

—and the employées, often almost penniless, have to seek for new work. Most young actresses commence in the provinces, which is the best school for learning this difficult art in spite of the present touring system. Salaries in the country range from £1 to £3 a week. Remember, too, as I have often written in these pages, that there is a vast difference between amateurs and professionals, between pleasure and business; and that because you may have succeeded well in the drawing-room theatricals got up at Christmas time amongst your friends, or even in those performed in the village school-room before the astonished villagers and neighbouring squires and squire's wives in aid of a charity, you must of necessity succeed before an unbiassed, nay more, a critical audience. For every successful star there are hundreds that never rise except in day-dreams.

I WOULD earnestly warn all who would be actresses against theatrical "do's" in the way of human sharks, who advertise that they are willing to "prepare" for the stage and able to find engagements for a certain fixed sum, which must always be paid beforehand; and also of small theatrical agents, who offer the novice a principal part and a liberal weekly salary all for a small premium, which premium paid the unlucky dupe is sent to some little far away town, to find no theatre, no manager. But there are several really genuine agents, who, for a small commission, obtain for their clients, if capable, good and lengthy engagements. Among the best are Messrs. Blackmore, of Garrick Street, and Mr. Gilbert Tate, of Wellington Street. For lessons, Mr. Henry Neville's School of Dramatic Art can be recommended, as that veteran actor thoroughly understands what he teaches.

PRIZE competitions are the order of the day. A new and extraordinary one—limited to a sex and a class—has just been announced by a St. Louis journal. Its editor proposes to send the two most popular lady teachers in that city for a trip to Europe during the coming summer, free of all expense, the popularity of the teachers to be tested by public vote, the vote coupon forming "an integral part" of the paper aforesaid. Thus the far-sighted editor hopes largely to increase the sale of the paper, and so recoup the expenses, and at the same time advertise the journal, for in this case the most popular teacher means the best canvasser; and I expect the free trip will have been hardly earned by the time it comes off; but then to go to Europe is ever the longing desire of American males, and females as well.

WHAT will not a pushing Editor think of next?

Their brains must get addled over new ideas for prize competitions. May be one, more pushing than the rest, will, if not already a Benedict, propose marrying any young lady the readers may choose for him by coupon vote. What an opportunity for the brothers of an unpopular and bad tempered sister, or the father of many plain and portionless daughters! Why he might even offer a penny a vote! People have sold their opinions for less oftentimes, for a glass of something hot, for a kind word, for a kiss gladly as beautiful Lady Georgina knew.

My readers will be glad to learn that kind Miss Janotha was enabled to present £600 to the fund to assist the distinguished pianist, Mdme. Arabella Goddard, the very practical result of the recent admirable concert organised by her lately on her distressed friend's behalf.

AMERICA has beaten us in novel employments for ladies. The "factotum" lady is the "newest thing" in England, but Yankeeland has improved on this in introducing the "mourninglady," who proves distinctly welcome when she enters the hushed house of death and takes into her hands, to the relief of the flurried, afflicted household, that which has ever seemed the proverbial last straw—*i.e.*, the ordering of those sad-looking black costumes society and custom expects the mourner ever to don out of respect to the dead. Jay's and similar establishments would object, however, should this latest transatlantic novelty be transported to England. Also, unless she has an enormous connection, will it not be hard for the said mourning lady to make a living thereby? She had better combine "best woman" at weddings with her other trade, only then she must be good at rapid facial change—have, in fact—

"A smile on her lip, a tear in her eye."

VEVA KARSLAND.

EXTERNAL CIRCUMSTANCES.—Man's highest merit always is much as possible to rule external circumstances, and as little as possible to let himself be ruled by them. Life lies before us as a huge quarry lies before the architect; he deserves not the name of an architect except when out of this fortuitous mass he can combine with the greatest economy and fitness and durability some form the pattern of which originated in his spirit. All things without us are mere elements, but deep within us lies the creative force which out of these can produce what they were meant to be, and which leaves us neither sleep nor rest till in one way or another it has been produced.

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