

"That's it," he iterated. "Your face doesn't fit." Hampstead did not wince.

"The question is," he proposed, in a voice husky with a mixture of embarrassment and determination, "how am I to make it fit? Or, failing that, how am I to get somewhere with a face that doesn't fit?"

The actor's reply was half sagacity, half "selling talk", mixed with some judicious flattery and tinged with inevitable gallery play, although there was no gallery.

"Elocution?" Kenton observed, with a little grimace of derision. "No! Oratory? Not at all!" The weight of his withering scorn was tremendous. "There are no such things. It is all acting! A man speaks with the whole of himself — his eyes, his mouth, his body, his walk, his pose — everything. That's what you need to learn. Self-expression! I can make your face fit. That's simple enough," and Kenton waved his hand as if the re-stamping of a man's features was the easiest thing he did. "I can make your body graceful. I can take that voice of yours and make it strong as the roar of a bull, and as soft as rich, brown velvet. Yes," and the actor leaped to his feet in growing enthusiasm, "I can make 'em all respond to every whim of what's passing inside. But," he asked suddenly, with a penetrating glance, "will that make an orator of you? Well, that depends on what's passing inside. It takes a great soul to make an orator — great imagination, mind, feelings, sentiments. Have you got 'em? I doubt it! I doubt it!"

The old man confirmed his dubiousness with the uncomplimentary emphasis of hesitating silence. In the sincerity of his critical analysis, he had forgotten that he was trying to secure a pupil. "And yet — and yet —" his eye began to kindle as he looked, "I tell you I don't know,