

end religious mythology and poetry were brought to the garnishing of the play, and in later days the matters of private life were permitted to appear upon the stage.

In the earliest times the sexes were not allowed to mingle on the stage in the main parts of the role, but after a time this restriction was disregarded.

The stages upon which the early tragedies were enacted were in the open air, and the times were, for the most part, on the great calendar and feast days, and at times of great national rejoicings. On many of these occasions whole weeks were necessary to complete the play, so numerous and elaborate were the details to be observed.

Till the time of the introduction of the more exciting scenes of the race-course and the gladiatorial games, and the more bloody conflicts of the arena in which wild beasts, slaves, and latterly the Christians were slaughtered by the thousands, the theatre was most popular and growing to wonderful proportions; but when these more thrilling entertainments were made the rule of the Latin and Greek peoples, the full flush of the drama faded till the institution was wrecked and its downfall was accomplished as a controlling influence.

It is worthy of note that the moral influences of the drama were then a matter of comment, and such names as Plutarch, Xenophon, Plato, Socrates, Seneca and Ovid uttered their protests against the immoralities of the stage, on the ground that the morals of the