

**THE ART OF ACTING AND
PUBLIC
READING: DRAMATIC
INTERPRETATION**

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The Art of Acting and Public Reading: Dramatic Interpretation by Rollo Anson Tallcott

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AND
PUBLIC READING**

DRAMATIC INTERPRETATION

By

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To

MY MOTHER

HARRIET ISADORE TALLCOTT

PREFACE

This book has been written in response to a demand for some text that will outline a course of instruction leading to professional work. It takes up the work of *Acting* and *Public Reading*, and presupposes thorough training on the part of the student in common reading and speech mechanics. It is for the advanced student in the normal school, the college, the professional school of oratory, or the private studio.

The purpose of the book is to set forth a comprehensive classification of the different ways of presenting various types of literature, taking into consideration the author's purpose and the class of audience to be entertained. It is my belief that such a classification can be made and that it may become a useful guide in maintaining a standard of consistency among readers, entertainers and actors so that there may be less harsh criticism which the average elocution teacher feels moved to make upon the propriety of this or that feature of an entertainment.

In taking up this classification, let me say that I do not hope to have it accepted as infallible or as the only classification possible, but I do hope that it will give the young platform artist a clearer conception of his field so that he will not encroach upon the actor's art in the name of public reading.

It is my purpose to show among other things that a study of the actor's art is fundamentally essential to

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a complete understanding of the reader's art and that no public reader can be truly suggestive unless he has first been given the opportunity to express completely and conscientiously all action that he hopes ultimately to suggest.

One of my best friends in the profession maintains that *good taste* is the only standard we may safely follow in carrying out our individual styles of entertaining. This might be true were it not for the fact that there are many talented entertainers who lack natural discernment and good taste, and who believe that any method of presentation which brings a laugh or hearty applause is acceptable. It is for such that a standard classification is necessary. It may even prove helpful to those champions of good taste who differ with their fellow entertainers as to what is really good taste. While it is true that good taste might govern the majority, it is just as true that there are other determining factors which enter into the presentation of literature and make it more effective.

I am indebted to Miss Mae Belle Adams of Emerson College of Oratory and to Professor H. M. Tilroe and Mrs. Florence Butler of Syracuse University for my early instruction in fundamental principles of interpretation; to Professor Fredrick D. Losey of New York City, whose technical instruction and whose professional work in Shakespearian readings have always been a source of inspiration to me; to Professor I. L. Winter of Harvard University and to Professor Arthur E. Phillips of Chicago, whose training in voice culture and the principles of practical public speaking