

The Way Onto the Stage

Some Valuable Pointers Given

by an Old Theatrical

Manager

By

ROBERT GRAU

HOW many women in Canada know that there are twice as many women directing the musical events on the North American Continent than there are men?

Few indeed, and there are still fewer who are aware of the fact that in the Southern States seventy-five per cent. of the concerts, given by the world's greatest singers and virtuosos, are given under the direction of women who have made their impress so emphatic in this field, that it is now well nigh useless for any one of the opposite sex to announce a musical attraction in the cities where woman rules all that is doing in music land.

While public spirit at the outset has actuated many of these women in an effort to bring the best in music to the majority instead of as formerly to the privileged few, nevertheless, it is an absolute fact that hundreds of women who started in this work through club activities, are now so firmly and profitably entrenched all over the country that one may not to-day procure a route for any musical organization unless the local interests are in the hands of what is often called "the woman impresario," and let me say right here that the term is wholly proper. Ellen Mai Smith and May Davis Smith, of Columbus, Ohio and Buffalo, N.Y., respectively, operate on a scale so prodigious that it is doubtful if there are two men in all the country, whose activities in the same field are as varied or half as successful.

This is so true that some of the greatest celebrities in the world of music have offered both of these ladies an annual honorarium equal to that of a cabinet officer exclusively to direct their tours. Not only are there hundreds of local women managers, but the number of women who have their own musical companies on tour in addition is constantly increasing, and out of some sixty musical bureaus in New York City, at least half are now directed by women. Surely, too, these represent a vital influence. Antoinette Sawyer has interests to-day equal to those of any one man in the musical field. These women have brought to their work in many instances, a knowledge of music. Some have been artists or soloists, but not all are gifted in this respect, nor is musical knowledge or talent a requisite for achievement as a public caterer.

There is not a town to-day in Canada of 5,000 inhabitants that could not support a half dozen musical attendances a year. The larger cities have local men, but woman has not in Canada, embraced this work extensively. Yet I can think of no better locale than the territory between Suspension Bridge and St. Johns, Newfoundland, in which to build up a profitable business along these lines.

But woman is making her impress in the amusement field to-day in practically every branch of the theatre. The Schuberts of New York started with girl ushers, then they placed women in their box offices with such a result that they are now being emulated all over the country. Woman is even replacing the ubiquitous hat check boy in the Cabaret shows, and I can name a dozen women advance agents who have made so good that their salaries are at least as high as the average paid to men.

The best press agents in New York City are women. Anna Mable Pollock and Nellie Revell have been paid as high as \$7,000 a year; Dorothy Richardson Ling, Belasco's "publicity pusher," is now at the head of a big publicity bureau. Beulah Livingston is a young girl who two years ago began to help provide "copy" in a press bureau conducted by a man; now she is selling more "copy" than her erstwhile employer. In addition, this industrious girl is placing the cabaret dancers she has interviewed for the press, in vaudeville theatres. Two years ago unknown and without influence to make her way, Miss Livingston now earns never less than \$100 a week.

The leading dramatic agencies which supply the stage producers with talent are under woman's rule. The late Mrs. E. L. Fernandez was the mother of an infant prodigy known as Bijou Fernandez. In the effort to procure engagements for Bijou, Mrs. Fernandez discovered a demand for clever children in which she specialized; she had no experience, but had a large acquaintance with stage folk. Starting in her own apartment in the

theatrical district, Mrs. Fernandez soon became a power, gradually becoming the representative of the larger producers and finally supplying the

theatrical syndicate with all of its talent. At her death, Mrs. Fernandez was succeeded by Bijou, who had become one of the best leading ladies available, but as an illustration of the splendid income possible from operations in the booking agency field—Bijou retired from the stage and now conducts the entire business, never so successful as now.

Miss Packard began about the same time that Mrs. Fernandez did. To-day, she is the booking agent for the Schuberts, the second largest concern operating in the amusement field. Her two sons are also conducting similar agencies, but their success combined is not to be compared with that of the mother.

The biggest play bureaus are under woman's direction. Elizabeth Maubury earns \$75,000 a year and it is through her successful play bureau that this lady has attained her present high social distinction. Miss Maubury's chum is Miss Annie Morgan daughter of the great financier who passed on in 1912. Alice Kauser's success as a play agent is second only to that of Miss Maubury's. A dozen women are earning in excess of \$5,000 a year in the same field.

Woman was early in the field as a producer of Photoplays.

Alice Blache writes her own Photoplays, directs them, and produces them in her own studio at Fort Lee, where she welcomes the woman aspirant. These women knowing what opportunity has meant for them are invariably reluctant to "turn down" the sincere aspirant, and this is true of women in practically every branch of the stage or screen productivity where she is now impregnably entrenched.

The most successful Vaudeville Theatre in the Country attained its present status through the remarkable regime of a woman. In Washington D. C., for a generation Chases' Theatre (now Keiths) has been one of the Capital's great institutions. It was leased by P. B. Chase in the early 90's and he found its conduct a problem so difficult that he was on the verge of bankruptcy and was about to quit when one day there came to his theatre a young woman dancer by name of Solaret. This was the period when serpentine dancers were as common as Tangoists are today. Solaret happened to meet Mr. and Mrs. Chase socially and during her engagement she expressed her views as to what a Vaudeville theatre should be with such poignancy that Mr. Chase begged her to quit dancing and assume the management of Chase's theatre. Solaret at once assumed her own name that of Winnifred DeWitt, and had the greatest success.

While woman's opportunities in theatre-dom are greater today on its business side than on its artistic, the business woman is still a development of the theatre's evolution, but these opportunities are now increasing at a rapid rate and the aspirant who seeks to enter this phase of the field will do well to read the "trade" papers of the various branches—*The Dramatic Mirror* is a good medium because it embraces Opera, Drama, Vaudeville and Motion Pictures and one can keep informed through its weekly issues quite accurately.

For motion picture information exclusively the *Moving Picture World* is the best medium. For musical information I would recommend *Musical America* and for Vaudeville the green paper called *Variety*, but as before stated for those who can't afford an extensive library of stage information *The Dramatic Mirror* is best.

But what about the aspirant who has talent? Where is she to go and how is she to proceed to convert that talent into a weekly salary?

If you are a dramatic aspirant but still seek to develop such talent as you possess and can afford the \$500.00 a year (for 2 or 3 years) I suggest the Empire School of Acting New York City, or F. F. Mackay's School of Dramatic Art at Berkely Lyceum in West 44th Street, N. Y. City; these two are the best in America and Charles Frohman engages every year about half of the graduates of the former, the other producers gladly availing themselves of the rest. I can name a score of famous

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The Perfect Home

How We Can Best Be Happy

by the Practice of

Efficiency

By

EMILY WARD

ALMOST every normal girl wants to marry and have a home. Yet how many girls are taught, before marriage, how to organize, furnish, arrange, equip and conduct a home? If we threw our boys into the world-battle with no collegiate or industrial training we should think ourselves monsters of cruelty. We do throw our girls into a struggle no less fierce—the struggle to make and keep a home all it should be—and we tell them nothing of the tasks and trials ahead. Are homes of less value than stores and factories?

How shall the home be revived and maintained? Through a general adoption of the principles of domestic science, and a personal acquisition of a better understanding by women of the hard problems which their men folks are meeting every day. At least forty per cent of a man's efficiency lies in the hands of women—his mother, his sweetheart or wife, his housekeeper, his clerk or stenographer, and these same women factors in the life of his client or customer. On a mere selfish basis, fathers should insist that their daughters be taught how to earn a good living and how to conduct an ideal home.

Home is the great power-house of human electricity. Our nerves are the wires, our emotions the currents, our actions the manifestations of light, energy and influence carried from home by the radiant stream of ambition and affection. In a power-house we employ the highest-priced electrical engineers, to handle the machinery with faultless care. But in a kitchen we hire cheap maids totally ignorant of the digestive machinery, the science of marketing, the principles of household economy, hygiene, sanitation, organization.

I know a woman living in the country who works fourteen hours a day—and never seems to get a thing finished. She takes five steps where one would do. She has no place for anything—and keeps everything in its place. Observing the thread in her work basket, you think it the worst snarl you have ever seen, but you change your mind when you see her temper. She is faded, wilted, nervous, shrill. She has pains and weaknesses and miseries galore. She enjoys poor health to the utmost—the utmost being a debauch of self-pity. She has grown common to her husband, and for years merely a servant-in-waiting to her children.

Another woman living in the city, spends an hour every morning planning meals, discussing problems with her housekeeper, instructing her maid for the work of the day. Then she rides to her office downtown, where she conducts a large law practice, earning thereby the wages of her maid and housekeeper, and a good deal more. Her evenings are free for social duties and pleasures, and she has time to spare for human service and uplift work. She is in demand for lectures and magazine articles. She holds the adoration of her husband. She keeps her youth and beauty.

I know that the majority of farmers' wives, and of women in small towns, have not the facilities and resources to manage their homes effectively by an hour's work a day, and to embark on a public career at the same time. I know that the average housewife gets about 300 per cent more out of the time and money available, than her husband would. But I also know that from twenty to forty per cent of the motion in the average kitchen is lost motion, and that one dollar out of every five spent on the household is wasted.

THE HOME ITSELF

The site of a home should be high and dry, with abundance of light and air, in a neighborhood with a low mortality-rate. If choosing a city apartment, look for an eastern exposure, and be sure that no buildings are so near as to shut off your sunlight. Easy access from the home to shops, theaters, churches and other public places should be had on payment of a single fare.

A man's home should be away from his work—but not too far away, preferably within good walking distance, a half-mile to a mile. The most loving wife needs to be delivered from the presence of her husband for at least eight hours every day; and if the home is too near the office, he may run over any time and interrupt the household regime. An actor is a poor

husband because never home—a doctor is a poor husband because always home.

Sanitation should include open plumbing; rapid and complete drainage; scientific prevention of sewer-gas; abundance of running water, hot and cold; use of proper soaps, cleansers and disinfectants, from cellar to the attic; modern cleaning methods—such as oiled cloths, sweeper, and vacuum cleaner, in place of old-fashioned broom and feather duster; elimination of carpets, curtains and tapestries that gather dust and germs, and substitution of rugs, simple furniture and other common sense equipment.

A few of the items under the head of hygiene are a home gymnasium; a heating apparatus both healthful and reliable, that keeps the temperature from sixty to seventy degrees Fahrenheit in cold weather; bathroom appliances and conveniences, to make the daily bath more enjoyable and expeditious; ventilators for all the windows in the house; an emergency case of home remedies, such as mustard plaster, court plaster, hot water bottle, smelling salts, fountain syringe, peroxide of hydrogen, bandage material and sanitary cotton; a chart or booklet always handy on What to Do in Accidents and Emergencies; and address book with names of best druggists, physicians and surgeons available—these having first been investigated: a lighting system (whether of gas, electricity or acetylene) that includes soft, shaded, overhead lights, but full-power, concentrated desk lamps; a combination of color scheme harmonious and restful; a good supply of drinking water guaranteed pure—either bottled, and certified by chemical analysis, or distilled or boiled in your own kitchen.

Certain articles for home use cost less from mail-order houses, others cost less from local dealers. Which are they, in each list? At certain seasons of the year, bargains may be had regularly—in clothing, furnishings, foods, and so forth. Do you buy accordingly? In the Kitchen, there is a science of utilizing "scraps" and left overs. Have you learned it? A pound of beans, of whole-wheat grains, of nuts or of cheese, contains from two to three times as much pure nourishment as a pound of best steak, and costs perhaps half as much. Do you consult modern tables of food values in ordering the daily meals?

Both vitality and morality require that a sense of harmony and repose comfort us in a few hours of ease accorded to us. In this violently practical age, when even schools and churches are made for utilitarian purposes, the home is the only place where we can satisfy our souls with grace of line, symmetry of form, harmony of color, beauty of texture, poetry of symbolism. We are soothed, or irritated, by the pattern in the rug, the picture on the wall, the contour of the home against the sky. A cottage costing \$3000, planned by an artist for the needs and the tastes of the members of the family, is a better investment than a \$30,000 mansion void of the magic touch of refinement and affection.

Hurry is the chief cause of worry, and a home is the haven of rest where we can smile at our haste, and watch the world go by. One of the first rules of a scientific household is that nobody's ailments or troubles or fears be mentioned in the presence of the family assemblage. Above all, gloom should be chased from the dining-room.

One of the first duties of a mother is to make her children proud to wait on her. But, alas, few mothers learn this until they are too old to begin and too tired to care. Each member of a family has certain duties and responsibilities to every other member. These are usually ignored; and often violated, as in the case of a father who whips his boy, or of a girl who wears her mother's clothes.

Parents mostly are guilty of either invasion or evasion of the souls of their children—they force dogmas on the young folk, or they neglect altogether to provide religious training. I do not think God looks at the label on our church; I think He looks at the love in our life. Greatness overlaps goodness. And as a man's greatest human love is the love of wife and children, so does that love, truly and wisely and freely expressed, make more for righteousness than any other instrumentality on earth.