational value whether the play was written in Latin or English, and, therefore, "Ralph Roister Doister", for example, was not an anomaly in school dramatics. That being the case there is small reason to think that the school productions were slipshod. They must have been as carefully planned and as stage-worthy as the ludimagister could make them. A production the sole purpose of which was to provide exercise in spoken Latin might neglect theatrical and artistic aims; not so a play, an English play sometimes, performed before an audience, an outside audience; not so action designed to induce grace and fine gesture, a presentation which might, indeed, be summoned before the Queen. That last would be a real incentive to any artistic director. And so we should not doubt Malim when he says the boys and their director carried the plays through "non sine ludorum elegantia".

An obvious, though instated, motive that Malim has in mind for his dramatics is to keep the boys occupied during the holidays; a very practical motive, indeed, and one of which Elyot and Erasmus would approve, idleness not being tolerated in any well-run Renaissance school. Malim, however, redeems himself for this, shall we say, lapse into the disciplinarian by coming out strongly for acting as training in bodily grace,

poise, and gesticulation. Nothing, he says, could be better. We would have expected this since Renaissance schools were so keen on gentlemanliness and oratorical skill.

There is another source to be quoted,- Schoolmaster Charles Hoole of Rotherham. Sometime during the thirties of the 17th century this studious and idealistic teacher wrote "A New Discovery of the Old Art of Teaching School". He did not print it until 1660. Here is a storehouse of information concerning education in the late 16th century, for historians unite in assuming that Hoole's description of prevailing duties, discipline, and fashions applies to reputable Grammar Schools during and even before the reign of Elizabeth. The reason for this assumption is that Hoole compiled his information and reached his conclusions not only from personal experience and observation but from the recognized methods of the past as described to him by alumni and old-school Masters. Adams, for instance, in his biography of Shakespeare depends a great deal upon Hoole for certain interesting deductions concerning the poet's scholastic environment since Stratford-on-Avon Grammar School was well-established, very well-endowed (teachers received a better salary than those of Eton), and apparently typical of humanist practice.

Hoole is much indebted to Erasmus whose "De Ratione Studii" he calls a "golden little book". In fact, when Hoole comes to treat of the right method to study a Latin author, he, like Erasmus, selects Terence, who "of all the

school authours that we read doth deservedly challenge the first place" and should be read "constantly every Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday for fore-noon Lessons", saying which he elaborates a classroom procedure so strikingly similar to Erasmus's (already quoted) that it need not be introduced here unless it were necessary to give additional proof of the profound effect that great humanist had upon 16th and 17th century paedagogy.

But the Rotherham schoolmaster had one particular mood of which his Rotterdam preceptor did not conceive: "When you meet with an Act or Scene that is full of affection, and action, you may cause some of your Scholars, after they have learned it, to act it, first in private amongst themselves, and afterwards in the open school before their fellows". Continuing, he treats of the values of this method: "Herein you must have a main care of their pronounciation, and acting every gesture to the very life. This acting of a piece of Comedy, or a Colloquy sometimes, (1) will be an excellent means to prepare them to pronounce Orationes with a Grace, and I have found it an especiall remedy to expell that subrustick bashfulnesse, and unresistable timorousnesse, which some children are naturally possessed withal and which is apt in riper years to drown many good parts in men of singular endowments." (2)

(1) q.v. 25

(2) op. cit.: 137

The common humanist credo that Latin plays provided in very interesting form practical and well-phrased conversation pieces combined with a sound morality and criticism of life is expressed by Hoole elsewhere. But in the passage just quoted we see an entirely new approach. School plays, artistically directed with a main care for pronunciation and interpretation, may be an "especiall remedy" for the teacher who is eager to have his pupils play a confident part in the outside world. That is, they provide training in personality and deportment. Another expression of the same idea, this time from the pupil's point of view, is supplied by Sir James Whitelock, a 17th century judge. "I was brought up", he writes, "at school under Mr. Mulcaster in the famous school of the Merchanttaylors in London...yeerly he presented sum playes to the court, in which his scholers wear only actors, and I among them, and by that means taughte them good behaviour and audasitye." (1)

When these words of Hoole and Whitelock are added to those of Malim, it should become even more apparent why some school directors might occasionally try their hand at non-Latin plays. By a defence such as was here provided, they would excuse their own "sub rosa" interest in the vernacular and argue a practical motive for the plays they themselves might write for boys. Again, we know that the 16th century

(1) Elizabethan Stage: 2, 76

was prolific of translations from classic drama (John Rastell's "Andria" may date as early as 1520). It would seem very likely that schoolboys acted some of these or unpublished versions of their own Masters to realize the values inherent in the art of acting, and, in fact, for the sheer pleasure of experiment. Such performances of original plays and translations would be very important. Instruction in theatre technique would be carried beyond the circle of those who could follow Latin. Since outsiders were admitted on special occasions the English performance would be a form of audience training very necessary in pre-Elizabethan and early Elizabethan days when the professional companies and the village amateurs were crude and illiterate. A very profitable form, too, since we might expect educated masters to bring considerable taste to their productions. At any rate, there is every likelihood that schools were taking to dramatics for dramatics' sake.

The last and most important source of information on the evolution of educational dramatics theory is not a schoolmaster. William Gager was a playwright and poet of repute, a Master of Arts (Oxon), a Doctor of Civil Law, and Chancellor of the Diocese of Ely. We shall meet with him again when we come to deal with college dramatics.

At Shrovetide, 1592, four plays written in Latin by this versatile humanist were produced in the hall of Christ Church, Oxford where he was studying. They were "Ulysses Redux"

(Sunday, Feb. 6), "Rivales" (Feb. 7), and "Hippolytus" (an adaptation of Seneca) and "Panniculus" (Feb. 8). To these plays was invited Dr. John Rainolds, President of Corpus Christi College, and, in his boyhood, actor in "Palomon and Arcite". The invitation was issued by Thomas Thornton, a friend of Gager's, possibly in a spirit of mischief as Rainolds was a sincere and doughty opponent of the theatre in all its manifestations, professional or amateur. When Rainolds ignored this letter, a second was sent to which he indignantly replied explaining his objections in no uncertain terms. On the third night of the theatricals it became apparent why Thornton had been so anxious to have Rainolds present. In an Epilogue Gager had introduced a comic character, Momus, who voiced objections to play-acting and criticized the plays which had gone before. Then in a Rebuttal Epilogue this Momus was answered and held up to ridicule. Rainolds on hearing about it was furious. A correspondence began, vituperative and puritanical on the part of Momus, fairly good-tempered and reasonable on the part of Momus's creator. A very significant quarrel, this, because in it one hears the Puritan doctrinaire who was just beginning to be a force in educational circles, and in Gager's answers the rallying cries of humanism, dominant since the days of Erasmus. In brief, Gager stands foursquare for a balanced, genial and liberal education and defends dramatics as part of that education with all the equipment of his eloquence.

In the very year of the controversy Gager published "Ulysses Redux" and included in the book Momus's Epilogue and the Epilogus Responsivus. In 1599 Rainolds published his letters in a pamphlet entitled "Th'overthrow of Stage Playes". (1)

The learned Doctor of Corpus Christi was persuaded that undergraduate theatricals were "unlawfull" because "the scripture sayth a woman shall not weare that which pertaineth to a man, nether shall a man put on woman's raiment; for they that do so are an abomination to the lord thy god." (2)

"Moreover," continues Rainolds, "the verie light of reason hath taughte whole common weales of heathens some to reiect the plaies themselves as Philosophers and polititians have done." (3)

Besides being against the teachings of the Bible and against civil law, amateur theatricals are vain, and idle, and expensive. To act is no better than to "play at Mum-chance or Maw with idle loose companions, or at trunkes in Guile-houses, or to dance about Maypoles, or to rifle in ale-houses, or to carouse in taverns, or to steele deere or rob orchards.....The charge of setting forth such plaies is money cast away, and addeth wastefulnesse to wantoness".(4)

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- (1) Two of these letters from Corpus Christi manuscripts have been quoted practically in their entirety by Karl Young in the commemorative "Shakespeare Studies" issued by the University of Michigan, 1916. Dr. F.S. Boas gives excerpts from others in a Fortnightly Review article, Aug.1907
- (2) Young: op. cit.: 108-109
- (3) ibid: 111
- (4) Boas: op. cit.: 312

Finally, "stage-plaies...should not be used in anie case on Sundaye, the Lords day." (1)

How familiar the old words sound! One might believe he were listening to some contemporary Puritan opposing school plays, or, more justly, to some fanatic of say twenty-five years ago. No,- just last year I discovered that one young girl in a production of mine was coming to rehearsals surreptitiously because her very religious and practical-minded parents were strongly opposed. And how have modern teachers met such "all is vanity" arguments, how have they overcome these strictures about the time and money involved? Hardly more earnestly than did William Gager in 1592. The following excerpts from his letter to Rainolds are in a way classical. Many teachers of to-day have tried to set forth the aims and values of educational dramatics, (2) but not one recognizes his, shall we say, indebtedness to Gager, not one school director seems to realize the long-standing traditions of his educational theory.

We need not deal with Gager's passionate defence against the charges of immorality, nor with his humorous dismissal of the sinfulness of Sunday performances. Let us go right to the heart of his argument.

"We doe it to recreate owre selves, owre house, and the better parte of the Universitye, with some learned Poeme or

(1) Young: 111

(2) cf. Overton: Drama in Education; Tower: Educational Dramatics; Hilliard-McCormick-Oglebay: Amateur and Educational Dramatics.

other: to practyse owre owne style either in prose or verse; to be well acquainted with Seneca or Plautus; honestly to embolden owre pathe; to trye their voyces and confirme their memoryes; to frame their speeche; to conforme them to convenient action; to try what mettell is in everye one, and of what disposition they are; whereby never any one amongst us, that I knowe was made the worse, many have byn muche the better as I dare report me to all the Universitye. Of whom some of them have lefte such domesticall examples and preceptes of well speakinge, as of many that dislike such exercises, and others, and owre selves had followed, so many solecismes in uttrance should not be committed so often as they are." (1)

In other passages Gager tries to prove that the drama is a potent moral force and contains many examples of noble living and noble dying which could not fail to incite lofty thoughts and good behaviour. And even this theory, so common in Renaissance criticism, so easily discredited, so subversive to the attainment of the great aesthetic and emotional values inherent in careful educational dramatics, is to be met to-day in the "preachy-preachy" plays which recommend themselves to pious teachers.

Gager says: "Neither doe I see what evil affection could be stirred up by owre playes, but rather good, for in

(1) Boas: op. cit.: 314

"Ulysses Reduce (his play), whoe did not love the fidelitye of Eumaeus and Philautius towards their Master, and hate the contrary in Melanthius?...who did not admire the constancye of Penelope, and dispraise the lyteness, and bad nature of Melanthe and thinke her justly hanged for it? Whoe did not prayse the patience, wisdom, secrecy of Ulysses and Telemachus his sonne? lastly whoe was not glad to see Ulysses restored to his wife and his goods and his mortall enemyes overthrowne and punished?" (1)

We may now summarize in modern idiom Gager's defence of school plays:

- (1) Far from being immoral they incite to virtuous conduct.
- (2) They provide refined recreation, training in the proper use of leisure, for the individual and the school.
- (3) They provide an outlet for creative students and literary beginners.
- (4) They assist in the study and appreciation of the classics.
- (5) They give necessary training in voice production, memorization, bodily grace.
- (6) They help to build self-confidence.
- (7) They act as a test and a spur to gifted students.

Before leaving Gager it is interesting to note that he refers directly to Elyot's "Gouverneur". Even without this direct proof of affinity between these two humanists it would be easy to find similarities. Both Elyot and Gager

(1) Boas: op. cit.: 315

protest against the exclusion of pleasurable exercise from any educational program not only because "all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy" but because the exercise itself is educational. "That there is a needfull tyme for sportes," argues Gager, "dothe not therfor prove the lawfullnes of owre Playes, which before I presumed to be lawfull: so your incomparable and harde comparisons, doe lesse argue their vnlawfullnes, and heere amonge other vnfit recreations, besyde Playes, you use many wordes agaynst dansinge, thoughte it be but as it weare by the waye. all which place dothe touche vs no neerer then I have shewed before, for myn owne parte. I never dansed, nor ever coulde, and yet I can not denye but I love to see honest dansinge. to omytt Homer's judgment therof, an excellent observer of decorum in all thinges; that learned Knight Sir Thomas Eliote, amonge other thinges that he wrytethe in a booke of his, which I have seene, in the prayse of dansinge, I remember, comparethe the man treadinge the measures to Fortitude, and the woman on his hande, to Temperance." (1)

When we add to Gager's points, here listed, Erasmus's and Elyot's idea of a "play-way" to learning based on the mimetic instinct and the needs of childhood and youth, when we add also Elyot's rather hazy conception of the spiritual value of aesthetics, illustrated in the absolute forms and

(1) Young: op. cit.: 116-7

designs of the dance, when we have done that, we have listed^{practically} everything that a modern teacher could say in defence of the school theatre.

We would stress the emotional values of dramatics to-day, perhaps, and these are scarcely mentioned in 16th century theory. We would devote considerable space to theatrical crafts. We would also say, what no one would have dreamed of saying in the days of the Tudors, that by teaching drama and theatre in school we may be creating audiences for a far far nobler Theatre than we now enjoy, and preparing young talent for that New Theatre when, and if, it comes.

No, the humanist schoolmaster would never have said that. Never for one moment did he realize that that was exactly what he was doing.

CHAPTER IV.

THE SCHOOL PLAYERS.

Before the humanist movement took root in England children's performances were rare. What few ventures are known, mystery or moral pieces given by choir boys, may be taken as an extension of the Boy Bishop ceremonies habitual to the Middle Ages and continuing to the time of Elizabeth. Thus the following findings of Warton really refer to a tradition of child acting rather than to a practice of educational dramatics.

"So early as the year 1378 the scholars, or choristers, of St. Paul's Cathedral in London presented a petition to Richard II that his majesty would prohibit some ignorant and inexperienced persons from acting the History of the Old Testament, to the great prejudice of the clergy who had expended considerable sums for preparing a public presentation of that play at the ensuing Christmas....In the accounts of Maxtoke priory near Coventry, in the year 1430, it appears that eleemosynary boys...of that monastery acted a play perhaps every year on the feast of the Purification in the hall of the neighbouring castle belonging to lord Clifton." (1)...
"In the year 1487 while Henry VII kept his residence at the castle of Winchester, on occasion of the birth of prince

(1) Warton: History of English Poetry: 570

Arthur, on a Sunday, during the time of dinner, he was entertained with a religious drama called "Christi Descensus ad Inferos"...It was represented by the Pueri Eleemosynarii... of Hyde abbey and St. Swithin's priory, two large monasteries at Winchester." (1)

One or two additional notes could be appended to these of Warton, but they would not materially affect our estimate of the extent of children's performances in the 14th and 15th centuries. Later historians have added nothing that would lead us to believe that plays by eleemosynary boys were other than exceptional. But in the accounts of the developments of the next century we are provided sometimes with an embarrassment of detail, sometimes with distressing lacunae.

It is probable that the vogue for school plays was well started in Germany, the Low Countries, and France before it affected the English schools, and at the height of the humanist movement continental schoolmasters were the leading exponents of educational dramatics. The Teutonic schoolmaster, in particular, was more enthusiastic than his insular brother. In fact the academic play was for a century and a half practically the sole outlet for the Dutch and German dramatists. Reuchlin, Frischlin, Gnapheus, Macropedius, and finally Brulow, these worked with and for young performers, and, with the exception of Hans Sachs, these are the outstanding

(1) Warton: History of English Poetry: 457-8

dramatists before Lessing. Their plays were popular. Rathaus, school-hall, Munsterplatz, public court and garden were thronged with scholars and burghers come to see the acting of the boys and hear the latest Latin or German lines of the Masters in charge.

At Strassburg, for instance, the Academy productions, given periodically, became a regular institution and at the close of the 16th century they actually evolved into a National Theatre subsidised by the Rath and attracting fine patronage from a wide district. Caspar Brulow, no mean contemporary of Shakespeare, and Latin professor at the Academy, wrote the famous Strassburg plays and directed the staging. In view of the eminence achieved by the Strassburg gymnasium, it is revealing to turn back the pages to the days of the foundation of Jacob Sturm, close friend of Melanchthon, the Erasmus of Germany. As Erasmus advised Colet of the value of Latin comedy, so Melanchthon advised Sturm. The result in the latter case was as follows.

"The chief feature of (Sturm's) school is the theatre on which the elder boys weekly tread the stage and the younger boys fill the benches. Had Melanchthon foreseen to what lengths a system of pressing Terence upon the attention of boys might be carried, his recommendation of the poet to the school master might have been less urgent or more guarded..." (might we not say the same of Erasmus's urgent recommendation to Colet in view of the subsequent semi-professionalism of

the Paul's boys?))..."Though Sturm is careful of Horace and Catullus, his boys play all the pieces of Terence and of Plautus indiscriminately. By dividing the work the whole repertory can be got through in six months. Day after day the actors are busy conning their parts, and week after week they throw themselves with as much histrionic effect as by imagination or drill they can attain into the stage characters and theatrical situations which pleased and edified Pagan Rome." (1)

Although no English school at the time (the early part of the 16th century) approached the production of plays with the fierce thoroughness of this gymnasium with its weekly performances that did not balk at the most ribald comedies, nevertheless, there must have been any number of schools which later on catered to the dramatic yearnings of the young scholars. Moreover, because of the common language and international outlook of the humanists, continental experiments in educational dramatics must have been closely studied by progressive English Headmasters. Of course no National Theatre sprang from English schoolboy theatricals. One might very well have had Elizabeth been less economical, for in the early years of her reign the boys of the Royal Song School and of the Song School of St. Paul's (2) were so popular with

(1) Watson: English Grammar Schools: 323

(2) These two Song Schools and the various other ones attached to the big cathedrals and wealthy households provided somewhat of a musical and theatrical academic system. Besides conducting the services, the boys presented holiday and reception entertainments, acquiring in the best establishments a decent elementary education in return. When their voices broke, some of the choristers were sent to University by their patrons; others graduated to the tenor or bass section of the choir or joined acting groups similarly organized in the household.

their sovereign that it seemed likely that they with their respective Masters would direct the future course of the Elizabethan drama.

Most of the data concerning school plays have been gathered from audit books and deal with those well-established London and neighbourhood schools which possessed companies of trained boys sufficiently talented to be in demand at court. Only odd scraps of information have come down to us about the production habits of the provincial schools. Chambers lists eleven companies which appeared at royal functions, or which found their way somehow into London records: The Children of Paul's, The Children of the Chapel and Queen's Revels, The Children of Windsor, The Children of the King's Revels, The Children of Bristol, Westminster School, Eton College, The Merchant Taylor's School, The Earl of Leicester's Boys, The Earl of Oxford's Boys, and Lord Derby's Boys. (1)

Four of these are regular school companies, although in the case of the Children of Paul's, there being a Song School as well as a Grammar School attached to the Cathedral, the actors were in Elizabeth's day very largely Song School boys. Previous to that the St. Paul's Grammar School is specified in the records. However, we do not know exactly how much give and take, how much interchanging of special

(1) Elizabethan Stage: ii, 59.

lessons and Masters, there may have been between the two schools throughout the century. There was a Song School at Westminster, but it does not figure prominently. All the other companies listed are from Chapels or some sort of professional singing or acting body. The records are often extremely vague. The Children of Bristol, for instance, are a mysterious group who may have adopted their "trade name" to escape municipal restrictions on travelling adult players. But the Children of the Chapel enjoyed a long and notable amateur career before they became professionalized. Song School boys, they had regular grammar Masters and could gain entrance to Universities. Unless we make a strict distinction these children should be classed with the regular schoolboys and the choristers of St. Paul's. The remaining companies are too obscure or too commercialized to warrant inclusion here.

It is at the present time impossible to compute how many other schools presented plays as a recognized part of their work. A painstaking antiquarian would have to subject innumerable rural archives to scrutiny to give merely a fair estimate. Even with all recorded facts before one, a correct answer could not be reached since it is foolish to assume that every school performance in the 16th century found its way into an extant audit book or other source. Very few authorities have bothered much about this question. Boas is the most helpful. He would have us believe that "It was

not only the schools in London or its neighbourhood that became active centres of amateur playing. It was fitting that the Ecclesiastical capital, Canterbury, should take a lead in a movement of this kind, and the Dean and Chapter gave generous encouragement to the theatrical performances by the boys of the King's School....In the north-west the boys of the town school of Shrewsbury gave performances in a quarry outside the walls; in the north-east Beverley, and in the home counties Hitchin were noted for their school performances. From time to time additional records come to light showing how widespread was this form of 'community drama'. It is a field in which explorers of local archives may still hope to be of service to historians of the stage." (1)

King's, Beverley, Shrewsbury, Hitchin, - four more schools, regular schools, are added to our list. About Hitchin, Shrewsbury and King's I shall have more to say later. A fifth is added by Watson: "It is probable also in the provinces that plays were acted in the towns by Grammar School boys, e.g. at Southampton, where payments were made by the town authorities to the master for a 'tragedy'." (2) With Eton, Merchant Taylor's, Westminster, and St. Paul's Grammar School, and with the two famous musical establishments, the Royal Chapel and St. Paul's Choir School, our total now stands at eleven schools whose amateur theatricals

(1) Tudor Drama: 22. See also the same authority's article in Cambridge History of English Literature; v: 102

(2) English Grammar Schools: 324

have been recorded. No one could honestly, from available information, list with these eleven the other companies mentioned by Chambers which seem to have no academic standing whatsoever.

Were there no more than eleven? Boas and Watson believe so. Good evidence for belief is contributed by no less an authority than Ben Jonson, himself a graduate of Westminster. In his "Staple of News" (Act III, Sc. 2) he puts the following speech into the mouth of Censure, one of the "ridiculous gossips" comprising the comic chorus who comment on the play proper or tattle the common ~~ant~~ of the times between scenes: "For my part I believe it: an there were no wiser than I, I would have ne'er a cunning schoolmaster in England. I mean a cunning man a schoolmaster; that is a conjurer, ~~or~~ a poet, or that hath any acquaintance with a poet. They make all their scholars play boys! Is't not a fine sight to see all our children made interluders? Do we pay our money for this? We send them to learn their grammar and their Terence and they learn theif play-books! Well, they talk we shall have no more parliaments, God bless us! but an we have Zeal-of-the Land Busy and my gossip Rabbi Troubletruth will start up and see we shall have painful good ministers to keep school and catechise our youth, and not teach them to speak plays and act fable of false news in this manner, to the super vexation of town and country, with a wannion!"

This delightful satire of puritan censure of school

plays (previously met in Dr. Rainolds) appeared in 1625. The late date may weaken its application to conditions in the 16th century. But judging from Hoole (writing eleven years after) methods had not changed momentarily since the reform days of Erasmus. It is not unlikely that there was as much, if not more teaching "to speak plays and act fables of false news" in 1550 as in 1625. By the latter date religious hostility towards the theatre had become vocal and set. By that date also the three most active children groups, Paul's and the two Royal Chapels, had disbanded so Censure's words would be applicable only to less advertised companies. (1) And when we consider that the three London schools known for their theatricals, Merchant Taylor's, Westminster, and St. Paul's Grammar School, had done nothing in public, so far as the records show for about forty years, her diatribe appears all the more strange. Of what schools was she thinking? Perhaps we should note particularly her "town and country", though that may be just a gossip's cliché.

That Puritans were looking with somewhat mixed emotions at school plays long before 1625 is revealed in a 1577 treatise written by John Northbrooke which inveighs against dicing, dancing, and "vaine playes". (2) It is written, a

(1) When in 1625 Nathaniel Giles was commissioned to take up boys for the King's Chapel it was expressly provided: "that none of the said Choristers or Children of the Chapell, soe to be taken by force of this commission, shal be used or employed as Comedians, or Stage Players...for that it is not fitt or desent that such as should sing the praises of God Almighty should be trained or employed in such lascivious and prophane exercises". (Manly: Camb. Hist. of Eng. Lit: v, 283
(2) Reproduced in Elizabethan Stage: IV: 199

bit incongruously, in dialogue form. The general tenor of one passage leads us to believe that school presentations were common events. Northbrooke is half Liberal, half Puritan in his attitude towards the practice. Age is speaking in answer to Youth's query about scholastic plays: "I thinke it is lawefull for a schoolmaster to practice his schollers to playe comedies, observing these and the like cautions: first, that those comedies which they shall play be not mixt with anye ribaudrie and filthie terms and wordes...Secondly, that it be for learning and vttrance sake, in Latine, and very seldome in Englishe. Thirdly, that they vse not to play commonly and often but verye rare and seldome. Fourthlye, that they be not pranked and decked vp in gorgious and sumptuous apparell in their play. Fifthly, that it be not made a common exercise, publickly, for pfofit and gaine of money, but for learning and exercise sake. And lastly, that their comedies be not mixte with vaine and wanton toyes of loue. These being obserued, I judge it tollerable for schollers."

From these words of caution to teachers, we may reasonably deduce that schoolboys did perform censorable comedies, that they did play often and commonly in English and for public profit, that they did costume themselves sumptuously and emulate the standards of the adult stage; in other words, we may deduce that the theatrical life of the schools was an important, and sometimes worrying, aspect of national culture.

With this evidence of Jonson and Northbrooke, there is no reason why we should accept the belief of Boas and Watson in a widespread use of educational dramatics. What was practised at Eton, Westminster, and St. Paul's, practised ever since the first quarter of the century, was copied by progressive humanists everywhere. Play production was fashionable, and the famous schools set the fashion. Again, since amateur theatricals were a favourite activity at Oxford and Cambridge (as we shall see), and since a goodly number of schoolmasters were graduates, teachers would be likely to continue in their respective posts the work they had found, or seen to be, so profitable and amusing in their undergraduate years.

Educational dramatics is implied or discussed in 16th century educational theory. Undoubtedly it was featured in educational method. There is no reason why we should not multiply our original eleven schools by eleven to get a true picture of schoolboy drama.

And taken all in all, it is a picture of school life in Renaissance times that is most revealing and pleasant. May we not ask ourselves, "If the Tudor child was not only reading drama but actually acting it and acting it more or less regularly and well, is not some of the darkness that envelops the early years of the Elizabethan drama lifted?" We are in a field for research and conjecture as fascinating

as that other field which has already produced such excellent results, the church play. Certainly the sudden appearance of innumerable dramatists, equipped with their share of ideas, taste, and technique, may no longer be set down as just one of the wondrous quirks of fate. Otherwise we must believe that the educational life of a country has but little effect upon the creation of national character.

"The expansion of Elizabethan England which took the world by surprise not only in navigation, in commerce, in colonization, but in poetry and the drama, in philosophy and science, was due to the immense extension of lay initiative and effort in every department of national life, and not least in the sphere of education and the schools." (1)

(1) Leach: Schools of Mediaeval England; concluding paragraph.

CHAPTER V.

THE SCHOOL DRAMATISTS.

It is difficult adequately to organize and assess the recorded dramatic work of the eleven schools mentioned in the previous chapter. I have chosen to estimate the dramatists who wrote for the boy companies rather than detail the production history of each separate group. This will permit both simplification and selection and still convey all the really essential information. Furthermore, by so doing I hope to bring home the rather astonishing facts that before Kyd, nearly every dramatist of note in comedy, tragedy and tragi-comedy wrote for amateur performances in school or college, that the famous pre-Shakespearean playwrights, Lyly, Greene, Nashe, Peele, Lodge, Kyd, and Marlowe, either wrote for schools, had access to amateur experience in their boyhood and youth, or are known to have worked on college stages, and, finally, that in the very hey-day of the professional companies, the children's theatre still attracted a surprising number of the best plays.

Possibly the first who should be listed is William Cornish, Master of the Chapel in the second decade of the century. Warton has a note to the effect that Gilbert Banaster, who held a similar position during the seventies and eighties of the 15th century "wrote in English verse the 'Miracle of St. Thomas' in the year 1467," (1) but we should hesitate

(1) History of English Poetry: 408

before believing that work to be a play.

Cornish became Master of the Children probably about the year 1509. A short time later he appears to have organized his singers into a regular playing company, in all likelihood the first children's theatre in England. We find them presenting during the Christmas season of 1514-5 an interlude called the "Triumph of Love and Bewte", and in the following year they appeared in "Troylous and Pandor", an ambitious venture which required fifteen actors and a rich wardrobe. Unfortunately, we can only surmise that Cornish wrote these lost plays, the second of which would entitle him to a very worthy place among the pioneers of the regular drama. Henry Medwell's "Fulgens and Lucrez", which comes considerably earlier, is the only extant play before 1540 which departs from mediaeval tradition in favour of a secular and romantic theme. "Troylous and Pandor", to all appearances, would be a companion piece, the second of its kind. Moreover, there is at least one student of the period who accounts Cornish a very significant playwright indeed. In his "Evolution of the English Drama", Dr. C.W. Wallace terms the literary musician the "octavian Shakespeare", assigns to him a number of plays of unknown authorship, and even deprives in his favour John Heywood of "The Four PP", "The Pardoner and the Frere", and "Johan Johan", and John Rastell of "The Nature of the Four Elements".

Most of Wallace's claims are scouted by other authorities. (1) But despite his dubious credentials Cornish deserves a place in stage annals if only as a pioneer in elaborate staging and by reason of his connection with the early Masques (2). Many of the colorful "disguisings" at the court of Henry VIII were conceived and directed by Cornish who used his children in some of the Pageantry and more particularly in the interludes which the form of the Masque then permitted to be inserted. In view of the later development of the Masque into an art form capable of attracting Jonson and Milton, and in view of its well-known effects upon the regular drama, it is a great pity that none of these experiments of Cornish has been preserved. Unfortunately, too, for his reputation as a dramatist the interludes from the Masques have also been lost. Therefore, about all that can safely be said of Cornish and his Children is that they wrote an introductory chapter to the history of the drama the full importance of which can only be conjectured.

Contemporary with Cornish were the first two Headmasters of St. Paul's Grammar School, William Lily and John Ritwise. Lily had been a pupil of Pomponius Laetus, the Italian humanist whom we have seen to be the first to bring Latin drama back to the stage. He may have taken part in some of Laetus' experiments, and, with that precedent, introduced educational

(1) cf. Reed: Early Tudor Drama: p.94 et seq.

(2) For an illustration of his skill as a director of spectacle, we may note that Cornish had the devising of the pageants on Sunday night of the Field of the Cloth of Gold.

dramatics into English public schools. Likewise he may have written or translated Latin pieces for his boys to perform. However, the first recorded performance by Paul's did not take place until after his tenure, and, unfair as it seems, Ritwise must be given the honours for instituting the theatricals and the original plays which were to bring such fame to the two schools attached to the Cathedral.

Because professional actors would, most likely, be incapable of handling Latin expertly, it became necessary to recruit London schoolboys to provide entertainment for educated foreigners. Therefore, in 1520 Henry VIII, possibly in a gesture of hospitality, possibly to prove that England was not so barbarous as the continentals believed, called upon Ritwise to give a "goodly comedy of Plautus" for the benefit of some French hostages. Then on November 19, 1527, Ritwise and his pupils played "Menaechmi" before their sovereign and the ambassador of Francis I, and in the next year they did "Phormio" for the pleasure of Cardinal Wolsey. Wolsey also saw the boys in "Dido", Ritwise's lost "tragedy" out of Virgil. "Dido" was a "romantic-classic" play written in Latin after the Italian vogue, and illustrates with "Fulgens and Lucretia", and "Troilus and Pandarus" how the English dramatists were taking their cues from the southern humanists in an endeavour to evolve a secular drama. The humanists of Germany and the Low Countries were less interested in romantic themes. Their plays often had a didactic

and theological purpose, and English dramatists, belonging to a nation affected by the Reformation, sometimes fell in line. Thus we find Ritwise writing an anti-Lutheran play which was given before Henry in 1527. It is not unlikely that Ritwise wrote other plays revealing either the southern or northern fashions in humanist drama,- the little we know proves him to be an active figure in the early children's theatre. And just how important that theatre was in the evolution of the English drama is revealed in his record. During his mastership the Paul's boys had performed in public Latin comedy, neo-Latin romantic drama, and "propagandist" play; and what their private showings were no one can say. Certainly Ritwise was a great pioneer and helped considerably in diverting the English drama into new and broader channels.

The next playwright connected with the history of the Paul's boys was John Redford, Master of the Choir School (c.1540). Redford was the author of at least one morality (1) in a humanist rather than a Mediaeval vein. As in the "Nature of the Four Elements" of John Rastell, printer and brother-in-law of Sir Thomas More, Redford's subject is pseudo-scientific befitting a schoolman who may have been trying to lead boys to the "new" learning by means of plays. "Wyt and Science" is the title of his accepted work. In it he endeavours to enforce the value of well-digested and

(1) Two doubtful plays are "The Marriage of Wyt and Science" and "The Trial of Treasure".

well-applied learning through the title characters and "father Reson" without whom Wyt is helpless. Other characters are Idleness, Ignorance, and Tediousness. We get what may be a glimpse of the humorous side of school life at St. Paul's in a comic spelling scene where, needless to say, Ignorance plays a prominent part.

Redwood's successor in the Song School was Sebastian Westcot under whom the Paul's boys reached the climax of their early history. He was not, presumably, a dramatist, but by some arrangement he had working for him one of the greatest of the pre-Elizabethan playwrights. In 1559 "the Queen was entertained by the Earl of Arundel at Nonsuch with a play of the children of Poweles and their Master Sebastian, Master Phelypes, and Master Haywood", (1) Master Phelypes may or may not be the John Phillips who dramatised Boccaccio's and Chaucer's "Patient Grissell", - and Master Haywood? That, of course, is John Heywood, nephew of More and "Dean" of the early Tudor interludists.

His identification here with the Children of Paul's leads one to surmise that the author-musical may have been a Master or Usher in the School. That, however, cannot be perfectly proved. He was for many years associated with Westcot and his predecessor Redford so that Chambers thinks "it is more than likely that(he) wrote throughout for the Paul's boys as he most certainly did in 1559." (2) In

(1) Elizabethan Stage: iii, 13.

(2) ibid: ii, 13.

another place the same authority writes of Heywood, "From about 1515 he was employed at court; in 1519 he is called a 'singer', later a 'player at virginals'; and finally he was master of a company of children, possibly the singing school of St. Paul's." (1).

If we accept this as conclusive, then the boys of St. Paul's stepped on the stage to play midwife at the birth of English farce. The Mediaeval Farce, or merry interlude, was, as we know, the first native genre that was purely secular. "Dido" and the early romantic dramas had shaken off the shackles of the allegorical form; Redford had diverted the morality to classroom uses. These are preliminary ventures. Heywood set a style.

His earliest interludes (2) dating probably from the thirties, are primitive sketches of no particular importance. But his three best plays, "The Four PP", "The Pardoner and the Frere", and "Johan Johan" possess far more than antiquarian interest. "The Four PP" is a prince among interludes, direct and racy in its dialogue, commendable in humour and character (particularly the mountebank Peddler), and revealing in the Pardoner's mythical adventures in Hell a fine flair for narrative. It shows a definite advance in realism over any play that was written by another author before 1550, and had Heywood displayed a surer sense of con-

(1) Mediaeval Stage: ii, 444

(2) "Witty and Witless", "The Play of the Wether", "The Play of Love".

struction it would be eminently playable to-day and as peculiarly appropriate for young players as one would expect from its conception. This sense of construction is far more evident in "The Pardoner and the Frere" and "Johan Johan" which, published anonymously, are generally credited to Heywood. Here we have real farce, and real social types, and it is quite apparent on reading them that the author had been observing the methods of the French sotie players and their playwrights.

Both these farces should be revived, for, even if they lack some of the literary charm of "The Four PP", they are more playable. "The Pardoner and the Frere" is a merry satire of those two worthies given with something of the genial spirit of Chaucer but ending in a mad scene of noisy recriminations and noisier drubbings. Its complete irreverence almost makes one doubt that it could have been written by a staunch Catholic who died in self-imposed exile from Protestant England. Just as irreverent is "Johan Johan" which tells the old story of the meek cuckold, the wily shrew, and the philandering priest. Its supper scene wherein the unhappy Johan is made to suffer no end of indignities from him amorous spouse and her lover until even his patience is outraged so that he turns upon them and drives them violently from the house, -this scene is Heywood's jolliest contribution to the stage, his closest approximation to the vigorous humours of the French school of farce. This last is not to

be wondered at since Heywood in "Johan Johan" took for his model the play "Pernet qui va au vin".

Heywood, Ritwise, Redwood, and possibly Phillips, - here are four pre-Elizabethan playwrights in the history of Paul's, each representative of a different trend in early drama and each performing his experiments with children. Ritwise used them to play in Latin or neo-Latin on humanist themes, Redwood used them to further the "intellectual morality", Phillips....the mediaeval legend, and Heywood...the farce. In later years these children were to be the medium for far greater playwrights. But in the meantime let us direct our attention to two more, important pre-Elizabethan schoolmasters who were also dramatists, Nicholas Udal, Headmaster of Eton and Westminster, and Ralph Radclif, founder in 1538 of a Grammar School in the dismantled Carmelite friary at Hitchin. In these two English Heads we find the nearest parallel to the great Teutonic schoolmaster-dramatists.

Of Radclif, John Bale, the one-time Carmelite, the virulent Protestant playwright, and the friend of Thomas Cromwell, has left us a brief record. He visited Hitchin in 1552 and wrote his impressions (1). We may imagine, too, that Radclif's boys presented some of Bale's plays, perhaps the notable "Kynge Johan", the first to introduce characters from English history, and as such the progenitor of the famous chronicles.

(1) cf. Chambers: Mediaeval Stage: ii, 197

That would, indeed, be a very pleasant conjecture to make since it would associate the school theatre with one more excursus the stage was to make in its pioneer efforts to escape from mediaeval traditions. However, unless there is more behind Bale's friendship with Radclif than meets the eye, the chronicler-moralist must remain outside the sphere of educational dramatics and join the exceedingly small minority of noteworthy playwrights in that position during the reigns of Henry VIII, Edward VI, and Mary (1)

From Bale we gather that Radclif had transformed part of the friary into a spacious and elegant theatre where his pupils gave plays in Latin and English for the public. The Master was actuated, naturally, by a desire to teach ease and clarity in spoken Latin. Likewise, he had a didactic purpose which doubtless delighted the fierce old Bale who was to get into trouble as a representative of the reforming drama singularly expressive of German humanism. Bale mentions a number of "comedies" and "tragedies" which Radclif had written and claims that they were "spectacula simul incunda et honesta". He urged Radclif to print them but the advice was not followed, unfortunately. The titles reveal clearly that mingling of classic, romantic, and biblical themes which we find so characteristic of humanist drama: "The Defection of Jonah", "Patient Griselda", "Titus and

(1) Medwell and Hastell are the only known dramatists of real note between 1500-1565 who most likely did not write for school and college stages.

Gisippus", etc. (1) Beyond the titles we know nothing about them. Some of them may not have been plays. Only a few of them may have been written in English, but still their loss is a tremendous one to the literature of the period and to any history of educational dramatics.

Nicholas Udal, graduate of Winchester and Corpus Christi, professor of the liberal arts, informant, and schoolmaster, translator of Terence and Erasmus, and leading playwright and producer of Mary's reign, contributed more to the English comedy than any pre-Elizabethan with the possible exception of Heywood. He is first noticed in a theatrical way at the coronation of Anne Boleyn when he fashioned interludes enacted by children. His first school position may have been that of usher at St. Antony's Hospital whence he graduated to the Headmastership of Eton in 1534. Here there was at least an annual play (and a costume library) and under Udal's severe coaching the Eton boys played before Cromwell in 1538, perhaps in one of his own creations. He left Eton under a cloud in 1541 and maintained himself by translations, court productions, religious pamphlets, tutoring, and by teaching for Bishop Gardiner at Winchester, either in the Bishop's chapel or at the town Grammar School which enjoyed Gardiner's patronage. Then in 1555 he became Headmaster of Westminster which position he held until his death very soon afterwards.

(1) Melibeus, Dives and Lazarus, The Afflictions of Job, The Delivery of Susannah, Jonas, The Fortitude of Judith, and (an interesting title) The Burning of John Huss.

For lengthy reasons which need not be gone into here, scholars no longer believe that Udal's famous play "Ralph Roister Doister" was written during his tenure at Eton, nor yet while he was at Westminster. It may have been written for Winchester students. (1)

Udal was a noted Marian producer and undoubtedly wrote many other plays besides "Ralph Roister Doister", but of only one of these have we definite information, his lost biblical comedy, "Ezechias", produced posthumously before Elizabeth at Cambridge in 1564. It may belong to his Eton Mastership. We cannot identify the Eton play that entertained Cromwell in 1538, nor can we be sure what plays he wrote for his patron Mary's Christmas festivities. Boas asserts that "Thersites", "The History of Jacob and Esau", and "Jack Juggler" show strong signs of Udal's hand (2). They were written before his death, and obviously intended for boys, as, indeed, the title pages of the third states while the first is a fairly close copy of a play written for French schoolboys. Moreover, "Jacob and Esau" and "Jack Juggler" display Plautine borrowings and are similar in technique and spirit as well as in aim to "Ralph Roister Doister" and "Thersites" is later referred to by Udal himself.

Judged by the standards of modern dramatic theory, "Ralph Roister Doister" is a farce and has no right to be

(1) cf. Leach: Nicholas Udal: Encyclopaedia Britannica.

(2) Tudor Drama: 26-28

called the earliest extant English comedy. Nor should it be called the first English farce.. Heywood's bright little sketches for the Paul's boys antedate it. But "Ralph Roister Doister" is the first English farce which reveals an awareness and concern for classic form. Also it is the first to attempt to re-capture the style and characterization of Roman comedy. We might, therefore, call it a farce-comedy. At any rate, the famous boys' play illustrates better than any previous farce the impetus and direction given to indigenous drama through the study of models and by the actual presentation of them in Latin or translation. It is based, loosely enough, on Plautus' "Miles Gloriosus" (which was to be played in Latin before Elizabeth 1564-5 by the boys of Westminster), and it is reminiscent occasionally of "Eunuchus" by Terence.

Like Roman comedy, and unlike the interlude and morality, "Ralph Roister Doister" is divided into Acts and Scenes and makes a decent attempt to maintain the unities. Its characters, English comic types or Anglicised stock figures of the classic theatre, are really believable, -bourgeois, in fact; and its well-known plot of the braggart and his parasite moves easily and uproariously to its boisterous finale. It is sufficiently humanistic to have shape, situation, continuity and reality, and sufficiently popular to have slapstick and mischief. When acted to-day by lads, it takes on a definite life. A cast of children seems almost essential

to convey the authentic impact of its rough farce. Adults might find it difficult as the humour is organically suited to adolescent interpretation. This youthful quality is to me one of the play's most significant features, for I am of opinion that the traditions of humanist educational dramatics helped to impart to Elizabethan comedy that fragrance of youth, that young, roistering approach, direct and unsophisticated, which makes some of the plays of the period peculiarly and poignantly effective when interpreted by children. For a span of upwards of seventy-five years the pioneer dramatists were writing for boys and college youths, so that to-day, when schoolmasters wonder why children often act Shakespeare more proficiently than the apparently less difficult plays of the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries, they should not forget the part children played during those years when the rough elements of the Shakespearean drama were being formulated.

We should not leave Udal without commenting on the three anonymous plays previously mentioned which, if not of his authorship, are fairly certainly the product of some writer or writers similarly concerned with educational dramatics. Without ever approaching the excellences of "Ralph Roister Doister", "Thersites", "The History of Jacob and Esau", and "Jack Juggler" are interesting pieces both historically and artistically and should be neglected in no comprehensive survey of the English stage, much less in a survey of the children's drama.

"Thersites" (1537?), the first of these, is a boyish burlesque with a hero even more outrageously cowardly and boastful than the insufferable Ralph. This Greek "Miles Gloriosus" vaunts his prowess and challenges to mortal combat every warrior famous in history or mythology (including King Arthur and all his Table Round!) only to quail before the mysterious terrors of the horned snail and, panic-stricken, seek haven behind his mother's skirts as soon as his challenges are actually accepted by other than an imaginary opponent. Doubtlessly the original director of "Thersites" accoutred his boy hero in clownish, gross-fitting mail and provided him with a slap-stick sword. The crude play is memorable for two reasons: first, it offers a preliminary sketch for that immeasurably more colorful Thersites who was to strut, sneer, and mimic his way through the Grecian scenes in "Troilus and Cressida"; secondly, it provides us with a link between the English experiments in educational dramatics and their French forerunners. "Thersites" is a close adaptation, with many touches of local colour, of a dialogue of Ravisius Textor, professor of rhetoric at the college of Navarre and afterwards rector of the university of Paris. He wrote a number of Latin playlets for his pupils which had, apparently, a vogue among amateurs and were published after his death in 1530. Another play of his, based on the parable of the Prodigal Son, exists in a much-mutilated English manuscript and gives us further

grounds for belief in a widespread inter-communication among humanist teachers and an interchange of play-scripts among exponents of educational dramatics. George Buchanan, the Scotch humanist who did most of his teaching in France, may also have influenced English developments through his school plays and productions "Jepthe" and "John the Baptist", etc. We shall come across each of these men again in another context.

Considerably more pretentious than "Thersites" are "Jacob and Esau" and "Jack Juggler", both of which are Marian plays printed in the decade following the accession of Elizabeth. Of the two the "merry and witty" "Jacob and Esau" would make the better showing in a modern school theatre because of its regular five act form and generally more coherent plot although one or two of its characterizations are stolid. In certain respects it is quite similar to the Prodigal Son comedies of the continent which will be considered shortly. Like them it treats of a biblical subject in a Terentian manner and like them it introduces characters from the contemporary scene. Isaak and Jacob are lay figures but Rebecca and Esau are drawn believably. One is especially entertained by the technique used by the dramatist to effect Esau's downfall in a way that would be readily understandable to his youthful players. Pictured as an insatiable hunter and a great lover of dogs, -quite the parish squire, -Esau returns from a foray so famished that he

readily sells his birthright for the famous mess of pottage. Even better are the three homespun servants, Mido, Abra, and Deborah, who with their dialogue and singing remind one irresistably of the trio in "Ralph Roister Doister" headed by the comic Tibet Talkapace. Ragan, Esau's lackey, is a combination of the stock faithful servant of classic drama and the pert parasite who, as in the case of Mathew Merrygreeke (Ralph's go-between), stems both from the ancient comedy and the morality Vice. He is all in all one of the most real and amusing characters in early comedy. To the student of humanist drama an interesting feature of the play is the use to which Isaak's two neighbours, Hanan and Zethar, are put. In their gossip about the main characters and in their gloomy predictions regarding the fate of the irresponsible Esau, they comprise an effectively Anglicised counterpart of the classic chorus. Again, the unwarranted happy ending, like a moral tag, and the homiletic epilogue on the subject of election makes one believe that Udal (the most logical choice for author) had in mind the school comedies of the reformed German and Dutch humanists.

"Jack Juggler", "a new interlude for children to play", is a loosely-knit farce compounded of typical servant scenes of verbal and physical extravagance which would make for a short but violent evening in the theatre. According to the prologue the play is based on the popular classic "Amphitruo", but the main story of Jupiter's amours on earth is passed

over in favour of the Mercury sub-plot and "Jacke Jugeler" takes the role of the mischievous messenger. Jack is an inveterate prankster, on this occasion so befuddling Jenkin Careaway (the English Josia, servant of Amphitryon) that the unfortunate fellow is made to believe his personality has been exchanged with that of his tormenter. This leads to troublesome consequences and the inevitable beating when he tries to explain his conduct to his skeptical master and mistress. The usual epilogue hints that this nonsensical plot has an ulterior purpose whereby we realize that in Jenkin's mishaps we have been treated to a cleverly concealed burlesque of the doctrine of transubstantiation! Here again we see how classroom methods of attracting pupils to difficult subjects by appealing to their tastes and talents found a staunch servant in the popular and easy play form. How better could a good Protestant (like Udal, despite his associations with Mary) teach his dangerous views than by incorporating them in such a jolly boys' play as this? And how strange that the good Protestants of later days should sometimes frown so severely on the school theatre and fail to remember its services to their cause! (1)

While we are on the subject of educational dramas which have been hypothetically attributed to Udal, a word should

(1) Any compunctions concerning the school theatre and the stage in general, such as Rainolds and Northbrooke had, were not shared by the early Calvinist protestants. The theatre was the ally of Bale, Radclif and Grimald. Baldwin and Ferrers, producers for Edward, were staunch Protestants. Many a strolling player was punished for presenting controversial pieces, and Bishop Gardiner was furious with Cambridge for presenting "Pammachius", a virulent reforming play. Sackville, Norton, Gascoigne, and the translators Studley, Nuce and Neville, good Protestants all, had no prejudice against the theatre.

be said of "Tom Tyler and his wife", an anonymous farce which belongs to the period and which according to the Prologue was written for "pretty boys" to perform. Except for its songs, which compare favorably with those of Udal and the Cambridge playwright, Stevenson, (author of Gammer Gurton's Needle), it seems to fall into the category of a doubtful Heywood play. On the other hand, except for its lack of classical precedent and of any notable resemblance to the methods of the reformed schoolmaster-dramatists of the continent, it might almost as fairly be attributed to Udal. Its determination as a play for young boys would argue against a University author.

Like the preceding farcical dramas, "Tom Tyler" belongs to the muscular school of humour. A veritable dog-fight of a play, it must have provided no end of sport for schoolboy thespians who were here given almost free license to thwack each other lustily and tumble about like puppies. As is the case with several of these early farces, the rowdiest fun is provided by the comic women, and Strife and her gossips are no exception. A likely reason for this is not hard to find. In the concert parties during the Great War, the Tommy who impersonated a low-comedy dowager or robustious charwoman invariably "stole the show" no matter how inexperienced a comedian he may have been. He enjoyed himself so hugely in the broad humours of the part that his enthusiasm was contagious. Similarly, nothing delights a boy actor more than

a chance to don voluminous and outlandish woman's garb and play the fool.-and unsophisticated audiences love it. The early playwright capitalized on this. In any case he wrote in a number of roistering female roles for any boys who did not mind absorbing (and returning) incredible buffetings. And all these hardy dames and cheery maidservants are important. Beyond a doubt they are the uncouth ancestors of Dame Quickly, Kate the curst, Maria, Audrey, the Merry Wives and innumerable lesser ladies in the comedies of Peele, Lyly, Greene, Jonson, Beaumont, Fletcher and others.

Tom Taylor, the friend of Tom Tyler, in another type character peculiarly suited to a boy's talent for comedy, and he also is to be found in various guises in later drama. Like Merrygreeke, Ragan and Jack Juggler, he is a jesting, boisterous, friendly, bright-witted, and garrulous fellow who never seems to grow up. Even in his magical transformations achieved through the genius of Shakespeare he frequently gives himself away beneath the disguise of a Touchstone, a Mercutio, a Petruchio, a Feste, a Gratiano, a Poins, or a Fabian, and he is, of course, first cousin to the Moscas who flit under various names through the scenes of Jonson. (1)

(1) Two other Shakespearean types are suitable for boy actors. These are the nimble clown (Gobbo, the Dromios, Biondello, etc.) and the ninny or oaf (Grumio, William, Peter), types which are traceable in the early farces, more clearly in the biblical comedies and tragi-comedies evaluated on other pages. That the presence of such types as these may be, in part, a result of the methods of educational dramatists is best shown in modern school productions.

A final and noteworthy feature that "Tom Tyler" possesses in common with companion boys' pieces of the time is the incidental song. The educational dramatist was especially fond of the lyric and introduces it without strong classical precedent or mediaeval example. Why was this so? Again a reasonable answer is not hard to find. He was writing for Song Schools or regular schools where part-singing for younger boys occupied an honorable place on the curriculum. No national school system before or since the Tudors developed the art of singing so thoroughly, and the results of that training are apparent in the magnificent Tudor madrigals and the incidental songs of the Elizabethan dramatists. In other words, the presence of songs in Elizabethan comedy may be partly traceable to the fact that the pioneer comedies were written for boys who knew how to sing well. This argument will become clearer when we come to treat of the lyrics of John Lyly.

A great deal more remains to be said of the contributions made by the educational dramatist to the evolution of English comedy. Already he must appear as a figure of vital importance, for the farces and the farce-comedies we have been evaluating are among the principal extant pre-Elizabethan and early Elizabethan efforts in their medium. When added to the Prodigal Son plays and to the University and law school experiments, they comprise almost our complete literature of Tudor comedy before the last quarter of the century.

In other words, without any assistance from professional and adult players, the humanist playwright could have carried the comedy through its middle and transitional period when with the help of classic, Italian, French, and German examples it was evolving from the humorous situations and characters which sometimes enlivened the earlier mysteries and moralities. In the development of tragi-comedy the children's theatre played likewise a leading part, as we shall see. But in the meantime we must turn to the plays belonging to the Prodigal Son cycle. (1)

In addition to the fragmentary manuscript translation of Ravisius Textor's playlet there are four extant English dramatizations of the beautiful parable: Palsgrave's "Acolastus", Ingeland's "The Disobedient Child", the anonymous "Misogonus" and Gascoigne's "The Glasse of Government". The last, a law-school play, has no place in a history of the dramatists who wrote for young boys, while "Misogonus" by reason of its unknown authorship may be but briefly used and only for its illustrative associations.

"Acolastus", a very important play by the Dutch teacher Gulielmus Gnapheus, was translated by John Palsgrave and published in 1540. Palsgrave, an obscure grammarian, intended this translation for young Latin students as he included marginal notes and a grammar. Professor Hereford is an

(1) The most notable continental dramatizations are "Asotus" and "Rebelles" (Macropedius), "Studentes" (Stymelius), and "Acolastus" (Gnapheus).

(2) cf. Watson: English Grammar Schools: 319-21

admirer of "Acolastus" and has explained clearly and fully its origin and significance. "All three", he writes, referring to Crocus, Macropedius, and Gnapheus, "appear to have arrived independently at the same solution for a practical problem which as schoolmasters they all had to meet: how, namely, to steep a boy's mind in the admirable colloquial Latin of Plautus and Terence without introducing him prematurely to a world of lenones and meretrices...."(We remember Ascham's criticism of the plays as school texts)... "All three found the solution in what may be generally called the Biblical drama, or as the strange phrase went, 'the comedia sacra'; but with a difference in motive and technique."

Herford then describes the dominant theme in this "comedia sacra": "...the tragic struggle of a moral hero with 'the world', his unjust sufferings, persecution, ruin, or his triumph and glory;-and a career of picaresque or prodigal adventure, issuing in a final restoration to grace and decency. For the former the Old Testament naturally offered abundant examples, as the Judiths, Susannas, Esthers, Josephs, which presently inundated Germany, sufficiently showed; ancient comedy, on the other hand, none whatever. For the latter Plautus and Terence were a mine of illustration, while the Hebraic genius...produced perhaps in the whole Bible but one instance, though one of incomparable beauty - the parable of the Prodigal Son. The latter commended itself to...the

ardent humanists, who vied with the old comic poets, aspired to be the Terences or Plautuses of the age, and to reproduce as far as was consistent with a Biblical subject and a pious intention the art, the coloring, the society of Plautus and Terence. Such, on the whole, was Gulielmus Gnapheus, the author of 'Acolastus', the most famous and the finest, though not the first Latin drama upon the Prodigal Son..It is the influence of Terence and not of the parable which dictates the choice of incidents, the complexion of the characters, and nearly every detail of the execution... what the parable passed lightly by becomes the main subject of the drama...(and) is expanded into a series of striking scenes, painted with the genial vigour of Plautus." (1)

At the end of his description Herford quotes Palsgrave's prefatory appeal to the reader to study the play well and copy its style. Then he says: "Whatever effect we may attribute to the excellent grammarian's appeal, it is certain that in comparison with those that had gone before, the ten years which followed Palsgrave's translation were decidedly productive." To conclude, he lists Radclif, Udal, and Grimald as probably coming under the influence of the "epoch-making 'Acolastus'".

It is not known how often "Acolastus" and the other Christian Terence plays were acted by English schoolboys, or

(1) Literary Relations of England and Germany: 84-86

how closely Palsgrave's translation was studied by them and their Masters. Ingeland's "The Disobedient Child", previously cited, is the only extant copy of the Prodigal Son story which we are sure was intended for boy actors. It is quite probable, though, that English schoolmasters frequently had their boys act similar plays in Latin or English which they wrote themselves or imported from the continent. Udal's "Ezechias", his doubtful "Jacob and Esau", and the titles of Radclif's lost plays would suggest as much. How many more Radclifs or Udals there may have been is a matter of purest conjecture. Conjecture or no, the whole idea of treating the Bible in a Terentian manner would have appealed to Tudor humanists who wished to combine good style with good morality as motives for school production, and without doubt a pronounced trend for Christian Terence in educational dramatics would have made for a greatly increased appreciation among schoolboys of stage value.

"The Disobedient Child" (c.1547) subtitled an "enterlude for boyes to handle and to pass tyne at Christinmas", is not a particularly happy dramatization since Thomas Ingeland, the author, was overly concerned with pointing the moral purport of the parable and leaves his Terence resting while he preaches tiresomely. The plot, like that of "Acolastus", has been embellished, adjusted, and localized, and, as we would now expect in a boys' play, its best moments are contributed by comic servants. The marriage feast is seen

through the merry eyes of the familiar nimble-witted attendant, and, when our interest flags, the equally familiar gossiping cooks, Long-tongue and Blanche-blab-it-out, come to the rescue with their lively chatter and buffoonery. The other characters, who are not always given definite names, remind one of the moralities, an association strengthened by the presence of a rather wordy devil and a perorator who recites the didactic epilogue. Next in interest to the humours of the servants comes Ingeland's lyric, addressed by the otherwise very stiff Young Man to his "sweet rose". It is an ardent little song which should be better known.

"Misogonus" (c.1560) is a vastly improved dramatization. If we possessed the complete script it would easily rank with "Ralph Roister Doister" and "Gammer Gurton's Needle" and in most respects it would be valued for revival purposes well above Heywood's best works and the two comedies of Gascoigne. In characterization, humour, structure, and particularly dialogue it is a superlative early comedy. We might well qualify it as the work of some educational dramatist since it is rare that we find a Christian Terence play not written by a schoolmaster or someone interested in the school drama; however, since we know nothing whatsoever of its author, (1) and since there is no evidence of its having been originally interpreted by boys, we must in all honesty pass

(1) Thomas Richardes (?)- sometimes believed to be Edwardes. Cf. Farmer: Early English Dramatists: 403 et seq. Could one believe Farmer's hypothesis, the play could be included in our list.

over its decided merits. Refretfully we leave this fine little comedy until further research presents us with adequate evidence of its purpose and conception.

When we have filled in certain details taken from the theatrical records of the colleges, we shall have completed what amounts practically to a survey of the whole field of the early regular comedy,- surely an impressive score on the side of the dramatists who wrote under the promptings of humanist educational theory. The field of early tragi-comedy is not so restricted. There are several lost plays, apparently tragi-comedies, which figure in school and college repertoires, but in the main, since humanist aesthetics frowned on combining lofty with lowly (despite the precedent of classical pastoral or satyr plays), the school, when it produced original plays, confined itself to straight farce, farce-comedy or Christian Terence, the college, less exclusively, to Latin or English tragedy after Senecan models. However, sturdy and practical English tastes and traditions were, like the Spanish, too strong to suffer very long any subjugation to the intellectual regency of Italian and French dramatic theory. Even into the very strongholds of humanism,-quadrangle, classroom, and court,-tragi-comedy insinuated itself. Ascham speaks of an "unorthodox" playwright who captured the ear of the Cambridge groundlings; Elizabeth and a capacity Oxford audience applauded "Palomon and Arcite" to the echo on a famous occasion which

we shall describe presently and the second and quite probably the first of our extant tragi-comedies were written by Masters of the Royal Song School and producers for the famous Children of the Chapel.

"Appius and Virginia", although it was not printed until 1575, is generally considered to date considerably earlier, perhaps before 1550. It is signed "R.B.". Every authority who has concerned himself with the problem of its authorship concedes that those initials can be applied to no known, better-qualified person than Richard Bower, Master of the Chapel Boys from 1545-61. With reservations, therefore, we can list him here.

Hardly worth reviving even by study groups, his clumsy play is still a representative pioneer effort with several points of interest. In the first place we should note its subject. Looking into the future, we discover that Webster fashioned a play about the same figures and there were few more popular characters in Elizabethan tragedy than the classic story here. Looking backwards, we can see that Master Bower is one with Master Ritwise and perhaps Master Cornish who also used classic themes for their, shall we say, tragi-interludes, "Dido" and "Troylous and Pandor". In other words "Appius and Virginia", first of the "lamentable comedies full of pleasant mirth", provides both an illustration of homogeneous qualities in 16th century regular drama throughout its whole course and another and stronger fore-

cast that English melodrama, tragi-comedy, and tragedy would scour ancient history and legend for suitable material.

In the second place, "Appius and Virginia" contains in a crude and undigested state several of the elements which go to make up, say, "A Winter's Tale",-scenes of happy romance and domestic bliss sketched in with others of violence and villainy; noble protagonists, sweet heroines, unhappy high-born ladies depicted in conjunction with rustic types, clowns, and merry fellows, Haphazard in "Appius" and the immortal rogue Autoclytus. And finally, harking backwards to the Morality, it brings allegorical characters into a scene that could be re-written to delight a modern director's or costume designer's heart. Herein Memory, Justice, Fame, and Reward inscribe before the moved father the name "Virginia" in the impressive book of Immortality. Another link with mediaeval tradition (this time bearing on subsequent developments in melodrama) is provided in the bloody execution,- with stage directions.

Alternating as it does between Mediaeval and Renaissance techniques, this primitive play thus becomes an important student's reference, so that, although we must bear in mind the slight evidence in favour of Bower's authorship and the likelihood that it may never have been included in the repertoire of the Chapel Boys, we may list it as another valuable, albeit hypothetical, contribution of the Children's Theatre to English dramaturgy.

We need attach no reservations to "Damon and Pythias", the second earliest extant tragi-comedy, which by the title page was "Shewed before the Queenes Maiestie by the Children of her Graces Chappell". The author was Richard Edwardes, and the occasion probably the Christmas season of 1564-5. Edwardes, one time student of Christ Church and Gentleman, of the Chapel, received his patent as Master of the Chapel in 1561. He was an esteemed playwright of his day, and, although we have only "Damon and Pythias" and an eye-witness account of his "Palemon and Arcite" (credited the better play) on which to base an estimate, we can understand, if not wholly reciprocate, the high opinion held of his talents.

"Damon and Pythias" is better than any of the surviving tragi-comedies (1) written before the era of the Elizabethan Greats, and deserves to rank with the early so-called tragedies, though it is inferior to the better farces. Neither so naive a play as "Appius and Virginia" nor so reminiscent of the Morality, it contains all the hall-marks of its genre, the "box-office success" of the day, - ancient theme, action, pathos, noble heroes, turgid rhetoric, variant verse forms, loose structure, and a generous admixture of knockabout comedy. In certain respects it emerges from the general ruck of such plays; thus, its moving central story of friendship

(1) Such as "Like wil to like" (Fulwell), "Horestes" (Pickeryng), "The Tyde taryeth no Man" (Wapull), "Cambises" (Preston), "Promos and Cassandra" (Whetstone), "Sir Clyomon and Sir Clamydes" (anon.)

and sacrifice seldom descends to burlesque swordage and capery and meretricious emotionalism; its dialogue on occasion is quite good, even musical; some of its characters,- the parasite, the faithful friend, the tyrant, the comic slave,-show evidence of Edwardes' close study of classic types; and Grim, the collier, with his fellows are rustic clowns only surpassed by their prototypes in the school farces,-in fact their shaving scene offers possibilities for any modern school director who does not object to horse-play.

That Edwardes was a serious student of the theatre and not merely a writer of potboilers is shown by the prefatory lines of "Damon and Pythias". They constitute one of the very first examples of an English playwright expressing his views of his art and are much more to the point than Udal's cursory comments in the prologue of "Ralph Roister Doister".

"In comedies the greatest skyll is this lightly to touch
All thynges to the quicke; and eke to frame each person so,
That by his common talk you may his nature rightly know.
The old man is sobâr, the yonge man rashe, the lover
 triumphyng in joyes,
The matron grave, the harlot wilde, and full of wanton toyes.
Whiche all in one course they no wise doe agree;
So courses pendent to their kinde their speeches ought to bee."

In the same prologue we find one of the earliest utterances, if not the earliest, on the effect of classic authorities on English theory. The above lines reveal the genuine concern for realism that we would expect in one of the ^{new} generation of playwrights; the following lines reveal the neo-classicism of his school and college environment. The two

quotations combined sketch in what was most likely the usual approach of the Schoolmaster-Dramatist to the theatre of the classroom and public hall.

"If this offend the lookers-on, let Horace then be blamed,
Which hath our author taught at school, from whom he
doth not swerve."

However, in Edwardes' day the tragi-comedy was still an abortive medium, and in spite of all his manifest virtues his "Damon and Pythias" remains ungenerously in our minds as one of those plays which Shakespeare burlesqued so unmercifully in "Pyramus and Thisbe". I say "ungenerously" because "Shakespeare might make fun of these crude attempts, but in them lay the stepping-stones of tradition from the productions of mediaeval days to his own works...there is visible an endeavour to create something more in keeping with the newer age than anything that had gone before." (1)

Edwardes is the last important Master of a Song School or Regular School who was likewise a playwright. There are one or two miscellaneous producers, known or believed to have written plays, who should be brought in to add authority to our discussion of educational dramatics as a ruling force in the development of the Elizabethan drama. With them we bring our chapter to a close.

First comes Thomas Ashton, Headmaster of Shrewsbury from 1561-71. In the Statutes of his school he wrote that

(1) Nicoll: Theory of Drama: 164

"Everie Thursday the Schollers of the firste forme before they go to plaie shall for exercise declame and plaie one acte of a comedie." (1) Such a Statute should effectively silence any doubts that provincial schools were lively centres of educational dramatics. Here we have private theatricals for Latin exercise, but the Shrewsbury school was more noted for its magnificent open-air productions in a large natural theatre situated in a nearby quarry. Here plays had been given probably throughout the century, sometimes before huge audiences as witness Thomas Churchyard's somewhat exaggerated tribute in the "Worthiness of Wales" (1587).

"At Ashton's play, who had beheld this then,
Might well have seene there twentie thousand men."

Ashton's two plays are unimportant, "Julian the Apostate" and "The Passion of Christ". They are lost and would be insignificant in the history of the drama in comparison with the scope of his productions. We would expect that such a school as his would have graduated many a scholar who was to make a name for himself in dramatic literature as well as a host of boys to swell the numbers of Elizabethan audiences. And, indeed, one of Ashton's pupils was Sir Philip Sidney; another was Abraham Flaunce, who wrote "Victoria" a metrical Latin version of Luigi Pasqualigo's comedy "Il Fidele", and adapted Tasso's "Araminta" into English hexameter dialogue; still another was Lord Brooke, author of two closet dramas, "Alaham" and "Mustapha".

(1) Elizabethan Stage: iii, 210-212

After Ashton the Headmaster-Dramatist breed well-nigh disappears. I would suggest that Richard Mulcaster, an important exponent of educational theory in his two works, the "Positions" and the "Elementarie", may have had a hand in writing the lost plays which the boys of Merchant Taylor's took to court under his Mastership: "Timoclia" (Candlemas, 1574), "Percius and Anthomiris" (Shrove Tuesday, 1574), and "Ariodante and Gen-evera", from "Orlando Furioso", (Shrove Tuesday, 1583). William Hunnis of the Chapel, and Richard Farrant of Windsor and the Chapel are known to have written for the stage and Hunnis has been credited with "The Tragedie of the King of Scots" (1567), "Narcissus" (1571), "Loyaltie and Bewte" (1579 and "Alaucius" (1579).(1) But all this, of course, is sheer supposition. The plays are lost and we have nothing to go on except the connection of the men mentioned with the producing companies. In any case Hunnis and Farrant were running a commercial project using children; their aims could hardly be called scholastic or even recreational. There are others of the same stamp, but the only real schoolmaster of the lot was John Mason, an obscure Surrey gentleman of the 17th century whose even more obscure plays entitle him to dubious honours as the last of a great tradition.(2)

(1) cf. Stopes: William Hunnis, the Dramatist, Athenaeum, March, 1900

(2) Elizabethan Stage: iii, 435

CHAPTER VI.

THE LAST PHASE.

We have now sketched the general tenor of school dramatics up to the first years of Elizabeth's reign and watched, a bit sadly, the exit of that not inglorious figure, the Schoolmaster-Dramatist. We have seen how educational dramatics was incorporated into 16th century theory and how classic drama was taught in the schools very thoroughly as literature. We have seen how Plautus and Terence, in their own or in humanist idiom, were frequently studied on school stages and how the schoolboy was a respected and valued actor playing either in Latin or English. We have seen how much of the playwrighting of the period was done by Masters for the edification or pleasure of their pupils and marked how these humanist plays influenced the transition from Mediaeval to Renaissance standards and progressed towards a sense of form, a more literate style, realism and secularization, aiming at theatrical as well as didactic and educational purposes. Finally, we have seen, and it should not have surprised us, how the first English farces, the first farce-comedies and tragi-comedies were written for the Children's Theatre.

With such a history behind them it is a matter of small wonder that during the early years of the reign of Elizabeth those years when the Elizabethan Greats were being born, the Boy Companies rose to a position of unchallenged eminence in

the theatrical life of the country. Sebastian Westcott of St. Paul's, Edwardes, Hunnis, and Farrant (all of the Chapel), these were indubitably among the outstanding producers of that period. Queen Elizabeth may have had well-known adult companies perform for her pleasure, but she was a genuine humanist without pedantry and her real tastes in theatre lay in another direction, her real favours were reserved for the now-famous Grammar and Song Schools.

Chambers has summarized the whole situation as follows: "During the earlier years of Elizabeth's reign the drama is under the domination of the boy companies. This may be due in part to long-standing humanist tradition of the Renaissance, although the lead is in fact taken not so much by schoolboys in the stricter sense, as by the trained musical establishments of the royal chapels and still more that of the St. Paul's choir under Sebastian Westcott. More important points perhaps are, that the Gentlemen of the Chapel, who had been prominent under Henry VIII, had ceased to perform, that the royal Interluders had been allowed to decay, and that the other professional companies had not yet found a permanent economic basis in London while their literary accomplishments were still upon a popular rather than a courtly level. Whatever the cause or causes, the fact is undeniable. Out of seventy-eight rewards for court performances between 1558 and 1576, twenty-one went to Paul's boys, fifteen to the royal chapels, and ten to schoolboys, making a total of forty-six

as against thirty-two paid to adult companies." (1)

Along with these statistics of court performance, a special commission granted to Edwardes shows how popular the boy singers and actors had become since the days of Ritwise and Cornish. The commission reads in part: "For that it is mete that our chappell royall should be furnysshed with well singing children from tyme to tyme, we have and by these presentes do auctorise our wel beloued seruant Richard Edwardes master of our children of our sayd chappell or his deputie... to take as manye well singing children as he or his sufficient deputie shall thinke mete in all cathedrall and collegiate churches as within liberties as without, within this our realme of England whatsoever they be. And also at tymes necessarie, horses, boates, barges, cartes, and carres, as he for the conveyance of the sayd children from any place to our sayd chappell royall." (2)

It is rather distressing to discover that the above commission, somewhat suggestive of a move towards an autocratic creation of a Junior National Academy for Music and the Stage, was responsible in measure for a vicious system of impressment some time afterwards when Boy Companies were proving a profitable investment to commercially-minded Masters.

This period of prosperity was climaxed, inevitably it would seem, by two developments which successfully brought

(1) Elizabethan Stage ii, 4.

(2) Elizabethan Stage ii, 33

into a single pattern all the complex and accumulating excellences of a long-standing tradition. Surely and justly, with increasing momentum, the Children's Theatre of the Tudor era from its experimental stages climbed towards its logical and natural destiny, a Theatre and a Literature of its own. In Germany the same irresistible tendencies in humanist educational theory and practice had evolved a Student's National Theatre. In England there was no National, in the sense of state-subsidised, Theatre, and the strongest forces innate in English dramatic traditions were directed into the channels of an adult and commercial stage. But if the English Children's Theatre attained neither to a National nor to a reigning status in Shakespeare's day, it did produce a Specialized Theatre, both unique and brilliant.

On December 26, 1576, (only two years after the founding of the Theatre by Burbage) Richard Farrant, Deputy Master of the Children of the Chapel, took a lease on the old Priory Buildings in Blackfriars. These he converted into a theatre so that his young charges might have a settled home for their increasingly frequent appearances in public. The Blackfriars is our first indoor theatre, and that, of course, is a material consideration in the development of the physical stage in England. That it was so is only logical since the children for whom it was designed had nearly always worked indoors. In the same way, the construction of Burbage's play-house suited the technique of travelling, open-air, inn-yard players.

The Blackfriars was not used exclusively by the Children of the Chapel. The Paul's boys were likely even more frequent tenants, and the Earl of Oxford's boys may have used it as well as the Children of Windsor. Sometimes the Masters pooled their actors, possibly from necessity when a play demanded a large cast or special talent, more possibly from reasons of economy and publicity. There can be little doubt that educational objectives were now well-nigh non-existent. The venture was, on the whole, a business one, exploiting choir-boys. It was fairly successful for a time, and during the first ten years the plays produced were the finest yet to appear on the English stage. But by now the professional companies were increasing in stability and reputation, and the attraction of new and famous adult actors-Tarleton, Kemp, Burbage-overcame the drawing power of the familiar children. Court and public alike gradually withdrew their favours. Then after twenty years, when the boys were being used to spread the scurrilities of the Marprelate controversialists, a ban of some sort seems to have been placed on their wares⁽¹⁾. At any rate before 1591 they disbanded and returned to their music and grammar-books. Just about this time Marlowe and the young Shakespeare were starting on

(1) The part played by children in the development of satirical drama, illustrated in this controversy and in the later and more famous "Poets-Players War", is important in the general history of the Elizabethan theatre but, unfortunately, it is outside the scope of Educational Dramatics. For similar reasons I have not seen fit to discuss the exceedingly important position held by boys in the adult theatre.

their careers. One is tempted to say that the children, having helped to pave the way for these geniuses, retired now that there was no more use for them.

Their retirement was not long-lived, however. At the turn of the century they came back to the Blackfriars. Just why is hard to say. Perhaps the ambitions of Nathaniel Giles, a keen man of the theatre and Master of the Chapel, had something to do with it, and, moreover, Richard Mulcaster, an enthusiast for educational dramatics, if we may judge by his extensive work with the Merchant Taylor's boys during the seventies and early eighties, was now Headmaster of St. Paul's. Then again, some of the learned dramatists of the time may have been anxious to find a pliable company to produce their satirical works and wage their periodic wars against recalcitrant commercial players who were often self-satisfied, cheap and vulgar. Whatever the reason or reasons for the revival, a new generation of play-goers, many of them, probably, retaining memories of their school-day theatricals, welcomed the novelty. For about ten years the children flourished, St. Paul's as usual taking the lead, followed by the Chapel (or Queen's Revels, to use their new name) and the King's Revels. Then their productions became less and less frequent. By 1620 they appear to have ceased for good. Children acted only in the quiet of the classroom theatre. Soon these private efforts became the exception rather than the regular procedure, until the resurgence of the

ideals of educational dramatics and the abundant theatricals of the 20th century.

Such, in brief, is the story of the last phase of educational dramatics in Renaissance England, a most professional and not entirely praiseworthy phase. Such is the story of the first Children's Theatre. Of more importance are the dramatists who utilized that theatre.

I have before me a list of all the known plays by known authors which were written for or given their first performance by children companies from their installation at Blackfriars until the death of Shakespeare. The list is remarkable but far too long to reproduce here. The score of authors includes in alphabetical order:

Francis Beaumont,	John Lyly,
George Chapman,	Gervase Markham,
Robert Daborne,	John Marston,
John Day,	Thomas Middleton,
Thomas Dekker,	George Peele,
John Fletcher,	William Rowley.
Benjamin Jonson,	Edward Sharpham,
John Webster.	

In other words, had Shakespeare and Marlowe not chosen to write for adults (although we must remember that there were no children companies active when they launched on their professional careers) a neatly condensed version of nearly the whole story of English Renaissance drama could be read in the repertoire of the boy companies as listed in

this and the previous chapter. The above is certainly an imposing array of dramatists for one theatre to boast. Most of the names speak for themselves to even the casual student of the period. I shall let them do so since our concern is with the development of the drama as reflected in and influenced by school dramatics. However, there is one dramatist there included whom we should estimate since he had an extremely important determining effect on writers who came after him. He is "The Wittie, Comically, Facetiously-Quicke and Vnparalleled" John Lyly.(1)

"A moste excellent Comedie of Alexander, Campaspe, and Diogenes. Played before the Queenes Maiestie on newyeares day at night by her Maiesties Children and the Children of Poules." This is something more than the title page for Lyly's "Campaspe". It is an official announcement dated 1584 of the opening of the Elizabethan theatre. The occasion was a "newyeares day" indeed.

John Lyly was the son of Peter, diocesan official at Canterbury, and the grandson (as we have already noted) of William, High Master of St. Paul's Grammar School in the days of its re-foundation. Thus, symbolically enough, explicit in his ancestry are Church and School, the tutelary Genii of English Drama. We would be very willing to believe that he himself was employed at St. Paul's, as usher or master,

(1) George Peele, the other pre-Shakespearean on the list, wrote, so far as we know, only one play for children, his fine "The Arraignement of Paris". The virtues of this masque-like comedy reproduce many of those found in Lyly's plays. Its influence, therefore, need not be detailed.

but, alas, there is no proof beyond his connection with the producing company. However, he might have been....he could have been.

Three years after he graduated from Magdalen College, well-known for its amateur theatricals, he achieved fame as the author of "Euphues, or the Anatomy of Wit", which fills almost as important a niche in the history of the novel as his plays do in their field, and for some of the same reasons. At the risk of repeating what is too well-known, I shall detail some of these reasons. The first and most important is the delightful and dangerous felicity of the euphuistic style, which, when sensitively imitated by a practiced hand, lends itself to diamond-bright phrasing and uncannily beautiful imagery. It can lift prose, whistling on silver wings, into airy companionship with poetry. It can also be as doggerel in its way as bad verse and has a decided tendency to decorative smarts and wearisome artificiality. A second reason for the importance of "Euphues" is that it crystallized at last the neo-classicism of Elizabethan romanticism, by which paradox I mean that it delighted in classic lore and allusion (as one can understand after nearly a century of humanist education), showed a remarkable appreciation of sheer technique, and withal treated its material and form with the lively fancy and careless confidence of a newly-stirred creative spirit.

Typical of his "Euphues", but less elaborate and more

simply expressed, are Lyly's eight comedies, seven of which were first acted before 1590: "Campaspe", "Sapho and Phao", "Galathea", "Mother Bombie", "Love's Metamorphosis", "Endymion", "Midas", and "The Woman in the Moon". The last was published in 1595 and Lyly wrote, so far as is known, no more plays before his death in 1606. These plays contain some of the finest dramatic writing before Marlowe and comprise our first literature of high comedy.

If Lyly were not, as I am sometimes disinclined to believe, a schoolmaster of sorts, he was in any case a particularly representative product of humanist education and educational dramatics. His school record is lost, but since his father was at Canterbury, since his brother attended King's School, Canterbury, it is probable that he, too, came in contact with educational dramatics as we know it was there practiced. His college, as we mentioned, was a centre for academic drama. There are more tangible affiliations. How similar, for instance, are his themes and titles to those of the known and unknown authors who presented their works at court through the agency of the children companies, plays such as "Narcissus", "Percius and Anthomiris", "Ariodante and Genevora", "Alcmaeon", "Iphigenia", "Damon and Pythias"! How similar in atmosphere and "properties" to his love stores are the Italian sonnets and romantic epics so popular among the humanist intelligentzia for their pretty artifices, conceits, idealization of womanhood, their elegant trifling!.

How reminiscent of Castiglione is his concern for courtly manners, Italianate gallantry, the "rules of the game"! In brief, Lyly is a typical University-bred courtier and author of the English Renaissance. Had he ^{been} born to continental parents, he would, most likely, have associated himself with some Academic dramatic company, or written charming satires and lyrics after strictly neo-classic models.

As has been said, Lyly's main claim to fame is as a precursor in the genre of high comedy since it was there that he exerted an influence which was to have immortal results. He established the fashion for literate plays dealing in great part with refined and cerebrated people capable of carrying on a bright conversation and of making love gracefully. His heroes and heroines, his gods and goddesses, are nearly all well in control of their emotions and, except in "Mother Bombie", seldom descend to a less-rarified atmosphere than that of their palaces and gardens and Elysian fields. Their loves and losses are not overwhelming. They suffer, seemingly, for intellectual exercise. They play and flirt with life, seldom become embroiled. Lyly's humour is equally cerebrated. The smile triumphs over the guffaw, and farce is taboo. Intricacies of plot and inter-play of character supersede comic business, and epigram takes the place of horseplay. All in all he taught English comedy the value of style, cultivated for its own sake, and proved that wit, subtlety, wistful mood, and refinement of emotion deserved

a place on the stage as well as the below-stairs banter and tumbling of comic servants and clowns.

We might imagine that such high comedy as his would be hard to reproduce with children. That is not so. Children find it difficult to handle the realistic situations and characters of modern high comedy for in the interpretation of these experience, with life and excellent technique are required. They can seldom grasp subtle realities and sophisticated humour. But subtle artificialities and mannerisms of voice and movement, things which one does not need to feel or understand perfectly to imitate, these can be given them by a painstaking director, and their mimicry balks at nothing that belongs in the world of make-believe and full-dress manners. In fact, children would invest Lyly's scenes with just the requisite amount of illusion while their youth and charm and appearance would enhance his qualities of other-worldliness and prettiness. To me Lyly's comedies are the work of a man with a splendid sense of the special tastes, sensibilities, and limitations of his audience and of his players. I believe, too, that certain characteristics of Elizabethan high comedy are traceable to the fact that Lyly wrote for children. In the first place, after Lyly's lyrics for his highly trained choir-boy actors, no later dramatist omitted music from his romantic comedies unless he had a very good dramatic reason or was not a gifted lyricist (in which case he tried to borrow). Lyly had settled to the complete

satisfaction of Elizabethan audiences the whole question of incidental music and its place in comedy. In the second place, kisses, embraces, lovers' encounters, and by-play are treated with astonishing circumspection by Elizabethan playwrights, and in their comedy romances the passion is usually of a tender sort, a blossoming of young dreams and hopes. Lovers sigh and yearn, laugh and cry, murmur musical nothings, flirt, quarrel, exchange witticisms and compliments, but seldom become intimate. Obviously Lyly, the precursor, could have had them do no otherwise.

With the exception of "Campaspe", in which the Chapel Children participated, and "The Woman in the Moon", which was not acted by children, all Lyly's plays were performed by the boys of Paul's. It is a very charming picture, this, of the young imps with their bright voices and lithe, richly-costumed bodies, pointing the witty lines, tripping boyishly through the graceful dances, and singing as only Tudor choristers could sing the lovely songs which Shakespeare and Jonson alone among Lyly's ^{immediate} successors were to surpass. And pity 'tis that the taste for Lyly's perfumed style and mythological plots has not outlasted the centuries, for the pretty comedies might make ideal pieces for modern school children. But although forgotten Lyly was out-shone and out-sung by Shakespeare, it was really fortunate for him, for in certain of Shakespeare's scenes of nimble wit and sweet romance the spirit of Lyly lives on; and when today we witness "As you Like It", "A Midsummer Night's Dream", "Twelfth Night", and "Much Ado

About Nothing", we may imagine in this musical scene or that romantic passage we are seeing through a wonderful magnifying glass the Children of Paul's, on their very best behaviour, presenting the works of John Lyly before the approving sparkling eyes and nodding wig of the Queen of England.

Thus, on this most pleasant note in the history of the Boy Companies, we bring to an end our history of schoolmasters, school-plays and school playwrights as they figure in the development of English drama. Altogether it should have been an exhilarating experience for the teacher who is engaged in modern educational dramatics. As he watched the great panorama of the 16th century drama unrolling before him, perhaps he may have been given courage to believe that he is helping history to repeat itself, and like his sincere and efficient professional brethren of nearly four hundred years ago preparing the stage for some Master-Drama of which he is but dimly aware. Perhaps, in that consummation, in that future theatre, children like his will be as prominent as were the Children of Paul's in Shakespeare's day,- as prominent, he trusts, but not as exploited.

CHAPTER VII.

THE COLLEGE THEATRE

The school played, roughly, a triple part in the evolution of the Elizabethan theatre: It provided a nursery for literary and theatrical talent;-It disseminated a knowledge of drama in its technical and academic aspects;-It helped to determine and define later forms, especially farce-comedy and high comedy. However, the school was not merely a contributing factor. On a miniature scale it was a companion picture, an analogue, of the theatre in nearly all its experimental and mature stages, reflecting and clarifying and instituting current tendencies, such as secularized morality, court masque, Christian Terence, farce, Latin comedy, open-air Biblical pageant (as at Shrewsbury), tragi-comedy, the permanent theatre, commercial independence, and the associate or collaborating author.

The college theatre, on the other hand, was more a tributary to the stream of Elizabethan drama than a co-mingling current. It was more cloistered and academic, the college amateur remaining more or less aloof from and scornful of popular manifestations. This exclusive academicism reached its severest expression in the criticism of a Sidney and a Harvey, which had it been followed might have stifled native genius and established a neo-classic despotism. But the Englishman like the Spaniard was too realistic, and the

English drama escaped the fate of the Italian. Moreover, there was a number of men connected with the academic drama who had quite a sneaking respect for the technical aims of the players if they disapproved of their shoddier vulgarisms and mountebank existence.

We have already quoted Warton's records of the earliest known children performances. In the same authority we read: "The earliest notice I can recover of this sort of spectacle in an English university is in a fragment of an ancient account-roll of the dissolved college of Michael-house in Cambridge, in which under the year 1386, the following expense is recorded: 'Proly pallio brusdato et pro six larvis et barbis in comedia'." (1) In any complete history of the drama records are quoted to show that typical collegiate mummary and organized "ludi" were common in the 15th century as one might well believe when one pictures students thrown together in residence during holiday periods. To quote Boas again, "It was the college system with its closely knit corporate life that gave so powerful a stimulus to dramatic productions at Oxford and Cambridge." (2) Trinity, Cambridge, and Christ's Church, Oxford, were the colleges most noted for theatricals during the 16th century, though King's, Queen's, Christ's, Merton, Magdalen, and the two St. John's, also showed a considerable flair for this kind

(1) Warton: History of English Poetry: 570

(2) Boas: Tudor Drama: 44

of work. The academic play flourished under Queen Elizabeth and persisted until the Civil War. At the turn of the century with the production of the well-known "Parnassus" trilogy at St. John's College, Cambridge, it reached its height and under James I royal patronage was frequent and royal approval effusive.

Schoolboys were sponsored by their Masters at the start for linguistic reasons. Not so the college boys; with them theatricals were a recreation, although, as we have seen in the letter of William Gager to Dr. Rainolds, they grew to appreciate the educational value. Some colleges, it is true, officially sponsored dramatics, and in the cases of Trinity and Queen's, play production was statutory. Thus Statute 24 of Trinity, dated 1560, states that a comedy or tragedy or, preferably, both should be performed privately or publicly during the Christmas season. Failure to do so resulted in a fine. (1) In later days the University authorities frowned severely upon the professional theatre and tried by legal measures and finally by wholesale bribery to keep travelling actors away from Oxford and Cambridge,-thus in the Vice-Chancellor's accounts for 1587-88 appears (in Latin) the entry, "Paid to the actors of the Earl of Leicester to depart with their plays without further troubling the University" (2) There are scores of similar entries. But undergraduate

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- (1) Warton: History of English Poetry: 570
(2) Boas: Shakespeare and the Universities: 17

and alumni plays were a different matter. They were encouraged by the faculty, always excepting Dr. Rainolds, who may have had sympathizers.

Classic comedies were favourites, and in addition to Plautus and Terence and neo-Latin imitations of them, Aristophanes and Italian comedies found a place in the student repertoire in Latin or English guise. By as early as 1535 the dramatic activity of Cambridge and Oxford had borne fruit in three original Latin comedies, two by Thomas Artour, the third by John Hooker, bearing the attractive title, "Piscator, or the Fisher Caught." And right until 1592 when William Warner of Magdalen published his "Menaechmi" (a possible influence on "A Comedy of Errors") translations of Terence and Plautus appeared at irregular intervals.

The first and most famous vernacular comedy produced by the undergraduates was "Gammer Gurton's Needle" which is now believed to be the work of William Stevenson who was superintending play production at Christ's College between 1550-53, the probable date of its composition. This, of course, ranks with "Ralph Roister Doister" as a precursor of the great comedies at the turn of the century. Curiously enough, for a university play it is less humanist in tone, less deserving of the title farce-comedy than Udal's play. It is not so much a Plautine imitation as a first-rate *sotie*, or French farce, and stems from Heywood and "Maître Pierre Pathelin". Like "Ralph Roister Doister", "Gammer Gurton's Needle" makes an

excellent novelty for school and college presentation, for slapstick that has a sufficient basis in satire or realism is one of the everlasting and honorable hall-marks of a vigorous theatre. Moreover, Dyceon of Bedlam, at least, among the *dramatis personae* deserves to be more widely known today as one of the best bits of rural characterization before Shakespeare.

But it is not in the field of comedy that the 16th century undergraduates were to exert their greatest influence.(1) Their main energies were devoted to experimentation with tragedy.

Almost from the first they showed a special fondness for serious neo-Latin plays dealing with Biblical subjects or religious controversy as several of their more noteworthy productions before 1550 attest: John Christopherson's "Jepthe", Nicholas Grimald's "Christus Redivus" and "Archipropheta sive Johannes Baptista", and Thomas Watson's "Absolon". These plays, though not in the vernacular, are still native. In addition Thomas Kirchmeyer's famous and stormy "Pummacius" was imported from Germany to bring down the wrath of Bishop Gardiner on the college heads who permitted its anti-popery polemics to be presented (2). It is possible that before 1550 the plays and Euripidean translations (in Latin) of George Buchanan, the Scotch-French humanist, and some of the

(1) In addition to those mentioned in this chapter, the important comedies produced at Oxford and Cambridge before Shakespeare were: "Plutuo" and "Pax" (Aristophanes), "Eunuchus" (Terence), "Menaechmi" (Plautus), "Wilie Beguylie" (anon), "Victoria" (Italian-Flaunce), "Hymenaeus" (Italian-anon), "Pedantius" (Plautine-Wingfield).

(2) cf. Doran's Annals: 1, 11

common Latin translations of Sophocles were given a hearing as they were in French universities. Ascham writes that he had seen one play by Buchanan, and he seems to be slightly familiar with the stage-worthiness of the Greeks.

The "Archipropheta" of Nicholas Grimald, student of Christ's College, Cambridge, fellow of Merton, Oxford, and by 1547 lecturer in Rhetoric at Christ Church, is, according to Herford, an important play that has been ignored by historians of the period. Herford's own rather surprising evaluation of its merits is reproduced here: "Nicholas Grimald is chiefly remembered as the author of a considerable quantity of verse, preserved in Tottel's Miscellany with that of Wyatt and Surrey and not altogether unworthy of the companionship. He is entitled, however, to an equally distinguished position in the history of English drama as the author of its first extant tragedy. For such, beyond question, though it has scarcely been recognized, is his "Archipropheta sive Johannes Baptista.", printed at Koln in 1548, probably performed at Oxford in the previous year.....It is stamped on every page with an extreme sensitiveness to the various intellectual interests which then agitated the Oxford air. The regime of Seneca at the English universities was just beginning, as that of Terence was drawing to a close; and in the drama as in the schools they struggle visibly for the mastery. John, himself, is drawn upon wholly tragic lines....on the other hand, versification and several

of the characters place it....in the ranks of Christian Terence. The Oxford Herod has a fool--Gelasinas, who girds at the plotting Pharises, tells bitter home truths to the queen, and exchanges thrusts of tolerable humour with his fellow-servants. But the chief beauty of the drama lies in another feature, for which neither Seneca nor Terence can be held accountable - the passionate love-wholly romantic and modern-which unites Herod and Herodias. Her insatiable hatred of John is not prompted by her injured dignity but by the threatened ruin of her life with Herod. With genuine tragic art the ominous message of the preacher is immediately preceded by a picture, very tenderly drawn, of their still unclouded happiness (11.4) On learning the truth she gathers all the forces of her woman's nature into a single effort to turn her husband's purpose. Herod is half an Oedipus, but it was not from the horrified silence of a Jocasta that Grimald imagined the Herodias who, after exhausting all argument in vain, overcomes him by her cry of wounded love:

.....tu
Hisce manibus (qua ego lubens exosculor)
His manibus, inquam, me iam occidito! sic ego
Animam patiar mihi auferri cum sanguine.
O mi vir, mi vir optime,
Profari plura nequeo,
Prae lachrymis fluentibus,
O mi vir, mi vir optime!" (1)

(1) Herford: Literary Relations of England and Germany
113-119

I have quoted Professor Herford at length in this and in the passage on Palsgrave's "Acolastus" because, although his admiration may be a bit florid, he is one of the very few authorities who has honestly tried to do justice to and knit into the pattern of English drama the early neo-latin comedies and tragedies. We are apt to laurel Sackville and Norton with the full honours for originating tragedy in England and, with more justice, Udal and Stevenson and Heywood for originating farce and comedy. We must not forget that before English imitations of classic tragedy, at any rate, appeared, humanist scholars, strong in their love for practical Latin, had been experimenting in their own way. In other words, the University scholars seeded the crop which the student amateurs of Gray's Inn and the Inner Temple were to harvest.

Moreover, the Christian Seneca, as illustrated by "Archipropheta", and also by Grimald's "Christus Redivus", was in some respects more typical of Shakespearean tragedy than the purer Senecan imitations in English or Latin which were to come after 1550 and which were to reveal more concern for the Aristotelian unities and the Horatian decorum. Thus "Archipropheta" and "Christus Redivus" contain that union of the comic with the tragic which has caused many puzzle-headed critics to fret over the clowns in "Dr. Faustus" and the Porter in "Macbeth". Likewise, they contain scenes of romance and realistic pathos, lyrically expressed - a foretaste of Marlowe. Therefore, just as "Acolastus" and the

lost "comedies" of Radclif, among the plays of the Christian Terence genre, are somewhere in the line of Elizabethan comedy development along with "Ralph Roister Doister" and "Gammer Gurton's Needle", so is the Christian Senecan drama in the line of tragi-comedy and tragedy development along with "Damon and Pythias" and "Appius and Virginia".

Two early tragi-comedies are "Cambyzes" and Edwardes's "Palomon and Arcite". That "Lamentable Tragedy mixed full of pleasant mirth conteyning the life of Cambyzes King of Percia" may or may not be the work of a Thomas Preston, Fellow of King's College and afterwards Master of Trinity Hall. There is no record of its being performed at the Universities. "Palomon and Arcite" was presented at Oxford in 1566 and proves that the authorities and scholars could unbend and conform at times to the livelier tastes of the public. We know nothing of the play except what we noted before, that it is a transitional piece of the "Pyramus and Thisbe" type. However, the well-known circumstances of its presentation deserve to be re-stated here as evidence of the popularity and skill of the college players whenever they chose to put on a "Big show" for the public.

Of the various summaries of the event (1) Warton's is the most entertaining: "At length the universities adopted the presentation of plays, in which the scholars by frequent

(1) From Anthony Wood, 17th century historian.

exercises had undoubtedly attained a considerable skill and address, as a part of the entertainment at the reception of princes and other eminent personages. In the year 1566, Queen Elizabeth visited the university at Oxford. In the magnificent hall of the college of Christ Church, she was entertained with a Latin comedy called "Marcus Geminus", the Latin tragedy of "Progne" and an English comedy (tragi-comedy) the story of "Palomon and Arcite", all acted by the students of the universities....when the play was over, she summoned the poet to her presence, whom she loaded with thanks and compliments: and at the same time turning to her levee, remarked, that Palomon was so justly drawn as a lover, that he must have been in love indeed: that Arcite was a right martial knight having a swart and manly countenance, yet with the aspect of a Venus clad in armour: that the lovely Emilia was a virgin of uncorrupted purity and unblemished simplicity.. the part of Emilia, the only female part in the play, was acted by a boy of fourteen years of age, a son of the Dean of Christ Church, habited like a young princess: whose performance so captivated her majesty that she gave him a present of eight guineas. During the exhibition a cry of hounds, belonging to Theseus, was counterfeited without in the great square of the college: the young students thought it a real chace, and were seized with a sudden transport to join the hunters: at which the Queen cried out from the box, 'O excellent! These boys in very troth are ready to leap out of the windows and follow the hounds!'" (1)

(1) Warton: History of English Poetry: 573

And before we leave this delightful old picture of academic drama paying a lordly compliment to the tastes of the Queen (and the pit), we should quote a few lines from William Gager's preface to his "Ulysses Redux", hitherto mentioned. The preface to this university play, published in 1592, is entitled "Ad Criticum" and illustrates the note of sensible compromise by which later devotees of the neo-classic were sometimes to tinge their criticisms of the popular stage. Coming at the end of the pre-Shakespearean period, it shows that while academic tragedy might have developed away from the standards of Grimald's "Archipropheta" along the strict lines marked out by Continental and English professors, it could return to its original position in the end.

First Gager anticipates the critics: "Imo, non est, inquis, hec Tragedia. Quid ita, Critice? Quia, inquis & materiae quaedam mendicitate peccat, dictioneque, plerumque comica est; & risum in Iro movet, quod in Tragaedia nefas est." Then Gager gives a long list of classic examples of serious subject matter violating the unities by including comic passages. Particularly he refers to the Satyr plays and the "Cyclops" of Euripides, and says "Seneca Thyesten non nimis sane sobrius inducit". Finally, he explains his own canons of taste maintaining that art is like life in that there is value and satisfaction in not confining one's self too strictly to a code, that there is much to be said for the public's likes, and that he, Gager, is only following Homer

in his various excursions with Ulysses: "ut viuendi, sic etiam scribendi ratio mihi imprimis probatur ea, quae est paulo liberior ac pene dissolutior, quaeque non tam doctissimis quam imperitis placeat....Equidem ego hanc sive tragediam, sive fabulam, sive narrationem historicam, sive quicquid eam dici ius fasque est, non ad exquisitam artis poeticae tanquam aurificis stateram, sed ad popularis iudicii trutinam exegendam proposui, & effudi potius quam scripsi: in aqua minus ingenio laborandum fuit, in cuius locum dimidie pene Odysseae argumentum succedit; quo in digendo, non tam acumine, quam delectu, nam tam copia, quam modo opus habui." (1)

But William Gager in 1592, "Palomon and Arcite" in 1566, and "Archipropheta" in 1547(?) to the contrary, the general tenor of academic tragedy was in the direction of strict subservience to classic precept and Senecan example. In the fifties and sixties of the century there was a veritable flood of translations of Seneca from the studies of Oxford and Cambridge. (2) Jasper Heywood (son of John) with "Troas", "Thyestes", "Hercules Furens" and John Studley with "Agamemnon", "Medea", "Hercules Oetaeus" and "Hippolytus" were the most prolific, and Thomas Nuce and Alexander Neville were also represented in the book lists. Later in 1581 Thomas Newton assembled ten translations in one volume. During the same period there were many college productions of such plays as Thomas Legge's "Richardus Tertius" (a possible source of

(1) Young: Shakespeare Studies: 123-4
(2) Heywood, Studley, Neville & Newton were members of the Inns of Court after they graduated from university. Though the liberal and popular renaissance movement originated in Cambridge in the reigns of Henry & Edward, the majority of its supporters in the reign of Elizabeth were to be found in the law colleges. The youth of these translators is conspicuous. Neville 16, Studley 19 when he did "Agamemnon" & "Media". Others in their 20's or very early 30's.

Shakespeare's tragedy) and our William Gager's early "Meleager" and "Dido", all typically Senecan. Legge, Master of Caius College, Cambridge, was in his student days at Trinity one of the directors of the dramatic festival in the chapel of King's College in honour of Queen Elizabeth. At that time, August 5-10, 1564, the "Aulularia" of Plautus, Edward Halliwell's Latin tragedy "Dido". and Udal's comedy "Ezechias" were given-but three nights proved too much for the Queen who declined to hear the pièce de résistance of the festival, a Latin translation of Sophocles' "Ajax Flagellifer". Gager's "Meleager" was played before the Earl of Leicester and Sir Philip Sidney in 1581, doubtless to the latter's great enthusiasm; and in 1583, before the humanist Prince Palantine of Poland, Albertus Alasco, his lost comedy "Rivalles" and his "Dido" previously mentioned. Scores of plays and productions such as these (1) testify to the activity of the college dramatists however esoteric they may have been.

But better than any play-writing and festival statistics to an understanding of the atmosphere and classic acumen of the universities between 1530 and 1590 are the comments of Ascham on a play by his friend Thomas Watson which antedates Grimald's "Archipropheta". Here we see the scholar's desire to find out the ruling secrets of dramatic effectiveness, his love of law and pure speech, his interest

(1) cf. Bibliography of University plays: Cambridge History of English Literature: vi, 469-87.

in aesthetic criticism. It is better for our purposes than an analysis of Sidney's "Apology", being less known, more authentically academic, and concerned with tragedy as it was written some time before Sidney was born.

"When M. Watson in S.Iohns College at Cambridge wrote his excellent Tragedie of Absolon, M. Cheke, he and I, for that part of trew Imitation, had many pleasant talkes together, in comparing the preceptes of Aristotle and Horace de Arte Poetica with the examples of Euripides, Sophocles, and Seneca. Few men, in writyng of Tragedies in our days have shot at this marke. Some in England, moe in France, Germany, and Italy, also have written Tragedies in our tyme; of the which not one I am sure is able to abyde the trew touch of Aristotles preceptes, and Euripides examples saue onely two, that euer I saw, M.Watson's Absolon, and Georgius Buchananus Iepthe. One man in Cambridge, well liked of many, but best liked of himselfe, was many tymes bold and busie, to bring matters upon stages which he called Tragedies. In one wherby he looked to wynne his spurres and whereat many ignorant felowes fast clapped their handes, he began his Protasis with Trochoeiis Octonariis: which kinde of verse, as is but seldome and rare in Tragedies so is it neuer used, saue onelie in Epitasi: when the Tragedie is hiest and hottest, and full of greatest troubles. I remember ful well that what M.Watson merelie sayd unto me of his blindness and boldnes in that behalfe although

otherwise there passed much frendship betwene them. M. Watson had an other maner (of) care of perfection, with a feare and reuerence of the iudgement of the best learned: who to this day would neuer suffer yet his Absolon go abroad, and that onelie because in locis paribus, Anapestus is twise or thrise vsed in stede of Iambus....

..This I write ...as to leaue in memorie of writing for good example to posteritie, what perfection in any tyme, was most diligentlie sought in that most worthie college of S.Iohns in Cambridge." (1)

Ascham was obviously more interested in neo-Latin than in neo-Latin drama, but still one can very clearly see in his college-day conversations, thirty years before Shakespeare was born, the infiltration of French and Italian opinions on the classic laws of unity and decorum that were effectively to emasculate most of the tragedies and comedies which issued from the college cloisters. The Elizabethans, fortunately at times, unfortunately at others, utilized these laws just so far as they suited their purpose or their audience. Shakespeare seldom violates a unity of impression by intermingling incongruous elements, and in his best tragedies and comedies he does not allow the concentrated emotion to be diffused by too loose or narrative a structure. (2)

(1) Scholemaster: 139-140

(2) Hamlet takes place pretty well within the limits of Elsinore and we are not conscious of any lengthy time lapses. "The Tempest", "As You Like It", "Midsummer Night's Dream", "The Merchant of Venice", "Romeo and Juliet" move very rapidly with no radical cleavage from the laws of time or place. And it is a pity that when Shakespeare wrote some of his Chronicles and "Anthony & Cleopatra" and "Pericles" he did not listen more attentively to the dictates of the academicians and try to condense and focus his material.

While reading Ascham's criticism one wonders who the "bold and busie" playwright was, so full of his own conceit. Perhaps Grimald, who was at Cambridge contemporaneously with Watson and Watson's admirer. One is pleased to see that the students, albeit "ignorant felawes", applauded his tragedies, for these scenes of college life, these enthusiastic audiences and scholarly or busy playwrights of the fifteen-thirties and forties were creating a more intelligent and conscious approach to the theatre and doing much of the ground-work that was to make possible a very great Tragedy indeed. The time was not so far distant when there should appear a publication that, fittingly enough, carried this advertisement on its title page: "The Tragical History of Hamlet Prince of Denmark. By William Shakespeare. As it hath bene diuerse times acted by his Highnesse seruants in the Cittie of London: as also in the two Vnersities of Cambridge and Oxford, and elsewhere."

We now leave the quiet quadrangles and great foundations on the banks of the Cam and the Isis for the London centres of higher learning, the flourishing law schools, those vital adjuncts of the 16th century educational system which graduated so many Elizabethans to notable careers in politics and literature.

"But yf ye will be rather bent, a yong mans witt to prove
And thinkst that elder learned men perhaps it shall behoue
In works of waight to spend theyr tyme, goe where Mineruas
men
And finest witte doe swarme: whom she hath taught to
passe with pen."

Jn Lyncolnes Jnne and Temples twayne, Grayes Jnne and oth-
Thou shalt them fynde whose paynfull pen thy verse shall^{ers mo,}
That Melpomen thou wouldst well weene had taught them for^{florishe so.}
And all their woorks with stately style and goodly grace^{to wright}
t'endite."

(Preface to "Thyestes" - Heywood) (1)

The position occupied by the law colleges in the gene-
ology of the Shakespearean drama adjoins that of the univer-
sities, but since the plays of the Inns were in English and
since their masque-entertainments were prominent in the social
life of the Queen, that position has received more publicity
and attention from present-day students. "The plays and
revels of the Middle and Inner Temples and at Gray's Inn were
intended frankly for recreation. We have an interesting memo-
rial, dating from the late years of the Queen's reign of the
spirit in which these entertainments were organized and the
pains lavished upon them. 'Gesta Grayorum' is an account of
the revels at Gray's Inn, 1594-5, when Mr. Henry Holmes, a
Norfolk gentleman, was elected to be a mock king, with the
title of Prince of Purpoole, and an array of officers and
was enthroned in the great hall on 20 December, St. Thomas
eve. On Innocents Day (26 December) he received an ambassador
from the Inner Temple 'attended by a great number of brave
Gentlemen'. But there was such a crowd on the stage that no
entertainment could be presented until late in the evening

(1) Quoted by Conley: The First English Translators of
the Classics: 23-24

when a 'Comedy of Errors' was played by the players', probably Shakespeare's comedy performed by the Lord Chamberlain's men. There was better fortune with a show on Twelfth Night, and at Shrovetide the Prince of Purpoole visited the Queen at court and present a Mask of Proteus, which won Elizabeth's commendation of the actors, 'and in general of Gray's Inn as a house that she was much beholden unto, for that it did always study for some sports to present unto her'. The compliment was well deserved, for Gray's Inn and the Inner Temple had for over thirty years vied with each other in entertaining the Queen. But the 'sports' had for the most part taken a more austere form than the mask, and it is among the historic glories of the English Bar that its members were the first to produce a blank verse tragedy upon a London stage. The presentation of 'Gorboduc or Ferrex and Porrex' at the Christmas revels of the Inner Temple, 1561-2, and its repetition before Elizabeth at Whitehall on 18 January 1562, marked a new departure of the highest importance for the future of English drama." (1)

The leading dramatists of this amateur movement were in addition to the two Thomases, Sackville and Norton, Robert Wilmot, George Gascoigne and Thomas Hughes, and the other outstanding plays were "Jocasta", "The Misfortunes of Arthur", "Tancred and Gismunda", (all tragedies), and the two comedies

(1) Tudor Drama: 29-30

"Supposes" and "The Glasse of Government". One notable factor in the conception of these plays which links them with the university efforts was that the authors were frequently versatile men of letters. William Gager wrote considerable Latin verse; Nicholas Grimald's poetry has been preserved in Tottel's Miscellany; Sackville is best known for his "A Mirror for Magistrates", while Gascoigne finds a place in any anthology of Elizabethan lyrics. In other words, here we find some of the great experimenters in English prosody which since Chaucer and Langland had been fighting valiantly against French and Latin domination. We should imagine, therefore, that the major contributions of such writers to dramatic technique would be literary. This is true. The fact that "Gorboduc" was written in blank verse is of more importance than that it imitated Seneca. Seneca was making himself felt in dramatic circles in his own idiom. England did not need a "Gorboduc" to be made aware of her preference in classic drama. "Gorboduc" illustrated that preference. But blank verse was a novelty, the humanist's compromise with Latin hexameters; and although the lines of "Gorboduc" were often remarkably pedestrian, they caught on and later became the norm. On occasion Marlowe and Shakespeare might use more formal or lyrical measures but never for long. Blank verse proved itself an organic necessity in Shakespearean tragedy, - it was, one feels, divinely created to express the genius of the Masters.

Nor was blank verse the only technical gift of the law

colleges to the drama. Gascoigne's "Supposes", presented at Gray's Inn 1565 (a forerunner of "The Taming of the Shrew") while demonstrating England's indebtedness to Italian drama by being a free transcription of Ariosto's "I Suppositi", was a very free and very special transcription. It was written in prose, a prose, considering its years, such as can be described only as precocious. Lyly was to give this prose dialogue a greater resourcefulness, a glitter, and an epigrammatic turn, a sometimes mannikin efficiency, but Gascoigne is the sire to Lyly's dam in the conception of a dialogue form which became and remained one of the refinements of our drama.

Besides being original in their prosody, these experimenters of the Inns of Court were original in their choice of themes. Gascoigne and his collaborator, Francis Kinwelmershe, while following the neo-Senecan methods of their fellows, turned elsewhere for the subject of "Jocasta, a Tragedie written in Greke by Euripides, translated and digested into Acts." Although this tragedy was a translation of Euripides' "Phoenissae" as watered down in an Italian play "Giocasta" by Ludovico Dolce, still it was Euripides, and Euripidean characters Orestes and Antigone and their famous company who were speaking in "Jocasta", probably for the first time in English. But "Jocasta" is an exceptional venture. The Attic drama (in Latin dress) was most likely frequently reproduced on University stages; it was quite alien to Elizabethan needs and popular tastes. Even Queen

Elizabeth herself, as we have noticed, did not care, when she visited Cambridge, to stomach Sophocles on the stage.

It is otherwise with the themes of "Gorboduc" and "The Misfortunes of Arthur", and in a different way with those of "Tancred and Gismunda" and "Supposes". The first two, like Bale's "King Johan", deal with British history or legend; the two last are drawn from romantic and realistic themes of the Italian Renaissance. Only two other sources of inspiration in the genesis of Elizabethan tragedy and comedy can compare with these, namely, ancient history, or classic tale and the contemporary scene. And when we remember that (to say nothing of Lyly) the first of these two sources was foreshadowed in the plays of Ritwise, Radclif, and Edwardes; for example, "Dido", "Titus and Gisippus", and "Damon and Pythias",--and when we consider that the native realistic theme was given standing in the school and college farces, "The Four PP", "Ralph Roister Doister", "Gammer Gurton's Needle", and "Tom Tyler", we can realize how well charted were the channels of Elizabethan taste by the various student amateurs. Only the Biblical comedies of Udal, "Ezechias" and "The History of Jacob and Esau", and the Prodigal Son story of "The Disobedient Child" of Ingeland, only these found no companions in later comedy. Gascoigne's "The Glasse of Government", which smacks of Christian Terence, is the final flurry of that cycle. A possible throw-back to Grimald and Christian Seneca, Biblical tragedies like "David and Bathsheba" were sometimes attempted by the Elizabethans, but they were not very popular.

Throughout all this study of the college theatre one name keeps recurring--Seneca, and so far we have gone little into detail on the direct and indirect influence which the study and imitation of his plays had upon later tragedy. That Seneca was generally admired should have now been sufficiently evidenced. That this admiration had any profound effects remains to be seen.

First of all we shall turn again for confirmation to those two notable schoolmasters, Hoole and Ascham.

In Hoole we find the following: "As for Lucian, Seneca's Tragedies, Martiall, and the rest of the finest Latin poets, you may do well to give them a taste of each and show them how and wherein they may imitate them and borrow something out of them." (1) In another place we learn that the "taste" of Seneca he advises amounted with his boys to two afternoons a week study. When we remember their four mornings with Terence, we may sometimes think that there was considerable grumbling among Elizabethan schoolboys at such a fulsome diet of drama. However, our concern here is not so much with the quantity of drama on the curriculum as the method of study. We notice again Hoole's stress on "imitation" and "borrowing". This belief in the value of direct imitation is one of the foundation stones upon which was built the superstructure of Renaissance criticism and education. It derived, of course, from Aristotle and Horace. Exactly what

(1) Art of Teaching School: 198

Aristotle meant when he defined art as an imitation of nature was not, nor is, completely understood. Horace, however, was closer to the hearts of the humanists, and he was clearer.--imitation of nature meant the reproduction of that which was the common experience of men to-day and yesterday; such reproduction was art when it was done elegantly and according to the very best models. In Renaissance times this theory was narrowed until, to put it baldly, art could mean an imitation of an imitation of nature, and learning was copying. Thus, Erasmus's Colloquies were designed to serve as junior copy, and he wished students to read and memorize Terence so that they could talk like Terence. And Ascham,--Ascham devotes forty-six pages of his treatise on education to a discussion of the proper use of and proper models for imitation. We have already noted his commendation of Bishop Watson's "Absolon" on the score that it abided by "the preceptes of Aristotle and Horace de Arte Poetica with the examples of Euripides, Sophocles and Seneca." But perhaps Sidney expressed the schoolmen's ideas better than they when he wrote: "Truly I could wish, if at least I might be so bold to wish a thing beyond the reason of my capacity, the diligent imitators of Tully and Demosthenes (most worthy to be imitated) did not so much keep Nizolian paper-books of their figures and phrases, as by attentive translation (as it were) devour them whole, and make them wholly theirs."(1)

(1) English Critical Essays: ed. Jones: 59

This should be enough to prove that which is sufficiently clear to need no proof, namely, to the artists and students of the Renaissance direct imitation of the best models in theme, matter, form, and even phrasing was a natural and sensible procedure. With this as a commonplace in criticism and education we should not wonder, as few do, at Shakespeare's resort to imitation for plot, speech and maxim. We can also understand why Seneca should be such a determining force, for, however we may regard this turgid Roman to-day, to the Elizabethan (a few avid Greek students to the contrary) he provided the supreme example of dramatic poetry and therefore the one to be imitated.

Dr. J.W.Cunliffe has traced the influence of Seneca in Elizabethan drama right down to the last doubtful parallel in the last obscure tragedy. The extent of his research is staggering and his findings no less so. What he has to claim for Seneca may be summarized here, although it is hardly fair to reproduce his contentions without his illustrations. Briefly, he says: Directly or indirectly the tragedies of Seneca in the original or in translation influenced the Elizabethan drama to develop its following characteristics:

- (1) Its five-act form and the chorus,
- (2) Its cosmopolitan and universal outlook rather than the severely national one we might expect from the temper of the age;
- (3) Its tendency to introspection and soliloquy;

- (4) Its use of the sensational and melodramatic;
- (5) Its frequent rhetorical exaggeration;
- (6) Its frequent introduction of descriptive passages;
- (7) Its fondness for reflective passages and moral maxims dealing with such common subjects as "the cares of empire, the fickleness of fortune, the uncertainty of popular favour, the cruelty of war, the falsehood of fame, the impetuosity of youth, the modesty of maidenhood, the evil consequences of luxury, the fatal gift of beauty, the dangers of high places and the safety of humility, the joys of country life and the advantages of poverty";
- (8) Its philosophy of fatalism;
- (9) Its examples of stoical fortitude of hero and heroine in the face of death;
- (10) Its stock characters such as the Messenger, the confidential nurse, the faithful servant;
- (11) Its supernatural elements, especially the Senecan Ghost.

Cunliffe's concluding paragraph reads: "What English tragedy would have been without the example of Seneca, it is hard to imagine; its development from the miracle plays and moralities must have been slow; and if the impulse had come from the European nations, it would only have been the influence of Seneca at second hand, in the case of France with exaggerated artificiality, in the case of Italy with exaggerated horrors. Even the direct influence of Greek tragedy

in all the perfection of Sophocles might not have been an unmixed blessing; but after all, literary criticism is concerned not with what might have been but with what was; and that the influence of Seneca was paramount in the origin and development of Elizabethan tragedy has been proved by the testimony of contemporary critics, and the still more convincing evidence of the tragedies themselves." (1)

Suspicious as we should be of the great majority of scholars who strive to gain reflected glory by "proving a case" from the documents and plays of the 16th century, still in the light of Dr. Cunliffe's comprehensive and minute research to which I could not begin to do justice here, we cannot fail to be somewhat impressed. Certainly, he makes out an excellent "case" which I can see no reason for omitting from these pages that are espousing the cause of educational dramatics. For as surely as it was the Senecan dramas, their translations, and their imitations, which determined so largely the ultimate form and nature of the Elizabethan tragedies, so was it the Masters and their students who diverted attention and directed appreciation towards those same dramas. To use a modern figure, we might say that Seneca was the program and the schools and colleges were the broadcasting units. And had Cunliffe made this clear, and had he shown how closely associated the Elizabethan dramatists were to these broadcasting units he might have

(1) The Influence of Seneca on Elizabethan Tragedy: 128

materially strengthened his case. We shall try to do it for him.

The whole infinitely fascinating problem of Shakespeare's education and his experience, if any, with school and college theatricals and dramatic studies is one which we must not try to solve here. We would immediately be wafted into a vast realm of controversy, and conjecture, and apocrypha. It is sufficient to refer back to what we have said in previous chapters on the general theories and methods of humanist education which might very well apply to the well-endowed Stratford-on-Avon Grammar school. It seems inevitable that Latin comedy, and in the light of Hoole's curriculum, it seems probable that Seneca was studied by Shakespeare at school. But we cannot be positive. And then, there is one of the less-known traditions to the effect that Shakespeare was a school-teacher, based on one brief comment by Beeston, an old actor-manager, noted down by Aubrey. If that were true (but Aubrey with his usual unreliability contradicts himself),-if that were true, it would indeed have given a fillip to our chapter on the schoolmaster and his plays in the history of English drama. Adams in his chapters on Shakespeare's life just before he left for London accepts this tradition and makes a very great deal of it. (1) He even imagines Shakespeare directing the boys in a scene from Terence. But even

(1) cf. Adams: Life of Shakespeare: Chap. vi.

Adams can only conjecture. Nor can we be sure that Shakespeare did not go to college. Again, he seems to have had friends at Oxford, and through them may have been introduced to academic circles and academic drama (1). So, altogether, we might make out a very good "case", but we would never be on absolutely safe ground.

Ben Jonson got only as far as Westminster, but that school was a haven for educational dramatics. Moreover, Jonson was a scholar born and created his own university chair from which he lectured as pontifically as the veriest neo-Horation of them all. Thomas Kyd could not claim a college education, but Merchant Taylor's was his school, almost as famous for theatricals as Eton and Westminster. John Webster could also sign himself "merchant-tailor", though, he neither went to college. With the exception of Dekker, of whose education we know absolutely nothing, practically all the other Greats and near-Greats were college men. Francis Beaumont was Oxford and Inner Temple; George Chapman lived near Radclif's school at Hitchin and may have studied there, -later he was at Oxford; Samuel Daniel was also Oxford; John Day was Cambridge; so was John Fletcher; John Ford was Oxford and Middle Temple; Robert Greene was Oxford and Cambridge; Thomas Heywood, greatest of that name, was Cambridge; Thomas Lodge was Merchant Taylor's, Oxford, and Lincoln's Inn;

(1) cf. Boas: Shakespeare and the Universities: Chap. ii

John Lyly was Oxford; Christopher Marlowe was King's School at Canterbury and Cambridge; John Marston was Oxford and Middle Temple; Philip Massenger was Oxford; Thomas Middleton, Gray's Inn; Thomas Nashe was Cambridge; George Peele, Oxford; and James Shirley, Merchant Taylor's, Oxford and Cambridge.

All these men drank directly from the fount of neo-classicism and, ipso facto, from Terence, Plautus, Seneca and mayhap Sophocles, Euripides, Aristophanes, the continental Senecans and Terentians, and the Italian dramatists, Tasso, Machiavelli, Aretino, Dolce, Cecchi, and Ariosto, - but primarily Seneca, to the satisfaction of Cunliffe.

Besides that, and which is probably far more important, while at college they all had opportunities to get valuable experience in their future vocation or avocation, the theatre. Most of them should have or did have similar opportunities at whatever grammar school they attended, and a few of them were exposed three times to amateur theatricals, at school, college, and law college.

That every one of the influential pre-Shakespearean play-wrights has been listed is surely a point of extreme significance. How disappointing that the records of their non-professional participation in play production are so scanty! That these great predecessors with their leanings towards the theatre and their ability to express themselves in dramatic prose or poetry should have remained aloof from the theatrical activity of their respective Universities

is possible, but it just does not seem natural. And two of them for certain did not, namely, Nashe and Peele. Nashe's amateur efforts at college were briefly introduced by the spiteful Harvey into his "The Trimming of Thomas Nashe." From what we can read between the lines it would appear that Nashe while at St. John's, Cambridge, was preparing himself to become in Greene's well-known words, "that young Iuuenal, that biting Satyrist". Harvey writes: "he (Nashe) had a hand in a Show called Terminus & non terminus, for which his partener in it was expelled the Colledge: but the foresaid Nashe played in it (as I suppose) the Varlet of Clubs; which he acted with such naturall affection, that all the spectators tooke him to be the verie same." (1) And, a more studious picture, to link Nashe with Seneca and the translators, we have his own comments in the preface to Robert Greene's "Menaphon": "I'lle turne backe to my first text of Studies of delight, and talke a little in friendship with a few of our triuiall translators...; yet English Seneca read by candle-light yeeldes many good sentences, as Blood is a begger, and so forth." (2) George Peele was closely affiliated with the academic drama. We have already mentioned the visit of Albertus Alasco to Christ Church when William Gager's two Latin plays, "Dido" and "Rivalles", were presented for the Palatine's edification. On that occasion, June 11 and 12,

(1) McKerrow: Works of Thomas Nashe, v.9.

(2) *ibid.* iii, 315.

1583, George Peele was entrusted by the poet with the direction of the entertainment.(1) Gager also honored Peele in some Latin verses which pay tribute to him as a fellow poet and translator of Euripides: "In Iphigeniam Georgii Peeli Anglicanis versibus redditam."

These brief glimpses into the college life and associates of two of the University Wits make it all the more difficult not to believe that the others, Lyly, Marlowe, Lodge, and Greene did not matriculate to the London stage from the amateur theatre. The names of several later Elizabethans can be found in the annals of the academic drama, but that need not concern us since by their time the professional theatre was fully matured and its dramaturgy settled. What is important to decide is whether Marlowe, to take one example, could have gone all through King's School, a famous institution, numbering William Harvey, William Lyly (John's brother), and Stephen Gosson among its graduates, where there were public shows at Christmas sponsored since 1560 by the Dean and Chapter of Canterbury (2),-to decide whether Marlowe could have been exposed directly to this theatrical environment to say nothing of class-room dramatic exercises and a curriculum, were it like Hoole's, that included four mornings of Terence and two afternoons of Seneca, and then gone to Cambridge where nearly every college was experimenting with one form

(1) Bullen: Works of George Peele, Intro XX

(2) q.v. 50-51

of theatre or another and where Seneca and English Seneca were "read by candlelight",---and come out completely unaffected to arrive in London all unaware of stage technique, inexperienced, and ignorant of classic and Italian practice, with nothing but his flair for poetry to recommend him. Quite seriously, it is ridiculous to suppose such a monstrous indifference and immunity to environment. On the part of Kyd and Lodge, to mention two other pre-Elizabethans,

a similar assumption is equally, if not more, ridiculous; for their school, Merchant Taylor's, could add to the general atmosphere of theatricals the thrill, the genuine thrill, of playing before the Queen. In such an environment what boy with literary gifts could fail to have his imagination filled with visions of the theatre and patterns of the drama.

Far more logical is the contrary assumption. Everyone of those pre-Elizabethans, not only Peele and Nashe, should by the time they attained adulthood have had considerable experience in the theatre,- acting experience, most likely, - most certainly thorough audience experience. Moreover, like Nashe with his "Terminus and Non Terminus", they should have been encouraged by their environment to write juvenile sketches and experiment with their fledgling abilities. And far from taking to professional writing for the theatre in the spirit of novices, they, like the young optimists of to-day who apply for a journalistic position by citing proudly their experience on college newspapers and magazines,-

they, the young Elizabethans, most likely had supreme confidence in themselves and undergraduate scorn for the unlettered theatreman with his, in their estimation, crude, old-fashioned methods. This is well borne out by the way in which Greene and Nashe flourished their degrees and by their familiar invectives against the Players and the upstart playwrights.

Perhaps the most condensed summary of the probable situation is given in "The Return from Parnassus", that satirical college play of 1606 wherein two typical University Wits come to London to make their fortune and apply to Burbage and Kemp for work. The famous actor-managers are talking to each other just prior to the appointment. (Act IV. Sc. 3). Says Burbage: "Now, Will Kempe, if we can entertain these scholars at a low rate, it will be well; they have often a good conceit in a part." "It's true, indeed, honest Dick;" replies Kempe, "but the slaves are somewhat proud."

CONCLUSION.

I have said that the purpose of this history was twofold: to discover the motives of the academic theatricals of the 16th century, and to trace the influence of these theatricals upon the professional theatre. Now at the end let us summarize very briefly our findings and determine, moreover, whether or not we have brought forth any facts or principles that may need re-emphasis for the benefit of those who are to-day engaged in educational dramatics.

At the beginning we posed a question: Why was the creative artist of Elizabeth's and James's day so amazingly articulate in the language of the theatre? We felt that many would base their answer very largely on a study of the popular theatre and that, perhaps, in an enthusiasm for the reverent and unaffected folk drama and the picturesque story of the rise of the strolling players there was a tendency to overlook a great deal of the important foundation work being done in schools and colleges. Here we found a surprisingly active theatre, a theatre with a purpose, a theatre which had come into being logically as a result of current educational theory. For, when humanists set up as their ideal the man who besides his other endowments was equipped to meet the problems of government and society with courtly grace and wit, audacity and savoir-faire, the man who was literally conversant with the classics, fluent in the speech of cultured antiquity, when they determined that education should be made both pleasant and realistic, that schools

should be made more liberal and should find a place for tuition in fine arts, manners, and sports, then it followed clearly that drama and dramatics would recommend themselves highly. They were tailored to the measure of the Renaissance schoolmaster. Furthermore, the belief of teachers, particularly those of the reformed faith, in the efficacy for moral training of maxim, literary illustration, and classical example strengthened the position of the theatre in education since the characters of comedy and tragedy provided innumerable illustrations, and unmistakable ones, of virtue rewarded and vice condemned while the actor was there to point in a personal and effective manner the moral import of the dialogue.

We noted how, actuated by such considerations as these, Melanchthon and Erasmus, Elyot and Ascham, along with other educationalists, advocated a course of study in which Roman comedy was given precedence, while important founders such as Sturm and Colet sought Masters for their schools who were familiar with the "new" methods. Shortly afterwards we found the progressive schools and colleges coming to the fore everywhere as centres for playwriting and advanced play production. The Song Schools, we saw, took to dramatics even more readily than the "regular" schools, the movement gaining strength here because of mediaeval traditions of having choir-boys take part in church and court ceremonies and entertainments.

Then we watched the boy actors under the direction of Masters like Cornish, Ritwise, Redwood, Radclif, Udal, Westcott, Edwardes, and Mulcaster attaining standards of taste and proficiency which during the formative years of Elizabeth's reign gave them the favoured and commanding position in the theatre, watched them take the lead in developing a secular and essentially Tudoresque drama from classic and continental models and, together with the college students, introducing English audiences to farce, comedy, tragic-comedy, and Senecan tragedy. We studied several of their more important plays and suggested that certain characteristics which made them peculiarly appropriate for adolescent actors, their general "young" coloring, are reproduced in the later drama acted for and by adults. This, we also suggested, was a not improbable reason why many great plays of the period lend themselves to-day to performance by children better than the masterpieces of other races and ages.

Then we traced hurriedly the history of the Children's Theatre at Blackfriars, and as a fitting and symbolic climax we watched the Boys launch the first of the pre-Shakespearean Greats, the first writer of high-comedy, John Lyly, on his theatrical career and see him through to his final and unique harbour in history. Lyly, we remembered, was the grandson of the first Highmaster of the first public school to practise educational dramatics. At the last, and perhaps this was the most illuminating portion of "this

strange, eventful history", we showed how practically every dramatist of note before Kyd wrote for student actors, how surprising a number of later authors had their works produced in the Children's Theatre, and how almost everyone of the important Elizabethan and Jacobean dramatists came either from schools famed for their educational dramatics or from colleges where amateur experience in the theatre could be had for the asking. Dekker and Shakespeare were the two not included in the graduation lists. We could discover nothing whatever of the scholastic background of the former, and we could not quote any record of amateur theatricals in the Stratford-on-Avon Grammar School. At the same time we did notice that Shakespeare's school was well-staffed and well-endowed so that we had no reason to suppose it laggard to adopt the methods and standards of better-known schools; then, too, we did not wholly ignore the Adams-accepted tradition that the Bard, himself, had been a schoolmaster.

Our history, of course, is still unfinished. Not even when all archives have yielded their facts and figures shall we know in detail the story of educational dramatics in the 16th century. For one thing too many plays are lost, their unknown authors and directors buried and forgotten. Indeed, it may be that all present information yields but a shadowy fragment of the original picture. Be that as it may the fragment deserves careful restoration, a frame, a more public place in the gallery of stage studies. And in the gallery

catalogue I should like to include the following notice:

"Observe, teacher-directors, the fruits of the seeds
nourished by your fellow-workers four hundred years ago,-
a thriving theatre and a deathless drama.

Observe, too, that the ideal of the ludimagister was educational. He did not seek to equip actors and craftsmen for a public stage which he sometimes despised. He laboured most often as a disciple of Erasmus. The actor, himself, was his main concern, his moral character, his speech, his manly bearing, his taste, his creative intelligence. His second concern was for the play considered as a form of literature.

The ludimagister did not neglect the staging of the play. Often his intention was to please a cultured Queen, a knowing foreign ambassador, a learned lord or cleric. And that was a laudable intention to bring out the best in himself and in his young charges, laudable until the taint of commercialism and self-aggrandisement defiled it. Thereafter his work, its objectives vulgarized and its principles undermined, lost in value what it gained in publicity and profits, lost, too, the favour of once-smiling Monarchy, lost caste and soon was outlawed even from its first and simplest home, the classroom.

Now, once again, the theatre has found its way into the school. Once again a thriving theatre, a deathless drama..
.....? Then let the modern ludimagister take heed.

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