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The Exhibition Table

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mischievous in the second production. Together they supplied two visible backgrounds, but the words stayed constant. These, with the second rendering, seemed already to have acquired a quaint familiarity, not alone in text, but in rhythms, somewhat like that which occurs in the instance of certain antiphonies, though of course with different emotional charge. It was not ritual; it was not parody; but it partook of the mild exaltation of the one and the delight in the perception of neat correspondences with something preconceived of the other. Doubtless this might not have been so evident and spontaneous had the episode been longer; nor could it, in a single presentation, have been present in like measure. It is an artistic derivative of dual performance (or perchance when prior performance is so vividly recalled as to be virtually projected into the present), and of dual performance in which a certain kind of emotional relation involving characteristic associations exists between the two techniques employed.

In the end there was no disposition to say that one method had succeeded and that the other had not—least of all any disposition to say that the modern-costume method should supplant the other as conventional treatment; but there was a very general satisfaction that both methods had been presented. The particular thrill had come from the second performance. In a measure it was factitious and incidental, and rested upon piquing succession of the unexpected. Yet in part also it was, I think, due to a feeling that our age had succeeded in catching and in containing within its own vehicle something of the high accent, and had somehow spoken creditably in its own vindication. And if, as I am not sure, the gain had been relatively slight as disclosure of Shakespeare, it had been of real moment as discovery of self.

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### THE EXHIBITION TABLE

Several months ago it was necessary for me to import a large table into my English classroom. After the original use for the table had passed, I searched for the janitor to ask him to remove it. Suddenly some eighth sense whispered, "Why not keep it for exhibition purposes?" That night after school I arranged an exhibit of the booklets distributed by the *World's Work* dealing with the lives and books of many famous modern authors. Through the next few days many pupils stopped for a minute or so to hurriedly glance at the booklets. The pictures seemed to draw

forth the most comment. "Say, he's not bad looking." "I wish Galsworthy had some hair." "I know someone who has a friend who heard Amy Lowell speak once."

After three days I changed the table contents from booklets to interesting novels of the past, taken from the school library. *The Return of the Native*, *Jane Eyre*, *Wuthering Heights*, *David Copperfield*, *Clayhanger*—these were among my choices. The next three days saw the pupils standing by the table for quite a while, running through the books, some to search for favorite passages, some to show another pupil a favorite part, others to question me which one I liked the best. Always I said definitely and gave my reasons. Several requests came for certain books when I should return them to the library.

The third exhibit was entirely different: ten of the best papers of the past two weeks. There were the names of the authors along with my comments on each paper. "Say, John is *some* writer." "Perhaps I could write an adventure like Mary's for the magazine." "Too bad that Albert's penmanship is so awful."

Then came the day when the table was bare. Everyone who entered the room came without thinking to the table, gave a look, went away. I asked one of the classes (a Senior one) if it thought that further exhibits would prove of interest. A unanimous affirmative vote followed. So we chose a committee of two to deal with the project. As modern poetry had been discussed recently in our class, the decision was formed to make a poetry exhibition. Both libraries—the city and the school—were combed for books of, or about, the "new poetry." Nothing would do but that each volume must be opened to a poem that everyone "should know about." A few pictures—Robinson's, Frost's, Masfield's—were procured and posed above the appropriate volume. A tiny card completed the array, on which was neatly printed, "Exhibition by English IV, John Reade and Mary Akers." From then on there has been a constant stream of exhibitions of all kinds. A recent one, theatrical models made by a class studying the drama, excited so much interest that it was given a full week. Real business letters, newspaper clippings, magazines, pictures, original cartoons, jokes—Where is there an end to the field of "English"? Each class feels as though it were having a real share in making the classroom more attractive, to say nothing of the knowledge gained through the planning, collecting, and arranging of each exhibit.

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