

Audiences are invariably delighted with it, but for some unaccountable reason, it is never a draw with the public. A recent production of this play in London with two most popular players in Henry Ainley and Madge Titheridge, ran for two or three weeks only. Brough and Boucicault, with a magnificent production in Australia years ago lost a small fortune over it. True, Irving with the aid of a beautiful production and a cast which included Ellen Terry, Forbes Robertson and William Terriss, managed to get a run out of it at the Lyceum, but that was the solitary exception, and even with him it never took a place in his permanent repertoire, and was soon dropped.

On its merits as a theatrical entertainment it ought never to be out of the repertoire of a Shakespearean company, and be equally as popular as "As You Like It" and "Twelfth Night." Why isn't it? I defy the "Dominion" critic, or anyone else to tell me why.

"Coriolanus," although one of the lesser-known plays, in my recent seasons in Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide, was acclaimed by the Press and public as the greatest success of the 19 plays then in my repertoire, but the "Dominion" critic found the play tedious in parts, yet "Coriolanus," a hundred years ago was extremely popular and constantly acted.

THE most potent factor, however, in deciding the selection of Shakespearean plays for stage presentation, has been the question of parts, and it will be found that in most of the neglected plays there is no outstanding character which offers a suitable vehicle for the exploitation of the personality and talent of the star actor or actress.

A notable instance of this kind is "The Winter's Tale," which, with a poor leading man's part, and three women's parts of almost equal value, had been shelved for the past forty years in New Zealand, until I revived it here in 1927. Played for two or three nights in every large centre, it proved extraordinarily popular, and I have no hesitation in stating, that judged purely as a theatrical entertainment, there is nothing better in Shakespeare, "The Merchant of Venice" and "A Midsummer Night's Dream" not excepted.

Of course, it would be foolish to contend that all of Shakespeare's plays are of equal merit, but it is equally foolish to dogmatise regarding the merits of certain plays because they are not constantly placed before the public. The critic who does so is simply following

a fallacious belief, unsupported by facts, and based upon insufficient knowledge of the circumstances which govern the choice of plays for stage representation.

WHILE on the subject of critics, let me point out another fallacy from which they suffer. No doubt with the very best of intentions, and the desire to be helpful, they constantly stress in their criticisms of the performances, the philosophy, wisdom, and intellectual qualities of Shakespeare. Now, the primary motive with which the majority of people attend a theatre, whether they go to see Shakespeare, a musical comedy or a mystery play, is for the purpose of being entertained, and there is no surer method of making them stay away than to give them the impression they are going to witness an "educational" entertainment.

All great drama is, of course, educational in the highest degree, but the educational aspect should be merely incidental and to a certain extent unconscious, and I know of no greater disservice to the theatre in general and Shakespeare in particular than this continual stressing of his moral teachings and educational influence.

Emphasise and make people realise the fact that Shakespeare contains more genuine comedy and greater drama than all other playwrights combined, that the humours of Falstaff are even more amusing than the inanities of musical comedy—that the dramatic situations in "Macbeth" or "King Lear" are even more thrilling than the peevish jack-in-the-box absurdities of the latest crook drama, and every performance would be filled to overflowing.

The belief that Shakespeare is high-brow and heavy mental food dies hard fostered as it is by pedants and commentators who seek to obscure his inherent simplicity and fundamental greatness, under a mass of dry-as-dust annotations and academic learning.

In other words, let Shakespeare speak for himself through the medium of the stage, for which his plays were written and designed. For, to quote Frederic Harrison:—"It is impossible to judge any drama by reading it. The whole nature of a play of the first rank is transfigured when we see it adequately performed. It is only revealed in acting. No imagination can enable us to conceive the whole force of a really great drama until we SEE IT. You might as well try to judge a symphony of Beethoven by looking at the score, and that is more true of Shakespeare than of any other dramatist, ancient or modern. Shakespeare was a player to the tips of his toes; and he must be SEEN and HEARD on the stage to be truly known."

Systems of Radiovision Too Much Radio

Entirely New Angle Conceived

THE difficulties which still hamper the achievement of true radiovision, or the transmission of moving scenes by wireless, do not arise if it is possible to connect the transmitter to the receiving station by one or more line wires. Most of the successful demonstrations of "moving-picture" effects claimed by various experimenters have, in fact, been carried out over connecting wires.

Such a limitation is, of course, fatal to the popular conception of a moving-picture service in which signals will be broadcast through the ether and picked up on an ordinary garden aerial. If it is necessary to provide a connecting wire between the central distributing station and each individual receiver, the initial cost of installation will be so high as to restrict the service to a comparatively small circle of wealthy subscribers.

A Fatal Limitation.

THERE are two main reasons why a connecting wire is necessary in the present state of television development. In the first place, owing to the number of separate modulation frequencies required to transmit a clear picture, there is no "elbow room" available for them in the ether. A radio service of moving pictures must therefore either be confined to inconvenient hours outside the ordinary broadcasting times, or else give rise to wholesale interference with existing broadcast programmes.

In the second place, the energy picked up by an aerial from a radiated signal wave is so small that an expensive outfit is necessary to amplify the received currents up to the point where they are capable of operating the Neon receiving lamp.

Quite apart from the expense of a multistage amplifier, it is well known that beyond a certain point the effect of atmospheric and internal "tube noise" becomes so great as almost, if not wholly, to mask the effect of the original signals.

Telephone Vision.

ASSUMING that the use of connecting wires is necessary, the existing telephone service appears to offer the best medium for operating television apparatus in its present state of development.

The Bell Telephone Laboratories have, in fact, now developed a combined telephone and television system in which it is possible for a speaker at one end of the line to see the distant person with whom he is conversing, and also to have his own features simultaneously televised and transmitted to the far end of the line.

How the System Works.

THIS achieves the ideal of telephonic conversation. Not only does the user hear, but he also sees the person with whom he is conversing. It is a definite step forward in the annihilation of space.

As the speaker talks into the microphone he faces a mercury-vapour lamp, bent into the form of a circle, so that the whole of his features are illum-

Occasional Rest Urged

THE advantages of giving listening an occasional rest is stressed in the following article from the Sydney "Wireless Weekly": "What part should the listener play in broadcasting? The broadcasting station transmit everything that can usefully or agreeably be put over, but it is the duty of every listener to choose between what he should hear and what he should leave alone.

There are people who have their radio sets switched on during practically the whole time of transmission, and loudly complain if what they hear during any session is not to their liking. Now, there would be something wrong with broadcasting if any individual listener really enjoyed the whole programme from morning to close-down time.

No one, however leisured his or her life, ought to listen all the time. Yet, like so many other things, listening to wireless broadcasting may become a habit, the listener fearing that he may be missing something by not having the radio switched on.

THE first advice that I give to listeners, after the first enthusiasm has worn off, is to exercise as much restraint in the use of broadcasting as is exercised in the enjoyment of any other of the good things of life. To this end an intelligent study of the programmes of the various stations will contribute materially.

Most people simply switch on their sets at an habitual hour, and then praise or blame the broadcasting organisations, according to the measure of their personal appreciation or otherwise of the items they happen to pick up. One should look up the programmes beforehand, and decide what one wishes to listen to, and only that.

IT is inevitable, if the programmes are rightly compiled, that there will be many items to which any given listener will have no inclination to listen, and he will be very well advised not to listen at all at such times. But if one listens with discrimination, prepared for what is coming, and anxious to hear it, one will enjoy it very much more than if it is simply heard haphazard. Anticipation affords almost as much pleasure as realisation.

Beyond the lamp, is a screen containing two apertures. In the second of these appears the image of the distant speaker.

The reflected rays from the head and shoulders of the local speaker pass through the second aperture, and, after being analysed by a rotating disc fitted with spirally-arranged holes, fall on to a photo-electric cell. This converts the light-and-shade effects into corresponding electric currents, which are then fed to the line wire and reappear as a visible image before the distant speaker.

Meanwhile the incoming picture signals from the distant station cause the intensity of a local Neon lamp to fluctuate. These light variations are built up into an image by a second series of spiral holes formed in the same rotating disc, and are then thrown on to the first aperture in the screen referred to above.



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