

## The Rockwood Review.

ensured a fixed sum for his efforts, and having a similar and simultaneous arrangement with two other not very distant communities, where the good looks, the excellent choirs, and the unity were about on a par with those of Rockton, he properly and warmly felt that he was nobly doing his duty as an upright citizen and public benefactor. But when the music lessons and the necessary drill movements had been completed, and the donning of a prodigious display of tinselled and begenmed velvet and silken robes of Eastern Potentates had been effected, a scaly and glittering Serpent had undoubtedly crept into the Rockton Eden, and there were at least a dozen Eves into whose ears it whispered the assurance that they were born to be translated, sooner or later, into a galaxy of dramatic stars. Haman and Mordecai, and half a score of Kings and ruffianly Jews, including the Hangman, imbibed the poison, and it worked so potently for evil, that when the execution was over, the dresses had been doffed and sent to the other villages; the sweet puffs in the local paper had been read, and the general burst of praise from many lips had been duly received and believed, there was left a strong desire to conquer further worlds. And so, in an altogether too brief space of time, sprang into being the R. D. C.,—that fierce disturber of village peace, and powerful disintegrator of village society, the Rockton Dramatic Club.

Need it be told that the first dream of every amateur is to figure as the principal character in the most difficult of the legitimate dreams, and that the Immortal Bard is the most favored of all dramatic authors? Light and frivolous productions are strictly tabooed, and voted as unworthy the notice of budding talent, and the least possible attention from a discriminating public. As with the amateur in general, so was it with the Rockton

amateur in particular, and the suggestion of an old hand, that it would be well to begin with something easy, was set aside with a contempt which covered the author of the proposal with becoming confusion and deserved ignominy. The selecting committee of the R. D. C. set to work, therefore, with full determination that a Shakespearean Tragedy should be the first production to be placed before an expectant Rockton audience. Hamlet had the preference, but was voted as too melancholy; Romeo and Juliet was regarded as too lovely; the Merchant of Venice was thought rather too difficult; Macbeth was too gloomy, and the other tragedies were reluctantly set aside as too difficult to costume. That was the bugbear constantly looming up. To drop the characters and paint appropriate scenery, were stumbling blocks. The comedies were canvassed and rejected on these grounds, and a temporary Shakespearean deadlock was the regrettable result. A bright eyed youth, who knew no such word as fail, solved the difficulty. Why not take some scenes from Julius Cæsar? The dresses, or the want of much of them, made the thing dead easy, although the absence of ladies was to be deplored. The scenery could be made up of sheets, a pedestal and a bust. This suggestion, inasmuch as it debarred the fair ones, was reluctantly accepted. But needs must, the parts were cast, and the death scene of Julius Cæsar, with the ever-living and well known "recitations" which follow, were enthusiastically hailed as the solution of the difficulty. Everybody wanted to be Marc Anthony, with Brutus as second choice, while Cæsar, being taken off easy, had few willing takers. The Populace, the Roman citizens, venerable and otherwise, were not difficult to produce or managc, but the whole of the parts were distributed by the casting of dice as the most appropriate method of avoiding dispute