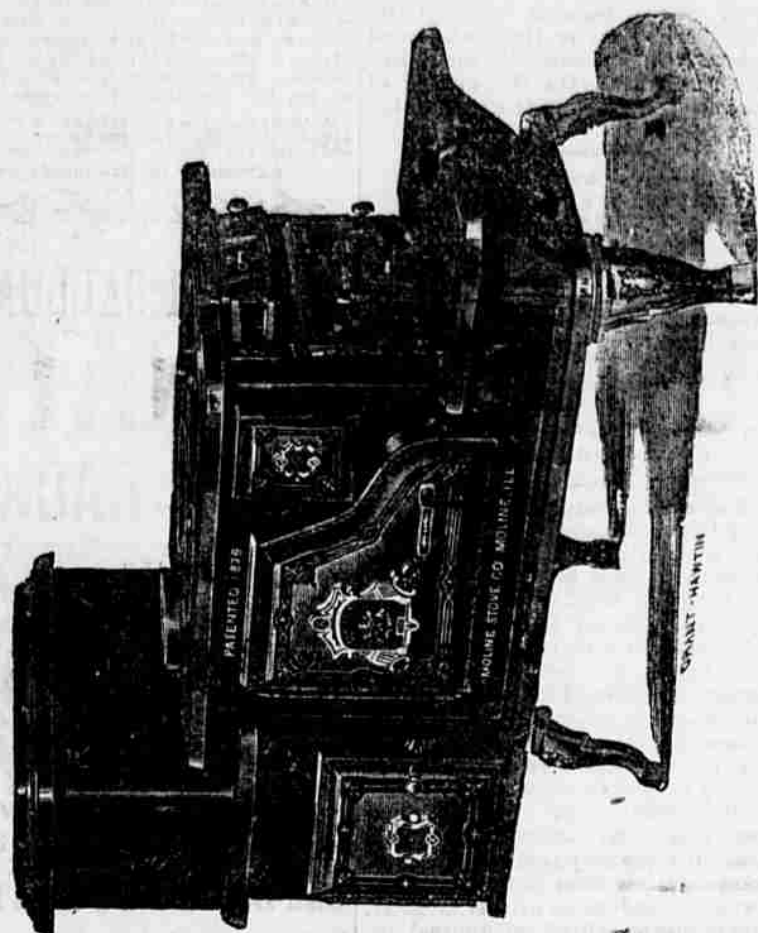


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THEATRICAL SECRETS.

Art of Making up Actors Faces - A Veteran Be-moans Its Decay.

How Young Faces are Made to Look Old or to Resemble Those of the Dead - Building up Noses and Chins.

New York Sun.

A man, whose face was creased by innumerable expressive lines, leaned with studied negligence against a post on Union Square and gazed at passers-by with an air of legitimate and well-bred indifference. He wore his "professional" look and wore his clothes, which were ultra-fashionable in 77, with a jaunty carelessness that ignored the whitened seams and denied the shining back. His tall hat was tipped at an angle over his eyes. He looked contented and loquacious, and very much like an actor. Presently, when an acquaintance passed he coughed, nodded rapidly, looked extremely wretched and said: "Ah, there, what are you up to, you rascal? How 'd' y?" "Why, hullo, Billy! When did you get in?" "Just now, my boy."

"How was the walking?" "Ah, there, you rascal!" and Billy burst into a broad and meaning smile, and gently shook his head. His friend went on, and he turned to the reporter and said, in a full, round, oratorical tone: "Would you oblige me with a light, sir? Thank you. The boys will have their little jokes, you know—the rascals. The obvious meaning from his question was that I had walked in. Our combination went to pieces in Ohio, but we all got here comfortably, though we left many other rascals behind. The number of busted companies between here and the one-night towns of Ohio would draw tears from a cast-iron Shylock. However, I'm back, and I tell you, sir, it does me good to look at Broadway again."

"Yes; the spring fashions make it bright. "It isn't the fashion; it's the faces. To my mind it is the most interesting study in the world—that of men's faces. You see, the thing has more interest for me than for the run of men even in my profession, because I'm an enthusiast in a certain sense. I belong to the time when the study and make-up of faces was mighty important in the theatrical line. It wasn't such a long time ago, either; but the times have changed since then, until now there seems to be almost no effort at all to make up and look your part. I never saw this more amazingly apparent than when I got in last night. I went in to 'Odette' at Daly's, and saw Harry Pitt, who is an actor of experience, slap the audience, so to speak, square in the face. In the first act he is the injured husband and father, and looks about forty-two years old. By the time the act is over he has reached fifteen years as supposed to have elapsed, which were full of bitterness and torture to him; but he comes bounding on the stage, looking about forty, instead of fifty-seven years old. Of course all the unities are jarred, and the piece intrinsically injured, and simply because he wasn't made up. The vice is spreading. Actors won't disguise their good looks for their part. Does John McCullough's Virginia look like an aged Roman's father? No; he looks like what he is, a significantly matured man in the prime of life. Lester Wallace never makes up or shaves off his darling moustache, no matter what the part, and Towle is always Tearle."

"It must be a great deal of trouble to make up every night." "Ah, but, my boy, look at the result! Go down to the Thalia Theatre, where they still do it, and if only five years have elapsed between the acts, see how it is shown on every face on the stage."

"It is difficult to make up well, is it not?" "Well, no," said the actor, lighting a fresh cigar and assuming a more confidential pose; "the rules are simple enough, and with a little practice, almost any amateur could learn to make-up artistically if he has any eye for effect. Some parts, like Romeo, Charles Surface, Sidney Darroll and Claude Delmotte, requires very little make-up for a young and good-looking actor. The face and neck should be thoroughly covered with white powder, and the cheek bones and nose lightly touched with rouge, which should not be too red. Then, as the lover ought to look handsome, he should draw a fine black line under his lower eyelashes with a camel hair brush and burnt amber. This makes the eyes brilliant. I'm sure it isn't much trouble to make up that way."

"Oh, immeasurably so. But to make a maturer man, like Cassio, Iago, Mercutio, John Mildmay, or Hawkesley, it requires only a little more work. After the actor has laid on the powder and rouged his face pretty heavily—he must take his brush and limber and trace some lines from the outer corners of his eyes, and other lines down toward the corners of the mouth from the nose. In short, he must make the crow's feet that are visible in all men who have lived over thirty years in this tantalizing world of ours. Then the chin should be touched with a little blue powder, which makes it look as if recently shaved. These precautions will make the most juvenile face look mature. If he has to go further, and look like old age, as in such characters in Lear, Virginia—for, as I said before, Virginia was an old man—Richard III, Sir Peter Teazle, and so on, more work is necessary. Heavy false eyebrows must be pasted on, and the eye hollow darkened and fairly crowded with lines. Wrinkles must be painted across the forehead, furrows down the cheeks, downward lines from the corners of the mouth, and (very important) three or four heavy wrinkles painted around the neck to give it the shrivelled appearance common to old age. The hollow over the upper lip should be darkened, and also the hollow under the lower lip. This gives the mouth the pinched and toothless look. A little powdered antimony on the cheeks makes them look fallen in and shrunken. Then tone the face down with a delicate coating of pearl powder and you'll

have as old a looking man as you'd care to see."

"How does it all feel?" "At first your face feels tightened, and the muscles don't play easy, but after a few grimaces it comes all right. It's a great relief to get it off, however, after three hours' work."

"It must cause rather mournful forecasts when a man looks on his own face made up for the age of say eighty years?" "Not so bad as when he makes up for a corpse, however. I'll never forget the first glance I had at my face after it had been made up for Gaston's death scene, when playing the 'Man in the Iron Mask' in '62. It positively appalled me, sir, and I lay awake all that night thinking of it, and dreamed of myself in a coffin for a month afterwards."

"How is it done?" "Well, it varies slightly. You see such characters as Lear, Virginia, Werner and Beverly are before the audience some time before they actually die, and therefore their faces can't be made so very corpse-like; but, for those, in 'The Bell,' Louis XI., Gaston and Danny Man are discovered dying when the scene opens or are brought in dead, so that their faces can be made extreme. For the last series the face and neck should be spread with prepared white, and afterward touched up with Dutch pink to give it a livid hue in place. Then put a deep shading of powdered antimony under the eyebrows and well into the hollow of the eye, on the cheeks, throat and temples. This is very effective, as it gives the face that dreadfully sunken appearance as in death. The sides of the nose and over the upper lip should also be darkened and the lips powdered blue. Then the face will look about as dead as it would three hours after a real death."

"At the make up of grotesque faces do they use false noses and chins?" "Very rarely. Usually the method is to stick some wool on the nose with gum and mould it in whatever shape you will; then powder and paint it as you would the natural nose for grotesque or comedy parts. Paste is put on with gum, instead of wool, sometimes. Clowns have to encase themselves fairly with whitening and find this troublesome without building up noses or cheeks. Grotesque artists have to work hard with their faces as a rule, but they often are repaid by discovering neat points. Many of our best Dutch and Irish comedians owe their first lift to a lucky made-up."

"I suppose there are types for the representation of different nationalities?" "Well, a gentleman is usually made up the same, no matter where he may be supposed to belong, but the caricature is usually one of the well-known make-ups. A Frenchman has to be powdered with dark rouge, and has his eyebrows blackened with Indian ink. All dark characters, as mulattoes, creoles, Spaniards and so on, are done with whitening and dark rouge, with plenty of burnt cork and amber."

"Is much work necessary on the hands?" "In witches it is of great importance that the hands and arms should be skinned and bony. This is usually done by a liberal powdering of Dutch pink, and painting in between the knuckles with burnt amber. Painting between the knuckles, you see, makes them look large and bony. But this sounds a good deal like ancient history now, does it not? The art is falling into disuse, me boy, and I've no doubt but that the time's not far off when we shall have youngsters playing old men with signs on their back reading, 'Please, sir, I'm eighty years old,' while their faces are as fresh as daisies."

"To what do you attribute this tendency?" "Laziness. The theatrical age of today is a profound wonder to me. The entire profession wants to str. An actor plays old men now simply for his contemplated starrng tour. An actress does old women heaves, or juveniles only, and she, and a capitalist who will enable her to star, and none of them seem to take any pride in the minor parts. Hence they don't take the trouble to make up artistically, and the stage is robbed of its chief charm—realism."

He buttoned his coat with great nicety, tipped his hat a trifle forward, and, after a hearty handshake, left the reporter and strode jauntily up Broadway, his shining hat bobbing with automatic regularity above the Easter bonnets, until lost to view in the crowd.

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