

## WHEN ACTORS HAD TO ACT

(Continued from previous page)

stage. "When you're on the stage it's much the same as if you're in Church—anything will set you off." Actors would make an exit, deliberately altering their final line to make it as difficult as possible for the next to use it as a cue. Or if they had to shake hands before going, they would have an egg or a saveloy handy to leave with the other man. Once, Mr. Beeby remembered, he had to make a very quick change from evening dress into a morning suit. Imagine then his feeling when the suit which he was to wear next came walking on to the stage on the back of another actor. "How do you like my new suit?" said the other man. "Bit shoddy, isn't it, but a good cut you know." And the owner of the suit had to play-up to this impromptu dialogue, keep the play running, and try and think at the same time what he would do for a change when his exit came.

### He Arrested Himself

In the small companies with which actors served their apprenticeship most of the fun came out of the scarcity of props and dresses—and cast. One company Mr. Beeby remembered could not run to the extra part of a policeman, and the only suitable person in the play for doubling happened to be a player who had to be arrested. He managed quite well, however, and arrested himself to the satisfaction of all audiences by standing beside a door, giving his last line and then by reaching over with his hidden arm to grab himself by the scruff of the neck and haul himself off-stage.

## COURAGE

(Written for "The LISTENER"  
By MARGARET GRAHAME)

"Courage is the price that life exacts  
for granting peace,

The soul that knows it not, knows  
no release

From little things;

"Knows not the livid loneliness of  
fear,

Nor mountain heights where bitter  
joy can hear

The sound of wings."

THOSE lines, written by Amelia Earhardt, the famous American airwoman, whose plane was lost on her round-the-world flight, gave me fresh heart in London in the September crisis of 1938.

Courage is not the absence of fear, but the conquest of it, and that I think is where most of us go wrong. We forget what courage really means and are ashamed of our fears.

"Knows not the livid loneliness of fear." That line removes any doubt that courage, in Amelia Earhardt's experience—and she had it to a high degree—means unimaginative daring. Fear,

## Death on a Divan

Shortage of scenery was always a problem. In "The Woman Thou Gavest Me" the heroine was supposed to die on a divan. Mr. Beeby was younger then, and had been having a hard time making love to a woman about 20 years his senior and able to give him a stone or two in weight besides. However, all went well until one night, when they were using a divan built up out of fruit cases and cushions, he had just said the final climatic line praying to God to accept the soul of the woman, who was dying on the divan, when, dead on cue, the fruit cases collapsed.

The stock piece of the old touring companies, "East Lynne," had a part for a small boy which always caused some difficulty. It was not possible for small boys to tour with the companies, so a compromise was usually reached by putting one of the adult male cast in bed and having a woman player under the bed for the dialogue. This worked very well, except that one night, to the great delight of the audience, the bed collapsed, the "small boy" shot out, and the presence of his "voice" was revealed.

### Not Enough Water With It

Another hazard of the stage that was, and probably never will be again, was the liking of many of the actors for something with less than a little water in it. Even to the best regulated touring companies accidents happened. Westport was the scene of one minor tragedy for the Alan Wilkie company in 1920. Mr. Beeby was touring with them and had gone ahead with the rest of the cast to Westport while the mechanic and his assistant followed with the props, costumes and make-up in a big lorry. At that time there was no

bridge over the Buller River, but a ferry.

The cast crossed safely, reached Westport in good time, and about 7.15 went to the theatre to dress. The house was packed, but there was no scenery, no wardrobe, and no make-up. At 7.30 the lorry had still not arrived. At 7.45 Alan Wilkie explained to the audience that they feared an accident had happened. At 8.30, cast and audience were out in the street looking up and down for the lorry. Still it did not come, so the company proceeded without it.

The next day, they hired a horse and gig and went looking for the lorry.

On the Westport side of the ferry was a pub, and 100 yards on the Westport side of the pub was the lorry, turned over in the ditch, with the mechanics sound asleep inside it.

### They Wanted Vaudeville

Often they ran into strange places with unusual audiences. In the Maori settlement of Ruatoria they found when the play should have been beginning that the audience was busy clearing the floor of chairs and sitting on the boards. This was all right; some laxity could be allowed. But then the Maoris started singing and completely drowned out the performers. They were lectured and scolded, but persisted and finally got what they wanted—a vaudeville show. All the company were versatile, and quickly produced solos, duets, quartets, a tap dancer, and so on, until the Maoris in the end profusely thanked them for a splendid entertainment.

Now, when Mr. Beeby's work does not please his audience, they just switch him off; and Mr. Beeby tells his tales with such obvious relish that it might almost be thought he does not find that quite so much fun.

whether for ourselves or for others, has to be known, faced fairly and squarely before it can be overcome. It's no good trying to hide our fears and push them back into our subconscious minds. A repressed fear will only ruin our nerves and make cowards of us.

Again: "Courage is the price that life exacts for granting peace." Peace of mind is what is meant here, I think. The repose of spirit, which enables a man or woman to face danger steadfastly and remain unafraid. And then, "release from little things." Release from all those petty fears; worries about bills, about illness, about the 101 small things which so often never happen.

### Afraid of Being Afraid

They disappear anyway in the face of a greater danger, but so many people go about in fear of being afraid when that danger threatens. They imagine themselves going down into an abyss of fear, from which there is no escape, instead of realising that fear is the dark valley through which most of us must pass before we can reach the "mountain heights." For though some people are undoubtedly born brave, the great majority must acquire it.

Never be afraid of your fear; don't hesitate to admit it to yourself. It may be necessary to pretend in front of other people, but you are the one person you can't deceive. The officer commanding his men, the captain on the bridge, the air raid warden on patrol, the nurse in the hospital, or the mother comforting her children, they must all outwardly show no sign of fear. But in-

wardly let them admit, if necessary: "I'm scared stiff, but I won't give in. I refuse to be governed by my fear. I'll do whatever is required of me."

### Courage Breeds Courage

Each one of us can make the same resolution, adding, too, perhaps, a refusal to worry about those dear to us who may be in danger. And having done that, you'll find a calmness of spirit which is the beginning of courage.

Further on in her poem, Amelia Earhardt writes:

"Each time we make a choice we pay,  
With courage to behold resistless day,  
And count it fair."

Each time we choose to do something of which we are afraid, we are a step nearer our goal.

But courage doesn't just come out of the blue; it must spring from faith—faith that somehow, despite all trials and dangers, right shall prevail. In "Richard Whittington," Massfield writes:

"Courage, sweet lady, for the darkest hour prepares the dawn, the darkest bud the flower."

If we can put our faith in that, we can face the future with courage in our hearts and hope in our eyes.

We only sell goods of Reliable Quality

Send for a copy of this



FREE  
Catalogue

POST FREE  
IN PLAIN  
COVER.

- ★ NO CHARGE FOR EXTENDED CREDIT.
- ★ NO REFERENCES REQUIRED.
- ★ NO ENQUIRIES.
- ★ NO DEPOSIT.

Visit Our  
Showroom

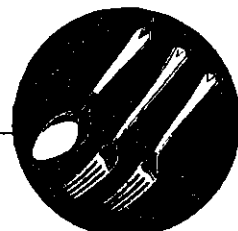
and the smartest  
Coats, Furs, Suits,  
Day and Afternoon  
Frocks can be yours  
for small monthly  
payments. If you are  
unable to call, send  
for this Catalogue.  
We guarantee to fit  
you to perfection by  
post.

Dress out  
of Income

ON 5!  
£1  
TO PER MONTH

DRESSWELL

SHOWROOMS: TOP FLOOR,  
COOKE'S TEAROOMS, QUEEN ST., AUCKLAND



### SPOONS and FORKS

Resplendent spoons and forks on snowy damask, complete the setting of your table. Silver and plated ware in every day use cleaned the quick, easy Silvo way will shine with a new loveliness.



A Reckitt's Product

SO14

EACCLARK'S

Extra  
Strong

MINERS COUGH CURE  
FOR  
COUGHS, COLDS,  
ASTHMA, BRONCHITIS, ETC.