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THE MODERN DRAMA AS A SOCIAL FORCE*

By NORMAN HAPGOOD

ACROSS the ocean they have a real censor, and it is not necessary to depend upon the mayor or the police to tell us if it is right for the more enlightened members of the community to see a play like "Damaged Goods." In England the censor is a man



who never goes to the theatre, but to whom all plays must be sent before they can be produced. Miss Morgan in her poem compared Mr. Bennett to John the Baptist. In England John the Baptist can't appear on the stage — except in a dress-suit, singing in an oratorio. But even in Eng-

land there is a growing sentiment in favor of a drama free to express itself as a social force.

In talking about the drama as a social force, I don't want to narrow it to the one moral question which is agitating this city today. The drama is the greatest general social agent of any of the arts. It is the one art which in a short space of time is capable of expressing the highest flights of the human imagination and bringing all kinds of people together, just as religion does. I was startled at first by Mr. Coleman's prayer, but then I remembered that the drama started in religion and that even today it finds its highest expression at Oberammergau. No play of recent years has left a more profound stamp on my mind than "The Guilty Man." That wonderful

of the plays of that time were either sentimentality without sense, like this one, or pretty stories of a girl and a boy, with some not too serious obstacles before them, who in the end were married and lived happily ever after. They were all done by one pattern. Now the drama is a great constructive and expressive force.

One name must stand out in any survey of the change, and that is the name of Henrik Ibsen. (Applause.) It is seldom that a great man can mean as much to a different civilization as to his own. Ibsen can never be to the masses of the American people what he might have been had he been an American; but he showed a wonderfully superior mind and technique in approaching the problems of his day, and others have followed him. In Spain we had Echegaray; in Germany, Hauptmann and Sudermann. In France the influence, though not so strong or direct, was felt. And in England the entire drama was made over. The "tea-cup drama" disappeared, and we have a series of men now in England and in this country that have made this one of the notable dramatic eras of all time. (The speaker illustrated this by speaking of the work of Shaw and Galsworthy, and the new one-act plays of Barrie.)

We can't have a great stage unless it represents the genius of its time. It may be a comic genius, as with Molière in France; but our people are serious. We are the first great real democracy that has ever existed, and we have many problems. One of them is that over which all Boston is now stirred up. We have been compelled to realize that even in America the drama is the expression of the ideas of grown people, and not a toy for children. A singular thing is that this complaint against frank speaking is always aimed at serious plays. (The speaker then said that Mr. Bennett's fight was already won, but that another play, "The Guilty Man," was

the responsibility of the father to his illegitimate child.)

It is extraordinarily important that we should win this fight, and win it good and hard. Democracy is an exciting thing, but allowed to go in the wrong direction it can be made comfortable and commonplace instead. Let us go in the right direction, realize all our possibilities, and we shall have great geniuses and great art. And the drama will do this for us if we see that it treats of the real. Do this for the drama, and you will find that it is as enriching and valuable and proud a possession as the nation has.

THE MESSAGE OF "DAMAGED GOODS."

By Richard Bennett.

THERE is a great big clamor going on around this country by a lot of prudes, hypocrites and criminally ignorant people, against the teaching of sex hygiene. I wonder why! Sex hygiene: morally clean: isn't it terrible that anyone should object to being morally,



physically clean, and should object to his children's being taught, or should object to taking the teaching himself or allowing it to be introduced by our medical men or our men of the church?

But the teaching is going on—it is going on if I have to start it myself in every town I go into where they haven't it. (The speaker then announced a plan by which he

and Mrs. Bennett will instruct the men

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If you don't take the drama this way, if you don't realize those opportunities and possibilities and get the genius of the nation to working them out; if you take a hostile attitude and try to keep the drama from expressing what the nation is thinking about; then you will bring about the very evil you seek to avoid. That happened in England when the Puritan conscience was uppermost. It boycotted and suppressed the theatre, and the result was the only genuinely licentious stage England has ever had. If the people in this country who are trying to stifle expression on the stage were the majority, the result would be an outbreak of some form of indecency.

Some ten years ago the American stage did not express very much. What it did express is represented by "Rip Van Winkle," a marvellous performance, but the play itself a picture of a drunkard, with the audience invited to think what a splendid fellow he was, and how hard his family was in not liking to have him drunk. Most

*The speeches and the questions and answers reported by Miriam Allen de Ford.

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THE PRAYER.

With thankful hearts, we acknowledge, O God, the satisfaction given by the drama, the helpfulness afforded by the stage, and the ministering service rendered by the players who entertain, inform and uplift the multitude. We have received much from these sources and have given little in return. Grant us, we pray, a serious mind and a sense of personal responsibility in our attitude toward the theatre. May we shun the evil in it and support the good. Do Thou uphold every playwright, manager and player who is striving to uplift his fellow man and give them the backing of all men and women who love righteousness and who work for the coming of the Kingdom. Amen.



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But the teaching is going on—it is going on if I have to start it myself in every town I go into where they haven't it. (The speaker then announced a plan by which he

and Mrs. Bennett will instruct the men and women of the audiences, respectively, on sex hygiene after two matinee performances of the play.)

A man said to me a while ago, "Mr. Bennett, Brioux's motive is unquestioned, but I never knew you had any thought on this subject. When did you enter into this?" I said, "I guess I have fought my way into this as into all my other ideas—I have entered into it because I can't stand the rotten conditions which have been handed down to us and which govern the society of today." (Applause.) "But," said he, "do you realize that you may do a little good with your play, but you are going to go through the country wrecking homes?" Those homes would be wrecked anyhow—they have been wrecked. If we had a street in a slum district full of unsanitary tenements, we could not build new ones until we had torn the old ones down. So if there are rotten conditions in families, let us uproot the families and start new ones.

How many parents in this audience have not constituted themselves liars in the eyes of their children? The majority of us have lied in answer to the first question of our children regarding the fundamental facts

(Continued on Page 4.)

THE QUESTIONS

Q: Will you kindly give your opinion of Shakespeare's "The Merchant of Venice"?

A: All I can say in a short space is that I think it is one of his best plays from two points of view—plot and acting parts.

Q (Mr. Brown): The churches teach good and evil in an abstract way, but in such plays as "Damaged Goods" we get action and reaction and result; and in such cases does not the drama go beyond the church?

A: Personally, I like to confine myself to what I am sure of. I am sure both have done a great deal of good and are going to do more.

Q (Mr. Brown): Do not scenes of violent crime act as a stimulant to young minds?

A: It depends on how it is done. The murder of Banquo and Duncan by Macbeth never inspired anyone to murder.

Q: What is your opinion of William Winter's criticism of the present day stage?

A: I think it is piffle. (Applause.)

Q: Since you have criticised the dramatic critic, why do you not criticise the editor who is responsible for him?

A: I am perfectly willing to divide the responsibility between them and the public, which I hope soon will demand something better.

Q: Are there any plays depicting the unjust economic system between labor and capital?

A: There has been a stream of them, from Hauptmann's "The Weavers" to Charles Rann Kennedy. But the best playwrights make such discussions a part of a genuine presentation of life.

Q: Has the modern problem play, like "The Second Mrs. Tanqueray," an uplifting influence on the community?

A: I think the problem play has a very uplifting influence, and that particular play was a pioneer in the field.

A: I think that usually genius is humble, but sometimes you have genius in a person who has also the spirit of paltry vanity, and that is Shaw.

Q: What do you think of plays dealing with the problem of assimilation?

A: The only one I know is "The Melting Pot," and that is a winning, but not a great, play.

Q: What do you think of Ibsen's "Ghosts"?

A: I think it is an over-protest.

Q: As between "The Follies of 1913" and "Damaged Goods," which would you prefer your daughter to see?

A: If there is anyone in the audience who would prefer his daughter to see the "Follies," let him speak up!

Q: Is "Belladonna" a moral play?

A: I haven't seen it.

Q: Isn't "The Fight" likely to have a bad effect on young girls?

A: I can't judge as to that particular play, as I haven't seen it, but for the plays we have been considering I should answer in the negative.

Q: Why do you say you haven't any scale for weighing the church against the drama?

A: Because it is true.

Q: What will be the effect of the enfranchisement of women on the social evil?

A: The enfranchisement of women—the setting free of their ideals so that they can work effectively in the community—will have many great advantages, none greater than the raising of the sexual standard.

Q: Don't the economic conditions of today prevent a poor man from seeing plays like "Damaged Goods," playing in a high class theatre at high prices?

A: Yes, but the whole thing will be in moving pictures soon. (Mr. Bennett.): Is it pride that keeps you out of a 50 cent seat in my theatre?

Q: Do you know any play that will

they object to plays like "Damaged Goods?"

A: I am afraid that is true of a large part of the male half of the human race. The men complain where the women applaud because people always object to having a privilege taken away from them, and because they have been accustomed from boyhood to think of sex in a smutty way.

Q: Why, when all the people are thinking of this thing, are we so afraid to face the truth and the facts?

A: We are less and less afraid every year.

Q: Do you think that the moral effect of such a play as "Damaged Goods" is lasting?

A: I certainly do. I believe that such plays are helping the feminist movement to stamp out prostitution as a business. (Applause.)

Q (Mr. Hogan): I should like to know if under a state where Socialism would exist and profit be wiped out, prostitution would not be wiped out also?

A: Socialism or any other method which puts woman on a footing of equality with man will reduce prostitution. (Applause.)

Q: If it is true that a majority of the men and women of America have little knowledge of the drama as a great art, why would it not be wise to teach it in the high schools?

A: It is being taught, more and more, and in a way they can understand, and the little children are being grouped together and put to acting fine plays.

Q: Hasn't the theatre done more for the abolishment of slavery, by playing "Uncle Tom's Cabin" than the Church?

A: I can't deal in these comparisons; I am afraid of them.

Q: Will you give the name of a play that deals with white slavery?

A: "The Fight," "The Lure," "Any Night," "Ourselves."

Q (Mr. Ballou): If "Damaged Goods" is to have such a wonderful effect on the young mind, don't you think it should be produced in a lower priced theatre, where it will reach the people who need the information? (Applause.)

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Q: What do you think of Tolstoi's "The Kreutzer Sonata"?

A: My opinion, given with the utmost humility, is that it is the expression of a great mind become morbid.

Q: Will the drama transform or eliminate from human nature the innate quality of selfishness?

A: I think that is a pretty large order to give the drama.

Q: Won't the young people be unduly and too early interested in sex by its free discussion?

A: I think not. In my youth the young people talked about it in a smutty manner. Discussing it frankly would do away with that condition.

Q: How can we expect the police, who are in league with vice, to censor plays like "Mrs. Warren's Profession"?

A: You all know the answer: we can't.

Q: Is the working agreement recently effected between the syndicate and the Shuberts going to affect freedom in producing plays outside of that group?

A: One of the things that held back the American drama was monopoly. Then the split came and gave opportunity to adventurous playwrights. But soon two theatres were being erected in towns that could support only one, and that has led to the present agreement. If it lives up to its present terms, very well; but there is danger that the drama may again be set back seriously.

Q: What do you think of Shaw's criticism of Shakespeare?

and "Damaged Goods," which would you prefer your daughter to see?

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Q: Do you know any play that will teach the working people to keep what they create?

A: I don't think plays can go ahead of the best intelligence of the community, and that problem has not yet been solved.

Q (Mrs. Hoffman): What effect have the moving pictures on our children who go to see them so much?

A: The only bad effect I have seen is the lack of continued attention. On the other hand they are reaching millions who never before had anything to feed their minds.

Q: What do you think of Ibsen's Nora?

A: Nora is an event in history. The feminist movement, first heralded by her, is the biggest movement of our time.

Q: Isn't sex something too delicate to handle anywhere but in the family?

A: That isn't the choice that is present. It is a choice between having light as we can get it or no light at all.

Q: Couldn't "Damaged Goods" and plays of that sort carry out their purpose without being so outspoken?

A: No; exactly what is unhealthy is this idea that when we speak about sex we have got to feel embarrassed.

Q: Did not Ibsen go too far in abolishing some points in the technique of the drama?

A: Because Ibsen did a thing with superb result doesn't mean that everyone has to do the same thing, and everyone doesn't.

Q (Miss Rogolsky): Isn't it because people don't want to know the truth that

(Applause.)

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A (Mr. Bennett.): It is impossible for any man to dictate in what theatre his play shall be produced. We were turned out of every theatre in New York. Then Rockefeller, Jr., terrible man, offered us the vestry of the Fifth Avenue Baptist Church, which I refused. Finally, after I got Mayor Gaynor's approval, I secured a theatre on condition that I would produce it in all the theatres of this booking concern. When I get out of the clutches of that crowd I am going to produce it in the 25 cent theatres. (Applause.)

Q: Isn't sex hygiene too serious a subject to be taught in the grammar schools?

A: Certainly it would be better taught in the homes, if they were very, very wise; otherwise in the schools, if we had ideal teachers. It is a case where experts disagree.

Q: In view of the fact that actors are well known to be people of loose morals, are they the people to teach us?

A (Mr. Bennett.): Stand up. What is your work?—I am a clerk.—Then I stand 100 per cent. for the actors and you 100 per cent. for the clerks. I am a moral man; are you?—Yes, sir.—What do you know of actors?—I know only what I read in the newspapers.—I thought so. Actors are as moral as clerks or newspaper men. If what you said were so, I should say they were unfit not only to teach but to exist.

Q (Same.): I should like Mr. Hapgood's opinion.

A: Even if it were true, it would be no reason why they should not express moral
(Continued on page 4.)

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AS IT LOOKS TO ME

By GEORGE W. COLEMAN, Director of the Ford Hall Meetings

EVEN those who know our work best do not estimate it at its full power. Last Sunday evening there was a very heavy rain and the going was nasty. We thought that this time surely the hall would not be full. Instead of that, the place was crowded so early that we were able to begin the meeting nearly fifteen minutes ahead of time. Mr. Dreier thought it was the greatest night we ever had. Certainly the reaction between the speaker and the audience was unusual, even for Ford Hall.

* * *

Miss Edith R. May, who so generously and effectively assists Mr. London every Sunday evening in the sale of the magazine, takes a deep interest in every phase of our work. There are not many who voluntarily would take up a task like that and stick to it just for the sake of helping along a good cause.

* * *

Mr. Ballou certainly made a winning fight in his earnest plea in behalf of the young man who wanted to know why "Damaged Goods" could not be played in a theatre with more popular prices. And Mr. Bennett finally gave an answer that satisfied everyone. It was a fine display of wholesome indignation completely answered.

* * *

Conundrum: What is it that makes Mr. Hogan want to raise a row every time he asks a question? Doesn't he get a fair show, or does he just love to be obstreperous, or can't he help it anyway?

* * *

Most of us thought that Mr. Bennett was unnecessarily hard on the young man who asked a question involving the general moral reputation of actors. The questioner stood his ground bravely, however, and came out of the encounter with banners flying by adroitly transferring the question to Mr. Hapgood, who gave a satisfactory answer.

* * *

It is great fun when all of a sudden from some unexpected quarter of the house a

So John D. Rockefeller, Jr., offered the vestry of the Fifth Avenue Baptist Church to Mr. Bennett in case he failed to secure a theatre for the production of "Damaged Goods"? I wasn't so far wrong, then, when as a Baptist deacon, I urged all my young friends in Boston to go to the Tremont Theatre and see it played. Not that young Rockefeller sets the fashion in Baptist circles, but that it is gratifying to be in such distinguished company.

* * *

Norman Hapgood can make a worth-while talk with about the least apparent effort of any man I know. As I study him his readiness is due to two things, a long-time familiarity with his subject, and an absolute indifference as to the art of speaking. He puts his whole mind into the thing he wants to say, and never troubles himself at all as to the form of expression. He cares a great deal about saying what he really thinks, and cares not at all about making clever phrases.

* * *

Mr. Wolf, manager for A. Shuman & Co., got his first experience of Ford Hall last Sunday night, coming in as a guest of Mr. Thomas Dreier. It is very interesting to watch the effect our work has upon a man who comes upon it suddenly for the first time. Most of us have gotten so used to it we take a good deal of it as a matter of course. Mr. Wolf's face indicated a keen response to everything that was going on.

* * *

The seeds of our Ford Hall idea are sprouting up in the most surprising places all over the country. At Lancaster, Penn., I was amazed at the audience that turned out to hear the story of our work. The meeting was held in the Court House, seating nearly a thousand, and every seat was taken and many stood all through a program that lasted two hours. In the audience were business men, college professors and working men with their wives and daughters. It was declared to be the most representative audience that had ever gathered in the city. The following noon I was given a

business men. The Lancaster Advertisers' Club, an organization less than a year old, made itself responsible for all the arrangements for both these meetings, and did it so thoroughly and completely as to leave nothing to be desired.

* * *

In my mail this morning is a letter from Lewiston, Me., telling of the formation of a committee to investigate the possibilities of an open forum for that city, and asking for more information. There is a movement on in Braintree, Mass., to unite all the churches in an open forum movement. A similar movement, already in operation in Newton, Mass., is making splendid progress.

THE GOOD GRAY POET OUR TOPIC NEXT SUNDAY.

There was a time when Walt Whitman wandered about the streets of Boston in the flesh and attended concerts and lectures and the theatre just as any journalist does now. I can fancy his being sent to "cover" a Ford Hall meeting and presenting the world, in the paper next morning, with an unforgettable picture of the great human spectacle up here on the hill with its urgent throb of life and its indomitable passion for the ideal. Of all the men who might come to us to talk about Whitman Prof. Zueblin can probably tell us best of this wonderful old man who loved men and women and little children, and, who looking on a thousand manifestations of life, pronounced them all good. "Walt Whitman, Prophet and Democrat," is to be Mr. Zueblin's topic.

Other Meetings

Wells Memorial Institute, Tuesday, December 15, at 8 p. m., Better Houses for Working People, by Henry Sterling.

Sunday Commons, at Huntington Chambers Hall, Sunday, December 21, at 3.30 p. m. Dr. Charles Fleischer, leader.

Public Library, Thursday, December 18, at 8 p. m., The Temple of Peace; Art and Scenery in Piedmont, by Cav. L. Melano Rossi. Sunday, December 21, at 3.30 p. m., How to Listen to Music, by Arthur M. Curry.

School of Social Science, at Lorimer Hall, Monday, December 15, at 8 p. m., The Campaign for Pure Food; The Story of An Investigation in Boston, by H. P. Cassidy; What Westfield Did, by Dr. H. P. Cassidy.

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It is great fun when all of a sudden from some unexpected quarter of the house a ringing voice calls our attention to someone who has arisen to make a little speech all on his own account, quite oblivious of all discipline or order. I suppose these people get so absorbed in what is going on that they do not observe at all the method under which we conduct the question period. And have you noticed lately, the last two times, at least, it was a woman who thus broke loose? Perhaps this is a little eruption of that new freedom we are hearing about so much.

I have been glad to note additional colored men in various parts of the audience of late. I have noted both their intelligence and their thorough-going complexions, indicating that the finest type of colored men is not at all dependent for its progress and development upon an infusion of white blood. Without claiming any special attention they enter into everything with great zest, and show themselves as worthy of consideration and respect as anyone in the hall.

Mr. Richard Bennett's characterization of the Ford Hall Meetings as a Twenty-first Century Club was a rather clever *bon mot*. He told me he hadn't had so good a vacation for a month as that he had with us on our platform last Sunday night.

time. Most of us have gotten so used to it we take a good deal of it as a matter of course. Mr. Wolf's face indicated a keen response to everything that was going on.

The seeds of our Ford Hall idea are sprouting up in the most surprising places all over the country. At Lancaster, Penn., I was amazed at the audience that turned out to hear the story of our work. The meeting was held in the Court House, seating nearly a thousand, and every seat was taken and many stood all through a program that lasted two hours. In the audience were business men, college professors and working men with their wives and daughters. It was declared to be the most representative audience that had ever gathered in the city. The following noon I was given a luncheon by the advertising and business men of the city, over which the Mayor of the city presided. And here again was preached the Ford Hall gospel as applied to

Ford Hall Folks

Edited by Thomas Dreier.

PUBLISHED weekly by the Ford Hall Associates, whose work is to create, assemble, and distribute ideas that will help men and institutions grow more helpful in serving society, and which will promote "peace on earth, good will toward men." It is the official publication of the Ford Hall Meetings, which are held, under the direction of George W. Coleman, every Sunday evening during the months of October to May, in Ford Hall, Ashburton Place, Boston, Massachusetts.

All business communications should be sent to Miss Mary C. Crawford, Treasurer Ford Building, Boston, and all communications intended for the editor to The Thomas Dreier Service, University Press, Cambridge, Mass. Subscription Price: \$1.50 for 26 numbers.

Other Meetings

Wells Memorial Institute, Tuesday, December 15, at 8 p. m., Better Houses for Working People, by Henry Sterling.

Sunday Commons, at Huntington Chambers Hall, Sunday, December 21, at 3.30 p. m. Dr. Charles Fleischer, leader.

Public Library, Thursday, December 18, at 8 p. m., The Temple of Peace; Art and Scenery in Piedmont, by Cav. L. Melano Rossi. Sunday, December 21, at 3.30 p. m., How to Listen to Music, by Arthur M. Curry.

School of Social Science, at Lorimer Hall, Monday, December 15, at 8 p. m., The Campaign for Pure Food; The Story of An Investigation in Boston, by H. P. Cassidy; What Westfield Did, by Dr. H. B. Allyn. 10c.

Boston Equal Suffrage Association for Good Government at Faneuil Hall, Tuesday, December 16, at 7.30 p. m. "Why the Wage Earning Woman Wants the Vote," by Miss Anna Murdock, teacher; Miss Annie Malloy, telephone operator; Miss Rose Scott, shirtwaist maker; Mrs. Wakeman, demonstrator; Miss Annie Burke, textile worker; Miss Margaret Fitzgerald, saleswoman; Mrs. Philip Davis, garment worker. Music by pupils of the Boston Music School Settlement.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY of BOSTON

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 21st
AT 3 P. M.**

FRANKLIN UNION HALL, Berkeley and Appleton Sts.

THERESA MALKIEL, of New York
Will Speak on "CHILD LABOR: THE SOCIAL EVIL"
ADMISSION FREE

ADVERTISING

A space of this size—one inch high and two and one-half inches wide—can be had for advertising purposes for one dollar per issue. For information regarding advertising apply to Jacob London, Room 707, Ford Building, Boston, Mass.

FORD HALL FOLKS

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF H. S. VICTORSON.

Part. I.

My birthplace was Mitau, Courland, one of the Baltic provinces of the Russian Empire. I spent there the first nine and a half years of my life. During that time I acquired a considerable amount of Biblical information, as well as some knowledge of German. My grandfather, who was a teacher by profession, had begun to instruct me in both. When he had left for this country I was 7 years old. Before his departure he entrusted my further education to a lifelong friend of his—a grand, noble, old patriarchal Jew, whose inspiring way of teaching and whose wonderful personality I'll never, never forget. To him more than to anybody else, excepting my father and mother, I attribute most of what is good in me. In my later life, after sad experiences, his image kept alive the last spark of hope that was in extreme danger of being extinguished.

When we came to this country we settled in Brooklyn, N. Y. I started to go to public school, and continued my religious studies with grandfather. A year and a half after our arrival the terrible crisis of 1893 occurred. Father could find no work and had to shovel snow for 50c a day. We were altogether six children, and four of them younger than I was. So I had to give up my studies and go to work in a tailoring shop under very unsatisfactory conditions—18 hours a day at \$1.50 per week. You can well understand the bitter sadness of my soul at that time, owing to such unbearably hard work and to the deplorable conditions at home. It was then, young as I was, that I became a Socialist, and have been one ever since. Well do I remember how, in my childish innocence and inexperience, I often thought, while distributing circulars for Socialist mass meetings and similar gatherings, that the Social Revolution would mean but a day or two of struggle. I've learned better since; I know now that substantial and intrinsic change is a matter of slow and continuous growth.

All trades have their slack periods, but the tailoring trade more so than any other—at least five months in the year, and this at different intervals.

they would stealthily allow me to take home certain books that were not generally permitted to be taken out. These I often would study till the early morning hours.

(To be concluded.)

WHAT RICHARD BENNETT THINKS OF US.

After the exhilarating experience of last Sunday night Mr. Bennett said:

"After seeing and feeling the responsiveness of a Ford Hall audience tonight, I feel that here at last is a 'forum' of the people, by the people, and for the people—a forum in its true and biggest sense, a forum which comes nearer to the original Roman idea than any other institution in America of which I am cognizant.

"I wish that every community in America had a Ford Hall, and enjoyed the benefit of weekly Ford Hall meetings. It would mean finer standards of citizenship and finer citizens."

THE HUNGER OF FORD HALL FOLKS.

"Two things commanded my attention at Ford Hall," said Mr. Edwin H. Wolf, general manager for more than a quarter of a century of one of New York's most successful retail clothing stores, who was at last Sunday's meeting. "The first was the hunger for knowledge displayed by those who asked questions, and the second was the wonderful executive ability of Mr. Coleman.

"The eagerness with which the people looked forward to new knowledge, the keenness of mind manifested in the quality of the questions asked, the aliveness of both speakers and listeners impressed me greatly. And Mr. Coleman's wonderful executive ability, his power of cutting through to the essentials, and his very evident wish to give everybody the squarest kind of a square deal compelled me to pay him the tribute one business man wishes to pay to a master of an art.

"So long as such wonderful melting pots as Ford Hall exist—mental melting pots, I should call them—America is safe. I found in Ford Hall the highest type of religious expression, and with it I found nourishing food for the intellect. If a foreigner were to ask for an expression of the true Amer-

Q: What do you think of the 5-cent vaudeville theatres?

A: Just what I said I did of the "movies."

Q: Is there any call for a play like "Hindle Wakes?"

A: That is in a different class from these plays we have been discussing, and I do not think from merely reading it I can criticize it, but I should be among the radicals if it were produced here, and advocate the expression of any ideas of sex liberty whatsoever upon the stage.

THE MESSAGE OF "DAMAGED GOODS."

(Continued from Page 1.)

of life. We have destroyed in them their first ideal of life, until they think we must be right and there is something wrong in sex and in speaking of sex; and so we go on, generation after generation, a nation of liars!

All that Brieux asks in this play is a cleaner, higher, broader life for mankind. He asks that we make it by convention, not by law, impossible for the fit to mate with the unfit, the well with the sickly, and produce further sickness. Alcohol, syphilis and gonorrhoea have actually raised our tax rate, and cost millions of dollars every year, but show me a politician who has ever proposed spending a single dollar to prevent these conditions! That is the kind of truth "Damaged Goods" wants to bring before the country.

Hatred expressed in words and sent into the mind of another sows hatred there. And always that which we invest comes back to us *with interest*.

A good man is one who is fit mentally and physically to perform efficiently the work demanded of him by the position he holds.

Friends Who Are Coming

Dec. 21—Prof. Charles Zueblin, "Walt Whitman, Prophet and Democrat."

Dec. 28—Rev. Allyn K. Foster of Worcester, "Can Religion Be Made Scientific?"

Jan. 4—Dr. Stanton Coit of London, "The Ethics of Marriage and Divorce."

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All trades have their slack periods, but the tailoring trade more so than any other—at least five months in the year, and this at different intervals. In my case it had one advantage, I could continue my studies. So I attended night school, and later night High School, but this did not amount to much, for the night school gatherings then meant little more than insults by ruffians of the women teachers and of the foreign—especially Jewish—pupils. Many a time the superintendent was obliged to turn out the lights and to disperse the noisy gathering.

So I decided to study all by and for myself. Not having the necessary facilities therefor at home, I started in looking for them elsewhere. And then I discovered another great educational factor of my life—the branch of the Brooklyn Public Library at Montrose avenue, corner of Humboldt street. Having nothing to do—for work was not to be obtained—and less than little to eat, I would spend there almost all day and the better part of the evening. Well do I remember the strange, though friendly glances of the attendants—there were an elderly lady, a young lady and a gentleman. As I used to remain there till they would close up, and as, during the later evening hours, I was the only visitor present, the librarians used to give up a good deal of their time to me in answering questions and in referring me to the proper reference books. Very often

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"So long as such wonderful melting pots as Ford Hall exist—mental melting pots, I should call them—America is safe. I found in Ford Hall the highest type of religious expression, and with it I found nourishing food for the intellect. If a foreigner were to ask for an expression of the true American spirit in material form, I should say that a Ford Hall meeting might be offered as America's truest representative."

THE QUESTIONS.

(Continued from Page 2.)

teachings. My opinion is that stage people have a good deal less hypocrisy than others. In view of their temptations they show as high a standard morally as any other class.

Q (Miss Smith): I should like you and Mr. Bennett both to tell me who you think is the greatest American dramatist and what is his masterpiece?

A: A generation ago I should have said James A. Herne and "Margaret Fleming." Today there are too many to say. (Mr. Bennett): I say Ned Sheldon and "Salvation Nell."

Q: What is your attitude toward "Bought and Paid For?"

A: My attitude is not that of most people. I consider it a well-constructed play with a good moral but of commonplace texture.

Q: What do you think of "Salvation Nell" and of the work of the Salvation Army?

A: I admire the play and I think very highly of the work of the Salvation Army.

cleaner, higher, broader life for mankind. He asks that we make it by convention, not by law, impossible for the fit to mate with the unfit, the well with the sickly, and produce further sickness. Alcohol, syphilis and gonorrhoea have actually raised our tax rate, and cost millions of dollars every year, but show me a politician who has ever proposed spending a single dollar to prevent these conditions! That is the kind of truth "Damaged Goods" wants to bring before the country.

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Jan. 11—Symposium, "What Is the Matter With Our Public Schools?" Miss Margaret Slattery of Fitchburg and others to be announced.

Jan. 18—Bishop Charles Williams of Michigan, "Why I Work for the Single Tax."

Jan. 25—Dr. Albion Woodbury Small of Chicago University.

Feb. 1—Alexander Irvine of New York.

Feb. 8—Prof. Edward A. Steiner, "The Inter-National Mind and the Inter-Racial Heart."

Feb. 15—Symposium, "Breeding Men." Speakers to be announced.

Feb. 22—Charles Brandon Booth, "The Case for the Prisoner."

March 1—Leslie Willis Sprague of Chicago.

March 8—Symposium, on "Journalism." A. J. Philpott of the *Boston Globe* and others to be announced.

March 15—Rev. Harry Ward, "The Challenge of Socialism to Christianity."

March 22—Rev. Frank O. Hall of New York, "The Moral Law."

March 29—John Cowper Powys of England, "The Economic Aspects of Woman Suffrage."

April 5—Mary Church Terrell, "Uncle Sam and the Sons of Ham."

April 12—Dr. Thomas C. Hall of New York.

April 19—Prof. Walter Rauschenbusch.