

In schools where the teacher and pupils decide to stage a play in whole or in part for public performance, some sort of dramatic organization is required. If there is a dramatic club in the school it will naturally take full charge of the production; but, if not, the teacher and class must take the first steps to arrange for the play.

The first thing to be done is to select the play, and if possible it should be one that has been studied in class. The dramatic production should be the outgrowth of class work, and the would-be actor must make a study of the characters, the development of the plot, the structure of the play and the purpose of each scene. He must have studied the play so thoroughly that he knows the exact meaning of every expression, and is able to interpret the feelings of the various speakers in the play.

In any dramatic organization, the most important person is the director or stage-manager of the play, who is usually also the "coach," who gives instruction to the actors. The director has full charge of the production of the play, the rehearsals, the scenery and stage effects, the costumes, etc., etc. He must, of course, be assisted by various committees, but he directs their work and his decisions are in all cases final. He should not only have some knowledge of how to stage a play, but should have certain indispensable personal qualities such as tact, good humour, executive ability and decision. It is desirable, for obvious reasons, that some member of the staff should be the director of the school play: but experience and knowledge of stage production is the first consideration. The director, of course, does not himself take part in the play.