

SAVING THE SCENE

An Emergency For Which Actors Must Ever Be Prepared.

ACTS NOT ON THE PLAYBILLS.

Presence of Mind by Which Clara Morris Turned to Advantage a Certain Interruption in "Miss Multon" and a Felina Intrusion in "Camille."

An experienced actor is supposed to be able to cope with any stage emergency, no matter what is lacking or what happens. Cool, self possessed, it is expected of him to turn the ridiculous into a source of applause rather than of disapproval or laughter.

And among the necessary requirements for the actress is an unshakable self control, no matter, if by some carelessness she is thrown into a situation almost without precedent. She must never fly off at a tangent because of some unheeded incident. She must not scream when the perennial gallery idiot yells "Fire!" If something is forgotten she must try hard to hide its absence or invent a substitute.

If anything unusual occurred I always tried to incorporate it into the play if possible, as when in the school-room scene of "Miss Multon" I was astonished to see a large water spaniel come trotting on to the stage, waving his tail at me as if we had been bosom friends for years. I don't like to recall all the things I thought about that dog for a moment or two.

Then I rose, and, thanking heaven and a generous master for the collar he wore, I grasped it, and, having stroked his silky ear with the other hand, I said to my pupils: "Children, I do not wish to curtail your pleasures, but I have told you before that I cannot permit you to have your pets in this room during lesson hours. Now, don't force me to remind you of that again."

And the little girl who played Paul quickly and cleverly responded to my wink. "Oh, excuse us this time, Miss Multon, and we won't do it again." And, taking the dog from me, she led him off into the retirement of private life, while in the morning one newspaper remarked that "among the prettiest of the lighter touches of the performance was the scene at the Christmas tree in the first act and the dog scene in the third act."

Another time, in Baltimore, when I was playing "Camille," I had a similar experience. In the fifth act I had staggered from the window to the bureau, moaning that dread moment when I was to see the reflection of my wrecked and ruined self in the looking glass. The house was all attention, watching dim eyed the pitious, weak movements of the dying woman. Just then I heard

the quick indrawing of the breath that startled womanhood always indulges in before either a scream or a laugh.

My heart gave a plunge. "What is it? Oh, what is wrong?" And I glanced down at myself anxiously, for really I wore very little in that scene. "What is it?"

Then came a titter, and evidently it was growing. In agony I turned quickly about and found myself facing a monstrous cat. Starlike, he held the very center of the stage, his two great topaz eyes fixed unflinchingly upon my face. His tail stood straight and aggressively in the air, twitching with short twitches at the very tip.

Ains, no wonder they giggled! But how to save the approaching death scene was what went through my mind.

Clinging to the bureau, I slipped to my knees, and with an earnest prayer that he would not resist my appeal in a faint voice I called him to me. Thomas looked suspiciously at me, hesitated, then approached gingerly and sniffed at my fingers. Then he rubbed his dingy body against my knee, and in an instant my arms were about him, my cheek on his wicked old head. What a sigh of relief went like a wave over that audience! I had won!

I then called Nannie to relieve me, and the applause that swept the house was as balm to my great distress. I said to Nannie, "Take him downstairs; he grows too heavy for me to pet." And Sir Thomas was carried off reluctantly, imagining perhaps that I was envious of the hit he had made.

My manager, who was somewhat of a wag, of course made the most of the saved situation. A gentleman met him on the street the next morning and was anxious for him to settle an argument between himself and wife.

"My wife, who has seen the play several times in New York, insists that the beautiful little scene with the cat belongs to the play, while I don't recall it, nor do any of our acquaintances whom I have asked this morning. Won't you kindly set us right?"

"Willingly," replied my manager. "Your wife is in the right, my dear sir. That cat scene is always done. It is a great favorite with Miss Morris, and she haunts that cat all over the country with her."

May heaven forgive him!—Clara Morris in New York Press.

Inquisitive.
"What is your name?" asked one five-year-old niece of another.
"My goodness!" exclaimed the other. "You are as bad as grownup folks. They are always asking my name and a lot of other silly questions until I am actually ashamed of them."—Chicago News.

If you know how to spend less than you get you have the philosopher's stone.—Franklin.

Metals and Metaphors.
"It is most amazing," said a metal-

lurgist, "how the world relies on metals for its metaphors and similes. Thus an orator is silver tongued, or golden mouthed. An explorer is bronzed by African suns. A resolute chap has an iron will. A slingshot moves with leaden feet. An ostrich has a copper lined stomach. A millionaire has tin. A swindler is as slippery as quicksilver. A borrower has brass."

Amicable Adjustment.
"I want you distinctly to understand, Emil, that when your colleague's wife has a new hat I want one too."
"Calm yourself, my dear. We've settled it between us. You're neither of you going to get one."—Fleegende Blätter.

The Lesser Evil.
"I hate a barber that talks politics all the time, don't you?"
"Can't say I do. I'd rather have him talk politics than hair tonic."—Washington Herald.

Rare Freak.
"Funny, isn't it, about the blowing up of a manhole?"
"How's it funny?"
"Because a man generally blows up in pieces."—Baltimore American.

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This form of salute has always been demanded by English speaking seamen, and its exactness has burned the hearts and the powder of generations of naval commanders.

In the old days for a foreign ship, whether merchant or naval, to enter an English port without veiling topsails or dipping its national flag was to run the risk of war, although the profoundest peace existed.

Without warning or argument the shore defenses or a man of war would send a round shot across the bows or between the masts of the foreigner, and if the offending flag did not instantly come down the insolent intruder was brought to her senses by being raked through and through.

Such was the reception accorded by Sir John Hawkins in the sixteenth century to the Spanish admiral who, in time of peace, sailed into Portsmouth sound without veiling his topsails or lowering his flag.

Salutes are essential matters of naval etiquette and are exchanged on an elaborate code fixed by the maritime powers. The number of guns to be fired under all circumstances is minutely stipulated.—Harper's Weekly.

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(Metolious Central Oregonian.)
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