

*The show business**The limitations of the stage**A moral from a toy theater**Why five acts?--Dramatic collaboration**The dramatization of novels and the novelization of plays**Women dramatists**The evolution of scene-painting**The book of the opera**The poetry of the dance**The principles of pantomime**The ideal of the acrobat**The decline and fall of the negro-minstrelsy**The.*

There is only one reason why all grown-up people do not play with toys; and it is a fair reason. The reason is that playing with toys takes so very much more time and trouble than anything else. Playing as children mean playing is the most serious thing in the world; and as soon as we have small duties or small sorrows we have to abandon to some extent so enormous and ambitious a plan of life. We have enough strength for politics and commerce and art and philosophy; we have not enough strength for play. This is a truth which every one will recognize who, as a child, has ever played with anything at all; any one who has played with bricks, any one who has played with dolls, any one who has played with tin soldiers. My journalistic work, which earns money, is not pursued with such awful persistency as that work which earned nothing. Take the case of bricks. If you publish a book to-morrow in twelve volumes it would be just like you on "The Theory and Practice of European Architecture," your work may be laborious, but it is fundamentally frivolous. It is not serious as the work of a child piling one brick on the other is serious; for the simple reason that if your book is a bad book no one will ever be able ultimately and entirely to prove to you that it is a bad book. Whereas if his balance of bricks is a bad balance of bricks, it will simply tumble down. And if I know anything of children, he will set to work solemnly and sadly to build it up again. Whereas, if I know anything of authors, nothing would induce you to write your book again, or even to think of it again if you could help it. Take the case of dolls. It is much easier to care for an educational cause than to care for a doll. It is as easy to write an article on education as to write an article on toffee or tramcars or anything else. But it is almost as difficult to look after a doll as to look after a child. The little girls that I meet in the little streets of Battersea worship their dolls in a way that reminds one not so much of play as idolatry. In some cases the love and care of the artistic symbol has actually become more important than the human reality which it was, I suppose, originally meant to symbolize. When questioned on this course of conduct, she replied: First a doll had been a substitute for a child; afterwards a child was a mere substitute for a doll. But that opens other matters; the point is here that such devotion takes up most of the brain and most of the life; much as if it were really the thing which it is supposed to symbolize. The point is that the man writing on motherhood is merely an educationalist; the child playing with a doll is a mother. Take the case of soldiers. A man writing an article on military strategy is simply a man writing an article; a horrid sight. But a boy making a campaign with tin soldiers is like a General making a campaign with live soldiers. He must to the limit of his juvenile powers think about the thing; whereas the war correspondent need not think at all. I remember a war correspondent who remarked after the capture of Methuen: Otherwise he would have stood quite still while he was chased. I run after Jones with a hatchet, and if he turns round and tries to get rid of me the only possible explanation is that he has a very small balance at his bankers. I cannot believe that any boy playing at soldiers would be as idiotic as this. But then any one playing at anything has to be serious. Whereas, as I have only too good reason to know, if you are writing an article you can say anything that comes into your head. It is that they cannot afford the expenditure of toil and time and consideration for so grand and grave a scheme. I have been myself attempting for some time past to complete a play in a small toy theatre, the sort of toy theatre that used to be called Penny Plain and Twopence Coloured; only that I drew and coloured the figures and scenes myself. Hence I was free from the degrading obligation of having to pay either a penny or twopence; I only had to pay a shilling a sheet for good cardboard and a shilling a box for bad water colours. The kind of miniature stage I mean is probably familiar to every one; it is never more than a development of the stage which Skelt made and Stevenson celebrated. But though I have worked much harder at the toy theatre than I ever worked at any tale or article, I cannot finish it; the work seems too heavy for me. I have to break off and betake myself to lighter employments; such as the biographies of great men. The play of "St. George and the Dragon," over which I have burnt the midnight oil

you must colour the thing by lamplight because that is how it will be seen , still lacks most conspicuously, alas! All this gives me a feeling touching the real meaning of immortality. In this world we cannot have pure pleasure. This is partly because pure pleasure would be dangerous to us and to our neighbours. But it is partly because pure pleasure is a great deal too much trouble. If I am ever in any other and better world, I hope that I shall have enough time to play with nothing but toy theatres; and I hope that I shall have enough divine and superhuman energy to act at least one play in them without a hitch. All the essential morals which modern men need to learn could be deduced from this toy. Artistically considered, it reminds us of the main principle of art, the principle which is in most danger of being forgotten in our time. I mean the fact that art consists of limitation; the fact that art is limitation. Art does not consist in expanding things. Art consists of cutting things down, as I cut down with a pair of scissors my very ugly figures of St. George and the Dragon. Plato, who liked definite ideas, would like my cardboard dragon; for though the creature has few other artistic merits he is at least dragonish. The modern philosopher, who likes infinity, is quite welcome to a sheet of the plain cardboard. The most artistic thing about the theatrical art is the fact that the spectator looks at the whole thing through a window. But the advantage of the small theatre exactly is that you are looking through a small window. Has not every one noticed how sweet and startling any landscape looks when seen through an arch? This strong, square shape, this shutting off of everything else is not only an assistance to beauty; it is the essential of beauty. The most beautiful part of every picture is the frame. This especially is true of the toy theatre; that, by reducing the scale of events it can introduce much larger events. Because it is small it could easily represent the earthquake in Jamaica. Because it is small it could easily represent the Day of Judgment. Exactly in so far as it is limited, so far it could play easily with falling cities or with falling stars. Meanwhile the big theatres are obliged to be economical because they are big. When we have understood this fact we shall have understood something of the reason why the world has always been first inspired by small nationalities. The vast Greek philosophy could fit easier into the small city of Athens than into the immense Empire of Persia. He would have been stifled by the British Empire. Great empires are necessarily prosaic; for it is beyond human power to act a great poem upon so great a scale. You can only represent very big ideas in very small spaces. My toy theatre is as philosophical as the drama of Athens.

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Looking at the picture of the front of the building, the Chinese calligraphy written across the building at the fourth and fifth floor are ancient Chinese characters which translate saying: The entire front of the building was covered with fired ceramic tiles. The roof tiles and overhang tiles were red. The vertical writings on each side are poetic and hard to interpret. Starting at the top of the right side the characters translate as follows: On the other side the characters translate starting at the top: The characters can have different interpretations. Note the two Chinese dragons at the top of the roof and they also appear on the second floor loggia. The entire design is one reflecting Shanghai, China. The sign on the top of the roof a sign read "Chop Suey" and the theater sign on the second floor overhang read "Toy. This silent, six-reel film by the Essanay Film Manufacturing Co. The experience is supposed to "straighten out" the unruly Archie, but the boy is more interested in the local female population than in serving God. Eventually, however, our hero cleans up his act and tries to live his life within the proper moral boundaries. Unfortunately, he is caught in an innocent but compromising situation in a London hotel room, whereupon Rev. Pemberton angrily washes his hands of the boy. Brass Oriental lanterns lit the loggia on each side. Copings flanked the steep mansard at the top of the building with terminal dragons in terra-cotta advancing the theme. Typical of early movie theaters, the ventilation was almost non-existent. They had a reputation for being hot and stuffy. Note the electric fans along the walls on each side of the theater. The rotating fans were the only ventilation method used to move the air. The early movies were often of poor quality "grainy". It was new and exciting. Later film exchanges were all clustered in the State Street area. The films came in by train and were picked up by the distribution offices. Movies were shipped in Vitaphone hex-shaped film cases that held 4 to 6 reels. I weighed one of my old Vitaphone 35mm film cases with four reels in it at about 50 lbs. From the film distribution offices the movies were dropped off in the morning in front of the theater or in the lobby. A feature length film would have had six reels. The projectionist had to haul the film cases up four flights of stairs to get to the projection room. After the show ended, the reels were left in front of the theater for pick up the next day. The reels were not re-wound. The film distribution office would re-wind the reels repairing tears, bad splices or missing footage before sending to the next location. Films sometimes did get to the theaters with a bad splice. The projectionist was supposed to inspect each reel before running it. A bad splice hitting the gears could do lots of damage to the projector. Up until , movies were shown using two projectors. The projectionist all men had to make sure that they ran the films in correct reel order. The projectionist started reel 1 on the first projector. About 10 seconds from the end of the reel, a small circle flashed briefly in the corner of the screen. In addition a reel alarm bell started to ring on the top of the projector. This alerted the projectionist to get ready to fire up the other projector. The projectionist fired the second projector up with the next reel just as the other ran out. The audience started to yell. Soon the next reel was running. While the second reel was running, the projectionist removed the first reel on the other projector threading the next reel in sequence. In addition the projectionist had to control the house lights and run the 50V amp travel spots if they were running a show. The carbon arc lights used in theaters were always a fire risk. In the TOY Theater closed. The population of Milwaukee since had almost doubled. The new movie palace s coming upon the scene made modest cinemas like this one obsolete. Without the "theater", the Toy Building remained on Second St. The restaurant was the principle tenant in the six story commercial building. Charlie Toy was the entrepreneurial owner who gave his name to the establishment. Toy originally worked for Karl Ratzsch as a waiter before starting his own business here. The restaurant became famous for its Chop Suey among other Chinese menu items. Dark wood beams ran between the columns. The Toy Restaurant remained in business at the Second Street location until about , when it was relocated at W. Old World Third St. The Chinese waiters wearing black were all men. When taking orders, nothing was written down. Moy Toy died in , and his son and daughter-in-law, Edward and Laura Toy, took

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ownership. It was a big expedition. I was intimidated by the foreignness of it all. Toys became a favorite spot Downtown was full of sailors. That meant a trip into town was a major production. My strongest memory was the incredible dragon that was painted on the wall of the staircase that led from the street to the second floor. To a kid it was the biggest, most colorful thing he had even seen "€" and when I found out my last name was derived from "draco" the constellation of the dragon , I forever became a fan of the exotic and of adventure. This floor housed the Hascall Billiard Parlor. Note that the billiard table did not have pockets. Billiards or three cushion is played with two white balls one of which has a black dot. In addition a red ball is on the table. Each player has a white ball. The object is to hit three cushions plus one of the other balls after the last cushion. The spin affects the bounce off the cushion. Billiards was a game played by gentleman. Pool was quite a different story. Ya got trouble, my friend, right here, I say, trouble right here in River City. I consider that the hours I spend with a cue in my hand are golden. Help you cultivate horse sense and a cool head and a keen eye. Never take and try to give an iron-clad leave to yourself from a three-rail billiard shot? But just as I say, it takes judgment, brains, and maturity to score In a balkline game, I say that any boob kin take and shove a ball in a pocket.

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