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A Selected, Annotated List Of One-Act Plays for Festival Use

By Jessie Louise Losey

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A Selected, Annotated List Of One-Act Plays for Festival Use

by Jessie Louise Losey*

In recent years participation in one-act play festivals has become an integral part of the activity program sponsored by many high schools. As this form of expression becomes increasingly popular, more and more teachers are asking for information about one-act play scripts in order that they may be able to select suitable material that is of desirable quality for festival use.

It is the purpose of this study to suggest specific one-act plays which are desirable scripts for high school presentation, especially for festival use, to give information about the publisher, the royalty, and the plot of each script.

Investigation shows that frequently teachers who direct one-act plays have majored in fields other than speech, have had little experience in theater work, or have limited reading background in the field of the one-act play. Most of these teachers are willing and quick to admit their need for help in this activity. Because of the difficulty in forming correct judgment of scripts by reading synopses in publishers' catalogs, this study proposes to give information about a select list of plays evaluated from the viewpoint of the director. Since much of the success of a dramatic production depends upon the selection of a challenging script which is within the ability of actors to perform convincingly and with satisfaction, this study is designed to assist the less-experienced director in the selection of worthwhile plays suitable for festival use.

It is the practice of some publishers to designate plays in their catalogs according to type, using the broad terms comedy and drama. Although these are the commonly recognized classifications of all drama, this study will use the more specific designations of drama, melodrama, comedy, and farce.

Drama. In this study the term drama will be used loosely to designate plays which portray the laws of life truthfully as the characters struggle to solve a problem. The outcome of the struggle may be an unhappy ending, or it may be a solution of the problem which seems right and satisfying to the audience.

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Melodrama. A melodrama is a play based upon tense situations and thrilling action. It rises to an unexpected climax which is frequently tragic and which for the moment appears plausible.

Comedy. The chief interest in comedy is in the development of characters who seem like real people whose behavior is true to life. The language of the play has a natural conversational rhythm, and the humor is refined in quality. The ending of a comedy is a happy, amusing conclusion which leaves the audience chuckling.

Farce. The farce has a strong plot based upon the situation rather than upon character. The situations are quite humorous, if not ridiculous. The characters are frequently exaggerated, and the lines place emphasis upon broad humor and laughter.

Other theatrical terms which are used frequently in this study are timing, characterization, and climax.

Timing. The speed at which the play moves is called timing, and is determined by the action and by the mood which must be established early in the play. In a drama the timing is usually somewhat slower than that which is used for farce.

Characterization. Projecting one's self into the character of another through the power of imagination is called characterization. For a short time the actor must think, feel, and behave in the manner appropriate to his role.

Climax. The climax of a play is the point of highest interest; at this point the problem is solved. Some plays have scenes containing moments of high tension which help to build toward the climax, but the climax itself is always at the end of a one-act play.

This study does not propose to list every script suitable for high school use, but rather, as the title suggests, to offer a highly selective list of plays chosen from the large number that were accessible at the time this study was prepared. Therefore, some worthy plays may have been omitted. Some plays usually appearing on lists prepared for high school use have been omitted because this study proposes to limit its recommendations to scripts which seem most suitable, practical, challenging, and enjoyable for high school actors to present in festivals. Scripts employing considerable coarse language or doubtful subject matter have not been included, nor have plays been approved if a flimsy plot depends upon false sentimentality to produce emotional response from the audience.

Plays chosen for this study are considered by the writer to be theatrically sound, to have a reasonable royalty, and to be suitable for production with minimum equipment. With few exceptions copies can be purchased separately for cast use. This study does not propose to give the impression that the act of choosing a play from this list assures a high

festival rating for the producing group. Important as it is, the selection of a suitable script is merely the first step in play production.

In that each person's reactions to any mode of expression is influenced by individual tastes, selection of the plays listed in this study is necessarily subjective. However, an effort has been made to study the scripts objectively and to suggest many plays which are considered to be "good theater" regardless of personal preference.

Although every group strives to produce a play which will receive a commendable rating in the speech festival, the primary purpose of the one-act play program is to contribute to the educational experiences of youth. More important than the festival ratings are the educational values which young people derive from participating in the one-act play festivals. From this experience high school participants should learn cooperation, tolerance, and good sportsmanship. They should learn to evaluate and to appreciate the contributions of others.

Because of its length, the one-act play is an excellent medium to teach youth to analyze and interpret character, to learn stage techniques, to develop poise, and to improve voice and diction.

After considering the abilities of his students, the wise director will choose a script which seems to be the best selection which the cast can perform convincingly and with satisfaction, instead of choosing a popular script in the hope that it will secure a high rating on its own merits.

Criteria used in the selection of scripts:

Literary Value. Because the one-act play is a relatively new medium of expression, very few scripts can qualify as literary masterpieces. However, many one-act plays are so written that they sincerely and convincingly reflect the drama in the lives of people who struggle to solve the problems of life, or they fulfill the function of comedy, which is simply to entertain. Such plays have been included in this study because they are "good theater."

Good Theater. A script that is said to be "good theater" is based on a general idea which is worthwhile, has wide audience appeal, is in good taste, challenges actors to give an artistically pleasing interpretation in situations that are enjoyable to them, and has sustained action which rises to a high, satisfying climax.

Size of Cast. Since a one-act festival play will be disqualified if it is over thirty minutes in length, a cast including not more than six actors seems to be ideal. The cast should be small enough to permit each actor to make a definite contribution to the development of the play, to present a minimum number of problems in make-up and management when time is limited, and to impose no undue financial burden upon the producing group that must pay entrance fees for each contestant and provide transportation and meals for the festival trip. In order to assist in the selection

of scripts which are convenient and economical to use, this study suggests few plays with large casts.

Technical Problems. A thirty minute time limit within which each cast must perform at a festival necessitates the use of plays which can be presented satisfactorily before a cyclorama and with the following minimum essentials: a divan, tables, and chairs. Time and festival rules make it impossible for any school to use an elaborate set or special lighting and sound effects which require time to prepare; therefore, the scripts listed in this study can be presented successfully with a few pieces of furniture and with properties which can be transported easily.

Reasonable Budget. Each school is required to bear the expense of participating in a one-act play festival. Consequently, scripts which do not have a prohibitive royalty must be available. Although royalty scripts are usually considered to be superior to non-royalty scripts, a few excellent non-royalty plays are suggested in this study. Where required, royalty fees are quoted, and costumes or special properties that are necessary for production of these plays are listed.

Range of Difficulty. Although all of the plays included in this study present problems to challenge high school actors, there is sufficient range in the difficulty of scripts to permit directors to select plays which are most suited to the abilities of their casts.

No director should ever select a play just on the qualities of the story, for the play will not be convincing unless the actors are vocally and physically suited for the roles which they must play, and can develop believable characterizations. As the director reads the script which he would like to present, he should be able to visualize the play and imagine how certain actors will play the roles. It is wiser to choose a simple script within the ability of the cast to interpret than to choose a difficult play which the group cannot perform successfully.

Availability of Scripts. A producing group needs to purchase copies for members of the cast; therefore, few one-act plays which are available only in expensive collections have been included in this study. Addresses of the publishers of these plays are given at the end of this study.

A Selected, Annotated List of One-Act Plays for Festival Use

Acid Test, The. Mrs. C. P. Smith. Comedy; 2W; Baker, no royalty. Living room. Modern costumes.

Two intimate friends rejoice over the fact that their friendship is strong enough to withstand the acid test of personal criticism. Retaining their good humor during a game of telling each other her personal faults, they find that they cannot take any criticism of their teen-age children. A bitter quarrel follows, and the beautiful friendship is broken forever.

Easily staged, this clever play is a study in human behavior. Besides presenting strong characterizations, the actresses must be able to portray subtle shifts in emotions as the quarrel gains momentum. Because they are ladies of culture who would never stoop to hair pulling, they should do controlled emotional acting which shows the fury in their hearts even though they retain some semblance of dignity.

Albuquerque Ten Minutes. Florence Ryerson. Comedy; 2M 3W; French; royalty \$5. A railroad station with a telephone booth and benches. Modern Clothing. Two Indian costumes.

Actors Candice Lynn and Bill Bailey meet unexpectedly during a ten-minute train stop. They find that their plans for marriage will be ruined because each one is changing jobs, and they will be a continent apart. Taking a lesson from Indian customs which make man the master, Bill carries Candice off to New York where they will be married. Left alone, the apparently docile Indians come to life; the wife pockets their money, and the man meekly does her bidding.

Setting a stage quickly to represent a railroad station in which there is a telephone booth presents a technical problem when this play is used for festivals. The Indians must be surrounded by the wares which they sell to travelers. The roles of Candice and Bill require good casting; they must be able to appear poised and sophisticated in order to make their characterizations believable.

Andante. Wesley Coumts. Drama; 3M 2W; Row, Peterson and Company; royalty \$5. Living room in which there is a French window which can be opened, a grand piano, and a violin. Modern costumes.

After the doctor removes a cast from his injured hand, David Lawrence, the great violinist, knows that he will never play again. Bitterly contemplating suicide, he is saved by hearing his son play. By teaching his son to be a fine musician, he can achieve satisfaction through his success.

Although this play is slightly melodramatic, the story is plausible, and it can be effective if it is presented by an experienced group. David Lawrence must be able to portray an emotionally unstable man whose despondency brings him to the brink of suicide. Supporting roles of the wife, the adolescent son, and the doctor must be convincing in order to give strength to the play as a whole.

Violin music can be faked off stage if actors are alert about pantomiming and timing. A plaster cast for the injured hand can be prepared in advance. By cutting the cast across the back of the hand and taping it with adhesive tape, the doctor can appear to remove the cast realistically. Make-up on the hand should suggest surgery scars.

Antic Spring. Robert Nail. Comedy; 3M 3W; French; royalty \$5. No setting except chairs to suggest a car. Modern costumes.

Two adolescent couples are going on a picnic, but they are unhappy about having to bring a little brother and a small sister who are about twelve years

old. The older couples make love, quarrel, and forgive while they are trying to enjoy a picnic. The children tease the older couples and tolerate them merely because there is food to be served.

This comedy is flippant, fast in pace, and offers many opportunities for good characterization. In casting, the director should take care to choose actors who are physically suited to the roles. The two children must be considerably smaller than the other actors and be lively little imps. Because this play is done entirely in pantomime, the principal production problem lies in the necessity to make that pantomime convincing. Actors must pantomime the car ride and the picnic dinner so realistically that the imaginations of the audience will be stimulated to the point that they will respond whole-heartedly to the spirit of the play.

Auf Wiedersehen. Sada Cowan. Drama; 4M 2W; French; royalty \$5. Living room in Nazi Germany. Costumes 1935 and Nazi uniforms.

Frieda Neuberg, a Jewish woman, has reared two Gentile children who will now be persecuted by Nazi followers because they live in the home of a Jew. To save the children from persecution, she plans to go to America. A Jew seeking refuge from Nazi tormentors rushes into Frieda's home and begs her to hide him. He is shot by officers who tell Frieda that she cannot get a visa to travel and that she will be arrested for aiding a Jew. There is only one solution; Frieda commits suicide off stage.

Written with restraint, this tragic story of Nazi persecution does not attempt to capitalize upon racial prejudices or to fan old hatreds by undue emotional appeal. It presents the staggering impact of political pressure upon individual lives when dictatorship removes all liberty. It seems as if enough time has elapsed since Hitler's reign to permit the use of this play by a talented, experienced group. Care should be exercised in casting; every role demands excellent characterization, but the role of Frieda is especially difficult.

Bad Penny, The. Rachel Field. Drama; 4W; French; royalty \$5. Old-fashioned living room. Modern costumes or period costumes 1900 to lend atmosphere.

Two selfish, middle-aged women dread the visit of Lil, their sister who ran away from home years ago to become an actress. They fear that she may demand her share of their father's estate which they use for themselves and for small luxuries for Margaret's young daughter. They refuse to talk of important things and so do not let Lil tell them about the memorial which she is establishing for their father who did a great deal for the town.

This script is an interesting study in character for three women and a girl of twelve. Each woman must represent a very different type of person; the two sisters should portray the emotions of greed, fear, and jealousy. Bits of subtle humor will keep the audience entertained while the drama of life is revealed.

Balcony Scene. Donald Elser. Drama; 4M 4W; Row, Peterson and Company; royalty \$5. Chairs to represent the balcony of a church. Modern costumes.

Accompanied by the Recording Angel, a ne'er-do-well attends his own funeral. From the comments of people who come to the service, the young man, as well as the audience, learns what kind of man he really was.

With little action to motivate the play, the actors must create an illusion of reality in order to bring this play to life. Capitalizing upon the use of fantasy, the players should make the audience feel as if they are momentarily catching a glimpse of Judgment Day. This play requires a cast from an experienced group as well as many thorough rehearsals.

Barrier, The. John McGreevey. Melodrama; 4M 1W; Dramatic Publishing Company; royalty \$5. Living room. Modern costumes.

Dr. Hughes learns that a mental patient has escaped from an institution and intends to kill Mrs. Hughes. The doctor tries to send his wife to safety, but she returns to find the madman threatening her husband with a gun. Gently she persuades him to let her bathe his wounded hand. As he relaxes, he says that he could not hurt her because she is kind, like his wife who died. A tragedy is averted, and the wife is the barrier between her husband and the public.

Tense and highly dramatic, this new play rises steadily to a gripping climax. Dr. Hughes, his wife, and the maniac must be convincing characters; officers of the law play the supporting roles. This is a difficult play which requires good characterization and timing.

Best There Is, The. Marion Wefer. Drama; 3M 4W; Row, Peterson and Company; royalty \$5. Office in a hospital. Uniforms for nurses and interns.

Tessie sobs as she waits for the report from the operating room where her father is undergoing surgery. She wants him to have a private room even if it takes her years to pay for it. A rich man, resentful that his daughter is not concerned about his illness, lets Tessie's father have his room without cost. The report shows that Tessie's father will live; the rich man has cancer.

Staging this play with limited time and equipment presents problems. There must be several exits, stretchers, a wheel chair, and enough instruments and charts to suggest an office in a hospital. Roles are less difficult than in some scripts, but they must be played realistically, and the timing should be given special attention.

Bishop's Candlesticks, The. Norman McKinnell. Drama; 3M 2W; French; royalty \$5. Very plain dining room in the Bishop's home in France. Clerical and peasant costumes of the 1800 period.

The kindly Bishop welcomes a convict, feeds him, and gives him a place to sleep. Hating humanity, the convict steals the Bishop's candlesticks, but the police return him to the Bishop who forgives him and tells him to sell the silver for enough money to get a new start in life.

Because this fine script is very difficult to present realistically, it is not a wise choice for an inexperienced group. All characters are mature. The actor who is cast in the role of the Bishop should appear elderly both vocally and physically. He should be dignified, kindly, and completely unselfish. The actor playing the convict should be large, have a deep voice, and be capable of portraying a highly emotional man half maddened by abuse and hatred. The women's roles are important although they are not so difficult as those of the men.

Blue Beads. Anne Coulter Martens. Drama; 1M 3W; Row, Peterson and Company; no royalty. Farm living room. Modern costumes.

Having a deep longing to paint the lovely colors of autumn, a farm wife orders a set of paints for herself and a string of blue beads for her daughter's birthday gift. The child finds the paints and is delighted to have something for which she has been longing. Not letting her know that the paints were not intended for her, the mother keeps the blue beads and rejoices in her daughter's happiness.

Less difficult than many scripts, this play is useful for inexperienced groups, and it has the advantage of being free from royalty. Actors have opportunities for sincere portrayal of characters familiar to every adolescent, and audiences respond to plays of home life and parental sacrifice.

Blue Stocking. Conrad Richter. Drama; 2M 5W; Dramatic Publishing Company; royalty \$10 with admission, \$5 without admission. Living room in 1800. Post-Revolutionary period costumes.

Having married and established his home in the West, Judge Wheeler is tempted by his sister to return to Boston where his children can learn the culture of the East. His wife is unhappy because she knows that she will not be able to adjust to that type of life. When her pioneering father talks about building the West, the Judge decides to remain in the new settlement where he can help to build a better community.

Being a costume play, this script has charm for youthful actors who delight in "dressing up." Humor is supplied by the prim sister who is shocked by the actions of her frivolous nieces and by the rugged old man whose manners would not be acceptable in Boston. The roles of the mother, father, sister, and grandfather are especially good studies in character. Rich in the traditions of our country, this fine script is a good choice for a group with some theatrical background.

Blue Teapot, The. Jean Latham. Comedy; 2M 2W; Dramatic Publishing Company; royalty \$10 with admission, \$5 without admission. Living room of old-fashioned rural home. Modern costumes.

Cynthia and Jimmy are quarreling because he wants to have his battered childhood treasures in their new home which she wants to decorate in magazine fashion. In order to help the young people to see that happiness comes from mutual love and consideration, Ma and Pa Brown each gives a version of their early experiences involving the blue teapot. The lovers learn to give and take in a way which should make them more mature in solving life's problems.

This simple play with a wholesome message is not difficult to stage, moves at a fast pace, and has audience appeal. Ma and Pa Brown are delightful old characters who must be played with sympathy and understanding. Jimmy and Cynthia are lively young moderns determined to have their own way.

Bolt from Heaven, A. Harold Weiss. Drama; 2M 2W; Dramatic Publishing Company; royalty \$5 with admission, \$2.50 without admission. Minister's study containing a dictaphone. Modern costumes.

The Reverend Adam Brent has a large sum of money which he is to deliver to the trustees of a children's hospital when they meet later in the evening. Out of the rain a man enters the study through a window. He comes to rob and to taunt the minister about asking God to send a bolt of lightning from Heaven to strike him dead. Thinking that the dictaphone will record, the minister describes the man, who is frightened into running away without taking the money.

This new script rises to a high climax which experienced actors can reach satisfactorily. The male roles are difficult because the entire play depends upon the force of the conflict between them as they engage in a battle of wits. A sound effect record of rain accompanied by thunder will help to create atmosphere and will do much toward setting the mood of the production.

Boy Meets Family. Allen Rieser. Farce; 3M 4W; Dramatists Play Service; royalty \$5. Living room. Modern costumes.

Lancelot is confused and embarrassed as he goes to the home of his fiancée to meet her family for the first time. She has coached him about suitable topics of conversation until he is not sure which topic fits each person. After a most embarrassing scene, he sets everyone straight; they apologize and start over.

This fast moving farce is highly entertaining without resorting to slapstick for laughs. The male roles require actors of some maturity, and one woman must be able to play the role of a middle-aged mother.

Bread. Fred Eastman. Drama; 2M 4W; French; royalty \$5. Farm dining room. Modern costumes or period costumes 1930.

While Grandma darns socks and blind Stella reads the Bible aloud, Mother plans for the piano which they will get with the butter and egg money which her son Jim has been depositing in the bank for them each week. Her husband is in despair because his horse has just died, and there is no money to replace it or to make a down payment for a tractor. Then Jim confesses that he gambled with the money and lost all of it. In this crisis, Mother brings peace between father and son; their problems are partially solved, and love rules the home as they start over.

Written during depression years, this script is an excellent study in human relations in any era. With roles for three adolescents and for three mature actors, the parts are well divided. Mother, the dominant character, portrays a woman of courage and keen insight. Father and Jim must be cast so that the intense conflict between parent and son is wholly believable. Grandmother with her terse remarks adds humor and charm, and two young daughters complete the cast.

Cabbages. Edward Staadt. Comedy; 3M 4W; French; royalty \$5. Living room. Modern costumes or period 1925.

After the discovery of oil on their farm, Gus and Wilhelmina Grossmeier have moved to town to live like rich people. Disgusted with his wife whose sole ambition is to show off, Gus reminds her that "cabbage heads bust sometimes when they swell." She is dismayed when she has the family tree read in the presence of outsiders. After paying the listeners to keep the secret of the family skeletons, she decides to live as she should.

Rich in humor, the lines of this play afford an unusually good opportunity for excellent character acting, and there is not enough Dutch dialect to cause production difficulty. Completely lacking in cultural background, Wilhelmina is an ignorant, domineering woman who thinks that she can attain social position by out-spending the neighbors. Gus is an easygoing old farmer with a keen sense of values and with the courage to speak his mind occasionally. The washerwoman is an interesting character who adds much humor to the play. Other roles are less difficult, but they are quite good. For festival use this script must be cut somewhat, and slang expressions reminiscent of the 1920 era should be modernized, or the actors should wear period costumes.

Clod, The. Lewis Beach. Drama; 4M 1W; French; royalty \$10. Farm kitchen 1863. Civil War costumes including uniforms for soldiers.

Thad and Mary Trask are two ignorant farm people who do not understand about the Civil War. Southern soldiers search their home for a Northern scout carrying important messages. Although Mary does not understand about the war, she shoots the Southerners when they break her cup and swear about the food which she has prepared for them. The scout is free to go on his way. Unconcerned about the two bodies on the floor, Mary mourns over her broken cup.

Challenging and full of action, this script should not be chosen by groups with no previous theater experience. Thad and Mary are dull, elderly people ignorant of and uninterested in happenings beyond the confines of their farm. Soldiers must appear to be men mature enough for responsible military duty. Two of them are rough and arrogant in speech and manner.

Costuming may be done by making uniforms from inexpensive materials such as rayon which resembles wool. Basic patterns can usually be found in the costume sections of pattern books. The set requires an old stove or a fireplace where food can be prepared.

Cloud-Burst. J. Clark Weaver. Drama; 3M 3W; Row, Peterson and Company; no royalty. Farm dining room. Modern costumes.

Ed and his parents have worked hard for Gilman in the hope of getting a farm of their own, but poor crops have defeated them. When Ed becomes ill from exposure, his mother bitterly blames Gilman and refuses to call him when she should warn him of an approaching flood. Ed collapses as he tries to get to the telephone. Bending over his body, his parents realize the futility of hate.

In this non-royalty play of rural life, emotions are strong, sincere, and can be understood by young actors. Ed should be cast to represent a young man in the last stages of tuberculosis. His mother should be a large, determined woman with a loud voice. A wall type telephone on a sturdy support is a necessity; otherwise the stage set is not difficult. A sound effect record of thunder and rain will help to create atmosphere. This script is a very good choice for an inexperienced group.

Confessional. Percival Wilde. Drama; 3M 2W; Baker; royalty \$10. Living room. Modern costumes.

Out of work because of a business scandal, Robert Baldwin is tempted to lie in order to save his employer and lifelong friend from prison. His family urge him to save his friend because he will receive a large sum of money as a reward. Knowing that Baldwin is an honorable man, his friend confesses; thus Baldwin's problem is solved.

Dealing with ideas and mental conflict, this play can rise to a compelling climax, but it is not a good choice for an inexperienced group. Robert Baldwin must be portrayed as a man of maturity, integrity, and culture. Although he holds the center of attention, his wife, grown son, and daughter play important roles as they present arguments that are prompted by their greed. This mature play will challenge actors as well as give them a valuable lesson in ethics.

Cook's Detour. Monte Kleban. Comedy; 5W; French; royalty \$5. Living room with a dining area where a meal has just been served. Modern costumes.

Entertaining friends at lunch and bridge, Alma finds that each guest is trying to entice her wonderful Negro cook away from her. The plan almost succeeds, but the cook hears them talking about the hardships endured by cooks in other houses and decides to remain with Alma.

Well-written comedies for women casts are scarce, but this is a good script for groups desiring this type of play. Lines are clever, and there is opportunity for excellent pantomime. One woman must be a convincing Negro of some maturity. Other women should appear matronly in order to give the play an air of reality.

Cup of Tea, A. Katherine Mansfield. Drama; 2M 4W; Dramatic Publishing Company; royalty \$10 with admission, \$5 without admission. Drawing room. Modern costumes.

Pretending to be kind and gracious, Mrs. Fell, a society leader, is really a very selfish, shallow woman. When she must choose between helping a young girl in need and spending money for a trinket, she reveals her true self to her fine husband.

This study in character rises to a dramatic climax when the husband realizes that his wife has appeared to be interested in helping humanity merely as a means of gaining praise for herself. Husband and wife should be cultured people in middle life. The antique dealer is also a man of some years, and the maid may be an older woman. Two young women have important roles.

Darkness. Chase Howard Webb. Drama; 2M 1W; Row, Peterson and Company; no royalty. Waiting room in a police station. Modern costumes.

Blind as the result of a car accident, Joe Tirey waits each day at the police station in the hope that he will one day hear the voice of the man who drove the other car and who did not take him to the hospital. His sister tries to help him bury his hatred because she knows why the other man did not respond. When they meet, Joe learns that the other man lost both hands in the accident.

Slightly melodramatic, this play can be effective and appear plausible. All roles are mature. Embittered and emotionally unstable, Joe has lost all ambition in his self-pity and desire for revenge. He and his sister must be capable of building the play toward a strong climax. The other man is on the stage only a few minutes, but his role is very important. Having the actor wear a topcoat with the sleeves placed in the pockets creates the illusion of missing hands.

Dark Rider. Robert Finch. Drama; 6M; Row, Peterson and Company; royalty \$5. A bunkhouse containing a cot. Work clothes for the cowboys.

Eagerly the cowboys watch for the coming of the doctor to aid Boots who has been injured. The doctor says that he is too late, but a handsome stranger appears and promises that all will be well as he comforts Boots, and they plan to ride the range together. Suddenly he is gone, and Boots is dead. Then the cowboys understand that they have entertained the Angel of Death unaware.

Employing the element of fantasy, this unusual plot appeals to both actors and audiences. One cowboy must be able to play the guitar and to sing acceptably. Boots should appear younger than the other men, and the doctor may be elderly. The Angel of Death should be poised and charming for it is he who makes everyone feel happier. He wears better clothing than the cowboys.

Dear Departed, The. Stanley Houghton. Comedy; 3M 2W and 1 girl about twelve; French; royalty \$5. Sitting room. Costumes 1900 period.

Mrs. Slater and Mrs. Jordon are sisters who have not spoken to each other for two years because of a quarrel over who should keep their father. Now he appears to have died in Mrs. Slater's home, and she intends to claim his possessions before her sister arrives to plan the funeral. During another quarrel between the sisters, their father walks into the room and informs them that he is not dead; he was just drunk. He is going to marry a widow who will enjoy caring for him.

Period costumes, clever lines, and distinctly different types of people combine to make this a most enjoyable comedy. All characters are mature except the little girl who has few lines. Grandpa is quite elderly but spry enough to subdue his officious daughters and their husbands.

Dust of the Road. Kenneth Sawyer Goodman. Drama; 3M 1W; French; royalty \$10 with admission, \$5 without admission. Living room about 1870. Period costumes.

Prudence Steele turns a tramp from her door on a bitter night. Suddenly a man appears in the room to challenge her thinking about right and wrong. When her husband returns from church, he also is challenged by the stranger, the spirit of Judas who sinned for thirty pieces of silver. Peter Steele struggles with his conscience and the temptation to keep money which was left in his trust. Deciding to do the honorable thing, he finds that Judas has disappeared.

Suitable for experienced groups, this fanciful drama needs strong, controlled emotional acting in order to portray mental conflict rising to a climax of spiritual beauty. All characters are mature. An elderly uncle has few lines. Mary, a hateful, grasping woman, must be able to soften into a more likable person at the end of the play. Peter should show changes of mood as he fights the temptation to let greed turn him into a dishonest man. Judas needs a deep,

persuasive voice which changes from hard cynicism to tones of sorrow and regret.

Elizabeth. Sam Rulon. Drama; 3M 5W; Row, Peterson and Company; royalty \$5. Dining room in 1835. Period costumes.

James, a stern Quaker father, consults his grown children about sending Elizabeth, their blind servant, back to a home. For three years she has served them well and has been a happy member of the family. At last James admits that the reason for his decision lies in the fact that he is in love with the gentle young woman. His children convince him that it is proper for him to marry her, and she consents.

Period costumes and the quaint speech of the Quakers make this script a charming play. Since the use of authentic furniture is impossible at festivals, the set will have to be merely suggestive. All characters are mature, and James, who is elderly, must be convincing in a difficult role. Having to appear blind, Elizabeth has a very challenging role although her scenes are brief.

Elmer Cleans Up. Paul S. McCoy. Comedy; 2M 3W; Ivan Bloom Hardin Company; no royalty. Living room. Modern costumes.

John and Clara Redfield are provoked because their adolescent son, Elmer, will not clean up to attend a social function with them and his sister Mary. He agrees to go if they will consent to his using them as characters in a story. They sign agreements, and he gives each of them five dollars before he goes to his room to clean up. After a friend calls to congratulate them on their talented son who has had a story printed in a magazine, they discover that he has published their love letters which he found in the attic.

Although this script is less difficult than many plays, it has acting problems to challenge adolescents and a story which delights audiences. Father and Mother play character roles, and Elmer is a likable, wily teen-ager who knows all of the tricks. It is easy to stage and fun to present.

Eternal Life. Fred Eastman. Drama; 2M 3W and 1 boy about twelve; French; royalty \$5. Bomb shelter during World War II. Period costumes.

For three days, six people have been trapped in a bomb shelter. Fear, jealousy, and personal discomfort bring out the characteristics of people under stress. Mary, who cares for her sick child, keeps her poise and her courage. She leads them to sing a hymn and to repeat Scripture which is an inspiration. At last they hear the sound of rescuers digging for them.

This script has an inspiring message of spiritual power. It is most appealing during time of war, but its sincerity and fundamental emotions will challenge actors any time. The cast needs good voices for singing and chanting Scripture, and all characters except the child should appear mature.

Fifteenth Candle, The. Rachel Field. Drama; 2M 3W; French; royalty \$5. Tenement living room. Modern costumes.

An Italian immigrant, working in his shoe shop, gloats over the fact that his younger daughter will soon be able to go to work. Having had to go to work at an early age, the elder daughter pleads for the little sister who should continue her education; even the pleas of the girl's teacher are ignored. The child will go to work to earn money for papa.

This is a good drama requiring talented, experienced actors. Because the speech is colored by a foreign accent, convincing characterizations are difficult. The actor who plays the shoemaker has an especially challenging role. The other man is also an immigrant of middle age. The roles for the women present fewer language problems, but they require strong characterizations.

Finger of God, The. Percival Wilde. Drama; 2M 1W; Baker; royalty \$10. Living room. Modern costumes.

Strickland, the director of a large investment company, has planned to disappear with the assets of the business. All plans are made, but his valet is double-crossing him, and he will be arrested at the station. A girl appears, calls him an honest man, and by her conversation brings him back to his sense of duty and honesty. After the girl leaves, he realizes that he has been saved by the finger of God.

This play is simple to stage, but it requires an experienced producing group. Strickland, cultured and calculating, fights against the conscience which he thought that he had silenced years ago. The young woman is very persuasive and clever as she makes him see the right course to follow. The valet has one short scene and can be a younger man than Strickland.

First Dress Suit, The. Russell Medcraft. Farce; 2M 2W; French; royalty \$10. Living room. Modern costumes.

Betty and Johnny are to be married in an hour, but Johnny's dress suit has not arrived. Teddy, Betty's younger brother, will not lend his dress suit to Johnny regardless of his great need. He dresses and is starting for the church when his father calls to say that the wedding will have to be postponed; the minister slipped on a cake of soap in the bathtub.

Based upon the antics of an adolescent, this farce appeals to youthful actors and delights audiences. It rises to a strong climax which is both unexpected and humorous. Mother is the only adult in the cast. Betty and Johnny are average young Americans with considerable personality. Teddy is about sixteen and should be an actor who can capture the hearts of the audience; he must have a dress suit which fits him.

Fixin's. Erma and Paul Green. Drama; 2M 1W; French; royalty \$5. Farm kitchen. Work clothing.

Ed and Lily Robinson have worked hard, but the little profit from the farm has always gone back into the land. Lily wants pretty things for her home, and Ed promised her the money from a small piece of cotton. While she is visiting in town, a neighbor persuades Ed to use the money to buy more land and plants seeds of suspicion in his mind about Lily. When she returns, they quarrel, and she leaves forever. Ed can have his land.

A mature young couple, Ed and Lily have known little but hard work, and his desire to acquire land has become a passion. Torn between his greed and his sense of fairness, Ed is weak enough to let his older neighbor persuade him against his better judgment. Typical of all women who yearn for a little beauty in life as they go through the days of endless toil, Lily struggles against her environment and finally leaves it in search of a more satisfying way of life. The neighbor should be a man of middle age with the domineering attitude developed by those who consider themselves to be right about everything.

Florist Shop, The. Winifred Hawkrige. Comedy; 3M 2W; Baker; royalty \$10. A florist shop. Modern costumes.

Maude, who works in the shop, has sent orchids to Miss Wells, an old maid engaged for years to a man who sends her red carnations. Thinking that she has a secret admirer, her fiance begins to talk about an immediate wedding. Because she sent expensive flowers to a poor customer, Maude loses her job, but she is soon hired again. She will be needed to arrange flowers for the wedding which she helped to bring about.

The major production problem in this play is the stage set which requires the use of many flowers. These can be made from crepe paper. Patterns and

instructions are available in an inexpensive book published by the Dennison Manufacturing Company, Farmington, Massachusetts.

Although all characters are mature, the characterizations are not too difficult for high school actors. The owner of the shop is a forceful person who can change from an angry man into an obsequious merchant with an eye for business. Since the play revolves around Maude, she should be portrayed by a capable actress; the engaged couple have an important scene.

Fog on the Valley. Verne Powers. Drama; 3M 3W; Row, Peterson and Company; royalty \$10 with admission, \$5 without admission. Simple rural cabin. Costumes 1900.

Judith Carson, newly widowed, is left the land jointly with her stepson, Norrie, who has always resented her presence because he was jealous of his father's love for her. Partly as a result of the minister's advice and partly for the sake of the girl whom he loves, Norrie buries his hatred as the fog rolls away from the valley, and there is peace in the lonely cabin high in the hills.

Slightly melodramatic, this challenging script rises to good climaxes and gives each actor an opportunity to develop a distinct, unforgettable character. Both audiences and actors like this play which should be an interesting project for a group with some previous stage experience.

The dominant figure in the play, Judith is a courageous woman who shifts quickly from one deep emotion to another. Norrie is a high-strung, emotional youth who has let jealousy poison his life. He should be portrayed by a capable actor. The elderly minister is a mild, easygoing man who tries to help his people solve their problems. Norrie's youthful sweetheart, the neighbor, and the arrogant land grabber round out a cast which tells a compelling story of mountain life.

Giant's Stair, The. Wilbur Daniel Steele. Drama; 2M 2W; French; royalty \$5. Farm kitchen in the mountains. Everyday clothing.

Caring for her demented sister, Til, Abbie Weatherburn wonders what really happened to John, her husband who disappeared some time ago. The telephone keeps ringing, and Abbie hears the neighbors saying that they have seen John making his way toward home through a dreadful storm. When the sheriff comes to question the women about John's disappearance, Til sees strange sights and frightens the man into confessing that he killed John and hid his body. Til rushes out into the storm to join John in spirit.

Full of atmosphere, this difficult play is skillfully written by a master storyteller. The roles all require mature acting. The role of Til, the mentally incompetent, is particularly difficult for a young actress to portray. Abbie also needs careful casting. The sheriff is a burly man trying to bluff someone else into accepting the responsibility for his own deeds. The attorney has a small but important scene. A wall telephone is a necessity, and a sound effect record of thunder and rain will help to create mood.

Good Medicine. Jack Arnold and Edwin Burke. Farce; 1M 2W; Longmans, Green and Company; royalty \$10 with admission, \$5 without admission. Doctor's sparsely furnished office. Period costumes 1900 or modern.

Because he has had so few patients who could pay, young Dr. Graves is selling his medical books in order to buy food. In desperation he takes a job delivering groceries. A wealthy woman comes for consultation, and he tells her frankly that she is not ill. Delighted with his honesty, she gives him a place on the hospital staff at a very substantial salary.

This script has clever lines, a small cast, and fast action. The simple stage set requires no medical equipment except a thermometer and a stethoscope.

Characterizations are not difficult. The wealthy woman is elderly and quite eccentric; Dr. Graves must be a convincing physician, and his young wife plays an important role.

Grey Bread. Jean Lee Latham. Drama; 4W; Row, Peterson and Company; royalty \$5. Cottage with a fireplace for cooking. Peasant costumes.

Appearing hard and unkind, Riga, the ancient grandmother, reveals how she caused her daughter to forsake an unsuitable marriage for one of worth. The daughter, remembering her glittering love, encourages her daughter, Yolande, to love the gay stranger who strolls away. Heartbroken, Yolande turns to her grandmother for comfort and encouragement because she feels there the security born of great wisdom.

For an experienced group of young women, this play is an excellent choice. In this study of character, a young woman learns that the stable virtues of honor and duty are pillars of strength to be desired above the passing fancies of the hour. Yolande turns not to her mother who encourages her to do as she pleases but to her grandmother whom she respects for her wisdom and fairness. Riga should be a wrinkled old woman strong in her convictions. Yolande's mother is a shallow woman who likes to take the easiest way. Yolande, the typical adolescent, is uncertain about making choices, and the other actress is a young girl with few lines.

Happy Journey, The. Thornton Wilder. Comedy; 2M 3W and 1 boy; French; royalty \$10. Chairs to represent a car and a divan. Period costumes 1920.

Ma and Pa Kirby take their two children to visit a married daughter in a neighboring town. They get ready for the trip by pantomime and get into the car; Pa takes the wheel, and they are off. The conversation and the pantomime as they travel is highly entertaining. Period costumes must be used or else some changes will have to be made in the pantomime.

With only chairs and a divan needed to set the stage, costumes and characterizations must make the play seem real. The pantomime must be convincing. The father, mother, and adolescent children are the most important characters. The older daughter appears briefly, and the stage manager keeps the play moving. Although this play is considered to be a comedy, the second scene ends on a serious note.

Heritage of Wimpole Street. Robert Knipe. Drama; 1M 2W and 1 boy about twelve; Baker; royalty \$5. English drawing room about 1856. Period costumes.

Tyrannical Edward Barrett has not forgiven his daughter for eloping with Robert Browning, nor will he give his other daughters any freedom. When Elizabeth's young son comes to visit, Edward is determined to hate him, but he cannot. He is kind to the child and decides that his daughters should be permitted to entertain suitors. At the climax he is reading one of Elizabeth's love poems.

Period costumes give this drama an air of dignity and charm. Mr. Barrett, the actor around whom the play revolves, commands respect mixed with fear until he relents enough to consider the happiness of others. The grandson has a good scene as well as the two daughters who help to set the mood of the play. This is a good script, but it will be difficult for a group that has had no previous stage experience.

Hero Worship. Frances Hargis. Drama; 2M 2W; French; royalty \$10. Old-fashioned kitchen. Period costumes about 1920.

Robby, an old Civil War veteran, has been coddled and supported by his wife while he sat around and told tall tales. Now his wife insists that he go to work as timekeeper for the railroad so that Sam, their grandson, can go to high school. When their married daughter comes home, her mother has to tell her that her father is a fraud; he never did any of the deeds about which he has always boasted. To save her father's pride, the daughter agrees to take Sam home with her and to send him to school. With that problem solved, the wife says that she can continue to make the living; that is easier than to shame Robby by forcing him to take a job in his old age.

Emotions in this play are within the understanding of high school actors, and the characterizations are not too difficult. Robby should be cast so that his interpretation of the wily, old rascal will be delightful and convincing. His wife is a meek, patient woman who has always responded to his whims in order to keep him happy. She has a very important role and should be cast carefully. Sam and the daughter both have fewer lines, but their roles are good. Both high school actors and audiences enjoy this play. The stage set is very simple.

Highness. Ruth Giorloss. Drama; 2M 2W; Longmans, Green and Company; royalty \$10 with admission, \$5 without admission. Office of the Kremlin. Communist military uniforms for men.

Anna, a scrub woman, rebuffs Gregory, a Red soldier who would make love to her. Paul Orlov, a secretary, interviews a young woman who was arrested because she tried to sell jewels and rich clothing of the type worn by royalty. Paul recognizes the girl as the one whom he loved when his father was a tutor in the palace. Giving up her pass in order to help the couple escape, Anna entertains Gregory until they are safe. He shoots her because she tricked him.

Set in the days following establishment of the Communist regime in Russia, this script tells a powerful story of intrigue. The men's roles demand maturity to make them convincing. Gregory is an arrogant Red, but Paul is a less ardent Communist. The princess is an attractive, frightened young woman. Anna, the courageous commoner, dies so that her half sister can escape.

High Heart, The. Adelaide C. Rowell. Drama; 5M 2W; Row, Peterson and Company; royalty \$5. Living room in Southern home about 1863. Period costumes with military uniforms for the men.

Sam Davis, a Confederate scout, is captured with vital information which he obtained from some Union soldier. The Northern Commander offers him his life and freedom if he will reveal the name of the man who is the traitor. Since it is the father of his sweetheart, he cannot betray him and goes to his death with a high heart.

Exemplifying the customs of the era, this fine script challenges actors and strikes the audience with a powerful emotional impact. It is a good choice for an experienced group. Mrs. Payton, the chaperon, is a charming woman of middle age; Agnes, a vivacious young lady, has fallen in love with Sam, the gentleman of whom war has made a spy. He has a very difficult role, for he must choose between saving his life or standing by his principles of honor. The officers are mature men of military bearing and must be cast so that their characterizations are believable.

Hills of Eire, The. Marcus Bach. Drama; 3M 2W; Row, Peterson and Company; royalty \$5. Irish peasant cottage. Everyday costumes except clerical suit for the priest.

Because he killed his rival for the hand of Marie, Danny O'Shea must die. His blind old mother hears pounding as the gallows is being prepared and tries to learn the identity of the criminal who will be hanged in the hills at sundown.

Danny intends to kill the guard to get away, but the priest tells him that a man cannot run away from his conscience or his punishment. Convinced, Danny goes forth to walk the last mile into the hills of Eire.

Only experienced groups should choose this beautifully written drama so full of pathos, inner conflict, and courage. Danny must be cast carefully because he portrays the emotions of a young man desperately fighting the battle of right and wrong. Mother O'Shea is a feeble old woman with a keen mind. A man of maturity, the priest must be convincing in his important role. Although Marie has fewer lines, she should be a personable young woman who can help the mother to bring the play to a strong climax. The guard has only a brief appearance. Even though this script is not written in dialect, actors should try to suggest the Irish tongue by their rhythm of speech.

High Window. Verne Powers. Melodrama; 2M 3W; Row, Peterson and Company; royalty \$5. Living room. Modern costumes.

An elderly woman in a wheel chair, Emily Winthrop wants to have her nephew committed to an asylum, but the lawyer refuses because he lacks proof that the young man is insane. Fearing that he knows something about the death of her husband who apparently fell from an upstairs window, she wants to dispose of him. In trying to strangle an inquiring reporter, Mrs. Winthrop reveals her own guilt, and in an effort to evade the law, she walks to the fatal window as the curtain closes.

Filled with distrust, fear, and suspense, this melodrama delights audiences as it sets the mood and mounts steadily toward a terrifying climax. Because Emily dominates the play, this role should be cast with care. The roles of the nephew and of the lawyer are both strong parts that must be played convincingly. The secretary and a reporter round out the cast for this thriller.

Hunger. Ella Mae Daniel. Drama; 2M 1W and 1 boy; Northwestern Press; royalty \$5. Farm kitchen about 1930. Plain costumes.

Trying to get supper for his sons, Dad Hilkins is having a difficult time since his wife died. A neighbor brings them some cooked food and by her conversation shows her ignorance and reveals the backward ideas prevalent in the community. Jeff, the older son, wants to be a doctor, but they laugh at him and make it clear that he cannot go to school. He and his father quarrel, but he returns to apologize and to admit that it was an idle dream. They will have to work together so that the little boy can have his chance.

Pulsing with the unvoiced yearnings of countless people who dream of a time when things will be better, this play is symbolic of all "who are wantin' what they can't never have."

Representative of all hard-working fathers, Dad vaguely realizes that his children need advantages which he never had, but being unable to provide them, he clings hopelessly to the past. Fired with youthful ambition, Jeff knows that his dreams will be buried in poverty as he plods in the footsteps of his father. The woman symbolizes the ignorance and superstition of the backward areas where the people are unwilling to accept new ideas. The small boy has few lines and soon goes to sleep. The script is not too difficult; youthful actors can understand the emotions.

If Men Played Cards as Women Do. George S. Kaufman. Farce; 4M; French; royalty \$5. Living room. Business suits.

Behaving in a manner usually ascribed to women who attend bridge parties, four men meet to play cards. They praise each other's clothes and criticize the host's house; they they gossip about each other and about everyone else in

town. At last one sees a mouse, and they all mount chairs in the way that women are supposed to react under such circumstances.

This easily staged farce is a riot of fun for a male cast. Although it requires no great acting ability, it does present problems in characterization, pantomiming, and timing. Since its purpose is simply to entertain, each actor should be able to develop a well defined character and to portray it consistently.

Ile. Eugene O'Neill. Drama; 5M 1W; Dramatists Play Service; royalty \$5. Cabin of a whaling vessel. An organ is necessary. Costumes suggest 1900 period.

Dominated by an unreasonable pride, Captain Keeney boasts that he always returns from his expedition with a ship full of whale oil. On this trip they have run low on supplies and should return with less oil than usual. His wife begs him to return to land before she goes stark mad, and he almost consents. When he hears the cry that there are whales ahead, he rushes out to give sailing orders; he will get more oil. By playing the organ in a peculiar way, the wife shows that she has become insane.

In this compelling drama of the sea, pride, arrogance, and greed fight against the fundamental need of a woman for love, home and security. Written by a master dramatist, it requires experienced acting and direction.

Gentle by nature, the wife endures many hardships of the sea in the belief that she is doing her duty by her husband. Her highly emotional role should be played by a capable actress. Rough and domineering, the captain rules the ship with a hand of iron, and not understanding his wife's need to return to civilization, he lets his pride push him farther out to sea. The mate and the sailors are mature, seafaring men.

Jacob Comes Home. William Kozlenko. Drama; 2M 3W; Row, Peterson and Company; royalty \$5. Simple interior. Plain costumes 1935 period.

In Berlin a Jewish family waits the return of their beloved Jacob from prison. As they await his promised coming, the men tell of punishment which they endured at the hands of Nazi jailors. As the tension mounts, a knock comes, and a voice demands payment for the delivery of a box containing ashes. Jacob has come home.

Rising to a shocking climax, this tragedy depicts some of the stark terror experienced by the Jews during Hitler's rule. Written with restraint, it shows the impact of dictatorship upon individual lives without emphasizing racial prejudices. Inasmuch as a score or more years have passed since those grim days, it seems as if this fine script can be used by an experienced group without stirring up old controversies.

Bodily response and timing are most important in the development of this drama. The cast must be able to develop distinct, believable characterizations as they set the mood of the play which rises steadily toward an unforgettable climax.

Jazz and Minuet. Ruth Giorloff. Comedy; 3M 5W; Longmans, Green and Company; royalty \$10 with admission, \$5 without admission. Living room. Modern costumes and Revolutionary War period.

Becoming angry because Richard cannot take her to a dance, Eleanor calls a man of questionable reputation to be her escort. While she waits, she reads a diary of her great-aunt whose dress she wears as a costume. In a flash-back she sees how the aunt caused a tragedy by her careless actions. Eleanor has learned her lesson by the time Richard appears unexpectedly.

For those who like an element of fantasy, this play is challenging. In the flash-back, a tragedy of long ago is shown as two jealous lovers fight a duel with swords. Complete dimming out of lights or a momentary closing of the

act curtain is necessary at the conclusion of the flash-back. Costumes are of the George and Martha Washington style, and the men wear wigs of the type worn by gentlemen of that era. Characterizations are not difficult, but staging the duel requires skill.

Joint Owners in Spain. Alice Brown. Comedy; 4W; Baker; royalty \$5. Bedroom with single beds. Period costumes about 1900.

Mrs. Blair and Miss Dyer have to occupy the same room in the old ladies' home. Each one has been so quarrelsome that no one else can live with either of them. They are very unhappy until one has an idea; they will divide the room with a piece of chalk and pretend that they have their own homes. They can play a game of visiting each other or pretend to enjoy a time of privacy. This bit of make-believe helps them to live on in an environment so different from the way of life which they lost when they became dependent.

On the surface this script appears to be simple; however it offers an excellent opportunity for character study. Full of pathos, the play shows the tragedy of dependent old age even though it is played as a comedy and is considered to be very humorous. The feeble ladies are peppery, sharp tongued, and eccentric; they should be portrayed sympathetically. Attendants have brief scenes.

Lamb in the Window, The. Robert Finch. Drama; 6M 3W; Row, Peterson and Company; royalty \$5. Front portion of a church. Modern costumes.

The Reverend Mr. Edwards is leaving the church which he has served so long because he feels that he has failed to help anyone. Although he does not know that the church board intends to ask for his resignation, he resigns. Then he finds that he has been a great inspiration to the humble and the needy. The board asks him to remain, and he agrees.

Filled with quiet, deep emotion, this script has a spiritual beauty found in few plays. The characters seem like the folk next door, yet each has his own distinguishing characteristics that set him apart from everyone else.

The minister should be played by an actor with considerable poise and understanding of character. Although all roles are mature, they are not too difficult for high school actors to play convincingly.

The set can be simplified by using chairs and a speaker's stand. The stained window can be made by drawing the design on a large piece of cardboard such as a mattress box, painting it black, and cutting out little pieces with a razor blade. Pasting small pieces of cellophane in various colors on the back of the cardboard will make a stained window through which light will pass.

Last Curtain, The. Neal Hovey. Drama; 3M 3W; Row, Peterson and Company; no royalty. Dressing room in the Ford Theater 1865. Period costumes.

Deeply in love with John Wilkes Booth, Jeanie, an actress, tries to prevent his assassinating Abraham Lincoln. As actors come and go during the progress of the play which is being presented in the theater, she pleads with him to marry her and to forget about the war. In a dramatic scene he promises and asks her to help him to retain his sanity. Then a newspaper headline announcing the defeat of General Lee sends him forth in a frenzy of hatred to fire the fatal shot. Jeanie sobs heartbrokenly as the little music box tinkles "Jeanie with the Light Brown Hair."

This dramatic story is beautifully told as it alternates between laughter and tears. Set in the long ago, it has distinctive atmosphere, charm, and an unforgettable climax. Because of the many acting problems in this script, only talented, experienced groups should choose it for festival production.

Jeanie, the attractive young actress, should have poise, grace, and a rich voice that can throb with sincere emotion. The handsome Booth, arrogant and emotionally unstable, must rise from the depths of despair to a state approaching madness as he denounces the Union. Three other actors relieve the tension by quarreling and reporting the progress of a play in which they are supposedly participating. Peanut John, an elderly dullard who carries messages and holds Booth's horse, has an excellent character role.

The simple set requires little but a bench, dressing table, spittoon, and an old trunk which is useful for carrying clothing and props to festival. The music box may be any small, appropriate looking box. The music can be faked off stage by use of a tape recorder. Playing the song an octave high on the piano will produce a tinkling tune which sounds sufficiently realistic when it is recorded. By careful timing, the off stage music can be synchronized with the handling of the music box.

Last Flight Over. Allean Lemmon. Drama; 2M 2W and 1 small boy; Row, Peterson and Company; royalty \$5. A pioneer cabin 1867. Period costumes.

Seventeen year old Dave rebels at the hard life on the prairie and longs to go to the East where he can learn to build bridges. Blaming his father for the recent death of his mother, he records her name in the family Bible and adds "worked to death." As he is about to join a family leaving for the East, his father reveals his reason for fighting the prairie and trying to dig a living out of the soil. He feels that he is helping to build something big as civilization travels westward. At last understanding comes to Dave, and he decides to remain in the frontier country where he can build bridges for rivers that have never been spanned.

This tense drama of frontier life embodies emotions which youthful actors can understand. Resentment, sorrow, and conflict between father and son carry the play to a satisfying climax. Grieving for the mother awaiting burial, Dave is so emotionally upset that he cannot think clearly, and he lashes out at his father in an effort to justify his leaving home. The father stoically faces the grim realities of life, but underneath his stern exterior, his heart is heavy. The two women set the mood for the play and prepare the audience for the conflict to follow. The small boy has few lines, but he is important to the development of the drama.

Leader of the People, The. Luella E. McMahon. Drama; 3M 2W and 1 boy; Dramatic Publishing Company; royalty \$10 with admission, \$5 without admission. Dining room. Period costumes about 1920 or modern.

Jody is delighted when his grandfather comes to visit because he tells all kinds of wonderful tales about the settlement of the West. Tired of hearing these stories, Jody's father is impolite to Grandfather who delights in recalling the adventures of his youth. Realizing that people do not care to hear stories of long ago, the old man's life suddenly becomes empty. It is hard to accept the fact that only the boy loves the adventures and appreciates the sacrifices made by the early settlers.

Based upon the traditions of the past, this script reveals how quickly civilization marches on and forgets the price paid by the pioneers who laid the foundations of our country. Written with discernment, it rises steadily to good climaxes.

The actor who plays Jody should be physically suited to the role of a twelve year old; he should have a good memory, poise, and a clear, pleasing voice. Elderly but mentally alert, Grandfather should be portrayed with great sympathy and understanding. The mother is a capable farm woman, and the

father is aggressive and interested only in progress. A teen-age daughter and the hired man complete the cast.

Legend of the Lake. Chase Howard Webb. Drama; 2M 3W; Row, Peterson and Company; royalty \$5. Mexican hut containing a bed. Mexican costumes.

Crecensio, a fisherman, once lost a sweetheart to the stormy waters of the lake. In her illness his wife, Ana, thinks that he still loves that girl. On a night when the waves are high, Ana slips out to join her in the lake while Crecensio is arranging to take her to her former home where she will be happier and can regain her health.

Telling a weird tale, this script is both difficult and challenging for an experienced group. Even though it is written without the use of dialect, the language suggests the soft, rhythmical flow of the Spanish tongue. Unless the play moves at a good tempo and has strong characterizations, it can become very dull.

The solicitous husband willing to make any sacrifice that will help his wife, Crecensio must show profound shock when he learns that Ana is dead. Ana should be played with great understanding; although she is ill, she must be forceful enough to make the role convincing. The kind woman who cares for Ana has an important character role. The doctor and a silent girl complete the cast.

Lord's Prayer, The. Francois Coppee. Drama; 3M 3W; Baker; royalty \$3. Living room in France. Costumes of the French Revolution.

Rose, a woman of middle age, is mourning the death of her brother, a priest who was killed by the soldiers during the reign of terror. When the Abbe comes to comfort her, she talks of revenge and says that she can never pray again. A fugitive rushes into her house and begs her to save him for the sake of his family. Some of the bitterness in her heart melts away as she permits him to don her brother's cassock so that he can leave undetected. Then it is that she can fall upon her knees to pray, "Our Father . . ."

Rising steadily to a climax of spiritual beauty, this play is a challenge and an inspiration. Only talented, experienced groups should choose it for festival use.

Rose has the most difficult role. Forceful, bitter, and filled with the desire for revenge, she must make her mental conflict very evident as she gradually returns to her Christian way of thinking. Faced with the opportunity for revenge, she finds that she cannot let an innocent man die. Only after she has saved him can she desire or ask forgiveness for herself.

Mature in years and kindly in thought, the Abbe is a saintly man who can become stern when Rose will not respond to the teachings of her church. His voice should be deep and pleasing in quality. The fugitive must be highly emotional. Two women have a brief scene. A sound effect record of a mob scene is helpful to create mood.

Make Room for Rodney. Marion Holbrook. Farce; 3M 4W and 1 boy about fourteen; Dramatists Play Service; royalty \$5. Living room. Modern costumes.

Rodney is an adorable imp who plays a cornet, collects snakes, and plots to get his sister married so that he can have a room of his own. He scares one suitor away, and with the help of his pet snake, he creates a situation which results in his sister's becoming engaged to the right man. Now he can have a room where he can write a book, *The Brother of the Bride*.

This play of adolescence has clever lines as well as humorous situations, and the roles are divided so that each actor has a good part. Within the ability of high school actors to perform successfully, it has appeal for both actors and

audiences. It is a good choice for an inexperienced group that wants to present a humorous play.

Having considerable poise and personality, Rodney plays the dominant role. If he cannot play a cornet, some other instrument may be substituted, and his pet snake can be secured from a toy counter.

Minor Miracle. Verne Powers. Drama; 4M; Row, Peterson and Company; royalty \$10 with admission, \$5 without admission. Life raft. Ragged clothes.

Adrift on a life raft without food or water, four men have little hope of survival. At last they try to pray, but only the mate can manage a murmured petition as McClane sneers at them. One leads in singing a hymn, and then the selfish Lasos tries to shoot a gull with the last bullet and misses. In his agony he prays. Then as McClane defies God, a drop of rain hits his face, and he falls to his knees in prayer. A storm is coming to blow them to land, and they will be saved. Prayer wrought a minor miracle.

Artistically written, this rugged drama of men against the sea pulses with despair, courage, and spiritual power. To present or to see **Minor Miracle** is an experience not soon forgotten, and groups with some theatrical background will find it a satisfying choice. A Navy boat can be inflated quickly with a vacuum cleaner, and a sound effect record of thunder and rain adds the necessary touch of realism to the final scene.

Casting should be done very carefully. All actors must appear mature enough for military duty. Large and commanding, the mate never loses his hold on the men. Hale, the weak one, should be a small man almost too immature to be in service. Surly Lasos is a burly, selfish fellow who is a coward at heart, and McClane, the cynic, delights in telling the unpleasant truth. The play mounts in tension as crisis after crisis passes until McClane prays in a dramatic climax. The roles are divided so that each actor has an opportunity to build a dramatic scene.

Monkey's Paw, The. W. W. Jacobs. Melodrama; 4M 1W; French, royalty \$10. Living room. Costumes 1900.

Mr. and Mrs. White listen with awe to a fantastic tale told by an old sailor who claims that a dried monkey's paw can grant three wishes. Herbert, their son, laughs at the idea, goes to work, and is killed. In the meantime, his father has wished for a modest sum of money, and the next morning a man comes to tell them about their son's death and to offer the exact sum as compensation. Later Mrs. White wishes her son alive again even though his body was mangled. As footsteps are heard approaching the house, Mr. White grabs the paw and wishes him back into his grave.

Having three separate scenes, this script is unusual in construction, but each scene rises to a climax of high emotional intensity. Mr. and Mrs. White must be capable actors who can portray the scenes so vividly that the audience will feel the mood and be prepared for the shocking climaxes. Drawing the act curtain during the play challenges actors to make the pause between scenes only momentary in order to retain the effect of the emotional impact from the last scene. Presentation of this script is difficult and should not be attempted by an inexperienced group.

Moonshine. Arthur Hopkins. Comedy; 2M; French; royalty \$5. Rough mountain cabin. Modern costumes.

A mountaineer who operates a still captures a man whom he believes to be James Dunn, a revenue officer. He intends to kill him so that his still will be safe again. Making the mountaineer believe that he has the wrong man, James Dunn tells him that he has been trying to get some one to kill him for

some time; he is afraid to commit suicide because of the consequences, but this will put the blame on the moonshiner. The superstitious mountaineer refuses to do his dirty work for him and sends him away on his own horse.

Since there are only two actors in this comedy, they must be very forceful characters. Big and uncouth, the moonshiner exhibits the simple credulity of a child as he listens to Dunn's tales. He is not really a bad man; he simply lives by the code of his area. Dunn is more refined and shrewdly talks his way out of a trap by pitting his wits against the other man's superior strength. It is a challenging play which actors enjoy presenting and which audiences delight in seeing.

Moon-Up. Robert Arthur. Melodrama; 3M 1W; Franch; royalty \$5. Rural home in the hills. Modern costumes.

Tom lives at the edge of a roaring river, and his mother refuses to move to a safer home until Harry, her worthless son, returns to see her. Tom has deceived her about Harry whom he knows to be a criminal. Harry returns, gets supplies, and threatens Tom if he interferes with his plans. For a time it looks as if Tom has joined forces with him, but Harry brings about his own destruction when he climbs out of the window and falls into the raging waters below.

Seeming plausible for the moment, this forceful play requires strong characterization. Tom is a man in middle life who shields his old mother by telling her fictitious stories about Harry because he feels that the truth will kill her. Apparently Harry is without conscience; he is a little younger than Tom, is smooth of tongue, and respects no one. The sheriff is a large, capable man of middle age. Quite elderly, Ma sits in her wheel chair and dreams of the day when her favorite son will come back to her. Although she is not on the stage all of the time, her role is very important.

This play is difficult to stage and should not be chosen by an inexperienced group. A wall type telephone is necessary, and there must be a window substantial enough to permit Harry to crawl through in such a manner that he can give the illusion of dropping into space. Ma must have a wheel chair. Creating mood and building toward a horrifying climax require good characterization and excellent timing. A sound effect record of a roaring river helps to create atmosphere. The language needs some cutting.

My Late Espoused Saint. Frank Durham. Farce; 2M 2W; Row, Peterson and Company; royalty \$5. Living room. Modern or period costumes.

Two old friends, Essie and Phelie, are having tea and talking about Phelie's husband who has been dead a year. He was a college instructor with a violent temper; although his wife misses his tantrums, she is enjoying the freedom to keep house her own way. In a brief flash her husband returns and performs as of old. In the last scene she realizes that it was but a vision and that she is quite content to continue in her peaceful way alone.

Employing a bit of fantasy, this unusual comedy is useful for groups with limited experience. The two elderly ladies are cultured women who would be charming; costumed in the style of 1900. Because their roles require character acting, they should be cast carefully. The husband, a blustery, domineering man, is always sure that his way is right regardless of his wife's opinions. The other man is a nondescript Negro who appears briefly at a window. Because this play has separate scenes, the act curtain should be closed briefly; it should be opened as quickly as possible in order to maintain the continuity of the play.

Necklace Is Mine, The. Agnes Peterson. Drama; 5W; Dramatists Play Service; royalty \$5. Living room. Modern costumes.

Isabel, a widow, is trying to buy the love of a worthless man. In order to get money for him, she tries to rob Mrs. Edgerton, her sister-in-law, of a valuable necklace. It is to be sold so that the money can be used to aid crippled children. Although Isabel knows that there is a legend saying that a curse will fall upon anyone who takes the necklace dishonestly, she gets possession of it. Knowing what she is trying to do, the maid puts bromides in her coffee and greases the necklace with mustard oil. When Isabel feels the heat from the oil on her neck, she swoons in terror, and the necklace is saved.

Although this play is tinged with melodrama, it is a study in character with strong roles for Mrs. Edgerton and Isabel as they fight a battle of wits. Poised and shrewd, Mrs. Edgerton is a gracious woman. Isabel is less refined and completely unscrupulous. The maid has an important role because she outwits the thief. Two dinner guests help to establish a background for the rising action of the play. This difficult script is suitable for groups with some theater experience. All of the characters must appear to be women of maturity.

Neighbors, The. Zona Gale. Comedy; 2M 6W; Baker; royalty \$10 with admission, \$5 without admission. Old-fashioned kitchen. Period costumes 1900.

News is spread that a poor woman in the town will have to take care of a nephew whose mother has just died. Being neighborly, the women immediately set to work to help her care for him. They gather old clothing which they hope will be useful. They even plan to have an ice cream social before they learn that the child is not coming after all. The commotion serves a good purpose, however, for a bashful young man finds the courage to propose to his girl during the excitement.

Reflecting the kindness and neighborly spirit of a small town, this play about real people offers many good opportunities for distinct characterizations. Middle-aged women eagerly bustle about while Grandma sits in her corner sewing carpet rags and wishing that she were not too old to do things. The lover who is too bashful to talk sensibly has an excellent comedy role. This play is not difficult to produce, and it is enjoyable.

Old Lady Shows Her Medals, The. James M. Barrie. Drama; 2M 4W; French; royalty \$10. Poorly furnished room. Costumes World War I.

Women boast about their sons who have gone to serve their country, and Mrs. Dowey, wishing that she had a son, invents one after she has seen the name, Kenneth Dowey, in a newspaper. The minister brings him to her home, but the young man is in a foul mood because he has no relatives and resents being brought here. Mrs. Dowey mothers the boy, and he finally agrees to pretend that she is his mother and to spend his leave with her. In a second scene Mrs. Dowey is putting his effects away; he will not return, and she must go bravely on with her work.

The universal need to love someone and to feel loved and wanted in return is the underlying theme in this script. Wanting satisfaction derived from being like other women, Mrs. Dowey has her hour of joy and teaches a young man the meaning of family affection.

Mrs. Dowey should be played sympathetically—even tenderly—by an understanding girl. Resentful and unresponsive at first, Kenneth should be portrayed as a good fellow whose passing will cause genuine regret. The roles of the clergyman and the charwomen are not long, but they should be strong characterizations in order to give meaning to the play as a whole.

On Vengeance Height. Allan Davis. Drama; 2M 2W; French; royalty \$5. Cabin. Mountain costumes.

Blind old Gram is waiting for Clay, her grandson, to return to the mountains but she fears that he will be killed by Lem Carmalt who is waiting for the last of the family to grow up so that he can finish the feud begun so many years ago. Clay returns, meets Lem, and kills him. Gram rejoices with the spirit of the primitive woman who has suffered much and is avenged.

Based upon the mountain custom of carrying on feuds for generations, this play is highly dramatic and rises to a splendid climax. Only groups with some theatrical background should choose this script for festival use.

The role of Gram is especially difficult because she never leaves the stage, must appear blind, and must express emotions ranging from fear to savage triumph. Although she once shot a Carmalt, she humbles her pride to plead with Lem to call off the feud so that Clay can live. Mature in years, Lem is a burly, uncouth mountaineer clinging to the senseless customs of the past. Clay, about sixteen, is stalwart and aggressive. Following the traditions of his people, he rushes out to meet the enemy. These roles should be cast with care. Hope is a girl about fourteen who has few lines. She is the audience while Gram counts the graves on the hill and tells their stories.

Patchwork Quilt, The. Rachel Field. Drama; 2M 4W 1 little girl; French; royalty \$5. Sitting room containing a bed. Modern and period costumes about 1910.

A grandmother whose mind is wandering has sewed the deed to her farm into one of the patches of her favorite quilt which her daughter wants to throw away. The daughter and her husband want to find the deed so that they can sell the farm and have money to spend for luxuries. In a flash-back the audience sees the old lady's early love and her happiness in her new home on the farm which her husband gave her for a wedding present. Returning to reality, the daughter is still searching for the deed which she never finds, and Grandmother lives on in her world of dreams.

In this study of character, the beauty and nobleness of the early love contrast strongly with the greed of the younger generation interested only in material things. Except for the little girl who is about six, the roles are all mature and should be cast so that the actors are vocally and physically suited to the parts which they must play.

Grandmother, who is feeble, should be portrayed by a girl who can play the role sympathetically. Her role is difficult because she must appear mentally incompetent and does not leave the stage. In dim light a young couple present the story of the early romance. This scene is the fantasy in Grandmother's mind. Except for the role of the grandmother, the characterizations are not difficult, but the timing and the lighting are very important.

Pearls. Dan Tetheroh. Drama; 2M 2W; French; royalty \$5. Living room. Modern costumes.

Following the recent death of their mother, two sisters try to make a home for their younger brother, Tad. They want him to go with respectable company and fear that he may be tempted to do wrong. When he gives Polly, his sister, a string of pearls for a birthday gift, they are sure that he stole them from the store. He saved to buy them, and their faith is renewed in one another.

The beauty of family affection is paramount in this play which deals with an ethical problem. It is a good choice for an inexperienced group because it is simple to stage, and characterizations are not exceedingly difficult. It tells an interesting story and rises to a satisfying climax. For festival use this script must be cut somewhat in order to keep it within the time limit.

Perfect Gentleman, The. Anna Best Yoder. Comedy; 2M 3W; French, royalty \$5. Living room. Modern costumes.

Margaret invites her chemistry teacher to her home to dinner and instructs her adolescent brother about his behavior in the presence of the man whom she adores. He tries to follow instructions and succeeds in creating one embarrassing scene after another. Then the older sister returns from college, and the young teacher immediately becomes interested in her. Margaret realizes that she is left out as brother announces, "Soup's on!"

For groups that wish to present an adolescent comedy, this is a nicely written script with a great deal of audience appeal. It is easy to cast because Mother is the only mature character. The young brother should be a likable boy who can capture the hearts of the audience. Since the teacher is a recent college graduate, he should have a deep voice and appear to be in his early twenties. Although the role of Mother is not difficult, she should have the voice and bearing suggestive of a woman in middle life. The roles of the daughters as typical young moderns are fun for high school girls to play.

Pink and Patches. Marg Bland. Comedy; 1 boy 3W; French; royalty \$10. Yard with a clothes line. Modern costumes.

Texie belongs to a poor family that believes the women should do all of the work. Although her father drinks up his small income, Texie's mother defends him loyally. A tourist offers to give Texie a dress, and she dreams of a fragile, pink garment such as she has never had. The dress proves to be just another old brown calico with a patch on it.

Although this play is generally classed as a comedy, the climax is far from humorous. When Texie swallows her bitter disappointment and accepts things as they have to be, it is a tragic moment. Texie should be cast as a girl in early adolescence whose clothes never fit or look respectable. Her mother is bedraggled but proud, and her brother is not a likable child. The tourist is well-dressed and smug. This play is a good choice for groups that need a script which does not require mature male roles. The characterization are not difficult; it is easy to stage.

Pink Dress, The. Donald Elser. Drama; 2M 3W; Row, Peterson and Company; royalty \$10 with admission, \$5 without admission. Living room. Modern costumes.

Cora, an adolescent girl, steals an expensive dress from the store where her father is a trusted employee. She and her mother quarrel, and when her father comes home, he reveals that he borrowed a dress for her from the store. When the store detective arrives to make inquiry about the stolen dress, Cora's father saves her from disgrace by pretending that the dress she stole is the one that he had permission to borrow. In the morning he will return the dresses to the store, and Cora will have to wear her old formal to the party.

This script is within the scope of teen-age understanding, rises to a satisfying climax, and teaches a lesson. The mother is a selfish, nagging woman who blames their position on her husband. She encourages Cora to do things of which her father will not approve. Headstrong and petulant, Cora yields to the temptation to steal without weighing the consequences. The father is a patient man who provides for his family to the best of his ability. Being a man of principle, he teaches his daughter a much needed lesson and disciplines her justly. The other roles are easily cast.

Plum Tree, The. Luella McMahon. Drama; 7W; Dramatic Publishing Company; royalty \$10 with admission, \$5 without admission. Living room in home for old ladies. Modern costumes and uniforms for nurses.

Two nurses keep a home for the care of elderly women. Three of them who are eighty years old are to be taken to the state hospital for the insane. One keeps talking about something that she must do with a knife; another thinks that she is going home, and the third thinks that the undertaker is coming for her. To make the situation easier, the nurses give a tea party for them, and they have a lovely time before they go away.

Told with the utmost simplicity, this script abounds in opportunities for fine character acting. Every woman can develop a distinct characterization, and each role should be interpreted sympathetically. The most difficult roles are those of the ladies who will go away; they are not violent cases; they are just the victims of old age. Carefully cast, this play can be an interesting project for a group of talented girls.

Pot-Boiler, The. Alice Gerstenberg. Farce; 5M 2W; Longmans, Green and Company; royalty \$10. A rehearsal stage. Modern and spectacular costumes.

A young author attempts to direct the first act of his play. Actors do not respond to his directions and over-act. The results are ridiculous. Tearing his hair and accomplishing little, the miserable author finally admits that he has not written the second act yet and does not know how all of the problems will be solved in the final scene.

This delightful farce should be played with skill and abandon. It is a fine script for youthful actors who enjoy opportunities to play roles that can be exaggerated. Drawing the line that separates an artistically played farce from a mere riot of foolishness, the director should insist upon mature, polished acting. It is not a good choice for an inexperienced group.

Revolt of Mother, The. Ruth Sergel. Comedy; 3M 3W; Dramatic Publishing Company; royalty \$5 with admission, \$2.50 without admission. A barn. Period costumes 1900.

Because Nanny Penn is ashamed to have her wedding in their old shack of a house, she refuses to set the date. Not knowing her reason, George becomes angry, and they quarrel. Nanny's father has just built a new barn on the site that he promised to use for a new house. Her mother, Sarah, is inwardly seething with the injustice, but she goes meekly about her work. When Father is called away for a short time, Sarah moves the furniture into the new barn and sets up housekeeping. Father is dumfounded, but he finally agrees to put in partitions and to accept the idea of using it for a home where Nanny can have her wedding in style.

This clever comedy of rural life involves problems easily understood by youthful actors. Ending on a serious note, it is different from most comedies because it has dramatic moments which lift it above the level of pure entertainment. Since there is a balance between youthful and mature characters, it can be cast so that actors of different degrees of maturity can participate. The most difficult roles are those of Father, Sarah, and the guest who comes to tell Mother that she is not doing her duty by her husband. This is a play which actors enjoy rehearsing and one which audiences appreciate.

Riders to the Sea. John Synge. Drama; 1M 3W and extras; French; royalty \$10. Fisherman's cottage in Ireland. Simple costumes 1900 period.

An elderly mother is mourning the death of her son who was drowned at sea. Only one son, Bartley, is left of the many men who once formed the family. One by one the sea has claimed them all, and then it claims Bartley who dies in an accident. The mother philosophically takes comfort in the thought that the worry and the mourning are over and that Bartley can have a good burial, for that is all that men can hope for in this troubled world.

This tense, beautifully written drama needs the lilt of the Irish speech to make it convincing. The old mother, stooped with grief and age, should be portrayed sympathetically but with restraint by a versatile actress who can sway the audience toward tears as she kneels by the body of her last son. Her daughters are capable young women, and Bartley should be a stalwart young man unafraid of the sea. The extras carry Bartley's body into the room; they have no lines.

Robe of the Galilean, The. John McGreevey. Drama; 5M 5W; Dramatic Publishing Company; royalty \$10 with admission, \$5 without admission. A room in Jerusalem. Biblical costumes.

Marcellus, a Roman noble, and Demetrius, his slave, have come to a shop in Jerusalem to learn more about the Christian beliefs. Marcellus has accepted the faith enough to place himself in danger to protect Christian women from the Roman soldiers. After seeing a Christian die of wounds, Marcellus tells Simon Peter that he has fully accepted the faith and will return to Rome to tell the Emperor of the new Kingdom.

Based upon a portion of the novel, *The Robe*, this drama requires mature interpretations and careful direction. The costumes must be sufficiently authentic to make the play believable. All male roles should be cast so that actors appear quite mature both vocally and physically. Tension mounts rapidly as the action moves steadily toward the dramatic climax.

Running Tide, The. Jay Gould. Melodrama; 2M 2W; Dramatic Publishing Company; royalty \$5. Living room in a lighthouse. Costumes 1900 period.

Monica Parks tends the lighthouse and looks after her sister, Rachel, who evidently fears her. When an inspector comes to conduct an investigation regarding wrecks which occurred because the light failed, Rachel begs him to take her away from her cruel sister. In a tense scene it is revealed that Rachel's mind was affected when her lover left her for another and that it is she who put out the lights and caused the wrecks.

Highly emotional and dramatic, this play depends largely upon the mood which must be established and sustained throughout the play. Roles are all mature, and actors must be capable of building to a strong climax. The timing is very important in creating atmosphere. Rachel has the most difficult role because she should appear to be normal in the first scene and gradually show her mental incompetence. The other actors have good roles which must be played convincingly.

Senor Freedom. Jean Lee Latham. Melodrama; 2M 3W; Row, Peterson and Company; royalty \$5. Living room in Mexico. Mexican costumes.

Dolores, the niece of a general, names a little pigeon Senor Freedom and talks much to Juan, the blind stranger who cannot remember how he happens to be in her home. Juan is really a spy sent to gain information about the general, and the pigeon is to carry the message to the rebels when it is time to attack. Loving Dolores, Juan finds it hard to complete his mission, but he is saved by a military conference which settles the problems of war.

The thrilling lines of this play pulse with love of country and the love of a man for a woman. Written in easy flowing rhythm, the language makes no attempt at dialect. Make-up and costumes give a colorful note to the production. All actors must appear mature, and they should have had previous stage experience in order to give a convincing interpretation of this script. Casting the roles of Juan and Dolores is very important, and the roles of the other characters must be portrayed convincingly.

Sham. Frank Tompkins. Farce; 3M 1W; Baker; royalty \$5. Living room. Modern costumes.

Charles and Clara lead such artificial lives that they do not know the meaning of honesty. Their home is filled with decorations which they claim are expensive works of art. An amiable thief enters and exposes not only their artificial furnishings but also their whole way of life. Apparently they repent and decide to live honorably, but the climax reveals that Clara has cheated again, and Charles thinks that it was very clever of her.

Written with skill, this script is highly entertaining and within the ability of youthful actors to produce acceptably. All characters are mature people with an air of sophistication. Lines are clever, and the situations are amusing. Getting the necessary decorations for the room is a production problem which the director should consider before choosing the play.

Sisters McIntosh, The. Richard Corson. Farce; 1M 2W; French; royalty \$5. Old-fashioned living room. Costumes 1900 period.

Lulie and Tizzie, two elderly, eccentric spinsters, live alone. Late at night a strange young man appears and claims to be a distant relative. Lulie is suspicious and plans to scare him away by showing him pictures in the family album and pretending to be crazy. The sisters convince him that they are irresponsible, and he is glad to hurry away without his bag which they gleefully explore. Although they are sure that he is not a relative, they cannot understand how he happens to have a picture of their aunt who he said was his mother.

This merry farce is a delight to both actors and audiences. Laced shoes, long dresses, and hair piled high give the women in this play an air of belonging to a day long gone by. They are both gullible, simple-minded old ladies with a bit of shrewdness in their makeup. These roles give opportunity for excellent characterization and pantomime. Although the role of the young man is not very difficult, he has opportunity to develop a distinct characterization which is very necessary to the development of the play.

Sod. Stuart Hunter. Drama; 2M 2W; Northwestern Press; royalty \$5. Exterior or a kitchen scene. Simple costumes of 1900 period.

Living in a sod house on the Nebraska prairie, Sally Barnes has saved her egg money for years so that she can send her daughter, Tessie, to her old home in the East where she can go to school and learn to be refined. Jim, her husband, thinks that the money can be spent to better advantage if he uses it to buy a sod buster. Sally defends her right to educate their daughter until Tessie comes home with a new husband and tells her mother that she is going to have a nice sod house just like hers. Heartbroken, Sally gives the money to Jim for the new tool; she does not need it now.

Depicting some of the hardships and disappointments of pioneer life, this script is easy to stage if the set is changed to a kitchen scene, and some stage business is invented. Straining milk and finishing the dishes will give Sally something to do during the opening scene.

A loving wife, Sally has sacrificed much to make a home on the prairie, and her role requires controlled, emotional acting. Rough of speech, Jim lacks cultural background, but he loves his wife and wants her to be happy. Tessie is a coarse, unrefined young woman reflecting her environment in speech and manner. Neither has her new husband any refinement or education; prairie bred, they are perfectly happy in their frontier community.

Sparkin'. E. P. Conkle. Farce; 1M 3W; French; royalty \$5. Old-fashioned kitchen with a fireplace. Costumes 1900 period.

Lessie, a bashful sixteen, irons and dreams of Orry Sparks who does not know what to say when he calls upon a girl. When he arrives, Gram gives him some good advice about the proper way to spark. Completely unnerved, Orry mistakes the closet door for the back door and spits tobacco juice on the clean, white dress which Gram cherishes. At first she is very angry, but she forgives him when he pops the question to Lessie.

Full of rustic humor, this farce delights both the actors and the audience. The action upon which the humor is based seems a little crude, but it is not offensive. The role of Gram requires careful casting because much of the humor depends upon her actions. She is an outspoken old lady with no refinement whatsoever. Orry, the other comedy character, is a bashful, awkward young man lacking poise and culture. Shy and embarrassed, Lessie tries to make his visit enjoyable. Her mother has a brief scene.

Special Guest. Donald Elser. Drama; 3M 2W; Row, Peterson and Company. Dining room in rural home. Modern costumes.

Embittered by the death of her son Edward, Nora entertains the young lawyer who accidentally shot him during a robbery. In order to get revenge, she intends to poison his tea. As a spirit, Edward appears to tell his side of the story. Unseen by the group at the table, he reveals how his mother's selfishness and teaching had made him what he was—a "no good." When she brings in the tea, he causes the lawyer to hasten away without drinking it. His father starts to drink it, but Nora knocks the cup from his hand. Completely defeated, she sits looking at Edward's picture as he leaves the house forever.

Tinged with melodrama, this script tells a weird tale of tragedy brought about by an overindulgent parent. Because it is a play depending much upon mood and strong characterizations, it is not a wise choice for groups that have had no previous stage experience.

Edward, the narrator, has a very important role as he builds the play to the climax. He should have considerable poise and a pleasing voice for many of his speeches are quite long. The role of Nora is difficult. She is proud, vindictive, and sharp of tongue. Her husband is a plodding, dull man in middle life. The lawyer and his sweetheart have good scenes.

Spreading the News. Lady Augusta Gregory. Comedy; 7M 3W; French; royalty \$5. An apple stall at a fair in Ireland. Irish peasant costumes.

It is market day when the peasants bring their wares to the fair where they can trade and gossip. Everyone is having a good time except the new magistrate who has just arrived and wants to make a good showing by enforcing the law. Jack Smith, who is on his way to work in a hay field, lays down his fork so that he can help a neighbor for a few minutes. Bartley Fallon picks it up and starts after him because he wants to give it to him before it is stolen. Gossip spreads the story that Bartley killed Jack in a quarrel over Mrs. Smith, and the people are planning the wake when Jack returns with his hay fork. The magistrate is disappointed to find that he does not have a criminal case on his hands.

This play is an interesting study in human nature as people revel in gossip that grows more absurd every minute. All roles are mature and require distinct characterizations; all characters are noisy and aggressive. Jack Smith should be able to sing acceptably. There is a suggestion of Irish dialect in the lines, but an experienced group should have little difficulty with this play.

Steps from Beyond. Jay Ried Gould. Melodrama; 3M 2W; Row, Peterson and Company; royalty \$5. Living room. Modern costumes.

Madame Dupless lives near the rocky coast with Johnny, her faithful hired man. A stranger appears and demands a letter which was found in her son's possession when he was killed by a revolutionist in Paris. He gets the letter away from Madame and her granddaughter, but he is killed when Johnny lights his way to the shore. The letter will be given to the police who need it.

This thrilling melodrama requires good characterizations and excellent timing to bring it to the climax. The mood must be established in the opening scene, sustained, and heightened throughout the play. The roles are all mature and should be cast carefully so that the characterizations are believable. This script is not a wise choice for an inexperienced group.

Strange Road. John M. Houston. Drama; 1M 3W; Row, Peterson and Company; royalty \$5. Cottage near the sea. Peasant costumes.

In spite of her mother's protests, Annie loves Alan and wants to marry him. He comes to tell her that he must travel a strange road according to plan and promises her a ring by which to remember him. Then comes the news of his drowning. Some say that she dreamed of his coming for he was already dead, but she has the ring.

For those who like an element of fantasy, this unusual play is a challenge. It is difficult because actors need to keep a balance between fantasy and reality which are curiously intermingled. Alan and Annie should be youthful actors who can create a dream world of their own as they are together in the fanciful realm. Annie must be able to return to reality when the neighbor brings the news of Alan's death. The neighbor and Annie's mother are mature women with little faith in visions. A sound effect record of waves pounding on the beach is helpful in creating atmosphere.

Submerged. H. Stuart Cottman and Lee Vergne Shaw. Drama; 6M; Row, Peterson and Company; royalty \$5. Interior of a wrecked submarine. Work clothes.

For six men trapped in a wrecked submarine the only chance of rescue is to shoot a man through a tube so that his body will indicate to rescuers the position of the helpless submarine. They cast lots, and the coward gets the fatal card. In an agony of fear, he refuses to die, and another man takes his place. Hating him for his cowardice, the men go into a safer room to wait. Left alone with his conscience, the coward becomes hysterical as his portion of the submarine collapses.

This tense, gripping drama of the sea challenges young men to give a fine performance, and the emotional impact on the audience makes it a play which is not soon forgotten. However, this script is not a wise choice for a group with little talent and no previous stage experience. The men must appear to be somewhat mature both vocally and physically, and they should be capable of portraying deep emotion which is always controlled except in the role of the coward. After creating the mood of tenseness and uncertainty, they must keep the tension rising steadily until the climax is reached.

To represent a submarine, producing groups usually build a framework to suggest three sides of the compartment. By constructing large portions that can be fastened together, it can be assembled quickly enough for festival use. It must be sufficiently substantial for the small door to be used for exits.

Sunday's Child. Elizabeth Welch. Comedy; 3M 3W; Row, Peterson and Company; royalty \$5. Sitting room 1916. Period costumes and one Indian costume.

Thirteen-year-old Betsy wants a pink dress to wear to her first party. Knowing that her father is an underpaid minister short of cash, she feels sure

that he cannot help her; then she remembers that she has been taught to pray. Kneeling in the sitting room, she carries her problem to the Lord. Her prayer is heard by Windy, a friendly Indian who causes a delayed romance to blossom. The wedding fee will provide money for the pink dress.

Although this play is classed as a comedy, it is too sincere and beautiful to be pure comedy; it will evoke not only quiet laughter but also a tear. Wholly sincere and unaffected, Betsy turns to the Lord with her problems as naturally as she would speak to her father. Her friend, Debbie, is much the same type, and Zach, her admirer, is a shy country boy who adds humor to the play. Her father and mother are typical parsonage folk, and Windy is the silent Indian who says little and thinks much.

Thank You, Doctor. Gilbert Emery. Farce; 3M 2W; Longmans, Green and Company; royalty \$10 with admission, \$5 without admission. Waiting room in a doctor's office. Modern costumes.

Mrs. Lester calls upon Dr. Gurney, a specialist in mental diseases, to treat her brother who has an obsession about pearls. She says that the brother will come to the office very soon. Pretending to be the doctor's niece, she has told a jeweler to send a pearl necklace to the office so that he can see it before she makes the purchase. When the man delivers the necklace which she intends to steal, the doctor thinks that he is Mrs. Lester's brother and has him put into a strait jacket. Posing as a mental patient, a detective creates quite a scene until the moment comes when he can arrest Mrs. Lester, the accomplished jewel thief.

This merry farce provides the suspense and the thrills in which audiences delight. Moving fast, it has clever lines and most unexpected situations. The action should be timed carefully, and the acting should never degenerate into slapstick. Since all characters are mature and require considerable skill in acting, only an experienced group should select this script for festival use.

The sophisticated Mrs. Lester is shrewd, poised, and calculating; she should be cast carefully because the action of the play revolves around her. The role of the doctor is very important; he must appear alert, suave, and professional. The roles of the messenger and of the detective also require good acting. Although the part for the nurse is less difficult, it is very necessary and should be interpreted well.

Trifles. Susan Glaspell. Drama; 3M 2W; Baker; royalty \$10. Gloomy old farm kitchen. Modern costumes or 1900 period costumes.

The sheriff, the county attorney, and a farmer are trying to find clues which will reveal the evidence needed to solve a murder case. Mrs. Wright has been taken to jail on the suspicion that she tied a rope around her husband's neck and strangled him. Although the men can find no clues, the two women who accompanied them solve the case when they find Mrs. Wright's canary and see that its neck has been wrung. They hide the bird and leave the men to their sleuthing.

This play with so much underlying pathos appears to be very simple, but actors have an opportunity to bring out the hidden tragedy in the life of the lonely woman who was goaded beyond endurance. Characterizations are not too difficult for high school actors, but they must appear to be people in middle life. The stage set can be greatly simplified without detracting from the production. The use of period costumes will add charm to the play and make it more believable.

Trysting Place, The. Booth Tarkington. Farce; 4M 3W; Baker; royalty \$10. Lounge in a hotel. Modern costumes.

Three couples have difficulties when they try to meet in the lounge. Lancelot, age seventeen, fancies himself in love with a young widow of whom his mother and his sister do not approve. Although the widow tries to discourage him so that she can meet her lover, Lancelot will not leave until he sees his mother approaching. He dives under a sofa and is in a position to hear conversations not meant for his ears. This information will be useful for blackmail. Finally the widow meets her sweetheart, and Lancelot is left out completely.

Putting special emphasis upon the role of Lancelot, this farce gives an adolescent the opportunity to act his age. He should appear emotionally unstable and very immature in his thinking. His hiding under the sofa is such a childish act that it heightens the humor of the scene. Since the roles of the widow and her lover are the only mature characters, this play is not very difficult to cast.

Setting the stage will present a problem at festivals. One sofa must be of the type which will permit Lancelot to hide under it and to crawl across the stage with it upon his back. There must be a large chair with a high back so that an actor can sit there unobserved.

Two Crooks and a Lady. Eugene Pillot. Melodrama; 3M 3W; French; royalty \$10. Library in a wealthy home. Modern costumes.

Mrs. Simms-Vane, a wealthy invalid who cannot move either her head or her hands, sits in a wheel chair and watches her maid and an accomplice search her room for a famous diamond necklace. They finally take it from her and remove the stones from their settings. Although she cannot summon aid, Mrs. Simms-Vane causes the thieves to quarrel and to double-cross each other. Thus she saves her jewels. The police arrive when they hear a shot fired by the maid who thinks that she is getting even with her false lover and that she will have the diamonds for herself.

With surprising events following in rapid succession, this melodrama is highly entertaining. Actors need to have considerable ability and some previous stage experience to present this script successfully because it moves fast and requires strong characterizations.

Mrs. Simms-Vane has the most difficult role for she appears to be very elderly, occupies a wheel chair, and without moving either her head or her hands, completely dominates the play. The treacherous maid should be clever, determined, and jealous. The accomplice is a mature man who is utterly ruthless. Other roles are short and easy to cast.

Uncle Jimmy. Zona Gale. Comedy; 3M 5W; Baker; royalty \$10 with admission. Backyard with a woodpile. Costumes 1900 period.

Uncle Jimmy, an elderly man of all work, longs to leave the village and to see something of the world before he dies. He has a chance to go to Idaho with expenses paid, and the women for whom he works get him ready for the trip. When he is ready to go, he suddenly realizes that he does not want to leave the village after all and is glad to return to his familiar pattern of life.

Rich in rural humor, this play offers opportunities for fine character acting. The principal role is that of Uncle Jimmy who is typical of people who do not get to do the things which they dream about until late in life, and then it is too late. He should be portrayed sympathetically; he should never appear ridiculous. Physically, he should seem to be quite elderly, but he is spry enough to be useful in the village. Others in the cast are mature characters. Care should be taken to develop interpretations which will cause the audience to laugh with the actors but never at them. For festival use this play needs to be cut.

Valiant, The. Holworthy Hall and Robert Middlemass. Drama; 5M 1W; Longmans, Green and Company; royalty \$10. Warden's office in a prison. Modern costumes and prison uniforms.

James Dyke, a confessed murderer, is to be hanged at midnight. The warden and the priest make one last attempt to get him to tell his real name and to order disposal of government bonds which belong to him. To shield his family, he refuses. His sister comes to see him, but he never lets her know that he is her brother. He tells her that he knew her brother who died a hero's death in France and gives her the bonds to take to her mother. As he walks toward the execution room, he repeats, "The valiant never taste of death but once."

Set within prison walls, this grim drama carries a powerful message that grips the hearts of both the actors and the audience. Because it requires mature interpretation, it is not a wise choice for groups without previous stage experience. All roles need careful casting, and the timing is very important. Although the emotions are intense, the actors should play them with restraint. Both the warden and the priest have strong roles requiring them to be physically and vocally convincing as mature men of responsibility. A much younger man, Dyke is nervous but courageous as he lifts the play to its dramatic climax. His role must be interpreted by a very capable actor. The role for the girl needs strong, emotional acting which helps Dyke to carry the tension higher. The attendants have few lines and are easy to cast. For festival use, this script must be cut.

What Never Dies. Percival Wilde. Drama; 1M 3W; Baker; royalty \$10. Room to be cleaned. Costumes for scrub women.

Two scrub women are discussing another worker, Mrs. Armbuster, who has been putting on airs lately. She has boasted that her son Jack is making big money and that she has a tidy sum laid by to pay the rent and the installment on her sewing machine. Shortly after Mrs. Armbuster starts to work, Jack appears and confesses that he used his mother's money to play the stock market and lost all of it. There is nothing with which to pay the bills. His mother tries to be brave, but it is a hard blow. Then the two women give her a hundred dollars so that she can pay her rent and keep her sewing machine; they will play the market tomorrow and get it back.

Although this play may receive a laugh on the last line, it will doubtless be preceded by a tear. Each old woman is a distinctly different type of person from the others, and each is determined and aggressive. Even though they may be a bit uncouth and their grammar is atrocious, they have hearts of pure gold. Mrs. Armbuster should be able to portray a wide range of emotions, and Jack must be truly repentant when he confesses. His role is short but very important. That he need not appear to be very mature may be an aid in casting.

When Shakespeare's Ladies Meet. Charles George. Comedy; 6W; Dramatists Play Service; royalty \$5. Garden. Shakespearian costumes.

Six of Shakespeare's ladies meet in the garden for the purpose of talking about young Juliet's romance and to give her some good advice about handling men. After listening to them talk of love, Juliet lets them know that she is wiser than they in spite of their greater experience, and they agree that they have learned some things from her. Each lady tries to retain her traditional character and quotes from plays; however, she will lapse into slang now and then in order to add spice to the comedy.

Although this is a very difficult play requiring expensive costumes, some high schools have used it with success. The director needs a thorough knowledge of Shakespearian drama in order to assist a high school cast in developing a

good interpretation of this script. Colorful period costumes are essential for a successful production.

Where But in America? Oscar M. Wolff. Comedy; 1M 2W; Baker; royalty \$5. Dining room. Modern costumes.

Robert and Mollie are well-bred Americans who are enjoying their dinner served by Hilda, their Swedish maid. They have written to a friend to get the name of a young man who builds houses for rent in a desirable section of the city. Unable to afford a car, they do not want a garage. They soon learn that the young man is Hilda's fiance whom she expects to marry in the near future. She has been putting her money into the venture to help him to get a start. He will meet them in his car when they go to look at the site for their house.

This is a very clever script for a small cast, and each actor has enough lines to make his role worthwhile. There are few problems except the need for dishes to use in serving a meal, and Hilda should develop a slight Swedish accent.

Why I Am a Bachelor. Conrad Seiler. Farce; 2M 4W; Dramatists Play Service; royalty \$5. Bare stage. Modern costumes.

The narrator starts to deliver a speech about his reasons for being a bachelor, but he soon presents short scenes to illustrate his lecture. The first scene shows a young couple very much in love as they linger after a show. The next scene shows the same couple behaving very differently after marriage. Another scene shows the way they would behave at the breakfast table before marriage, and the last scene shows breakfast with her family after marriage when a biscuit throwing contest completes a quarrel. That is the reason the narrator is a bachelor.

This unusual comedy requires a narrator with poise and a clear, pleasing voice. The lovers are typical young people who can be madly in love in one scene and be ready to fight in the next one. The family consists of a sister about twelve and two women of middle age. Although they have less difficult roles, they are very important.

Unless spot lights are available, it is necessary to close the act curtain for a brief period following each scene. A portable frame containing a door is required. A table, chairs, dishes, and food are also needed.

Where the Cross Is Made. Eugene O'Neill. Drama; 3M 1W and 3M with no lines; Dramatists Play Service; royalty \$5. A living room resembling a cabin on a ship. Period costumes 1900. Modern costumes can be used.

Nat Bartlett, a half insane man, is trying to put his father into an institution for the insane so that he can sell the house and its possessions. Sue, his sister, is unwilling for him to do such a thing. Nat tells the doctor a story of hidden treasure and gets him to say that he will take the father away. The father dies when both he and Nat think that they see ghosts that have come out of the sea with chests of treasures. Sue then realizes that Nat is mentally unbalanced too.

Requiring mature acting, this script offers excellent opportunities to develop distinct characters, to establish mood, and to reach a high emotional climax. All actors appear mature both vocally and physically and should have had some previous stage experience. Captain Bartlett is a feeble old man who dreams his dreams and would harm no one. Crafty Nat appears to be sane until he too sees the ghosts with the gold. The doctor is a capable, professional man, and Sue is a poised, sensible young woman.

Since this is the type of play to thrill an audience, a sound effect record of the pounding surf will add much to the atmosphere. Throwing a green

spotlight on the ghosts will add to the weird scene which is the product of disordered minds.

Yes Means No. Howard Rogers. Farce; 3M 2W; Dramatists Play Service; royalty \$5. Business office. Modern costumes.

Teddy Lawson tells his wealthy father that he has just become engaged, but his father is more interested in criticizing him for the way he ran the business during his recent absence. Father tells him that he lacks the ability to say, "No." They make a wager that he cannot do it consistently for an hour. Teddy is to get one hundred dollars each time he does it, and the secretary is to keep an accurate record. During that time he almost wrecks his father's business and his romance, but he emerges victorious and with a large sum of money to use for his honeymoon.

With rapidly changing situations, this farce moves fast and is entertaining. Requiring furniture which is not on the approved list, the set will need some modification for festival. All characters are mature, poised, and somewhat sophisticated. These qualities are necessary to make the play believable.

Zingu. Thomas Seller. Comedy; 8W; Dramatists Play Service; royalty \$5. Living room. Modern costumes.

The ladies of the Thursday Afternoon Club are entertaining an author who does not wish to be entertained. They strongly disapprove of a new member, Mrs. Roby, who is too clever for them. The author is rude; the ladies try to appear learned, and Mrs. Roby has fun talking about Zingu and forcing the ladies to make an attempt at intelligent conversation. After she is gone, their one desire is to discover the meaning of Zingu. The maid informs them that it is a river which they must have read about in school.

Rich in gentle satire, this farce is a wise choice for a high school cast wishing to present a comedy. The play is light in tone and amusing in a way which can offend no one. All women appear mature except the maid who can appear to be younger. Each actress has the opportunity to create a distinct type of character, and having so many different personalities gives the play an air of realism and charm. It is easy to stage and fun to produce.

Publishers of Plays

Baker's Plays, 569 Boylston Street, Boston 16, Massachusetts.

Dramatic Publishing Company, The, 179 North Michigan Avenue, Chicago 1, Illinois.

Dramatists Play Service, Inc., 14 East 38th Street, New York 16, New York.

Samuel French, Inc., 25 West 45th Street, New York 36, New York.

Ivan Bloom Hardin Company, 3806 Cottage Grove Avenue, Des Moines 11, Iowa.

Longmans, Green and Company, 55 Fifth Avenue, New York 3, New York.

Northwestern Press, The, 315 Fifth Avenue South, Minneapolis 15, Minnesota.

Row, Peterson and Company, 1911 Ridge Avenue, Evanston, Illinois.

Note: Sound effect records can be purchased from several of the publishers listed above.

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