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The little theatre movement

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Thesis

THE LITTLE THEATRE MOVEMENT

Submitted by

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(B.B.A., Boston University, 1925)

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the degree of Master of Arts

1929
During the past four years I have been definitely connected with the theatrical profession and along with other members of the Actors Equity Association have followed the rapid progress of the Little Theatre Movement with great interest. Therefore, aside from the fact that a thesis is a requirement to obtain a Master's Degree, I have taken a personal interest and enjoyment in developing this thesis, believing it is the first attempt to trace the Little Theatre Movement and all its various phases from its origin in Europe to its growth and progress in this country. The first few pages of the thesis, devoted to the pioneer efforts of the Little Theatre Movement in Europe and its growth and progress in the United States has been put in outline form, as I felt that this would give a clearer and better understanding of the early development and history of the Little Theatre. As much of this material as possible has been placed in chronological order.

It is humanly impossible (and of little importance) to account for or record each and every Little Theatre that buds one day and dies the next. The writer has not attempted to do this. However he does believe he has included every Little Theatre that has in any way furthered the Art, Purpose and Progress of the Little Theatre Movement.
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I THE MOVEMENT IN EUROPE

A. The Théâtre Libre of André Antoine, Paris, 1837.

The Little Theatre originated when the Theatre Antoine blossomed in Paris in 1837. It had a legitimate brother in the Moscow Art Theatre, and subsequently we had the growth of the Repertory Theatre movement in England. They were urgently wanted: they were supplied — but they were supplied by services of professional people who realized that a powerful counterblast to the ordinary commercial theatre was necessary, if dramatic art was not to perish wholly from the earth. They were organized, developed, maintained and operated by authentic and experienced artists who put so to speak, their life blood into these theatres that they might live. The Little Theatre of the country grew out of a natural wish to have good plays represented for "Art's Sake" free from any commercial aspects. It was against the conventional drama and the conventional acting of the Parisian boulevard that André Antoine — clerk in the Gas Company, and amateur actor — launched the Théâtre-Libre, ancestor of all the little theatres of the world. On March 30, 1837, in a small hall above a cafe on Montmartre, Antoine and his friends put on their first bill of modern one-act plays. The actor who spoke the prologue forgot his lines and there were many hitches about the scenery. Everything was quite in the soon to be established tradition of the Little Theatre. But actors appeared as human beings in plays of recognizable form, they smoked cigarettes, they even turned their
backs on the audience and through their agency the way was opened for distinguished realistic playwrights like Brieux, De Curel, Porto Riche and Lavedan.

B. Lugné Poe's Théâtre de L'Oeuvre.

This followed Andre Antoine's Free Theatre. Pierre Loving calls it the "First Workshop Theatre".

C. The Moscow Art Theatre of Constantine Stanislavsky 1890.

In Russia there was created the greatest of modern acting companies out of a dramatic school maintained by Nyemirovitch-Dantchenko and a Little Theatre headed by an amateur actor called Stanislavsky. It took about a dozen years for the amateur reformers of the London stage to break into the professional theatre. We cannot determine how long the Moscow Art Theatre was a part of the Russian Little Theatres but the strength of that special and finely amateur impulse was evident, when at the height of its success and in the midst of a world war the Stanislavsky Company began the organization of four other theatres where new talent met special audiences.

D. Wyspianski's Theatre at Cracow 1890-6.

Between 1890-6 Wyspianski, Polish painter and poet, had established his own theatre at Cracow. He helped to make "The Theatre of the Polish Conscience". He produced only plays of Polish playwrights.


Brother to the Theatre-Libre and great uncle to the American Little Theatre was the Freie Bühne which appeared in Berlin in
1899. Amateurs and critics mingled with professionals in its leadership and Ibsen, Hauptmann and Tolstoy were given to an audience of subscribers only.


In England George Moore, arch-realist began to talk of a free theatre in 1891 and before spring had come John T. Grein, the critic, launched the Independent Theatre, with that memorable performance of *Ghosts*. The membership in Grein's society included George Meredith, Thomas Hardy, Arthur Wing Pinero and Henry Arthur Jones; the next year Grein produced Shaws' first play written for the theatre - *Widower's Houses*. This theatre lasted six years.

G. The Stage Society, London 1897.

The London Stage Society put forth Granville Barker as well as Shaw, Maeterlinck, Hauptmann, Ibsen and the rest. Other acting societies followed the Play Actors, the Oncomers, the Drama Society, the Pioneer Players, etc., and soon Barker was worming his way into commercial and professional theatres to give London Galsworthy and Masefield.

H. The Art Theatre of Madam Vyeia Kommisarzhevsky, Petrograd 1904.

I. Max Reinhardt's Kammerspielhaus, Berlin 1905.

In Germany there developed a unique figure - Max Reinhardt - out of a unique aspect of the rebellious and amateur Little Theatre movement.

However professional Reinhardt may appear as actor and director it is highly significant that the first theatre over which
he exercised complete control was called the Kleines Theater, that he worked in the Freie Bühne and that he bridged the gap between volunteer work with the Freie Bühne and the management of the Kleines Theater by an adventure in the kind of cabaret management of which we have caught a glimpse in Balieff's Chauve-Souris.

**J. August Strindberg's Intimate Theatre at Stockholm 1907.**

The Little Theatre Movement as we shall later see was the result of a rebellion against the so called commercial or professional theatres. The Free Theatre, Independent Theatre, Literary Theatre, Art Theatre, National Theatre, Chamber Theatre, Stage Society, Repertory Theatre, Intimate Theatre - behind all these there was a common note of rebellion. Strindberg set it down on paper in the eighties. With these words he called into being those rebel play houses which almost invariably included among the plays of their first seasons the "Ghosts" of the other great Scandinavian playwright: "Let us have a free theatre where there is room for everything but incompetence, hypocrisy and stupidity, where we can be shocked by what is horrible, where we can laugh at what is grotesque, where we can see life without shrinking back in terror if what has hitherto lain veiled behind theological or aesthetic conceptions is revealed to us." He believed as did Antoine in reducing stage settings to "interchangeable backgrounds and a few stage properties." The characteristics of Strindberg's theatre were scenic simplification, repertory, and experimentation. The theatre seated two hundred people.
K. The Convex Mirror Theatre of Petrograd, 1911.

The Convex Mirror Theatre at Petrograd gave plays with new ideas – ideas not only dramatic and literary, but political as well – as Andreyev's "Sabine Women". There was less stress on stage decorations.

L. George Fuchs' Art Theatre of Munich.

George Fuchs followed Reinhardt in using perspectiveless backgrounds, though lacking Reinhardt's color. It has been said that "neutral tones and ascetic lines mark the stylization of the Munich Art Theatre". They alternated with plays and operas.

M. The Irish Players.

In 1894 a certain Miss A. E. F. Horniman who bore significantly the name of a popular brand of tea put up the money for Florence Fair to produce "Arms and the Man" in London. In 1904 this same woman bought the Mechanics Institute Hall in Dublin, turned it into the Abeey Theatre and presented it rent free for six years to the Irish National Dramatic Society. This organization, which had come to life through the energies of two amateur actors, W. C. and Frank Fay, which had enlisted W. B. Yeats from the Moribund Irish Literary Theatre of 1899 and which had brought to itself John Millington Synge and Lady Gregory, developed in half a dozen years into a professional theatre that sent us the Irish Players, created a dramatic literature and inspired Gordon Craig and embarked on significant experiments in the new stage craft. It was more a national theatre than a true little theatre. It produced the plays of
Irish authors who sought simplicity in scenery and production. The purpose was not primarily experimentation.

N. Gertrude Kingston’s Little Theatre in London.

Little can be said of this theatre. Although it flourished for a while as a Little Theatre, it lacked the necessary wherewithal and soon died a natural death.

O. Jacques Rouche’s Théâtre de Art, Paris.

In 1907 Jacques Rouche founded the Theatre des Arts and began the exploitation of French stage designers.


This was the last Little Theatre to be established before the war and one of the most important. They were an interesting group dealing with scenery, stage management, playwriting, etc. Henri Pierre Roche says that Copeau "is to the French of today what Antoine was to Paris twenty-five years ago. Copeau has a small theatre seating five hundred on the Rue du Vieux Colombier in the Latin quarter of Paris. He made a group of amateurs into a fine acting company.

J. Other Foreign Movements.

In 1909 Glasgow created a Scottish Repertory Theatre; in 1911 the Liverpool Repertory Theatre came into being under the direction of Basil Dean. The Birmingham Repertory Theatre followed in 1913 under the leadership of John Drinkwater and Barry Jackson. These theatres and certain others that imitated them employed many professional players and turned their first energies to the calling forth of new playwrights, yet their rela-
tionship is closer perhaps, to our own Little Theatre than to any other of the rebellious experiments of Europe. Though the provinces of England could be pocketed in Texas, they correspond fairly closely in their theatrical life to the present state of the far flung touring system of the United States. London is an exaggerated Broadway. In 1907 when the successes and the stars of the New York season were to spend a year at least visiting Boston, Baltimore, St. Louis, Des Moines, Denver, and stands between, it was a rare play that came to Manchester or Birmingham with any members of the original London cast, and it was only the most obviously popular pieces which went on tour. In the Repertory Theatre of the provinces a considerable impulse came originally from playwrights, but the necessities of play starved audiences had as important a part in calling forth new theatres as they had in our own American provinces. And today when most of the pioneers are gone the provincial Repertory Theatres that remain do so largely in a response to a need for dramatic entertainment and not because of a creative impulse among the artists. Play producing societies like the Stage Society still continue to render their special service and a certain few theatres like the Maddermarket at Norwich, the Everyman at Hempstead, the Leeds Art Theatre and the Birmingham Repertory, form a link between the older and the newer experimental theatres. Turning to England again, Miss Horniman began in Manchester a dramatic movement which the war was unable to completely destroy, but which later passed out of existence. In 1907 she set up in the Midland capital the Manchester Repertory Company under the direction of B. Iden Payne.
In conclusion, the efforts of these various foreign Little Theatre Movements, the same spirit of amateurism, the same system of subscription, the same parallels with our own Little Theatre Movement are clear enough. The cause is rebellion against the commercial stage. The guiding spirit is amateur. The economic system is based on the subscription audience and the playhouse is usually a small and cheap one, or an ordinary theatre rented economically for occasional performances. The difference between these European theatres of reform and our own are two: the policies of the European theatres succeeded in breaking the walls of the professional houses and establishing their leaders - Antoine, Brahm, Barker - as directors of commercial playhouses, just as their amateur ventures died; and the chief aim and artistic outcome of these efforts was the development in each country of new playwrights with the distinctively native quality. Our Little Theatres have their effect upon Broadway, but the necessities of the smaller cities deserted by good road companies, keep them alive, even then their actors and directors move on into New York. As for their product it is not as yet - worse luck - a brilliant group of such playwrights as the free theatres of Europe produced; but the rebellion of today is against the realism that the free theatres fostered and imagination in production settings and lights which open the way for imagination in playwriting.
II PROGRESS IN THE UNITED STATES

Our Little Theatre in America has an ancestry of almost forty years in the continent of Europe and is only a part, a current phase, of a long story of theatrical rebellion. It is a story in which the amateur actor, the subscription audience and the small auditorium have always played a part. By a careful research the history of the rebel theatre in the United States can be traced back to 1892.

A. The First Little Theatre to be Established, 1911-1912.

The first Little Theatre to be established in the United States of any importance was Maurice Browne's Little Theatre in Chicago. The New Theatre under the direction of Donald Robertson and the Hull House Theatre under the direction of Laura Dainty Pelham developed at approximately the same time, but quickly passed away. The years 1909-1911 marked the rise and fall of the New Theatre in New York under the direction of Winthrop Ames. In the years 1911-1912 Donald Robertson made a second attempt to develop the Little Theatre with the Drama Players, but this project did not last very long. For all practical purposes the true start of dramatic reform in the United States must be reckoned with 1911 when Thomas H. Dickinson founded the Wisconsin Dramatic Society and 1912 when Mrs. Lyman Gale's Toy Theatre of Boston and Maurice Browne's Little Theatre of Chicago came into existence. They were experimental, both in stage settings and in plays, but like many other of the Little Theatres that had been founded in America, having opened
such new paths as they were able, they "served their turn" and disappeared. After these beginnings of which only the Wisconsin group still exists, came the Arts and Crafts Theatre of Detroit and the Little Theatre of Philadelphia.


Beginning as a group of amateurs of the drama, acting in an out of the way band box of a playhouse, this institution has so commanded public interest and the public purse, that it now competes boldly and successfully with Broadway and just off Broadway. It is almost a community organization. Everybody connected with it either writes plays, or stages them, or acts in them, or manages them, or paints scenery for them, or designs costumes, or ushers, or does something, or several somethings, for an art in which his chief interests lie and to which his talents are devoted. This group later became the Theatre Guild which is doing such noble work in the theatre today.


This was a portable theatre with a group of players under control of Stuart Walker. It was an interesting example of the reduction of scenery to its lowest terms. The stage consisted of one unchangeable interior: two side walls with a blue curtained door in each one, and an arch across the back. In the arch a painted scene, different for each play. They gave Dunsany's "The Gods of the Mountain", "The Glittering Gate", and the "Golden Doom". They also presented some of Walker's own plays.
D. The Arts and Crafts Theatre of Detroit 1916.

This was an interesting group founded by Sam Hume. It is now gone. Hume made experiments in a direction suggested by Gordon Craig, that is, in the use of cylinders, against a flat background and flooded with white or colored limelight to suggest cliffs, castles, mountains, or whatever was desired.

E. The Carnegie Institute Theatre 1914.

The Carnegie Institute of Technology has a workshop or laboratory theatre where student dramatists may try out their work. Their methods and procedure are very much like the other already mentioned Little Theatres.

F. The Provincetown Players 1915.

One of the little theatres that has most consistently maintained a high standard and kept closest to its original purpose; one also which is still in existence, a group, like the Washington Square Players of writers and actors, inquiring and experimental in their aim. In their ranks were such playwrights as O'Neill, Glaspell and Pinski. They still maintain their experimental spirit as in their production of Susan Glaspell's play "The Verge" which shows normality verging on insanity (in the persons of various people) through the attempt to break away from stereotyped ways of living and create so to speak new patterns for life. The scenery for this was expressionistic which sought to respect the attitude toward the scene felt by people in the play, rather than the actual appearance of the room as it would seem to the eyes of an unmoved observer. Of course this means merely that the Provincetown Players are attempting to carry into stage designing the methods of painting,
begun some time ago by such people as Matisse and Picasso in France. Robert Edmund Jones tried the same thing in Lionel Barrymore's production of "Macbeth", though whether successfully or not is a matter of dispute. The Provincetown Players began in the summer colony at Provincetown, Cape Cod. Their first theatre was a fish house. Then they moved to the Playwright's Theatre, MacDougal Street, New York, where they still are. They produce mostly the work of their own group, but do not confine themselves to that exclusively.


Another little theatre founded by Alice and Irene Lewisohn which has maintained a high standard and is still functioning is the Neighborhood Playhouse in New York. It is a case of the little theatre idea overlapping that of the community theatre. The building, one of the best equipped in America, is on Grand Street, New York, in the heart of the Jewish quarter, in the neighborhood of the nurses' settlement on Henry Street. There is a group of Jewish people from the quarter, calling themselves the Neighborhood Players, who have done very good work. But the theatre is also available to players from outside, as for instance the Gertrude Kingston Players from London who used to come yearly to the Neighborhood Playhouse. Eugene O'Neill's "First Man" was one of the first plays to be given there. The playhouse serves both as an experimental workshop and also as a center for community life in the vicinity.
The origin of the Follies dates back to the early days of the Neighborhood Playhouse, before the present theatre was built and antedates most of the supposedly satire revues such as "The Greenwich Village Follies", "Charlot's Revue" and the "Ziegfield Follies". The downtown extravaganza had its beginnings in the happy days when the Henry Street Settlement players held weekly entertainment on Clinton Hill. Those were times filled with all the stress which attends the birth of amateur productions and further weighted with the consciousness that the drama must be taken very seriously. Nevertheless the audience were selected and invited guests. At that time there was no thought of letting in the general public. Not until 1922 were the Follies performed before others than the limited circle of those directly connected with the theatre.

By 1922 the Playhouse had established a subscriber group and it was in the nature of a reward for this small brave body which had trudged religiously to Grand Street to witness the plays of the season that it was decided to give three special performances, consisting of burlesques of the various serious enterprises. The opening was a tremendous success.

There were no "Follies" the next year as the theatre was closed and it was not until 1924 that production was resumed. In the meantime plenty of time was afforded for the accumulation of material and a longer engagement was planned. The directors planned on a four to six week run, but the show actually lasted twenty-eight weeks. It was then closed for the productions of a new season. And so it has gone. In 1927 the "Follies of
1927" were scheduled for only a two weeks run due to the closing of the Neighborhood Playhouse June 1st of that year.

I. The Vagabond Players of Baltimore, 1916.

This group of players are very much similar to other groups already mentioned. They give plays by Baltimorians and also European and American masterpieces. They also present representative plays that other little theatres in America are giving.

J. The "47 Workshop" of George P. Baker.

The famous "47 Workshop" of Professor George P. Baker at Harvard was one of the pioneer movement of the Little Theatre in America. Here he taught successfully the fundamentals of playwriting and sent to Broadway many of his promising students. Some authorities state that Professor Baker began his famous "47 Workshop" in 1913, but there is evidence of an earlier date.

K. "The Barn".

The "Barn" is another type of Little Theatre. It has been operating at its present location at 36 Joy Street, Boston, Mass., for the past six years. It is owned and operated by Mr. Townsend. The building used by the players was formerly a barn, but has since been transformed into a quaint and picturesque theatre for the presentation of plays both unusual and interesting in an artistic manner and with singularly finished production. Mr. Elliott Cary of Lynn is the director. There is an advisory board together with a number of patronesses. The Barn presents four or five plays a season, most of which are written by Bernard Shaw and Eugene O'Neill. All the players are amateurs who give freely of their services for art and art's sake alone.
"Our Theatre" started a few years ago by a group of C.L.A. graduates who were seriously interested in the drama. During their college work they had been together in college dramatics and most of them had specialized or were specializing in literature and drama. Most of their plays have been given at the Elizabeth Peabody House on Charles Street. A great number of romantic comedies have been well acted and produced by this group of players. In a recent issue of the Boston University News, Miss Colette Humphrey, Director of "Our Theatre", says "It's an experiment. Last year we had a season of worth-while plays at low price. It was an experiment to find out if there was in Boston an audience to which that sort of play would appeal. We gave plays which other theatres give only as all star revivals, the tickets for which are sold at a premium. Our cast is made up of amateurs who are paid no salaries. They are volunteers and aim to give a good lively performance in the atmosphere of the time of the play. Considerable research goes into each play. For instance, our first play this season was one of Molière's. Many interesting points of business have been brought to light. We tried to get the spirit of the original play. We are also building a permanent workshop where costuming, lighting and everything that goes to make a play is studied and perfected. We rent our costumes and props to schools and clubs and we also advise them. Our workshops are at present at 125 Myrtle Street. There we do sewing and prop work. We hope to have a permanent house in the city with adequate fixtures which would include a show room where our work would be on display for
all who wished to see it. We have at present a rather large library on the drama, containing lighting, stage managing and all the technical details of the theatre. We also have a library of music used with plays. There is so much music used in Shakespeare's plays that we find this collection very valuable. We also have files of reviews on current productions for anyone that wants to keep up with the modern stage." We can see from Miss Humphrey's article that like all other "Little Theatres" their chief interest lies in experimentation, giving sufficient time for details and research in each play, so that when it is finally presented critics and audience may say, "It was well done."

M. Goodman Memorial Theatre 1925.

The Goodman Memorial Theatre opened in October 1925. Its object was to "restore the old visions and to win the new". It was named the Goodman Memorial Theatre in tribute to a young playwright and poet whose death was one more wastage of the late war. His parent built and equipped the house. It contains a seven hundred seating capacity, while the stage is provided with a plaster dome for the play of light; spacious workrooms; movable "wagons" on which whole sets may be wheeled into immediate place and away again. A company of professional actors and a company of student actors will man the theater, both under the direction of Mr. Thomas Wood Stevens, late of the school of the stage in the Carnegie Institute at Pittsburgh.
III SERVICES OF THE LITTLE THEATRE.

A. Methods of Producing and Use of Scenery.

The new methods of lighting, the simplification of scenery, the increasing use of suggestive rather than literary representative stage settings, the increasingly artistic quality in producing generally, are some of the things which the Little Theatre has created and left as heritage for the theatre as a whole.

B. A Field for One Act Plays.

One Act plays had little place in the big theatre. It was confined for the most part within the narrow boundaries of the curtain raiser or the vaudeville sketch. The production of one act plays was due entirely to the Little Theatre.

C. A Hearing for New Writers, Native and Foreign.

The Washington Square Players put on thirty-two plays their first year, of which twenty-two were American. The settings and scenery were largely experimental in a direction suggested by Gordon Craig, that is, in the use of cylinders, against a flat background and flooded with white or colored limelight to suggest cliffs, castles, mountains, or whatever was desired.
IV TYPES OF LITTLE THEATRES.

A. How Many Amateur Organizations are there?

Consider these phenomena. Magazines devoted to the professional theatre (supposedly "commercial" hard-boiled, etc.) such as the Bill-Board and Variety now give columns, even pages, to the Amateur Theatre; many great metropolitan newspapers not only give frequent notices of amateur productions, but even run a column exclusively about the Little Theatre. One of the most celebrated of professional producers, David Belasco, at first an open and avowed opponent of the Amateur Theatre, now sponsors the "Little Theatre Tournament" in New York and awards a trophy cup to the winner. Publishers are flooding the market with plays intended only for amateurs and every week or two there appears a book on Little Theatre organization and management, or on the technique of production.

Almost every college and university in this country has established a "Department of Dramatic Art" or something of the kind, more or less a portion of the regular curriculum; a few have even established schools of the theatre. Hundreds of public schools have flourishing "dramatic societies" altogether different in purpose, at least from the old type. The demand for trained teachers of "the drama" and for directors is great enough to warrant the conducting of several training schools. A great educational institution recently summoned from all over the land representatives of the Amateur Theatre to participate in a conference; the delegates came from twenty-seven states. Finally as a crowning distinction a celebrated humorous cartoon-
ist whose clever pictures are syndicated all over the country, has several times devoted an entire page to satirizing the "Little Theatre" - or at least certain absurd features of the same.

One might go on enumerating these signs of the times, but enough's enough. These show which way the wind is blowing. Evidently the Little Theatre, whatever you may think about it, has arrived.

As to the amateur groups. Some people say there are 500 amateur theatres, others 5000. Both are guessing; nobody really knows. It depends somewhat upon what you mean. Cut out all the old types of "dramatic societies" from the list and you at once reduce the number vastly. The answer depends also upon what your standard of judgment is. There are not many organizations that are important from the standpoint of results in art. Again, not many play a large part in the lives of their respective communities. Few are highly organized, are financially sound, have permanent homes, and so on. If you were to give an estimation of 5000, including all the various types of amateur groups, you would not be very far out of the way.

B. Groups In Schools.

There are many groups in schools, hundreds of them, some of which play a large part in the school life and a few of which are really of educational value and are doing remarkable work. Some of these have real theatres and good equipment, with well trained teachers in charge. This work in the schools
is growing everywhere, as it is bound to - training the audiences of the future, developing youthful talent, brightening and enriching the lives of the young people. Before long, I think it safe to say, every good high school will have its practical theatre, with its courses in theatre arts. The only obstacle in the way is the conservatism of the school authorities in general.

C. College Groups.

There are 2-300 college groups. Some of these are merely the old type - producing one "show" a year, a musical comedy or a farce. Many others are of the new type, producing several times a year plays of at least fair mention. A few of these again are more than "dramatic societies" - they are genuine experimental groups, with some kind of a theatre, often also a workshop. Such are the organizations at Cornell, Penn. State, Yale, Smith, Hunter, Northwestern University; and the state universities of Minnesota, Colorado, North Carolina, Utah, Washington, Wyoming, Montana, and a score of others from Maine to California. Several such institutions maintain schools of the theatre for the education of professionals; for instance that at Yale, at the Carnegie Institute of Technology and that at University of Iowa. These have complete "plants" and from them are coming a steady stream of well trained actors, designers, directors and playwrights.

D. CHURCH GROUPS

There are the groups in churches - thousands of them. Most of these are as yet of no importance, except as providing a
means for a good time. A few, however, are genuine "Little Theatres", even community theatres - notably that of the Universalist Church in Reading, Penn. Most of these church groups produce very poor plays - almost incredibly poor - but some of them (sometimes right in the church auditorium) actually stage fine things and act them well - not religious plays entirely, but secular.

E. Clubs.

There are the groups in clubs (mostly women's clubs). The clubs have done their best work perhaps in fostering local groups outside, and in many cases, have made community theatres possible.

F. Social Settlements.

In social settlements the Amateur Theatre has found a rich soil. From the Henry Street Theatre Settlement in New York sprang originally the now famous Neighborhood Playhouse, which, as all the theatre world knows, has developed into a professional "Art" theatre of the highest standing. Prominent among the amateurs in this group is the Hull House of Chicago with a vigorous and indefatigable group.

Various local "centers" of the Drama League have trained themselves into active producing organizations, such as that at Tacoma, Washington. They have ceased merely to "study" the drama and read about it; they have passed into another and more interesting phase - they produce it.
G. Industrial Plants.

Industrial plants have their "Little Theatres" and why not? One can hardly picture the coal miners and engineers as a body playing around a theatre, but many of them as individuals actually do and they may have as much ability as anybody else—probably have. At any rate, this industrial phase is sure to develop.

H. Exclusive Groups.

There are also the comparatively small exclusive groups that aim primarily to entertain their carefully selected clientele with good plays and to give certain of their members an opportunity to amuse themselves. This they often do with excellent effect. Such is the Amateur Club of New York and The Amateurs of Brookline, Mass. "Plays and Players of Philadelphia" an old and comparatively wealthy organization, continues quietly its policy of producing unusual plays that stand small chance of commercial production, as does the younger North Shore Theatre Guild of Chicago. Such organizations form a link between what may be called the "Society" groups and such experimental groups as the Vagabond Theatre of Baltimore, the Fireside Players of White Plains, New York, the Potboilers of Los Angeles, and at least twenty others in or near great metropolitan communities, whose standards in plays and productions are as high as those maintained by any organization in the country.

I. Community Theatres.

The avowed aim of the Community Theatres is to provide entertainment for the community. Here is perhaps the most interesting story of all. They are coming in in increasing numbers.
But do not judge by the name. Many would like to function as community theatres that have nothing but the name - an aspiration, not a reality. There are, however, several strong organizations of this kind, and all have grown from small beginnings, have grown surely and steadily, because they have met a genuine community need. Such among others are the Community Playhouse of Pasadena, Community Arts Players of Santa Barbara, Le Petite Théâtre du Vieux Carré of New Orleans, The Little Theatre of Birmingham, the Little Theatre of Tulsa, the Players of Ypsilanti, Michigan, the Town Theatre of Columbia, So. Carolina, the Players of Providence, Hart House Theatre of Toronto, the Players of Buffalo, the Little Theatre Society of Indiana at Indianapolis, the Little Theatre of Memphis. Many more are rapidly achieving this status. They are firmly established, highly organized, and own or lease their playhouses. Some of them, such as Dallas, Pasadena, Buffalo, and Providence, maintain "workshops" thus solving their principal problem - how to present plays with professional finish, how to please their public and at the same time, how to experiment in all the theatre arts without sacrificing community needs. They are developing into recognized community institutions; in many cases, with a municipality actively promoting their interests. Now we see how multifarious are the groups known popularly as The Little Theatre. What have they in common except the name? Apparently very little. Some are large (even 4000 in membership) some have only 50 members. Some own their own playhouses, (New
Orleans, Pasadena, Santa Barbara, Philadelphia, New Haven, and a score of others) and many others, building or planning to build; some are tossed from pillar to post. Some are comparatively strong financially, others live from hand to mouth. Some produce difficult plays with professional finish, others have nothing to their credit except a vague desire to do something "different". Some have professional directors (Pasadena, Santa Barbara, Columbia, Tulsa, Birmingham, Dallas, New Orleans, Toronto, Philadelphia, Ypsilanti, and a dozen others); others leave it all to volunteers; others are mere sheep, afraid to try anything new or strange. They play safe, but have little in common with the adventurers of the Little Theatre.

V THE VALUE AND FUNCTIONS OF THE LITTLE THEATRE.

As we have seen and will continue to see the value and functions of the Little Theatre are great and many. In an article entitled "Little Theatre Foregrounds" illustrated in Theatre Arts Monthly, Mo.9, 566-33, S25, by Walter Frichard Eaton, the author says: "It is possible to approach and to become enthusiastic about the Little Theatre Movement from various points of view. It is many things to many men and many communities. The Lobero Theatre in Santa Barbara is one thing. The Provincetown Theatre on Macdougal Street, New York is quite another. The Carolina Playmakers at Chapel
Hill, North Carolina, constitute a third; the Cleveland Playhouse a fourth.

A. The Lobero Theatre.

The Lobero Theatre, like the new Pasadena Community Theatre, was built by widespread subscription, though not with municipal lands and its function is to provide good theatrical entertainment to the city at a moderate cost, while, at the same time, affording to the largest possible number of people an opportunity actively to cooperate behind the scenes, to find a creative outlet for the esthetic sides of their natures. It thus aims primarily to serve the community, rather than to contribute to dramatic art. Naturally it desires to give the best possible plays, within the range of public appreciation, and to give them in the best possible manner, within the limits of widespread participation. But if, in Santa Barbara, as it was found that first great productions were being secured by the repeated use of a small group of players and designers, who were thus approaching professional aptitude at the expense of other potential participants, who were remaining only spectators, the Santa Barbara Community Arts Association would unhesitatingly choose less artistic performers and wider participation. It considers the employment of three or four hundred men and women in a season quite as much a part of its community service as the artistic adequacy of its productions. Its chief problem, in fact, is how to achieve both aims at once.
B. The Provincetown Players.

On the other hand, a little group like the Provincetown Players on the boiling edge of Broadway, are under no obligation of community service. They are playboys of the theatre. They desire to please only themselves, they wish chiefly to experiment, to try out things others haven't done, to contribute what they feel they have in them of original ideas or creative fancy to the art of the drama and dramatic productions. One would logically look at such groups for novel, original plays, for ideas that might influence the professional playhouse, for a certain freshness and creative zest needed for artistic progress. And indeed, it was the Washington Square Players who became the Theatre Guild; it was the original Provincetown Players who gave O'Neill to the professional theatre and the experiments of a later group, much more professional in capacity, to be sure, who made his further progress certain and who contributed greatly, by stylized revivals of Fashion, Patience and Initiative to a reawakened interest in the historic past of our stage.

C. Professor Koch's Players at Chapel Hill, No. Carolina.

Professor Koch's group of players at Chapel Hill, North Carolina, are working from still another motive. Ignoring for a moment the fact that they are students and that their work is part of the educational curriculum of the State University, where they write their little plays about North Carolina life and take them in tour across the state, they are quite consciously seeking to establish a direct connec-
tion between the art of the theatre and the life of the people. Santa Barbara is a sophisticated community. The Provincetown Players can, and do, assume a common esthetic tradition with their audiences. They started at a point far out and beyond the point where as yet the Carolina Playmakers must end. They experiment with an art thrice familiar to all in their theatre. But the Carolina Playmakers travel to tiny hamlets, they play in rude halls in "central" schoolhouses, and their object is to make their plays about the lives of these people who come to see them at once so entertaining and so true that the humblest audiences will awake to feel that art, and specifically dramatic art, is fascinating, important, and must be further encouraged for the enrichment of life. So far the reaction of North Carolinians and other Southern people, from the state newspapers and from the effect on other Southern colleges, the Carolina Playmakers are succeeding to an astonishing degree in this aim. It may or may not have any ultimate effect on the professional theatre, or the art of playwriting, producing, and acting. But if it results as it appears to be doing, in disciplined amateur productions of good plays in scores of towns, large and small, in awakened High School dramatics which bring the study of Shakespeare and Sheridan to life and finally in a general public recognition of the dignity and interest of art, and its vital connection with the realities of life, no sane person can deny its importance or its value, in the long run, to the nation.
D. Cleveland Playhouse.

Again, a little theatre like the Cleveland Playhouse, for example, fills still a different function or role. Here we find a director and a group of men and women interested in the theatre as a fine art and able to practise this fine art with sufficient skill to attract as audience those other people in the city who desire to see it so practised and have too scant an opportunity in the professional playhouses. It is always quite possible, of course, that from such organizations significant original work will come, as from those on the edge of Broadway, which afford experimental opportunities for professionals, or from organizations composed of men and women constantly spurred on by professional rivalry. The Little Theatre in our larger centers where the population is too great for a true community playhouse, and yet where the chief service accomplished, is to furnish such of the people as want it where the best in drama is presented, will no doubt concentrate for some time to come on the best possible presentation of interesting plays, mainly by outside playwrights, seeking only quite incidentally to further dramatic authorship or revolutionize the art of production in any esoteric manner. Out of a community theatre may suddenly come a novel and original play; an art theatre may also be conscious of community service, and so on. Nevertheless, they will serve to illustrate the many-sidedness functions or uses of the Little Theatre Movement. In all of them it will be noted that the amateur note is sounded. Professionals
may be engaged in the Little Theatre as directors, as actors, even as instigators; but that doesn't really affect the matter. In the Little Theatre your amateur standing is determined by the spirit in which you work. Little Theatre workers even when they take money for what they do are concerned with the box office to the extent of paying their bills, but nevertheless, have as their primary guiding motive something quite other than mercenary. It may be to better the community, to further the art; it may be to keep alive the best drama already produced elsewhere; it may be merely the selfish but laudable desire for esthetic self expression for an opportunity to act, paint, design, and so on. But, in any case, it is not a desire to exploit the public's love of amusement for one's own pecuniary gain. The exploitation of the public's love of amusement for the pecuniary gain of a relatively few theatrical managers, has always been the bane of our theatre, and in recent decades increasingly so. When exploiters flourish art pines. Looking over the American theatre today, the Little Theatre Movement, the Amateur Renaissance, plus the professional artistic, experimental playhouses can be seen as a natural and healthy reaction of our people. One of the surprising things about the Little Theatre Movement is the way it has been seized upon by educational institutions and placed in the curriculum. The man who practically began and has more to do with it than any other man is George Pierce Baker and he has not been without honor except in his own university. Only Harvard where it all started has been
blind to the cultural significance of this new movement. (What an opportunity right now for Boston University. Its value and popularity would, I have no doubt, be assured.)

The Universities who have instituted the Little Theatre Movement into their curriculum have found and are finding, that the arts of the theatre are curiously potent to wake response in great numbers of young people. By seriously teaching these arts as a part of the curriculum, the university compels not a grudging, but a whole-souled, enthusiastic submission to artistic discipline, insinuates practical lessons in esthetic principles and turns out graduates with a lasting interest or hobby, if you like, to preach and practise in their communities. One result is that already throughout the middle west high schools are insisting on English teachers who have had training in dramatic productions.

The various ways in which the Little Theatre may affect the professional stage form in themselves an interesting field of speculation. Judging by what has happened so far, it would seem that the most successful Little Theatre producers, dealing as they mostly do with untrained amateur actors, and having generally one eye on some form of community service, are hardly in line of training for the professional stage. Nor has the Little Theatre as yet contributed players to any appreciable extent to the professional theatre. Quite aside from the fact that the individual acting is almost invariably the weakest feature of Little Theatre productions, the entire spirit of the movement in most places, would be violated if any considerable number of players looked on
their work as a stepping stone to professionalism. That is, of course, not true of all the Little Theatres, especially the technically trained groups, but it is true probably of the movement at large, and certainly of those groups which place chief emphasis on community usefulness. In most Little Theatres, too, the conditions under which productions are given must inevitably differ from professional conditions and are not, on the whole, conducive to professional acting standards. However extended and painstaking the rehearsals, there can never be in them the driving fear of your job and they lack consequently, a certain basic reality; the performances can almost never be numerous enough to supply the thousand and one different reactions from audiences by which a player learns mastery—if he has it in him to learn; and, too, the audiences can seldom, in the nature of things, be that blank gulf of neutrality into which the professional has to learn to project himself and turn it to friendly warmth. Here and there among the Little Theatres of course the professional stage will recruit some player of natural brilliance, and here and there some youngster will be filled with the belief he will make a Booth or an Arliss, but on the whole I doubt if the Little Theatre will for some time to come swell the ranks of Equity. However it is quite possible and conceivable that the success of the Little Theatres may grow so considerable that certain of them in the more populous regions will cease to be Little Theatres and will, by a natural process of evolution, become professional purveyors of drama to those regions, which thereafter will not have to wait till
a play has run a year on 42nd Street and then move slowly westward, acted by an inferior company, before they have a chance to see it. The fact that at the Santa Barbara Lobero Theatre "Beggar on Horseback" was put on for two weeks and that the Pasadena Community Theatre opened with the première of a play by Victor Mapes, shows the possibilities. On the scenic side the Little Theatres in part, because necessity is the mother of invention, have made definite contributions to theatrical art. This was quite predicable. When a graphic artist plays with a theatre, he is after all bringing to it a trained technique, not coming empty handed like the amateur actor and when he is confronted with a small stage or stage poorly equipped, and the theatre has no money to make it otherwise, he is thrown on his own resources of imagination to suggest rather than to set forth literally. To any artist or producer of real talent, the problem is a fascinating challenge and again and again the result has been a simplification of means and an increase of suggestiveness and interpretive beauty. There is no question I think, but the professional stage has profited by the example, and audiences too have profited and now demand more of this simplification and suggestion. The effect of the Little Theatre on playwriting is a more complicated matter. Unquestionably they have been almost entirely responsible for the new repertoire—extensive in volume and by no means negligible in quality—of American one act plays. These plays are now acted all over the land, even in the smallest villages by various amateur groups who, a generation ago, used to act the crudest of silly farces.
To sustain a full length play requires both natural ability and training. The chances are strong where one can best find it—in the professional theatre and will give his time to the job. Certainly he is unlikely to succeed if he doesn't. The writing of full length plays, by that I mean plays of any real significance and power, is not a job for amateurs. It can hardly be a hobby; it must be a career. Here and there a young dramatist may try his wings in the Little Theatre, but as yet those theatres cannot really offer to a writer of ambition either adequate training or compensation. Will they ever do so? Will they ever function in the development of a full length and full grown drama of localities in America? It looks possible as their numbers increase and their audiences swell. Time will tell.

VI TRUE GREATNESS OF THE LITTLE THEATRE MOVEMENT.

In gathering material for this thesis I discovered an article entitled "The Greatness of the Little Theatre Movement" illustrated in Current Opinion 63:339-90 D17, and because of its direct bearing on this Movement I feel it important enough to include the entire article in the thesis. The author says the following regarding the true greatness of the Little Theatre Movement. "The true greatness of the Little Theatre Movement which has sprung up in this country during the past seventeen years is reflected in no small degree by the 'literature' on the subject which has grown almost to library size. Two or three magazines are devoted
exclusively to this "amateur revolt". The Theatre Arts Magazine of New York announces itself as standing for the creation of a new theatre in America, a theatre in which art and not business may be the first consideration. Experimentation as opposed to commercialization and professionalism is the keynote of the new revolt. Three volumes have been published almost simultaneously dealing with the Little Theatre. "The Little Theatre in The United States" by Constance M. D'Arcy Mackay (Holt). "The Insurgent Theatre" by Thomas H. Dickinson (Huebsch) and "The Art Theatre" by Edith J. R. Isaacs (Knopf). The Movement is also discussed by Clayton Hamilton in his "Problems of The Playwright" (Holt) and by Brander Matthews in The North American Review and by an unnamed writer in The Unpopular Review.

Most of these writers interpret the huge proportions of this rapidly growing group of Little Theatres to the widespread dissatisfaction with the regular theatre, which is routed and entrenched in the soil of Broadway and which scorns the intelligence of the audience of "The Road" as the inferior quality of its traveling attractions attest. A revolt was inevitable if we may believe the writer in The Unpopular Review. "The taste of Broadway which now dictates to our stage is in no true sense a cosmopolitan taste, but rather a strange mixture of provincial taste, not one of them ordinarily operating under normal conditions. So far as Broadway tastes represent New York, too often it is hectic and flashy and thoughtless, the taste of the scum of the
melting pot. What is sound and stable and truly cosmopolitan in New York taste will be found rather in the concert halls than the theatres, only occasionally coming to the rescue of a play like "Peter Pan" or "Magic" or "Justice". But far more than New York Broadway tastes represent the provinces in the persons of the five hundred thousand transients who are to be found every day in our vast city, here for twenty-four hours or a week, transacting business by day, perhaps, and by night determined to have a "good time". They are in the mood of orgy, as the scientist would say; they spend money ridiculously, they throw off normal inhibitions, they are out for a spree. To such people a seriously interpreted drama is not the one to give pleasure and satisfaction."

All of the Little Theatres are in one way or another the expression of a revolt against the flashy plays of Broadway, an attempt to throw off the yoke of this misrepresentative drama which is sent to other American cities as well. The results, we read, are already considerable. The writer of The Unpopular Review concludes: "All these amateur experiments, all this amateur effort, represents a disinterested and surprisingly spontaneous enthusiasm for the arts of the theatre and a widespread and profound discontent with the present conditions. The enthusiasm is contagious. The discontent only too easy to share. More and more converts will be made every day, more and more therefore an audience will be assembling ready to welcome large efforts at practical production. When those efforts are large enough, the professional
players (who are, of course, and must always remain the backbone of the theatre) will be drawn in to cooperate and guide as many of them are already doing. "The Provinces" will sign a declaration of theatrical independence and the work of Herne, Fitch and Moody, the work of creative and interpretive American drama will go on again."

Brander Matthews likewise sees in the unsatisfactory existing organization of the American Theatre the real reason for the astonishing growth of the Little Theatre Movement. He points this out in the North American Review: "Many of the smaller cities and most of the larger towns have been deprived of all opportunity to see good plays well acted. The best they could hope for would be either an occasional visit from a star filling in a week of one night stands between two large cities, or a few performances of a recent metropolitan success by a "number three company". Many representative plays of American, British and foreign authors were available in French; but plays are never written primarily for reading and they reveal their full dramatic force only when they are performed. To judge a play by the printed page only is like trying to judge a picture by photograph only; and in neither case is it possible to enjoy the richness of color. The Little Theatres brought the acted play to many places where the interest in drama had been kept alive only by the printed play. And even in big cities, the commercial theatre had neglected a host of pieces which true lovers of the drama long to behold - those of Lord Dunsany, for example, and
those of Maeterlinck. Professor Matthews does not think that the Little Theatres should be looked upon as actual rivals of the professional theatre. He thinks their purpose should be (and often is) to serve as a proving ground and experiment stations; to capitalize the enthusiasm and initiative of youth; to allow full freedom to the amateur spirit, which plays the game for its own sake and not for gate money.

Edith J.R. Isaacs, editor of the Theatre Arts Magazine, stands for clean cleavage between a purely commercial theatre on the one hand and "a new professional art theatre" on the other. He looks forward to a chain of local repertory art theatres serving every art loving community from Maine to California. As he explained in his Organ the new theatres ought to stand for the "synthetic ideal". He explains it: "The synthetic ideal has to do with the attainment of the elusive quality which makes for rounded out spiritually unified productions. It may be called rhyme or style or merely artistic unity. It finds use in the play and it colors the acting, the lighting, the setting and all other elements of the staging. When fully realized, it goes farther and creates an atmosphere which lies over the whole production, as seen in the theatre. It imparts an illusive something that evokes a definite mood over and above the spectator's usual reactions to drama. Certain periods in history have been known as the golden ages of playwriting, while others have been celebrated as the ages of great acting,
and still others as eras of gorgeous and spectacular staging. Today we excel in none of these contributed arts; but we have a new conception, a new idea of perfect harmony of them all. We have discovered that playwriting is an incomplete art, that acting properly exists, not to glorify an actor's personality, but only as a means to represent drama, and that the stage setting is rightly only a frame for the action. We are searching for a principle which will bring these incomplete arts into an artistic unity and give full scope to the drama, as a theatre-play and not as a bit of dramatic poetry recited by a charming actor before a pleasing background. The capturing of this principle may well be modernity's most significant contribution to the Art Theatre."

VII SUMMARY

It seems to me that the impulses and results of the American Little Theatre are clear enough. Except for a small group of educational enterprises they have come into existence for one of two reasons and they have continued successfully when both these motives were present. Europe knows these motives. In varying degrees they were behind the rebel theatres that began with Antoine. One motive is an audience that needs and to some extent demands more or better entertainment than its professional theatres provide. In Europe in the 90's it was the degrading "Sardoodledum" of the commercial playhouses that left audiences unsatisfied; in England in the first decade of the twentieth century and
in America in the second decade it was the decay of the touring system outside of the theatrical capitals. The other motive behind the American Little Theatre, as well as its Continental forerunners is the creator who cannot find an opening in the professional theatre. Everywhere the amateur actor has always insisted on exhibiting his charms but in the serious theatre a new type of truly creative amateur appeared. In Europe he was the director of the playwrights and the outcome of his efforts was new in drama. In America he has been the director or scenic designer and the results have been new and imaginative beauty in production. The difference only, is a difference of the times. The rebellion of the 30's and the 90's looked toward the intellectual, the literary and the realistic. The rebellion of today is looking toward the imaginative, the picturesque, the expressionistic and it takes the visual path first, the written path later. One type of Little Theatre distinguishes our motive from the movement of Europe. This is the scholastic. The vigor of the dramatic interest of America finds its sharpest index in the hundreds of courses in playwriting, play producing, acting and design, given in our leading universities. More and more the heads of universities are realizing that to properly and intelligently conduct courses in dramatic art they should be given by men with a true knowledge of "dramatics" aside from their own ability to teach English, French or whatever other department they are associated with. These courses have a practical outlet in the producing theatres of men like Baker, Arrold,
Koch, Stevens and others, whose number and activity increase each year. Even the acting schools begin to see the light and give their pupils the practical experience of appearing frequently in first rate plays under the general conditions of little theatre performances. Within the last three or four years an entirely new phase of development has opened up for the little theatres, which, like Pasadena and Carmel, have grown large enough and sure footed enough to venture upon new theatre buildings with complete and modern professional equipment, offering great opportunities, not only to little theatre directors of professional quality but to progressive, professional actors and to playwrights who prefer to have their own roads. A fine amateurism is at the heart of all this effort, both here and abroad, but in this amateurism certain distinctions between the movement in Europe and in America appear. In the European ventures, particularly in the English Repertory Theatres, the actors were sometimes professionals, though the directors were invariably amateurs. The American movement began on a wholly amateur basis and almost all of its actors remain amateurs. The directors on the other hand have frequently developed into professionals, like Browne, Hume, Pichel, Hensdell, Dean, McConnell and others who shift from little theatre to little theatre. In Europe the directors pass from their amateur first ventures into important posts in the professional theatre. Antoine became head of the state-subventioned Odeon. Rouche is now the director of the Paris Opera. Reinhardt
conquered the whole German theatre. Dean and Drinkwater found openings in London and Payne in America. In the bulk of the little theatres of the United States there have been certain actors, designers and occasional playwrights who have passed on from the amateur to the professional playhouse. It is to these graduates — to men and women like Helen Gahagan, Rollo Peters, Katherine Cornell, Norman Geddes, Woodman Thompson, Lee Simonson, Martin Flavin, Zoe Akins and Eugene O'Neill, that we look for the justification of the ideals and the practice of the rebellious Little Theatres and the professional playhouse which is slowly but surely conquering the art.

In conclusion, community service, professional training, art experimentation, takes a second place in the Little Theatre Movement to the simple joy of self expression. The Movement means that America is rediscovering the theatre in something the way Europe first discovered it in the Middle Ages. The English Theatre for several centuries was an amateur theatre. It enabled a great number of the population to find delight in creative expression. It had no roof over its head. It lived in the cathedral squares, the market places of any town, or any other place where the desire to practice it existed. Beginning as a religious function, it soon cracked that shell and though it continued along the trail of its origin, it was frankly popular entertainment. The theatre now needs a roof over its head for the most part. The earth could open and swallow Broadway and still the theatre could function. The theatre is wherever a few are gathered together with the
desire to impersonate and the many are gathered to catch enjoyment from their antics. The Little Theatres have influenced, and will increasingly influence, the organized professional playhouse, just as they have made definite calculated contributions to community benefit. But it wouldn't matter if they hadn't. They are showing people the difference between creative enjoyment and passive acceptance of entertainment, and they are adding vitality to the national conception of art and zest to living. If any Little Theatre group continues to please itself with the measure of success it achieves in creating a true dramatic effect, it needn't worry about any of the other things - community service, contribution to art or whatnot. They will follow in due course and if they don't what of it? Let us do a few things still, just for the fun of doing them. The more one studies the Little Theatre the word or term Little Theatre becomes almost meaningless. It is actually sometimes used to designate a small playhouse that houses a professional company - such as the Provincetown Players, the Neighborhood Playhouse and The Greenwich Village Theatre of New York. Even the Theatre Guild is sometimes spoken of as a Little Theatre, meaning in this case, a supposedly non-commercial theatre. It is time to change the term - if we can. At any rate it is time that the Little Theatre should grow up, as Charles S. Dickenson says. But let that be. In spite of all the criticisms, and ridicule from the side lines of absurd "torch bearers" of excesses and extravagances, the Amateur Theatre has within a very short length of time become an important factor in
American life, has made a considerable contribution to the professional stage, and has powerfully influenced it and will probably continue to do so. Its possible future is boundless.
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