LOWELL LECTURES AROUSE INTEREST

G. P. Baker's Talks on Drama Give Valuable Points For Play Writers.

Yesterday afternoon Prof. George P. Baker of Harvard gave the sixth of the series of Lowell Institute lectures on dramatic composition. The subject of this was "Drama, the Monologue, the Aside." Prof. Baker emphasized particularly the necessity of the author's having a perfect knowledge of his characters. The old Greek and modern playwrights, he said, "must be himself" and express his knowledge of himself by action. The drama must be a "living" play, something in which the audience must "live." "The playwright must extol," he said, "the truth of his drama."

The use of dialogue is of the utmost importance in a play, as it is through dialogue that the author develops his plot and portrays his characters. "It must expound," said Prof. Baker, "the true meaning of the whole story, and the thoughts of the characters must be clearly stated."

The plot must be developed logically and distinctly. Each word must be so written that each speech is of first importance. As conversations have their parallel in real life, so in writing dialogues the author must always keep in mind the nature of private conversations and their conversation, but nothing of that kind is done on the modern stage. Some nervous people have the habit of talking to themselves, and if such conversations are to have any importance, they must be considered in writing dialogue. It is far better to have the dialogue always true to life. Soliloquies are especially unnatural. The audience for some time, while the actor is delivering his soliloquy, is apt to lose interest, and it is for this reason that we have in our modern drama, in Shakespeare's time, the "aside." Formerly it was not unusual to have the dialogue always true to life, but in modern times, the audience has become so accustomed to this kind of dialogue that it is not unusual to have the dialogue delivered in a monotone.

A dialogue might conform to all the rules of perfectness, but if it is long, soliloquies, and asides, the audience will be apt to lose interest. Much the same rule applies to the prose. "There is no use of the attention of the audience in dialogue, but if it is made to live, it always moves the audience."

"The playwright is to succeed he must be himself," said Prof. Baker, "and express his knowledge of himself by action. The drama must be a "living" play, something in which the audience must "live.""

The old Greek saying is, "Know thyself." The playwright is to succeed, he must be himself, and express his knowledge of himself by action. The drama must be a "living" play, something in which the audience must "live.""

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