IN THIS ISSUE

“HOW I WON THE $10,000 PRIZE”

BY

WINIFRED KIMBALL

Winner of the Chicago Daily News $30,000 Scenario Contest

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THE PHOTODRAMATIST FOR JUNE
will be, in our opinion, the best number we have issued. From cover to cover, it will be inspiring, helpful, educational. The many departments—including, of course, "H. H. Van Loan’s Own Corner"—will be bigger, better and more interesting than ever before. Do not miss it

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THE EDITOR MAGAZINE
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"More Studio Secrets"

What Happens to Your Story Following Its Approval
by the Scenario Editor

By Bradley King
Of the Thos. H. Ince Scenario Staff

SOME time ago I wrote an article for The Photodramatist about the original scenario—from the time it was received at the Studio until the time it was marked by the editor to go "higher up" and have its purchase O.K'd. So many letters have come to me, asking me to continue the journey of the scenario, that it has convinced me that the subject must be of interest to those on the outside.

We left the story, remember, on the desk of "Mr. Bee," the producer. He reads it, and likes it, but before passing final judgment, usually submits it to one or two others—depending a great deal upon the amount of money involved. For not only the purchase price must be considered, but also the amount of capital entailed in the production. This preliminary skirmish resulting satisfactorily, the most interesting part, to the author, is gotten speedily over, and the story is turned over to the continuity writer.

We'll presume he has not read it before. If he doesn't like it, "can't see it," as the saying goes, the wise producer takes it from his hands and passes it on to another. For unless a story appeals to the one who is to adapt it, unless he can visualize it, it stands to reason that he won't get the best out of—not put his best into—it. The people are real—the situations natural. Of course, the story needs changing, building here and there, maybe a climax or beginning put in wholesale, but his grasp on the characters enables him to do this logically. If his ideas necessitate some radical change, he tells it to the producer, who, maybe, adds a few of his own, and then with a general O.K., the writer hies himself to some solitary spot and gets busy.

I have been asked very often how long it takes to write a continuity, and I always hesitate in answering. There are continuities—and continuities. Some companies like a script with no closeups written in, and only a general idea of titles, and some like them in regular "shooting form," so that the director can take the script and film the story directly from it. This last is the kind of script I learned to write—so it is the only one about which I am qualified to speak. And right here I will announce that it is no joke. One must know camera angles and lighting effects, and technical terms galore—and not just know them, but have studied and watched enough to use...
them in the most artistic or dramatic way and to the best advantage. Don't think I mean that the director will necessarily follow everything that is written in the script—he brings his own interpretation to the story—but the more the writer can give the director, the more the director can give the production. And that is what everyone is working for—not for just individual glory, but to make the production as fine as possible.

I've wandered away from the question of time required to write such a script—but again, it depends upon the length of the story, whether it is to be a "Special" feature, or a program release. I've spent six weeks on some and three weeks on others, so we'll split the difference for the story in question now and say it was written in four.

When finished the continuity is turned over to the director, together with the story, and let me tell you that if anyone in the world can tell you the good points you overlooked, the drama you missed, the comedy you failed to see—it is the director, and it is surprising how short a time it takes for him to see it in. After my first few experiences along this line, I conceived the bright idea of asking the director beforehand about certain changes, and getting his ideas—but that does not always work, for if the idea doesn't happen to be so good when it is worked out, he won't claim it anyhow. I will say for the director, though, that a great many times he is right in his contentions. He has an angle that the writer has not—a more intimate, truer one. He has a definite knowledge of just what he can and cannot "get over," of how much the characters can really interpret, and usually he possesses more actual dramatic experience than a writer is able to get in his line of work.

So, after some adjusting maybe, the script is ready for production. It used to be a great surprise to me how many people had to have a copy of the script—now I wonder that they do with so few. The director, the assistant director, the casting director, who must know the story intimately in order to choose those who will portray the parts—the property man, who dresses the sets—the architect who builds them—the electrician who lights them—the camera man—and so it goes on down the line, not forgetting, of course, the Production Manager, who has nothing to do but allot stage space to all the companies, see that they keep from stepping on each other's toes, check the scenes that are taken each day—and keep the general peace.

How long does production take? Depends on many things. The director—the length of the story—the weather, particularly if a good bit of the story is out-of-door work. From four to six or seven weeks is the usual time necessary to make a picture, unless it is of unusual length.

When it is finished being "shot," it goes to the cutters, who have the nice job of making twenty odd reels of film into six or seven. Some job? It is, and the cutter has to bring to his work a keen sense of humor and of the dramatic as well as a real knowledge of "tempo." Those "higher up," as well as the director, usually "sit in," on this part of the production, and watch the story unfold from a tangled mass of disconnected scenes to a smoothly running picture. And then comes the titling—which is an art in itself, for many times the directed action of the story, or the cutting, makes the script titles impossible.

And when the picture is finished—if it is to be a "Special"—it is usually given try-outs—that is, shown in different theatres and the effect on the audience studied. If the spectators fail to laugh at a supposedly funny point, if they giggle in a moment of drama—if they grow restless—it is noted and the "reason why" sought for and corrected.

Now, perhaps, you understand why producers must be careful in selecting a story. A tremendous lot of money and time and effort go into its production, and the story must make the cost worth while. But I think the knowledge of all that is given to your story should be a spur to make you put into it the very best that you have, and maybe it will take away from the tediousness, re-writing. At any rate, I hope it will help.
"'How I Won the Ten Thousand Dollar Prize'

By Winifred Kimball

Winner of the Chicago Daily News $30,000 Scenario Contest

The suggestion that I might enter a scenario in the Chicago Daily News Contest, did not originate in my own mind; instead, it came from the fertile brain of my dear sister. Most of the decisive steps which I have taken—those steps that have lead me from the beaten path of everyday life—have had her for their inspiration; and to her confidence in me, to her persistent efforts in my behalf, is entirely due my present success. So it was only seemingly that once again, it should be her eyes which remarked the references made in *The Photodramatist* to the Chicago Daily News Contest.

She wanted me to send in an application at once. At that time I had several stories on hand. I usually have. And I was working on one—I usually am. So she urged that we make a try for the Chicago Contest. She was eager in her enthusiasm. "Remember," she said, "that Mr. Read wrote you that your script held its place down to the last twenty-five in the J. Parker Read, Jr., Contest."

But she couldn't get any enthusiasm out of me. I only saw the work of revision and the expense of retyping. In plain English, I was "way down on my luck," and a prize contest was all bread and no cake in my philosophy! I said, "Nothing doing!" Fortunately, there is another happy feature in the perfect intimacy which has grown up between us two. It is that we never both despair at the same time. So, in spite of me, Minnie—my sister, Mrs. Minnie Kimball Alexander—subscribed for the News. She asked for three applications; and she informed me that she was going to enter three scripts, one historical, one a love story, and the story on which I was then at work—the one which afterwards won the prize.

Right then and there, I put my foot down. I said I'd not do anything so absolutely conceited as submit three of my stories. So we argued and argued over that. At length we compromised the matter—she should enter her three; but they should go in this manner. One was entered in my name, one in hers, and one in our cook's name. This pleased Lavinia and she said, "Now Honey, you just see if I don't bring you luck." She was quite right. It was the script that Minnie entered in her name which was the winner.

This ends the first chapter of the story of my success—a recounting of which...
Photodramatist has requested. The intervening months passed, as all such teasing intervals must do, if you only give them time enough. The New Year came along; and February brought the taxes! Ever since my father died and my sister was left a widow, I have hated February, because it grew to connote—Taxes! And taxes are so persistent. They are like crying babies—they have got to be attended to! So when February waxed old, and March was coming, I looked with half envious eyes at my married friends whose husbands paid all the bills and taxes.

But along with the first of March, Mr. Johnson, Editor of the Times, our newspaper, visited me. I remember it was about noon. And I said to Minnie, "There is Herbert—he is coming about some work that he wants me to do for the Times." But he didn't want to talk about my work. Instead he brought me the first telegram from Chicago. This telegram asked him to identify one Lavinia Henry, care of Winifred Kimball, possible winner in the News Contest, and to forward a picture of her at once. That was the first anyone knew of my entering the contest. As the Daily News requested, Mr. Johnson said nothing in his paper; but for myself, I felt that I was reasonably sure of one of the five hundred dollar awards. However, when the second telegram followed inside of a week, I perked up considerably; and my sister said, "You certainly have a place among the second ten."

You see both telegrams asked for pictures. I have one peculiarity, which I acknowledge. I hate to be photographed; and it isn't such an illogical aversion, for pictures usually make me look a fright. So the only pictures I had on hand, were a few that had been taken fully fifteen years back, when I spent two years in Tokio with my father's friends, Hon. Col. A. E. Buck and Mrs. Buck, American Ambassadors to Japan. I had kept this picture because it flattered me. I sent one on; and they wired back instantly, "Send a recent picture, or have such picture taken at once—rush!"

All of us wondered how those newspaper men found out that it was an old picture. Puzzled, but obedient, I took my vanity in my hands and sacrificed it on the altar of my ambition. I went to the local photographer, who dwelt in a building known locally as the Tin-top. I let him photograph me; and I sent the ghastly result to Chicago. Another week passed. This last seven days was a time of torture; for I was left to my own devices; and knowing nothing, one hour my imagination sent my spirits rocketing, whiles with the setting sun down they tumbled. Tomorrow and tomorrow were just the same. When Friday, March 31st, arrived, I got up with a brave determination that I would not become unduly excited. Firm in this resolve, I went down town and dictated to my stenographer on "The Mustard Seed"—that is the new screen story I am inditing. After two hours with her, I returned, and calling the boy to help me, I sought solace in the garden. I told the family that I was going to plant my nerves along with some acalyphias. I was working so hard that I never heard our doctor's admonitions when he passed by. But I caught the remark of the banker, a Mr. Fannin. He said, "Miss Winifred, what are you digging after? Why, you scatter the earth like Roxey at her wildest." Roxey is my airedale, and buries bones in every flower bed.

It was ten o'clock that night when Mr. Johnston brought Mr. Briggs and Mr. Jens Erickson, of the News, and presented them to me; but it was not until Saturday morning at nine o'clock sharp that Mr. Erickson, Mr. Briggs and Mr. McAuley gave me the check for Ten Thousand Dollars! After that I had my prejudices slaughtered; for what could I do? These gentlemen had come all the way from Chicago to give me one of the greatest pleasures of my life; and if they wanted photographs of me—those photos they should have. They were their due. But I assure you that the modern possibilities of photography appall me! Why, I took one of their creations, and I showed it to my blessed sister, and I asked, "Do I look like that?" And she said, "No!"

This is the story of my success; but it says nothing of the long months and years of hard work that have preceded it. I took the Palmer Course when Mr. Frederick Palmer first opened that school. I found it then, and I still think it, by far the best. Through the Photodramatist I learned of this contest; and Mrs. Kate Corbaley now has my story, "The Prophet's Prayer-rug." I have come to the conclusion that it is only through the efforts of a reputable broker, that an "unknown" writer can reach the producer; and, dwelling in this out-of-the-way place, I am glad to avail myself of the Palmer Sales Department.

To those among your readers—if there
are any such—who think the writing of a screen story is a balmy, pleasant occupation, I would say that, on the contrary, it demands the ready service of more imagination, more concentration, than the story-teller must use; for where the story-teller depends on his technique and a scene or two, the good photoplay must have a sequence of as many dramatic scenes as a strong novel. Oh, no! It is no easy task to create a good movie, but for one who is ready to work and has a picture-making faculty in his imagination, this work is most interesting.

In writing for the screen, I have made two friends, whose confidence and criticism I value—Col. J. K. Gordon Magee and Mr. Bryan Irvine. These gentlemen are of the movie world; and it gratifies me immensely that I can couple their names with my first great success.

Now, while the air is rife with prejudicial attacks upon the silver screen, while the insect minds of many little people add their buzz to the general hum, I am happy to state that I have worked and studied among screen craftsmen for five years; and such of them as I have known have been both kind and true.

Many letters of congratulation have arrived; and it is remarkable that so many of them are from other contestants—those who were less fortunate than I. These in time, I shall answer; but permit me to say upon your pages that their generosity rebukes me. I fear that such kindness would never have entered my head, if I had gone down in defeat. I am afraid I should have taken my disappointment to some secluded spot and withdrawn from the world. So I have learned from their magnanimity how to accept my next defeat.

It is a great delight—this using of the pages of The Photodramatist, to gossip about my success. Moreover, I feel that all of you will deal kindly with your latest "sub-deb" among screen writers. Yes; you will be patient with me, even though your thoughts now accord with mine in the opinion that it is high time I should "Iris out!"

"Write if You Must"

By J. H. McEldowney

"I'm thinking of writing a photoplay"
Is an off-hand assertion made each day
By many, and then ourselves betray
By asking the question, "Does it pay?"
Is it tokens of wealth they would secure?
Is the jingle of coins the only lure?
Is that motive worthy? Will it insure
A picture that will for time endure?

Perhaps, there's a better payment in mind.
A recompense of another kind.
Is it looking, searching, hoping to find
The tie that man unto man will bind?
Some way to convince mankind that the cares
of each individual the whole world shares?
That it's man's concern how his brother fares?
That a harvest of wheat comes not from tares?
That love in its coming brings its pains?
That to taste of joy one must share his gains?
That to fetter the feet with dragging chain,
And cripple the hands and clog the brains;
And stifle the yearnings of the soul,
Make, "What coin will it bring?" the only goal.
There is a reward when you've paid the toll.
Fame, fortune or pitance may be the dole;
Fine linen, loaves, fishes—maybe, a crust;
A canopied couch — a bed in the dust.

"No matter!" you say? Then write! For lust
Is not driving your pen—the writing will live
For you write 'cause you must.
The Screen Drama League
An Organization to Combat the Censorship Evil

A small dog attracts more attention than a large dog—because it makes more noise. When a Terrier snaps at the heels of a Saint Bernard, the bigger animal generally, in a good-natured way, ignores it. When, however the Terrier—encouraged by the apparent indifference of the Saint Bernard,—reaches the conclusion that the other really fears him and ventures to sink his teeth into the Bernard's flank, something generally happens to the Terrier—and happens suddenly.

The average so-called "reformer," advocating censorship, greatly resembles a Terrier. Because worthwhile men and women generally have other real work to do in this world, and can spend little time in giving him attention, he gradually becomes obsessed with the belief that he is really important—that his arguments are unanswerable, that he is a veritable "voice in the wilderness," and before long, he follows up his snarling by attempting, figuratively, to "bite" his opponents. It is then that the "Saint Bernards" take action.

Recently, in Kentucky, the "reformers" attempted to "jam" a censorship bill through the state legislature. Kentucky chances to be the native state of David Wark Griffith, one of the greatest directors the world has ever known. Leaving important work, Griffith hastened to the state capitol. He went before the legislators, and he told them, in a straightforward, masterly way, what censorship really is—and what it leads to. For the benefit of members of the Screen Drama League, we are reprinting his address, and urge every reader to clip it, take it to the editor of his home newspaper and urge that it be given publicity:

"The right to express freely any thought upon any subject is the very bulwark, bone, and sinew of the rights guaranteed by our Constitution," said Mr. Griffith. "The right to speak freely, to be answerable for our utterances to the law for whatever we may say, is a part of the idea of our American Government:

"Censorship is an institution of autocracy. Censorship has been since the beginning of time, the chief instrument used by autocrats, kings and rulers. If an autocrat in any form of government has the power of censoring forms of expression, he can rest assured that no one can dispute his autocratic governing power.

"This same censorious group that are working for censorship of motion pictures are brothers to censors of the past. It was these censors of the past who threatened Gutenberg, the inventor of the first printing press. It was these censors who believed that the printing press was an instrument of the devil. These censors came very near burning him at the stake.

"Had censors been waiting behind the back of Shakespeare when he was writing his plays, it is absurd to believe that he could have written those immortal works of art. Censors would have made impossible the printing of the Bible.

"Who is there to whom you are willing to give the power to say what you yourselves shall or shall not sec upon the stage; shall or shall not read in the printed pages; shall or shall not see in the motion picture? The motion picture is a form of speech, just as potent as writing or a spoken word. Why should be censored any more than the stage or a printed work? Can any man think of any other human being to whom he is willing to trust this mighty office?"

"Even if we admit that there are bad pictures,

(Continued on Page 36)
Common Faults in Continuity Writing
Synopsis. Being Basis for Completed Script, Should Follow Rules of Screen Technique
By Frances Harmer

Many who live far from picture centers do not realize that continuity itself—the articulation of the story into scenes and "shots"—can never be finally done away from the studio. They do not know that consultation with the director; inspirations behind the camera; discoveries that an effective scene has been used in a recent picture and can not so soon be repeated—that a dozen such incidents and needs make it essential that the recreation of the story behind the camera must be a fluid and immediate thing and can not arrive by mail, cut and dried.

(This does not mean for a moment that the ability to do all this work may not be conveyed by mail!) In consequence of this misunderstanding, many continuities arise from all parts of the States—almost, in fact, from all parts of the world; and it is about some of the more common errors of these, as well as those written very much nearer home, that I wish to speak.

Too many writers, whose laurels are yet to be won, are able to visualize—to look at a blank wall and see thereon the figures of their characters in Moving Action.

While titles are necessary to express, to elucidate, to psychologize moods, they play a small part in the development of the story. The ideally perfect screen story—which I never saw—should be told without them.

"Writers away from the studios cannot hope to construct successful continuities," says Miss Harmer, noted screen dramatist and Literary Assistant to Wm. C. De Mille. "However," she adds, "the principles underlying continuity and synopsis are the same, and every photoplaywright must understand and observe them."

This inability to see the action performed by acts results in such continuity items as the following:
1. "Then he tells her that while his father was a poor man, he was also honest."
2. "She regrets her action deeply and feels that she can never do enough to show her sorrow."
3. "Knowing that she has not a moment to lose, Elsie dashes upstairs, snatches at her coat and hat, and flies out of the house."

The foregoing, of course, are ludicrous errors. They are almost the equivalent of the non-grammatical phrase, "I have saw"—but they are more frequent than "I have saw."

To come to more frequent and serious faults, it must be admitted that many of them are incidental to the story itself, and I will itemize these as they occur to me:

First of all, let us in preparing a screen story for continuity, avoid time lapses as far as may be possible. The story that covers years is rarely the best story for the screen. The main exception to this rule—all rules have exceptions—lies in such stories as "The Lost Romance," "What Every Woman Knows," etc., in which time alone can bring about structural changes in characters and character relationships. But usually it will be found that the best screen stories, as the majority of the best plays, agree, more or less in the acceptance of the Greek unities.
—time, place and action.

Another very common continuity fault is a too minute articulation—a too careful "planting"—a too meticulous attention to detail.

As Mr. William DeMille once said, "When I see a man in a boat in the middle of the stream, I know he got into the boat; I do not have to see him approach the boat on the river bank, push it off and jump into it, to convince me that he actually did get in it, and that is enough." This has always seemed to me a very clear illustration of what I wish to say.

Reading the other day an excellent continuity by a writer who has gone from success to success, I noticed how far we had gone from this kind of articulation. In this play a man has to leave one house for another. We see him

a. Assuming his outdoor garments;

b. Descending the stairs;

c. Leaving the house;

d. Entering the automobile;

e. The automobile going through the streets;

f. Leaving the automobile;

g. Ascending the steps of the other house;

h. Being admitted;

i. Ascending the stairs;

j. Entering the sick-room of the friend he is to visit.

Now it can be seen that one subtitle, such as, "The sick man is as yet unaware that his real friend is rushing to his side," would cover all these shots.

This brings me, then, to one golden rule for continuity-writing: Do a great deal of the cutting in your writing.

In planning your story for continuity it seems better to leap from high light to high light.

Now, against all the foregoing must be set, however, the need of Proper Shading. Big moments must be lead up to gradually, but you do not lead to any big moment by a series of dull and uninteresting detail such as I have outlined above.

It is very difficult to write about errors in continuity without realizing that these errors were really made in the synopsis. And it is to writers of synopses that I should like to address the following suggestions:

Realize that the story to be told in dumb show must deal with elemental situations—with elemental passions (granted this base of strength, a coming picture, "Bought And Paid For," will show with what deli-

cate subtlety they can finally be delineated on the screen). The story for the screen must be impelled by the momentum of a tremendous force. Underneath even comedy there must be an emotion of some strength; otherwise, the picture sends the audience away with the feeling that it has eaten a chocolate meringue.

Now, the great situations arising from elemental passions are not many in number, and the writer should study these much as a chess-player studies the pieces, trying to see what new moods fresh combinations can achieve.

I should be inclined to say, myself, that the average rejected script is rejected more for lack of strength than for lack of skill. What is written about is not important enough. I repeat the word "important." When a story is brought to Mr. William De Mille, his first question is, almost always, "What is at stake?"

Now while in life the mortgage is serious enough, it has been so much exploited on the screen as to have lost value. If it is a mere question of a man keeping or losing money, jewels, treasure of any kind, that is not really important enough because it is not elemental. In life it matters very much if one has money or not. But in telling a story dependent on money for its value on the screen we give only a sense of something at once hard and hollow, because emotion is not there.

The next element of value, so frequently omitted from the scripts I read, is the element of character. So many writers send in quite ingenious plots, with puppets moving about in them.

The power to characterize is of the utmost value in writing a story for the screen. You must have your people sympathetic. If something is to be gained by a hero or heroine, the audience must like that hero or heroine well enough to be interested in seeing the prize go to the right winner.

Not so frequently absent, though not present as often as it should be, is the element of justice. Your story should satisfy the audience that the thing "has come out right." Don't shower good things upon your hero and heroine unless they deserve to have things so showered, and even then if possible let them earn and win them.

I have read stories in which the difficulties surrounding hero and heroine were overcome by the single expedient of a leg-

(Continued on Page 36)
"The Third Dimension"
Proper Characterization Essential to Writing
of Successful Photoplays
By Jessie Maude Wybro

EVERYONE who attempts to create is
a Columbus, venturing upon un-
charted seas, filling sail with winds of
fancy and guiding by the stars of his aspi-
ration. Some are looking for a short route to
an India of wealth and fame. Of these
999,999 out of every
million perish in the
attempt, and the un-
known waters admit
not even of the mark-
ing of their resting-
place. But the true
Columbus cries "Sail
on! And on!"—
through darkness and
discouragem ent —
through the mutiny
of reason and self-
advantage — through
that black time, even,
when the winds of
fancy die and the
stars of aspiration
grow dim. For such,
a New World waits.
It may not be the
world of which he
has dreamed; it may
be better—it may be
worse. But it is a
world which he him-
self has won, and by
so much he has en-
riched humanity and
is entitled to take his
place with the creat-
ors. Drama is the
most vital of all the
arts. "Vital" means,
"that which pertains
to life." Drama must,
above all else, give
the semblance of life;
not of a single mo-
moment, such as may be caught by painting,
or sculpture, or music, but life itself,—
people, who live and move and have be-
ing, who act, and bring upon themselves
the results of those actions.

Between the spoken drama and the silent
a great gulf is fixed. Yet, widely sep-

Primarily a writer of stage plays
—among them one which recently
won the Drama League prize, the
highest honor accorded to any
dramatist in America—Miss Wybro
has lately turned her attention to
the motion pictures. Her original
photoplay, "The Celebrated Mrs.
Sanderson," is now in process of
production at the Ince studios.

when to fling them to the breeze, and when
to bend to the steady oar-stroke that alone
can carry him through certain crises. In
fact, he who is most skillful in availing
himself of the experience of others is he
who, other things being equal, is best started
on the way to success.
The essence of all drama, whether it be bodied in the spoken word or flashed as pictures upon the screen is conflict,—the struggle of will against will, or will against circumstances. Conflict is made concrete,—that is reduced from general principle to definite circumstance—by means of plot. Plot, stripped to its nakedness, is merely what happens and the result of its happening. These happenings constitute the action of the play, which must be carried on by means of persons. The creation of plot, therefore, is in its process a series of created images passing through the brain of the creator and conceived as saying or doing certain things.

When I turned my attention upon this process in the effort to discover something that might be helpful to others, it was as though I dived down into the particular cauldron of my brain where plots are brewed and groped about to find what I wanted. And when I came up with a mathematical phrase in my hands, I gave a gasp of horror. Mathematics have been my particular abhorrence ever since the days when quadratic equations cost me bitter tears. But the phrase continued to stare me brazenly in the face. The Third Dimension suggests a most vital phase of the constructive principle.

As I looked back over my experience, I saw that at first these mental images had passed through my brain as flat figures, moving over a flat surface, whom I jerked hither and thither. That is, the figures had length and breadth—but not thickness! And then had come the time when I could see behind them—around them. They had acquired a third dimension!

A figure that has bulk cannot be stationed upon a background and moved by the jerk of a string. It must have space in which to move about. This space, in the case of the created image, is provided by impulses and motives arising out of the character itself, in the first place; in the second, by the antecedent causes of those impulses and characteristics. That is, why does the character do what he does do? It must not be an arbitrary action at the will of the creator. The circumstances that arise may be arbitrary. The creator has the power to postulate that this or that thing occurs. But this is as far as he may go. The reaction of the character to this happening lies in the character itself. He must respond according to the laws of his being. He rises in resistance, or gasps in defeat, according to his innate power. And the more perfectly he is created in the semblance of life, the more entirely he takes matters into his own hands. He may bid defiance to the will of his creator, and go his own sweet way. And that way is the right way! I have often had some such experience as this: I say, "Now Mary falls to her knees and weeps," only to have Mary turn upon me with a stony stare and say "But I shall do nothing of the sort! I shall remain perfectly calm. I shall even turn an epigram!" And calmness and epigram it must be, or Mary dissolves into a hodge-podge of nothingness out of which I must recreate her a different person, or let her perish altogether and with infinite pains fashion a Jane or a Dorothy to take her place. That is, Mary has definite substance of her own,—she is a human being, with the something around her and behind her that causes her to move in given directions and in given ways.

What is this something? If Mary does as she does in response to the laws of her being, what are those laws? What is the antecedent reason for that characteristic in Mary that makes her turn an epigram when other women would dissolve in tears? Is it from the long combat with antagonisms in her own environment? Is it the heritage from a crusty, sharp-witted father? Is it the legacy of a temperamental or superficial mother? Is it some unguessed self-hood, long repressed, that arises suddenly in a crisis and takes expression in an unguessed way? In Sarah Padden's "The Clod," one of the strongest one-act plays that has ever been produced upon the American stage, it is the sudden flaring out of resistance in the drudge that had endured, and endured, and endured until she seemed to be incapable of resistance, that precipitates the crisis of the play and brings the solution.

Cleneance Dane's "A Bill of Divorce-ment" is one of the few really vital plays of the current theatrical season. In spite of the fact that it deals with a phase of the recent war, and that it postulates a time some fifteen years in the future,—either of which is sufficient to kill an ordinary play,—it is one of the outstanding successes in a season whose way is heaped high with the bones of the dead. In this play the treatment of antecedent causes is most significant: A taint in the blood has made insanity the result of shell-shock in the father, and accounts for a certain nervous irritability in the daughter. Here the re-

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"Writing by Ear"
Photoplaywright, Like Pianist, Must be Trained to Succeed as Professional

By George Wallace Sayre

The other evening was Ladies’ Night at my Club and one of the items was a piano selection by a young man. He played a well known classic with what appeared to me to be wonderful expression and with what I thought to be technique. Upon discussing the young man afterwards, with a friend of mine who happened to be a music critic, I was astounded at his statement that this young man not only had never studied but also never had a music lesson in his life. My friend considered it a very rare gift but I considered it the abuse of a rare gift, for instead of mastering the technical of music generally, thereby making himself a true interpreter of the great Masters, and perhaps a Master himself, he had allowed this gift to stagnate and himself really to debase his undoubted ability by apathy and neglect.

To look at that man so careless and unconcerned positively hurt. I have always pitted waste of any kind, even material waste, but to see a gift that is positively divine lie unheeded and unappreciated by its possessor struck me as the next thing to a crime.

Training is essential, according to George Wallace Sayre, who advises, from his varied experience as a studio writer, that the experienced and inexperienced screen dramatist alike must have a firm foundation of technique, on which to base the acceptable photoplay. Without this, no "story" can achieve success.

Perhaps you know of someone in your acquaintance who can produce some of our finest classics upon the piano, who never studied to perform this repetition but rather doing it naturally, with a sort of divine instinct that needed only a touch of the hands upon the keys to bring out and perform blindly and innocently this work of an intelligent art. But put this same person before an audience of Music Critics. How far do you think his art would go in their minds? He lacks the most essential thing of the stronghold upon which the arts are built, and that is technic.

On the other hand, one might have a fine voice and be able to render an operatic selection fluently, but place him before a Master of Voice Culture and note the latter’s criticism.

I often wonder if the embryo writers realize what a vital connection this has with each and every one, for if he would but stop to think a moment and realize that his scenario is going before the Masters of the Moving Picture Industry, he could easily see why his effort was turned down, just as much as Hammerstein would turn down an untrained voice to sing in an opera. The Masters in any art are looking for those things which are not only inspirational but of constructive value as well.

Practicability is unsentimental and untechnically correct as imaginative; technic-
fectiveness is proper structure. A story that does not hang well together, a work that means a mere scattered episode which has no palpable thread, no climaxes and no conclusions, is not likely to be read through. It arouses no deep interest, intellectually or emotionally, and leaves no definite stamp on the memory of the reader. The factors which it lacks are those that give unity of structure.

From this point of view, the problem of the photodramatist is to make as close-knit and thoroughly organized a plot as possible without violating natural probability in appearance or reality.

The critical apprehension of structure is one of the greatest powers to be acquired by the embryo photodramatist.

An author might have a wonderful personality which predominates his characters, the background of which is his artistry, coupled with the observations and meditations which he has practiced throughout his life, and yet he wonders how he can put all this personality, this artistry in the cold facts of a scenario. He can do this in only one way and that is by the proper technical treatment and application of his material.

The trained screen writer does not treat his story as beads on a string, running along and along, but rather as stones in a great building, placing block upon block and setting each one snugly into its place. If a certain block or situation does not fit, he knows how to discriminate, or in other words, how to build up his many situations to make a strong story that will not topple over at a gust from the critics.

Suppose you had acquired the many intricate parts that comprise an automobile, but did not know the proper structure, or the method of putting together these parts, do you think that you could build a machine that would be mechanically correct, and furthermore, one that you would dare trust upon the highway? No! You would not trust your own knowledge but would acquire the services of a mechanic that knew his business and have him build up from the parts an automobile that you would be sure of.

Every author has these parts that comprise a good story in his mind. Animate these parts of his brain-child in an improper structural manner, and naturally his story will not run past the studio reader; but, rather, will hit fully upon that solid wall and crumple, again to be returned to the originator as the same fascicule he had once started with.

The thing that is most commonly lacking in the work of a striving author is a sustained plot, worked out with close regard to cause and effect. Still more characteristically, it lacks the study of character and the intellectual analysis of such varied problems as occupy life today.

I have been forced to the conclusion that many people, both men and women, are afraid to confess, even to themselves, that they have any gift for writing. They in their sub-conscious mind glimpse the difficulties ahead and are afraid that in order to develop this gift, hard work and perhaps some vital change in their own mentality must necessarily result. They are afraid and so shirk a serious responsibility. A man has no right to hold back anything that will tend to make this world more cheerful or a better place in which to live.

The days of Lincoln are past. Very few of us now find it incumbent upon us to carry the handicap in the race for knowledge that Lincoln carried. Opportunity is knocking at our doors. It is our own fault if we fail to take advantage of it. The extra toil incurred in studying technique is not work, but recreation, and recreation in its highest and purest form. To create puts you on a level with the Gods of Olympus, but you must create worthy things. Who is there of any worth at all who does not aspire to give the world some message of good will, and to justify his existence? If we do nothing to leave the world better than we found it, we have no justification for living. To accomplish something, and something worth while, is a glorious achievement. But to do this means work and study. This work and this study should be rightly directed by experts in the art in which we are anxious to succeed.

The proper technic together with the endless variety of human life supplies an equally endless variety of themes for the photodramatists, and the very nature of the theme will properly lead to emphasis now on the external, now on the internal, now on the ordinary, now on the extraordinary, with appropriate variation to the technical methods employed. But with all this variation the demand of our audiences, I am sure, holds for truth to the permanent and essential traits of human nature and human life, and for vitality and interest in the presentation of this truth.

So to sum up and make a grand total of what an embryo photodramatist's needs are: viz. a study of life about him broadly and

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First Stories
Common Errors Which Inexperienced Photoplay Writers Must Learn to Avoid
By Adele Buffington

It is probably the easiest task of all for a studio reader to select “first efforts” from the dozens of scripts which he reads daily. The inexperienced writer, in attempting his first screen vehicle, usually chooses exactly the same series of mistakes with which to clog up his “brain child” as his numerous brothers and sisters. The average “beginner” seems either to forget or to fail to realize that the greatest demand of the screen is dramatic action. Pages and pages are devoted to mere words, sometimes describing the beautiful colors in Mary’s dress, or the disturbing thoughts running through her mind, or the melodious tone of Jim’s whistling. Imagine what it would mean to “register” color, thought, and tone upon the screen!

Some writers lose themselves entirely in their desire to create a good narrative style. It is all very well to develop an interesting narrative style of writing one’s stories, but there is such a thing as “over doing” it. Furthermore unless accompanied by a good dramatic plot, narrative is worthless as screen material.

Another great weakness in the usual “first effort” is characterization. The author seems to create merely “types,” rather than the real, human, lifelike characters. And the implausible things which they cause these poor characters to do are most astonishing. For example, there is the case of the murderer who was sentenced to life imprisonment. He was sent to the “pen” and given a suit of stripes. He found his bed was shy the usual pillow, and so the warden, who was also the hero, gave him back his suit of clothes upon which to rest his weary (?) head. Yes, he escaped that night, wearing not the stripes, but his own suit of civilian clothes. (This was not a comedy—it was meant to be serious drama.) As a warden, I might say, the hero was a good nursemaid, and I believe the audience would agree with me.

There is no better way to test the situations of a photoplay story than by determining whether they might naturally occur in real life.

The inexperienced writer should strive to create human characterization, and to make his imaginary children do the things which they would do if they were living human beings. If he draws his heroine as a sweet, lovable, self-sacrificing character, he must not later show her planning to commit murder for that would be contrary to her established nature. Untruthful characterization should be very closely guarded against as it is a very common error in the work of the average beginner.

Another very common fault is the employment of incidents in which the charac-

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IN THE FOREGROUND

Being a Department of Brief Chats on Topics Within The Camera's Range

"Leadership"

A CAREFUL analysis of history will reveal the fact that it is largely a record of the achievements and progress of the human race—under leadership. Minus able leaders, mankind, as a mass, seems unable to accomplish anything worthwhile. The great nations, the great religions, the great industrial projects—all are a result of efficient direction by some master organizer and leader. The Israelites had their Moses to lead them out of slavery into the Promised Land; the Greeks, their Alexander the Great; the Romans, Julius Caesar; the French, Napoleon; America had her George Washington and her Lincoln. Without men such as these, our civilization today would be a sorry thing indeed.

Conditions in the motion picture industry up to recently resembled greatly those faced by the Allies prior to the day on which Marshal Foch assumed command of the armies that were battling the Hun invasion. Several factions, most of them sincere and honest in their efforts, to be sure, and striving toward the same end, were getting nowhere because of confusion in the ranks and woeful duplication of expense and effort. The picture industry needed a leader just as did the allied troops; and just as the cause of freedom was given new impetus and fresh confidence by the appointment of General Foch, so has the appointment of Will H. Hays, it appears, brought harmony and confidence to the world of motion pictures.

Although Mr. Hays has been "in the saddle" but a few weeks, the results are already noticeable. Petty animosities are being subdued; bickering between minor factions is abating; the big men of the industry are loosening the purse strings; and with the investment of additional capital, production for the ensuing twelve months bids fair to surpass that of any previous period.

Not only is there greater activity in production, but also the entire spirit of the industry seems to have changed. Artistic standards are being elevated. The cheap "hokum" is being passed up in favor of productions possessing greater moral and spiritual values. We do not doubt but that the presence of Mr. Hays is largely responsible for this new trend of affairs.

To assume leadership of this vast industry—an industry peculiar in that it is dependant upon an art—no one could have been found more fitted than Will H. Hays. An organizer of rare ability, a man "big" in every sense of the word; a man of whom it has been said, "He hates liars and side-steppers; with him there is no bunk and pharisiasm; no hypocrisy; no simpering and snivelling, and no confusion,"—he brings to the film world qualities that are bound to create respect for a much maligned industry and to render a vast service to the millions who enjoy motion pictures, assuring them of entertainment of the highest order.

Much criticism has been directed at Mr. Hays for having abandoned his high political office to enter the motion picture world. Most of this, however, has been so bitter and so scurrilous in tone as to render it ridiculous; and a large portion of it has come from men who, being of small calibre themselves, have made a business of attacking big men who attempt to do big things. Aside from the results that Mr. Hays is accomplishing, we believe the best answer to the snarling demagogues who have attacked him is contained in his own statement to members of the press, upon assuming his new position:

"The potentialities of the moving picture for moral influence and education are limitless, therefore its integrity should be protected as we protect the integrity of our churches, and its quality developed as we develop the quality of our schools. I think the day will come, and, mind you, in our day—I'm 42—when the movies will be as common in the schools as McGuffey's Reader.

"If I didn't believe in this future of the moving pictures I wouldn't have taken up this work, but I did believe in it and I have left politics and public life forever. I am very happy to be in a cause where we are all on the same side of the table, where there is no
acrimony and everything isn't strife. I approach this task with much concern but with that confidence which springs from an earnest purpose and from the conviction that we will have the generous help of every one in accomplishing what must be recognized as an effort for the good of all."

"Opportunity"

Of unusual interest to readers of The Photodramatist, should be the statement of Miss Winifred Kimball, winner of the $10,000 prize in the Chicago Daily News scenario contest, that she had heard nothing of that competitive test for photoplay writers until she read the announcement thereof in our columns.

Opportunity, through the pages of this magazine, knocked at her door, and, heeding the signal, she grasped the chance to achieve both financial and artistic success. Full credit is due her for her foresight, and The Photodramatist was among the first to congratulate her upon her success.

At the same time, however, we cannot help but take to ourselves some portion of the credit. Had The Photodramatist failed to give publicity to the Chicago News contest, in all probability Miss Kimball would never have heard of it; and in consequence, she would never have entered her story, nor have been awarded the honors she has received.

Readers of The Photodramatist may rest assured that they will receive, at all times, the latest and most authentic news of activities in the world of screen drama. Although the Chicago News Contest is now a thing of the past, there will undoubtedly be others of a similar nature. If you are not a reader of The Photodramatist, you may never hear of them.

Federal Censorship

A reader of The Photodramatist writes us that she is convinced that state censorship, as exemplified by the various boards now in office, is a ridiculous failure. She suggests that they be abolished and that the problem be solved by the appointment of a "good national censorship board."

Undoubtedly a good national board of censorship would be a solution; but, our correspondent defeats her own argument when she states that such a body is made necessary because of the failure of the state boards to function properly. If state censorship has been so grossly inefficient and absurd, what reason is there for presuming that the character of a national board would be any different? As a matter of fact, a federal film commission would be subjected even more to insidious, political influence than are the smaller ones now in office. Men and women, whether serving the constituency of a small town or of a nation, are merely human beings, and a body of censors sitting in Washington, D. C., would be no more capable of impartial judgment than the censorship committee in Corncob Center, Kansas; and would have the power, when the inevitable errors would be made, of inflicting infinitely more damage.

Of course, there is little chance of the establishment of a national board of censorship. The constitution of the United States distinctly declares that citizens shall not be deprived of the right of freedom of expression. Admitting that some of our congressmen apparently have never read the constitution—at least the clause referred to—we still believe that there are enough level-headed statesmen at the Capitol to ward off legislation that might wreak havoc upon the citizens they represent.
Federal censorship would savor greatly of the type of government that swept Germany and Russia to destruction. It is nothing more nor less than paternalism of the highest order—and paternalism has never resulted in anything but corruptness and discontent.

"It Makes a Difference"

JUDGE J. P. DAY, prominent Oklahoma politician and noted jurist, dropped into the living-room of his palatial home, at three o’clock in the morning, some days ago; found his young wife struggling in the arms of Lieutenant Paul Ward Beck, war-hero and high in army social circles, according to press reports; and, returning with a pistol, shot the man to death. Judge Day, in his statement to the coroner’s jury, branded rumors that liquor had flowed at the party, that evening, as falsehoods; and declared that the young officer’s attentions to his wife had met with vigorous resistance on her part. Mrs. Day in a statement to the newspapers, says, in effect, that she is a victim of cruel circumstance. The jury has exonerated Judge Day of all blame, declaring the shooting justifiable, and has refused to hold him for trial. Friends of Lieutenant Beck, on the other hand, maintain that he had always been the soul of honor, and declare that they intend to see that “something is done about it.”

Nothing will “be done about it,” of course. Neither do we expect to hear of any congressman introducing a bill calling for a “probe” of Oklahoma politics, the legal profession or the social life of the army. We doubt, even, that the Rev. Stratton, of New York, will preach a sermon—similar to the one he delivered recently on “Hollywood and the Picture Industry”—denouncing judges, army men and young wives as “moral lepers.”

We shudder, however, to think of the ensuing turmoil had the regrettable incident occurred in Hollywood—or if Judge Day, his wife or Lieutenant Beck had been connected, even in the remotest way, with the motion picture industry.

"Anonymous"

THE editor of The Photodramatist, being more or less human, has never held in high esteem persons who approach their enemies in the dark, from behind, and stab them in the back. No more does he relish the reading of letters attacking members of the motion picture profession, when these letters are unsigned. It is a significant fact that letters written by persons who conceal their identity are almost invariably ones in which vicious attacks are made on men and women who are beyond reproach. Writers of anonymous letters, “stool pigeons,” “informers,” spies, and others of their ilk, have always been classed in the same category. There is no place for them in the society of decent people.

The Photodramatist welcomes at all times letters from its readers. In fact, without such missives we would have no means by which to ascertain whether or not we are following the right paths, or if we are doing our best for the betterment of those who look to us for guidance. No reputable editor, of course, would presume to publish correspondence received in confidence, without permission of the writer thereof; but any reputable editor may be depended upon to consign unsigned communications to the wastebasket, no matter how important the information contained therein may appear to be.

Taxing the Pictures

STUDENTS of economics should be greatly interested in a bill recently introduced in Congress by Representative Herrick, of Oklahoma. This bit of legislation is headed, “A bill for the purpose of raising revenue and diverting a portion of the citizenship of the Nation from nonproductive employment to productive employment.” The substance of the bill is contained in the following excerpt:

“Any person manufacturing a movie film, producing a photoplay, or running a vaudeville or theatrical show shall be required to pay into the United States Treasury 50 per centum of their ticket sales, if operating a show, or net profits, if a manufacturer of films.”

The editor of The Photodramatist does not lay claim to being a master mathematician or an authority on the laws of economics. Possibly this is why it appears to us that the only result of such legislation would be to force the average man, woman and child to pay approximately one dollar to see motion picture films which they may now view for a third of that sum. Just why Mr. Herrick’s scheme would divert, as he says, “a portion of the citizenship of the Nation from nonproductive to productive employment,” is not apparent. In all probability, it would divert a large number of persons from productive employment to non-employment.

The bill has been referred to the Committee on Ways and Means, and printed in the Congressional Record. We trust that the aforesaid committee, being composed of gentlemen of intelligence, will find “ways and means” to treat this bill just as it deserves.
RETROSPECTION in photoplay writing should be avoided, for the reason that it is confusing to the audience, as they are just beginning to find interest in the story when their trend of thought is interrupted by an entirely new story. However, it is permissible to use retrospection when it is impossible to construct a photoplay without it. In that case, it should be very brief. It is also inadvisable to resort to dreams and visions, although, in a few instances, this has been done with some degree of success. These examples, however, are very rare.

WESTERN pictures are always popular and are easily sold, if well constructed. However, they must be "different." The public is tired of the old dance hall scenes and the daring twogun man, who is a superhuman character. A western story must bear new characterization—the hero must be a more plausible being, even though he possess great strength of character and win out in the conflict. Life in the west should be portrayed as it is, not as it is imagined.

NOW that the novelty of "going to the pictures" has worn off and the public as a whole is becoming more critical, it is more and more essential that playwrights endeavor to give to picture-goers originality in theme and characterization. By sitting in an audience and listening to the comments of your neighbors, you may hear such remarks as "he wouldn’t have done that in a million years," or perhaps just an ejaculation of "Piffle!" Also, in the "Why-Do-They-Do-It" columns of the "fan" magazines, may be found proof of the keen critical eye of the onlooker. Although originality and theme are perhaps more important than characterization, it is the latter that meets with the most criticism from the audience; and which, consequently, must be the most carefully studied.

COMEDY is more difficult to write than drama for the same reason that the short story is harder to construct than the novel—the time in which a given purpose must be accomplished is more limited. This fact renders it imperative that a comedy contain many more situations per reel than drama, and each bit of action must count either for a laugh or for working up to a laugh. Also, on account of the limitations of time, the subjects that are suitable for treatment are limited, and that makes it hard to construct comedies that are original.

ALTHOUGH the use of good English and correct grammatical construction are important factors in the writing of a photoplay, it is not necessary to decorate a story with flowery and non-essential language. Words do not photograph. What need to say that Tillie has "violet-hued eyes and Titian curls"—colors are reproduced on the screen in tones of black and white. Neither producer, critic nor director is interested in such minute and unnecessary detail, except, of course, such general description as will give an idea as to type of the various characters, and the general atmospheric settings. Dramatic action is far more important than a "pet vocabulary."

SUBTITLES should not be included in the synopsis of a story. That is the work of a professional title writer. However, if you can help some particular situation by the use of a spoken title, inserted in the form of conversation, use it, as it not only helps the scene but also the characterization. The greatest care should be exercised, however, that the spoken subtitles are not overdone. They must be very short and concise.
ONE of the real enemies of the photodramatist is the star who is such a good director that he wants to write his own stories. This attempt to do everything usually harms no one but the star who attempts it. It probably does satisfy their vanity to see their name spread all over the billboards, as per: William Peppensneffer presents William Peppensneffer in, "The Camel's Last Drink," by William Peppensneffer, directed by William Peppensneffer.' And then, not satisfied with that, the whole absurdity is completed with: "Copyrighted by William Peppensneffer Producing Company." Such a fabulous display of name inspires unfavorable comment by an intelligent audience which regards it as very crude. There is room enough for everybody to receive credit for the success of anything, and those connected with it should receive their just portion. The egotistical star who presents himself in his own story directed by himself cannot take the credit for the photography. The cameraman can mess up the whole thing or he can make it a work of beauty. Granting this, then why do some of our most famous stars persist in the belief that they can write? Shakespeare, Sheridan and George M. Cohan are the playwrights I recall at this moment who have been able to appear in their own plays graciously. But even these gentlemen would hesitate at shoulderin as much credit as some of our screen stars like to. They have yet to learn that a very limited number of people can do two things and do them well. At present, we haven't any Shakespeares, Sheridans, or George M. Cohans in our industry.

CORRESPONDENT writes me from Milwaukee, asking me to define an idea. An idea is a thought. All there is to life is, thoughts. They are good or bad. A book, play or photoplay is composed of a series of thoughts; a series of mental pictures. The photodramatist who takes the screen seriously will endeavor to make those thought pictures beautiful in order to please the audience and give them something good to think about. A good photoplay sends the patrons out of the theatre with a series of pleasing thoughts which are not soon forgotten. All we have are thoughts, and the lives we live are in accordance with the thoughts we think. If we think good thoughts we will live good lives; if we think bad thoughts—well we must live bad lives. If we think good thoughts we will write good stories and many people will be benefited; if we do not think good thoughts we cannot write good stories. We can tell a man by the way he drives his car and the care he takes of it. We can tell pretty much about an author by the stories he writes. If the writer puts one real good thought in his photoplay—a thought that will improve those who see the picture—his story can be called a success.

"DON'T waste your time and energy on the movies. They don't appreciate it," says Professor Walter Pitkin of the School of Journalism at Columbia University. He informs us that he has made a study of the demands of American moving picture companies for story material. We are inclined to believe that that study could not have been an exhaustive one, for he is passing around very poor advice. His words should not be taken very seriously. He is not speaking for the film companies. He says movie editors receive thousands of contributions each week. He is wrong. They don't. If he had said hundreds, it would have been an exaggeration. However, out of that number will come the successful screen authors of the future. We might inform this learned authority that the number of plays submitted to New York producers last year far exceeded the number of scripts sent to the film producers. Pitkin has undoubtedly been reading some press agent "copy." His investigation has not been very complete and he has made himself look a little ridiculous.

Such producers as Belasco, Tyler, Lederer, George M. Cohan and Al Woods, spend a great deal of their time in reading plays written by unrecognized writers. They will tell you that some of the best plays on Broadway were purchased from new writers. If Pitkin
A MAN sent me a script from Philadelphia and in his letter asked me if it was a good story. It was not a good story. The mere fact that there was a doubt in his mind proves that it was not a good story. The first one to be sold on a story is the author. If the author doesn't know whether it is a good story then nobody can tell him. A good story strikes the author like a cyclone and he knows as soon as the idea hits him that he has a good yarn. He will be so excited over it that his enthusiasm will know no limitations. It will make him nervous and panic and he will sit right down and start to work. When he has finished writing it he will not ask anyone if it is a good story. He knows it is. He will immediately try to dispose of it, and if he doesn't sell it to the first producer to whom he submits it, he won't become discouraged. He will sympathize with that producer for not being able to know a good story when he reads one. If he submits it a half a dozen times, and it comes back every time, that will not cool his enthusiasm. He will send it out again. If it comes home to roost again, he will get some more postage and send it to someone else. He will eventually sell it. He will not be surprised when he does, for he knew all along it was a good story. Remember this, aspiring writers, it is just as hard to sell a good story as a bad one. Sometimes it's much easier to sell a bad one.

ACHAP in Phoenix, Arizona wrote me the other day to relieve himself of the belief that there was no necessity for his attempting to write for the screen—as "everybody seems to be doing it."

We might inform him that not more than ten thousand scripts were submitted to all the producers in Los Angeles last year. The editor of most any popular national magazine will admit that he receives approximately twenty thousand stories in that same length of time. One of the largest film producing companies received only thirty-five hundred scripts during 1921. One of the largest newspapers in the country recently conducted a national scenario contest, which ran for four months and gave away thirty thousand dollars in cash prizes. There were twenty-seven thousand entrants. Another newspaper, one of the best on the Pacific Coast, held a similar contest a few weeks ago, and offered five thousand dollars in cash prizes. There were twelve hundred entrants. A newspaper in Arizona recently devoted two weeks to locating the aspiring screen writers in that state and succeeded in obtaining one hundred and fifty entrants. A Southern California daily devoted six weeks and unlimited space to a scenario contest and aroused the interest of one hundred and seventy-five aspiring writers. There are at present over one hundred million people in the United States. This proves conclusively that the gentleman in Phoenix is wrong when he says, "everybody seems to be doing it." The trouble at present is, that too many untrained writers are dashing off stories without giving time, care and thought to the preparation of their work. If those who possess real creative ability, real talent and genius for writing, would take the screen seriously and resolve that they would make a supreme effort, the result would be more encouraging. Contests are beneficial. They usually introduce new talent and new names.

Mary Pickford told the members of the Screen Writers' Guild recently that in the future she wanted tailor-made stories written for her by writers who knew their screen. Producers want photoplays. They are not written overnight, or dashed off during lunch hour. Those who take the screen seriously will find that their work will be treated accordingly.
Results of Chicago News Contest

“Unknown” Writer Wins First Prize of $10,000 Against 27,000 Contestants

WITH 27,000 contestants anxiously awaiting the decision of the judges, announcement of the winners in the $30,000 Chicago Daily News scenario contest was made on March 31st. Miss Winifred Kimball, of Apalachicola, Florida, hitherto unknown as a writer, was awarded the first prize of $10,000. Her photoplay, “Broken Chains,” a story dealing with the theme of spiritual regeneration, was declared by the judges to be almost a perfect example of screen drama. It was immediately forwarded to the western studios of the Goldwyn Pictures Corporation and is now in course of production.

Miss Kimball, who won out against practically every professional in the country, again demonstrated to skeptics the fact that the art of writing for the screen is different from that of creating fiction, as only two of the professional fictionists landed in the money. The story of the winner’s good fortune reads, itself, like a scenario. A member of an aristocratic Southern family which, through financial reverses, had been brought almost to the point of desperation, Miss Kimball gained success just in time to avoid losing the ancestral home, which was soon to have been sold for nonpayment of taxes. With her widowed invalid sister, Miss Kimball, according to reports, has bravely maintained the burden of supporting a family left destitute and in the history of which tragedy has played an important role. Some time ago her father, his fortune wiped out by a sudden change in the lumber market, committed suicide. A few weeks later her sister’s husband, driven to extremity by worry, also ended his own life. Left alone, the two sisters, with a faithful colored servant, did everything possible to fight the battles of daily existence. Hoping to find a means of support for herself and her sister, Miss Kimball took up the study of photoplay technique. For three years discouragement was the only result. Story after story from her typewriter was returned to her by the school in which she studied, as not being up to the standard. Eventually, however, building upon the lessons learned from previous failures, she constructed the drama that won the $10,000 prize, and which undoubtedly will make her famous.

The contest conducted by the Chicago Daily News has done much to encourage interest in photoplay writing, and the fact that but two professional writers were able to win prizes—both of them being authors who have made a special study of screen technique—should be highly encouraging to those who may have believed that their ignorance of writing might militate against their success in the motion picture world. A complete list of the prize winners, with the titles of the winning photoplays, follows:

First prize, $10,000: Miss Winifred Kimball, Apalachicola, Florida. “Broken Chains.”


From Pen to Silversheet

By Melvin M. Riddle

VI—CASTING THE CHARACTERS

To visualize the type, characteristics, temperament and physical and mental qualities of a conceived character and to determine the actor or actress who can best interpret that part upon the screen and secure the services of that actor or actress is the trying task of the casting director of a modern film studio, who, because of the responsibility attached to his position is one of the principal figures in importance in the film industry.

Such a task may not seem on first thought to be so difficult, but let us consider. In the first place, there is an infinite variety of characterizations to be filled, in any large studio where several unit companies are being cast all at the same time. This necessitates a rare qualification. The casting director must be a keen student of human nature. He must be able to pick types who look and act the part naturally. If the story calls for a weakling, he must pick a man with a weak face. If the story calls for a suave “heavy” or an eastside crook, he must call to mind someone on his list whose face and characteristics convey such an impression.

From this it follows that the casting director must be a man of long experience in the theatrical and motion picture professions. He must be intimately acquainted with the type and ability of a good majority of all the actors and actresses on the stage and screen. Such a knowledge can only be built up by years of association with stage and screen talent.

“For a point of general information,” says L. M. Goodstadt, casting director at the Lasky studio, “we try to know a little something about everybody who wears a make-up—from stars to the cheapest extra people. We never can tell when we will need just such a character as a certain person might be best fitted for, both from a standpoint of type and acting ability, and the only way around the problem is to know them all, or as many as possible.

“In order to accomplish this colossal aim, I find it necessary to keep constantly in touch with what the players are doing, by seeing their work on the screen. This means that I must see at least ten or twelve pictures every week—not only our own pictures, but those of other organizations as well. When I see a picture I take special notice of the work of each player in the cast, just how much ability he has, what possibilities he may have, how he photographs and for what kind of parts he is best fitted. If possible, I see them in the theatre, as the opinion of the audience is always valuable.

In considering a player for a part, I have the director and often the studio manager or supervising director sit in with me as I run a reel or two showing his work. In a matter of such importance, several heads are better than one.

“In casting,” continued the official, “we always try to combine type with the ability to act. In fact, if it comes to an absolute showdown, histrionic ability will supersede type, because the good actor can assume expressions other than his own, but the type without ability cannot do justice to a part. The ideal combination is a good actor who is also the right type. We cannot afford to take a man with little or no ability and put him in a part just because he is a type. It is also imperative to get as many well-known and capable people as possible in each cast. Some producers may have said, ‘The star is popular—she is a good actress, she will carry the picture. We needn’t worry much about the other players.’ This is a very poor policy. To make a good picture it is necessary to have every characterization interpreted by a good actor or actress.

“In addition to selecting and employing the
players who have already achieved fame and proved their ability, we are constantly on the lookout for new talent. When we discover new personalities—men or girls who show signs of latent ability, we put them in small bits. If they do those well, we give them small parts, and so on up the ladder until they have established their respective abilities and can be entrusted to ably execute a big role. It is necessary to keep the new material coming in to supplant those who drop out or change in type because of age or other conditions. Many of the most famous screen players of today have been discovered and developed right at the Lasky studio."

The great army of extra people, many of whom depend upon the studios for the where-withal for their daily existence, is another interesting phase of the casting director’s work. There are something like five thousand so-called “extras” in Los Angeles and Hollywood. The percentage of these that climb to the top and achieve success is about one in every five hundred. The great majority of them will never be ranked as anything else but extras. Not a day passes but what a few new people make their appearance in the casting directors’ offices and make known their desire to work in motion pictures.

“Nearly every extra player or beginner thinks that he or she can easily act.” says Mr. Goodstadt. “They do not fully realize the verity that acting requires study and work and faithful application, just the same as all arts. It is up to us to determine just which ones have latent talent or possibilities. The first impression which a casting director gets of a new aspirant counts for much. Some, I can take one look at and realize that they have not one chance in a thousand years to succeed. Others, I can see might perhaps be useful as types and I catalogue them as such. Others show promise of good possibilities for several kinds of work—show versatility and histrionic ability. Those that are given an opportunity, I keep in mind and watch closely.

“The result of this is that we maintain at all times, a sort of reserve of about a hundred extra people—boys, girls, men and women, who have tried and proved, who we know can do the work, who have satisfied the directors and who can be depended upon.

“It must be remembered, however, that despite these figures, this profession is much the same as any other. It is the person with ability and initiative who gets to the top and I do not believe it an exaggeration to say that it is possible to ‘arrive’ in less time, in motion pictures, than in any other professional line.”

The average casting office has a very complete set of files which are cross indexed to save time and make them more practicable. For every principal, free-lance and extra player there is a big card with figures giving his or her height, weight and other physical data. These are cross-indexed into files of types, segregating heavies, juveniles, character people, leading women, leading men, etc.

According to Mr. Goodstadt, the casting director begins his work after his first conference with the writer of the story or scenario, wherein he obtains a definite idea of the story and characters. He then goes through his list of players in the files. He chooses a leading man and if the latter is available, puts him down for the part, and so on with the other players. When the first draft of the scenario is finished, the casting director gets a copy and proceeds with his work of casting. In this he confers with the director, the supervising director and possibly the general manager of the studio. By the time the picture is ready to star, a complete cast of characters has been assembled.

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**A Tip**

*By Clarence M. Lindsay*

“Say, what’s the matter with my script?

"Why doesn’t it ring true?"

It’s not in writing it you’ve tripped;
The trouble is with you!

Go get another slant on life!
Go live before you write!
Go suffer, fight, love, win the strife!—And then you'll write 'em right!"
The Guild Forum
A monthly department devoted to the interests of the Screen Writers' Guild of the Authors' League of America, the official organization of recognized photodramatists and studio staff writers.

The Screen Writers' Guild

OFFICERS
Frank E. Woods, President. Marion Fairfax, Vice-President. Elmer Harris, Treasurer and Executive Secretary. Lucien Hubbard, Recording Secretary.

Executive Committee
The officers and Thompson Buchanan, Waldemar Young, Eugene W. Presbrey, Jeanie MacPherson, Mary O'Connor, Milton Schwartz, Al Cohn.

NATIONAL elections shrank into insignificance on Thursday evening, April 16th, when members of the Screen Writers' Guild met at the Club House, Las Palmas Avenue and Sunset Boulevard, Hollywood, to participate in the annual election of officers.

Realizing that the coming year will mean much to the Guild and that those elected will have heavy responsibilities upon their shoulders, the members cast aside the usual jovial spirit of the Club House during the procedure, and for the time being one might have imagined that those present were voting upon the Four Powers Treaty—or that the destiny of nations was at stake. However, considering the many matters of policy that those at the helm must decide during the coming months, there was good reason for the extreme care taken by the members in the selection of the organization's leaders. The ones elected are men and women who have been foremost in the ranks of those in the movement to spread the truth about the motion picture profession throughout the country and to ward off the attacks that have been made upon the profession by various organizations and persons antagonistic to the art of motion pictures.

The new officers are: Frank E. Woods, President; Marion Fairfax, Vice-President; Elmer Harris, Treasurer and Secretary; Lucien Hubbard, Recording Secretary.

The following were elected members of the Executive Committee: Thompson Buchanan, Waldemar Young, Eugene W. Presbrey, Jeanie MacPherson, Mary O'Connor, Milton Schwartz and Al Cohn.

Heads of various committees for the coming year will be: Thompson Buchanan, Club Committee; Eugene W. Presbrey, Grievance Committee; Frederick Palmer, Copyright and Registration Committee; Waldemar Young, Censorship and Publicity Committee; Milton Schwartz, Legal Committee; Al Cohn, Entertainment Committee; Mary O'Connor, Welfare Committee; Albert Shelby LeVino, Library Committee.

Eleven new members were selected for the Advisory Council, and the Guild roster of the council, including both old and new members, is as follows: Ruth Ann Baldwin, Thompson Buchanan, Jack Cunningham, Dwight Cleveland, Marion Fairfax, Elmer Harris, Rupert Hughes, Frederick Palmer, Peter B. Kyne, Lucien Hubbard, Earl Percy Heath, Eugene W. Presbrey, Elmer L. Rice, Charles Kenyon, Edna Schley, Doris Schroeder, Rex Taylor, Bayard Veiller, Frank E. Woods, Rob Wagner, Waldemar Young, William C. De Mille, Charles Chaplin, June Mathis, Jeanie MacPherson, Mary Pickford, Douglas Fairbanks, Perley Poore Shee h a n, Beulah Marie Dix and Albert Shelby LeVino.

Registration Bureau
For the purpose of aiding members of the Screen Writers' Guild who are "free-lancing" or who are temporarily at liberty, the Executive Board of the Guild has established a registration bureau. This bureau will co-operate with both producers and authors, and studios which are seeking capable, experienced writers to add to their continuity or scenario staffs have expressed considerable satisfaction with this arrangement, as it enables them to secure on short notice a list of the best trained experts in screen technique to be found. A number of calls from the big production units have already been received and the positions open satisfactorily filled. Any trained scenarist who is a member of the Guild and who wishes either to secure a position or to make a change may register with the secretary of the Guild for this purpose.

Entertains Executive Committee
Frederick Palmer, well known scenario writer, was host on April 12th to members of the Executive Committee at a dinner in
the Club dining room. The affair was in commemoration of the retirement of Mr. Palmer from the executive body with which he has been associated since the organization of the Guild. Those present were: Mr. and Mrs. Frank E. Woods, Mr. and Mrs. Rob Wagner, Mr. and Mrs. Tully Marshall, Marion Fairfax, Albert LeVino, Mr. and Mrs. Elmer Harris, Mr. and Mrs. Milton Schwartz, Thompson Buchanan, Mr. and Mrs. Lucien Hubbard, Mr. and Mrs. Eugene B. Lewis, Mr. and Mrs. H. E. Teter, Roy L. Manker, Mr. and Mrs. S. M. Warmbath, Kate Corbaley, Jeanie MacPherson, June Mathis, Dwight Cleveland and Eugene W. Presbrey.

**Amend By-Laws**

A number of changes in the constitution and by-laws of the Guild were made at the annual meeting on April 6th, upon recommendation of the Legal Committee, of which Milton Schwartz is chairman. The principal changes had to do with the method of electing officers of the Executive Board, such elections to be made directly by members hereafter instead of by heads of the committees and the Advisory Council. Various sections of the constitution and by-laws also were simplified under the new ruling.

**Showing Results**

Although the publicity campaign inaugurated by the Guild for the purpose of abating the vicious attacks made upon the picture profession by reformers and sensational newspapers in various parts of the country has been in progress but a few weeks, results already indicate that great good has been accomplished thereby. Literature telling the real truth about Hollywood was recently mailed to editors of all the leading publications of the country. This information was authoritative and accurate, and sponsored by many of the biggest writers in America. In consequence, the newspapers realize that the early reports printed in their columns had been founded largely upon rumor, and those of the better class have hastened to make amendments for the injury that had unintentionally, in most instances, been inflicted upon the men and women who derive their livelihood from the screen. As is often the case, in cases of this kind, the wave of prejudice against motion pictures which was caused by early sensational reports of the Arbuckle and Taylor cases has not only subsided, but has, in fact, swept back in the opposite direction, overwhelming a large number of opportunists who had thought to gain political and financial profit therefrom. The Guild, however, does not intend to cease its efforts in placing the eighth art in its true light before the public, and during the coming year will carry on even more zealously its campaign of enlightenment.

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**Seek “Different” Photoplays**

As predicted by many noted educators and other authorities, the motion picture is rapidly spreading its influence over other fields than the purely theatrical one. Despite the enormous attendance at picture theatres during the past year, the government reports showing an average attendance of twenty millions per day, an insistent demand has arisen for films to be used in connection with schools, churches, club-houses, lecture courses and other non-theatrical purposes. Such pictures, of course, will be somewhat different from the ones shown in the theatres. At the same time, they must combine the element of entertainment and helpfulness, else they would necessarily fail in achieving the purpose of those fostering them.

In a recent letter Mr. J. B. Monnette, Secretary of the Silver Shield Service, a company formed for the purpose of producing this type of non-theatrical motion pictures, outlined story requirements of that corporation as follows:

“These pictures must, of necessity, be of a much different type than those which are produced for the theatrical field. They must be pictures equally as entertaining and fascinating and have just as much suspense and human heart interest in them; yet they must be cleaner, more wholesome and upon a much higher plane than other pictures.

“For instance, a love story should be the kind of a love story that would make our young people a little more tender and kind, a little more loving, and the kind of a story that would make you and me and every other man and woman look back at their real sweet heart days. The same thing would be true of both comedy and drama. In other words, it would be the difference between the real and the counterfeit expression of such things.”
CAREY WILSON has been made associate editor of the Goldwyn scenario department, according to announcement by Vice President Abraham Lehr. Mr. Wilson joined the studio staff three months after his story, “Captain Blackbird,” had been purchased. The company has since bought from him two other originals, “This Way Out” and “Women Love Diamonds.”

BEATRICE VAN and William Parker have just sold to Robertson-Cole an original story, “In Search of a Thrill,” for Doris May.

ELINOR GLYN has been engaged to write a story, “The Eyes of Truth,” depicting life in Hollywood as it really exists. Sol Lesser will film the production.

ORIGINAL STORIES, if the following may be taken as an indication, are being given preference over adaptations. Lottie Horner and Clyde Westover have sold another original story entitled, “The Greater Redemption.” Mr. Burston has just completed production of, “The Man From Downing Street” and “The Milky Way,” by the same authors.

“THE MAN UNCONQUERABLE,” is being directed by Joseph Henabery for Paramount. The photoplay is an adaptation by Julien Josephson of an original story by Hamilton Smith.

SCIENCE has always been considered a difficult and uninteresting subject to interweave in the photoplay. However, Marshall Neilan’s next First National production is based upon the invention of the radiophone, the new wireless talking instrument.

THE SELZNICK picture units will soon arrive at the United Studios in Los Angeles, according to announcement made by M. C. Levee, president of the studio corporation.

A COUNTRY-WIDE canvas by the Goldwyn Scenario Department shows that public taste is swinging toward society dramas. Consequently, the company is in the market for a series of big stories depicting life among the rich.

FOR ONCE the movies have got ahead of the magazines in the publication of a story. Clarence Budington Kelland’s “Across the Deadline,” written for Frank Mayo as an original story, is shortly to be published in a national magazine.

WITH THE PRODUCTION of “Her Man,” Marshall Neilan’s newest picture just started, artificial sets will be eliminated entirely. Mr. Neilan has leased an old fashioned hotel in South Pasadena, which offers settings for both interiors and exteriors.

HUGO BALLIN is working at the New York Biograph studio on his next production—based on a story that won the $1,000 prize recently offered by Ballin to Chicago writers.

JOHNSTON McCULLEY has written an original story for Jack Pickford, and production will begin shortly at the United Studios.

CHARLOTTE STEVENS, the beauty contest winner from Chicago, is making her first appearance as a leading lady in a Bobby Vernon comedy written by Robert Hall and directed by Harold Beaudine and Bobby Vernon.

THE M. P. Utility Corporation will leave San Francisco presently for Japan to film two stories written by Elean Jurodo.

GEORGE RANDOLPH CHESTER, the widely known magazine writer, has been made supervising editor of the scenario staff at the Universal studios.

“FIRES OF VENGEANCE,” the Irving Cummings production starring Lon Chaney, is nearing completion. Louis Weadock is working on the subtitles.

FRED CALDWELL is writing the continuity for a seven-reel comedy drama starring Jack Perrin and Josephine Hill.

EARL METCALFE will portray the leading role in Rupert Hughes’ “Bitterness of Sweet.” Hughes and Metcalfe served together as Majors in the 69th New York Regiment during the World War.

LASKY STUDIO will consider stories for the following stars: Betty Compson, Gloria Swanson, Dorothy Dalton, Thomas Meighan and Wallace Reid. Also, unusual stories for all-star special features.

UNIVERSAL FILM Manufacturing Co. is in the market for stories for five-reel productions, for either star or all-star features.

ROBERT SHERWOOD in a late issue of “Life” says: “Superficially, Hollywood has somewhat the appearance of a quiet college
town. The studios take the place of the university buildings and the picture people take the place of the students."

IT IS NOTHING new when a producer adapts a stage play for screen purposes, but a reverse of procedure should prove interesting. There is insistent talk that C. Gardner Sullivan's original screen play, "Hail the Woman," is to be considered seriously as a stage production next season.


MRS. LILLIAN Trimble Bradley has joined the Lasky scenario staff. Mrs. Bradley is the author of such successful stage plays as "The Wonderful Thing," and "Mr. Mid's Mystery," and co-author of "The Moon on the Index."

RICHARD BUTLER GLAENZER, poet, short story writer, and critic, is the latest literary celebrity to hear the call of the movies. Mr. Glaenzer has been added to the Goldwyn scenario department.

"REMEMBRANCE" is the tentative title of another personally directed Rupert Hughes production, which is said to be of the same genre as "The Old Nest."

ESTABAN LLOYD SHELDON, a well-known writer from New York, is now writing for Mary Pickford at her ranch at Crescent Junction.

Will H. Hays Bans Arbuckle Films

Following a consultation with the heads of the Famous Players-Lasky Corporation and Nicholas Schenck, representing Joseph Schenck, financial backer of Roscoe (Fatty) Arbuckle, Will H. Hays, head of the newly organized Motion Picture Producers and Distributors, has issued an order banning any film, in which Arbuckle plays a part, from distribution in America.

This ruling will cost the Lasky organization and Mr. Schenck several millions of dollars, since three films made prior to the now famous "Labor Day Party," that ended in the Arbuckle trial at San Francisco, have been held on the shelf, awaiting a final verdict by the jury—a verdict, by the way, which resulted in a complete exoneration of Arbuckle.

Asked to explain the purposes that resulted in such a drastic ruling, Mr. Hays informed members of the press that the move was made for the best interests of the motion picture industry as a whole. "The purposes of our organization," he said, "are to attain and to maintain the highest moral and artistic standards, and the ruling has been made in accordance with that idea. Beyond that, I have nothing to say at the present moment."

Plot Recipe

By Myrtle Bella Graves

First, choose a thrilling situation
From out the list of thirty six;
Then add to it, imagination,
And stir until they start to mix.
Next plan the hero's knotty problem
Of how he wins the girl he wants;
Insert the force which tries to rob them
Of love. Within each heart ensconce
Real, life-like traits. Then add some humor.
Have ample cause for each event—
Write logic, not mere talk or rumor;
And leave no doubt just what is meant.
And then — unless your plot is better
Than those the famous authors do,
Best tear it up! — Make Fame your debtor
By working; then she'll smile on you!
PICTURIZING NOVELS
By S. P. Kingston

Recently I saw the photoplay Rip Van Winkle, and while the picture and the acting were good I was disappointed because it did not come up to what I imagined or pictured when previously reading the story. This brought up the question in my mind at once, why does the picturized book story so often fail? Probably no two people picturize the same story in a like manner, even when minute details are given, and naturally most everyone will feel that the picture is not just right. You read of a dozen or a hundred people see a hundred different mountains. Madam DuBarry seemed so odd in the picture that we looked it up in the book upon reaching home. So far as we could find, the picture was correct but not as we had imagined. This is where the original photoplay will always take the lead over the picturized book story. Perhaps to read the story in book form after seeing the picture would go very well, never tried it, but to read the story, then see the picture, I find generally they do not synchronize. Perhaps other readers of The Photodramatist have had a similar experience.

"HUMAN CHEER"
By Norman F. Smith

To live the longer the story must in the main have cheer. It must create impressions of the soul that are fond to human memories and are beautiful to feel. Though it may tear the heart with sorrow, it must leave it sweet with human cheer ere it is done.

Cheer can only be where human sympathies are saved. Though to create it, those joyful sympathies must once be all but lost, they must arise again, in full supremacy when the story ends and strife is done. To create must arise again, in full supremacy when the cheer, cheer that springs like echoes from the trast. There must be elements that appeal to human sympathies tenderly and deep in meaning. They must be true to human hearts. They must create impressions that penetrate and live in human souls like things of life. And then, there must be elements of direct and intense contrast. They must penetrate the heart with dread and sorrow. They must be strong and deep in meaning and must cause the heart to shudder.

Circumstances must then bring the two elements together and present them in their ultimate qualities and powers. They must be thrown together in a strife, a strife which it is inevitable that one shall win and the other die. And the qualities of these two elements must be such that for the one of contrast to win means horror and destruction of the soul, and for the one of sympathy to win means joy and human cheer. And the circumstances must be such that it appears that powers of contrast must conquer, but only in the end to fail.

These elements are represented by human people. The presence of the elements of contrast, or dread and sorrow, it is only to emphasize the true meaning of the other, cheer and joy. Unconsciously, when they are presented together, the mind then compares them, and realizes their great difference. And the fear of lost sympathies creates understanding of the soul. It is not until they are gone that the soul understands. It is not until they rise again that cheer will come.

To create. Glad sympathies must be aroused, then destroyed and then returned. To live in human hearts, it must bring visions there that are pleasant to recall. There is nothing so pleasant and beautiful as sweet human cheer.

MORE SENSE OF FITNESS
By Charles Kern

It would be perhaps a good idea if students of photoplay writing learned not only photoplay technic, but also good manners and tact. To elucidate: The other day I went to see "The Iron Trail," a large group of men are building a railroad bridge over a river covered with floating ice. Every minute of the day they are risking their health, limbs and life. When the bridge is completed, the heroine steps up to these men and calls them cowards. The bridge is located on Copper River under the Childs Glacier in Alaska. I recognized it at once, because I was one of the men who built said bridge. You can take my word for it, that cowards could not survive the hardships and dangers of Alaska railroad building for very long. They either turned tail or they were buried underneath three feet of frozen ground, alongside a lot of good men. After seeing "The Iron Trail" I felt naturally very kindly towards Rex Beach or whoever wrote the scenario.

Sometime ago I was a foreman, in charge of a railroad construction camp. A traveling motion picture exhibitor asked my permission to show his wares. His film depicted a railroad under construction, in one of the subtitles we railroad men were called: Human Beasts of Burden. After the performance I had to lend the exhibitor the fastest horse in my corral, to keep my crew from lynching him. It is a sad fact, that 75 per cent of the theatregoing public have to work for a living, but just the same they don't want to be called Human Beasts of Burden, after they have paid a two-bit admission.

Several million men went to France, to make the world safe for democracy. Those who returned were called "Saturday Night," a fine piece of snobbishry, in which they were told that (Continued on Page 38)
Comment: With almost no plot at all in the accepted sense of the word, this clever little comedy in the usual John Emerson-Anita Loos style affords abundant entertainment. No one but writers who thoroughly understand how to please the people could put together as many dissipated bits and make them pleasing as a whole. Not the story of Polly's struggle will remain longest in the spectators' memories, though that is distinctly there as the backbone of the piece; but the interpolated shows which give the greatest opportunities for laughs. The small town amateur performance is a "riot." Because it is a "movie" there is not a word spoken; instead, signs from the store are displayed; at the appropriate moment, "Do you cut the cuticle." This is one of the cleverest burlesques on the hackneyed "movie" seen on the screen in many a day, and includes, beside, the emotions and sophisticated as well as ingenious remarks of the childish spectators. In the other interpolated portion, the inimitable "Connie" gives a screamingly funny burlesque of Cleopatra and again the subtitles carry a large share of the amusement. In spite of all the buffoonery the picture presents a theme and a number of tense situations, while exaggerated for effect, the story still contains a number of exceedingly human touches, especially when Polly sets each amateur actress doing the thing she likes to do and therefore does best. Only master hands could screen so much technique under so much humor.

Synopsis: Polly Meacham, who is but a drudge in her uncle Silas' country store, puts on an amateur "movie" for the benefit of the children when her uncle causes the local house to be closed. Meanwhile, in the city the half-intoxicated Bob Jones proposes to Alysia Potter that they elope and thus avoid boredom. Because they take in Polly's show while waiting for the justice, they are caught by Alysia's mother and promised a big wedding. Unable to endure her uncle's cruelty, Polly goes to the city, forces herself into a Ziegfield rehearsal and masterfully engages herself for the show. Bob finds her and persuades her to come to the assistance of his mother who is trying to put on an amateur performance. Polly rearranges the affair so that each person does what she likes, and thereby makes each a success and wins the love of Bob. Alysia revolts against her mother's plans, assumes Polly's place in the Follies, and arranges matters for Bob and Polly.

LOVE'S REDEMPTION
Reviewed by Elizabeth Niles

Comment: Bandi is the only word to describe the plot of this stereotyped story. It is lacking in thrilling action; there is no gripping human interest; it is not even amusing. Its one redeeming quality is that it is a very pretty story to which no censor could take exception; occasionally it is a pleasure to find the world running all so smoothly. The conflict is too crude on the part of the family in England to arouse much interest and the climax is too easily guessed. The characterization is inclined to follow the rubber stamped types, except as Norma Talmadge and Harrison Ford give their own personalities to their roles. The story without these stars and the Jamaica setting would interest very few spectators.

Synopsis: Jennie Dobson, commonly called Ginger, who has been the housekeeper for Captain Hennessey until his return to England from Jamaica, applies to the steward of the men's club for another position. At this moment Clifford Standish, a younger son not wanted at home by his snobbish family in England, reels across the veranda and is helped upon his horse in an intoxicated condition. Ginger asks the steward for a letter to Standish. Arriving at Standish's unkempt plantation, she takes over the management of the negro servants, the unscrupulous overseer and finally Standish himself, whom she persuades to leave whiskey alone. Meanwhile a remark from a former admirer of Ginger is taken as an insult by Standish; this reveals to him he is in love with her. While he is gone for a license, his brothers arrive from England to inform him that he has inherited a large estate; learning his relations with Ginger they persuade her to write a letter renouncing her love for Standish. In spite of protests, however, the young people are married and go to England. There Standish's family try to make Ginger appear very much out of place; after she has made a scene upon discovering a supposed friend's cheating her husband at cards she resolves to return to Jamaica. Standish agrees that his wife is out of place in England and packs up and goes with her.

FOOL'S PARADISE
Reviewed by Elizabeth Niles

Comment: The first part of the story offers an unusual series of situations which hold the interest at high tension. Not for many days has such an excellent emotional appeal been made to the picture public. The latter half of the story, however, dealing with the chase to the ends of the earth, begins a picture of
THE PHOTODRAMATIST FOR MAY

33

An entirely different caliber. It has its appeal but it is to the eye and not to the emotions. While the scenes are interesting as marvelous sets, they serve little purpose in the story beyond emphasizing the man behind the character. The characterization in the first part is poignantly appealing and deeply human. What could be more dramatic than the relations of the blind poet and the Mexican girl of the streets whom he thinks is his idealized Rosa? We can only wish the latter half had been treated more subjectively and the gorgeous sets reserved for another story.

Synopsis: Having once met the beautiful Rosa Duchene during the war, Arthur Phelps carries her image in his heart to the oil fields of Texas and decorates his shack with her posters and photographs. To her he addresses his poems. One day she is scheduled to dance in El Paso. While awaiting her arrival he unconsciously fascinates a Mexican dancer, Poll Patchouli and arouses the jealousy of her lover, Roderiguez. Because her advances are scorned, Poll thinks to play a trick on Arthur by giving him a discarded club. He stands at the stage door after greeting Rosa; when it explodes he staggers to his seat. He watches Rosa to the end of the performance and then goes utterly blind. One day he wanders into a group of men whom Poll is amusing with an imitation of Rosa. He thinks it is the real Rosa and Poll conceives the idea of winning his love by pretending to be Rosa returned to him. At last he accepts her sacrifice and they are married. They live happily until one day Poll reads in a newspaper of a great eye specialist. Realizing the risk she is running, Poll takes Arthur to him for an operation. When the bandages are removed, Arthur discovers the deception Poll has been playing and his anger knows no bounds. Only the timely coming in of his oil well saves her from his anger.

After a long search Arthur finds his beloved Rosa at the far ends of the earth at the court of Talat-Noi. He tries to persuade her to come away with him, but finds a strong rival in Talat-Noi. When forced to choose between them, Rosa throws her glove in the alligator pit. This disgusts Arthur but when Talat-Noi, who had immediately jumped into the pit loses his footing and in falling strikes his head against a stone, Arthur jumps to his rescue. Disillusioned Arthur returns to Texas and though Poll scorches his friendly advances, he is saved from the knife of Roderiguez by her throwing herself in front of him. Roderiguez flees and Arthur and Poll are reconciled.

ONE GLORIOUS DAY

Reviewed by Laura Jansen

Comment: A very interesting story, which may go over the heads of many people, however. The dramatic tempo has been well carried on until the end; at times the story turns into farce, then it switches back into drama. Without Ek, a joyous imp, the story would be quite commonplace. It is an interesting novelty, no more.

Synopsis: Taking the commonplace little story of a pretty girl loved by a bashful professor and desired by a wealthy young man, the authors, by working in spiritualistic doctrines and bringing the character of "Ek" an unborn soul in search of a human body, have created a unique story with a great deal of laughable action and some drama. Ezra Botts, professor, is very shy. He is considered as a "nut" by the village people and is interested in spiritualism, claiming that he is able to release his spirit from his body and will do so at a certain time. This claim is made before a group of enthusiastic spiritualists.

Botts lives alone and Mrs. McIntire is his housekeeper. Her young daughter, Molly, has long been in love with the professor but he does not notice it. Ben Wedley, rich and idle, sees Molly and wants to marry her. Mrs. McIntire would not be averse to the marriage and, Molly accepts Ben rather reluctantly, it must be said.

The professor is supposed to send his spirit at ten o' clock to entertain the gathering at the spiritualistic society. Ben's mother leaves her home for a visit and Ben calls up Molly, saying his mother is ill and wants her. Botts is asleep in his library, preparing himself for the experiment.

Pat Curran, a grafting politician has been fostering the candidacy of Botts for mayor as he hopes to be the real mayor and reap a big harvest in graft. The professor has meekly done everything Pat has ordered, so far.

"Ek" the spirit of an unborn child, waiting his turn to reach the earth in a baby's body, decides he is tired of waiting, shoots through acons of stars and satelites and lands on the earth, one second too late, as the stork has brought the baby into whose body he intended to creep. He wanders aimlessly and listens to people talking, is bewildered by men's deeds and desires and watches an opportunity to find a body.

This opportunity comes when the professor succeeds in making his soul leave his body and Ek creeps into it. While the spirit of the professor wanders outside and goes to the spiritualistic meeting where he fails to make the people "see" him, and, in despair decides to re-enter his own body, Ek takes Botts body first to the club where Ben, Pat and others are drinking. He drinks after knocking several men down and leaves the place with a big stick, a cigar and a gun. He goes to the church and among the spiritualists, leaving the hall, convinced that Botts failed in his attempt, and shocks them all.

He then goes to a gilded cafe where he has a good time. Pat, who has been advised of the strange behavior of his mild candidate, reproves him and is properly beaten, the onlookers, voting to support Botts' candidacy, pleased with his new self.

Molly, before leaving the house, since her mother has gone to a picture show, left a note for Botts, advising him that she had gone to Wedley's house. Botts finds this note and hastens there, while his spirit, dejected, goes home and is staggered to find his body gone. He begins an aimless search for it. He meets a soul just leaving a body after a night attack by gunmen but refuses to accompany it to Heaven. He must find his own body first.

Botts runs to Wedley's and arrives in time to save Molly from an attack by Ben, who is thoroughly drunk. Ben gets treated roughly and Botts tells Molly of his love. He takes her home where her mother has been anxious.

(Continued on Page 38)
Q. Which is it advisable to write from a commercial viewpoint; drama or comedy drama? V. L.
A. It is our belief that good comedy drama is the easiest to sell.

Q. What should be the difference between a Brief Synopsis and a Detailed Synopsis? M. S. T.
A. The brief should contain a short statement of the purpose of the story and the main situation. Any claim to novelty or originality in treatment should also be indicated. In other words, the brief is chiefly valuable in interesting editors in the reading of the detailed synopsis. The detailed synopsis should tell the story in a straightforward manner, not omitting nothing that is of value in characterization, creation of atmosphere or plot development.

Q. What is the difference between a Multiple Reel and a Serial? H. Mc.
A. Multiple Reel is usually applied to subjects over five reels—Super Features. A Serial is released in installments; two reels a week—about fifteen episodes.

Q. Which is better to use, a prologue or a cutback? N. Q.
A. It is much better to avoid prologues, or retrospective action, in the main body of the story. Generally this can be accomplished by proper construction of your plot material. If it is necessary to show action which takes place several years previous to the main action of the story, it is generally better to make use of the cut back. It is difficult to advise you definitely in regard to this question without your material before us, as a great deal depends upon the construction.

Q. Why don't we have more children's stories upon the screen? The average audience is over twenty-five and sometimes fifty per cent children, and to my idea this fact should be considered by the producer. What is your opinion? R. S.
A. You are right in your contention that the screen should have more good children's stories and that children should be considered as an important part of an audience. We believe producers are coming to realize this more and more because there have been some excellent productions recently such as the Edgar stories of Booth Tarkington and the Jacie Ogden and "Dribbles" Barry stories.

Q. Is it good policy to use a business deal as the foundation of a photoplay story? A. E.
A. Business deals, when used in photoplays, can only be made interesting when they serve as the background for a big emotional dramatic conflict. Be careful, therefore, not to allow the business conflict to predominate over the character conflict.

Q. In writing a photoplay synopsis is it necessary to put in every little detail and happening? Is that not the continuity writer's job? W. P.
A. Do not place too much burden upon the continuity writer. Develop your action and incidents thoroughly. By this we do not mean that you have to describe every trivial movement of the characters, but merely all action and events that advance the plot to lesser or greater degree.

Q. How long should a photoplay be? Have understood that brevity is desired. M. B.
A. There is no standard rule. Needless conversation should be eliminated, and also long descriptions. Make the story interesting to read, and one that will hold the attention of the readers. It is not the length that counts, but the subject matter and the appeal. F. W.

Q. Is it necessary to copyright my stories? B. R.
A. If you desire absolute protection against infringement, by all means attend to the copyright. After this has been taken care of, plainly write this upon the first page of the manuscript, giving the date and the Act under which it is copyrighted. A. P.

Q. Just what is meant by characterization? A. J.
A. It is the detailed description of each of the characters in your story. For instance, their clothing, individual traits, habits, characteristics, actions, and even their ideals that must be shown in action upon the screen. D. B.

Q. I am mixed up on the terms "theme" and "plot." These are used in many publications. Will you kindly explain the difference? W. N.
A. Theme is the base upon which the story is founded. Plot is the elaboration of this base or theme. For instance, in "The Old Nest" the theme is "Mother Love," the plot is the skeleton, or outline upon which the story is built. M. M.

Q. Should the cast of characters simply state the names of the people or should it explain and describe each character? D. N.
A. The cast should give the names and a brief description of each character and should also state their relationship to each other.

Q. Should I use the present or the past tense in writing my synopsis? H. L. M.
A. This is a matter of individual choice. However most screen writers prefer the present as they feel they can present their story somewhat more forcibly and as if it were an actual happening at the moment. A. M.

Q. Do court room scenes make good climaxes to a story? S. K. D.
A. Generally speaking, no. The reason for this is that it is next to impossible to get the excitement into them that is present in the real thing. There is bound to be a certain amount of formality in a court room scene and there is a tendency to repress what might otherwise be big emotional scenes. If the climax can be arranged so that it takes place in less formal surroundings, there is a far better chance to bring out the individuality of the characters.
Film Producers are Calling:
"Author—AUTHOR!"

I

A national search for new screen writers, motion picture producers are combing the highways and by-ways of American life for everyday people to write screen stories that will command the handsome figures they offer. In the last six months more than $50,000.00 in scenario contest prizes have been offered by producers and newspapers in the quest for screenable stories. "Author—author!" The authors of tomorrow's screen dramas are now engaged in occupations in which their natural imaginative powers do not receive full play. Just as today's successful screen writers were situated before they tested their imagination and found that they were endowed with the natural ability to visualize and paint imaginative picture stories in simple everyday language.

Recently a California school teacher; a Chicago society matron; a Pennsylvania newspaper editor; an underpaid office man in Utah; a prisoner in the Arizona jail; the stenographer and many others, sold their stories at handsome prices, became studio staff writers or won big sums of money in scenario contests. Not one of these was a recognized author; not one was a master of literary skill. All were sought and discovered by a photoplay corporation aiding the producers in their search for undeveloped screen writing talent through a novel questionnaire test. You have the same opportunity to test your ability to write scenarios.

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Common Faults in Continuity Writing
(Continued from Page 12)

acy. That is not real justice, because it is good fortune. Let the prize, whatever it may be, come as the just reward, not the accidental reward, of true merit.

But I come now to one of the things more frequently omitted from the average syn-
opsis submitted almost than anything else. I mean beauty.

It is astonishing (and here we go back to what I said at the beginning; that very few would-be writers seem able to visualize) how little provision writers for the screen make up for the eyes of the audi-
ence—astonishing how seldom they give us sufficient beauty.

I believe any director is instantly attracted by a setting that means beautiful, or even unusual, shots.

In this connection I close with a “pointer.” One of the European plays attracting very much attention because of its originality was “The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari.” Many directors would welcome a story that gave as logical a reason for having settings so unusual and interesting. Who will invent us one?

The Screen Drama League
(Continued from Page 10)

there are also words spoken that should not be spoken, plays which should not be shown, books that should not be written, but not on account of these shall we lose the priceless heritage of free speech? Prosecute the offend-
ers against decencies, but do not lose our right of freedom, our right of expression.

“No picture can please everyone. Each human being thinks differently on different subjects from every other human being. Thus it is that a picture which may seem all right in the West or in the East may displease the South, and vice versa. Three individuals in each area will view a picture. By the time they get through with it there would be noth-
ing left of the original picture, while, if seen by an average normally-minded audience in its be-

ning, there might not have been a single thing in it to offend them.

“Censors are to be appointed by the party that happens to be in power, as I understand it. Follow this out to its logical conclusion.

and let the political party that happens to be in power appoint censors, show only what they want to be shown, and eliminate what they do not want to be seen or heard, and they could become seated on a throne of autocracy forever.

“The bigger and better class of films are not made for children. Do you want to censor all of these—ideas that are put into pictures and shown to grown-up people—according to the idea of a child six or seven years of age?

“If the laws upon the Statute Books are not strong enough to punish adequately the guilty, then make them stronger; but let us leave cen-
sorship where it belongs—to the government of such as the late Kaiser of Germany, and the late Tsar of Russia, and the old intolerant gov-
ernments that broke men’s bodies upon racks and wheels of torture.”

“The Third Dimension”
(Continued from Page 14)

action to circumstances goes back beyond the characters themselves to the inherited strain. This causation is so powerfully presented that critics have repeatedly re-
ferred to the play as a study in hereditary insanity. I disagree with this label most emphatically. It is first of all the portrayal of conflict between desire and duty; and it is the wife’s conflict primarily,—not the daughter’s. It is the daughter’s discovery of the hereditary taint that solves the sit-
uation, true; and the daughter’s conflict is a poignant one. But it is the reaction of the wife upon which the plot turns and that makes it her conflict.

The treatment of this principle of the third dimension, more than anything else, perhaps, marks the difference between the mere literary workman and the artist. The workman has a certain skill in the use of his tools, he can turn out an article for which he receives payment. But a work-
man is a workman. And unless he can acquire that instinct by which he gives depth and vitality to his creations,—until, in other words, he can endow them with the third dimension,—he can never be an artist.
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First Stories
(Continued from Page 17)

...ters figure, but which have nothing whatever to do with the basic plot. For instance, Betty might be involved in a plot which threatens to rob her of her valuable oil lands, but the author has an idea that his story will not run five reels, so he takes us on a drive through the woods with Betty, and then brings us all back into town to witness a shopping tour. Perhaps, Betty meets Jenny who tells us all about her sister’s cute little boy who saved his playmate from being run over by a passing automobile. Oh yes, we are compelled to sit through a retrospect of the thrilling scene where the child grabs his blue-eyed companion by her fair hair and drags her out of the path of the on-rushing taxicab! After witnessing all this, it is no wonder that the audience becomes confused and wonders what story the author is really trying to tell—Betty’s story and her oil problems, or the story of Jenny’s cute little heroic nephew. Getting the audience confused is one of the curses of retrospect action—and yet, the beginner seems to insist upon writing his story in such a way that retrospects of every nature, form and size burst right in upon each seemingly worth while dramatic situation.

Writing by Ear
(Continued from Page 16)

...intensely, to feel himself in a world significant at every point and palpitating in response, to study the customs and conditions of the people of whom he is writing, and on top of all this to study technic so that he can make the proper and correct presentation of his observations. One might observe for years, but without the knowledge of the proper technic, his story will not get over.

Photoplays in Review
(Continued from Page 33)

...ly waiting for her. There he faints. Ek, disgusted, leaves his body giving a chance to Bott’s own soul to re-enter his body, which he does.

The professor is brought to and becomes once more the “dub” he was but there is a new note in his voice. The following day, men crowd to congratulate him on the way he cleaned up Pat and his bunch, also Ben, and Molly listens happily, thankful that she has won the man she loved. Ek, having accomplished a little good, decides that after all, it might be best to await his turn to go back on earth and floats back to the limitless spaces.

Comment From Student Writers
(Continued from Page 31)

...it is not well for the rich to mix with the poor and that it is preposterous for the poor to aspire to be rich. The budding scenarists, who do not know the meaning of the word Democracy, should see “The Ruling Passion,” which is in beautiful contrast to “Saturday Night.”

Twenty-four years ago the Spanish American war was brought to a successful conclusion. Last week a picture was shown on Broadway, in which the villain is a villain because he is a Spaniard, in which a mob commits a very unchivalrous act, because it is composed of Cubans. The hero is a hero because he is a prohibition agent. Prohibition is no doubt a very popular institution with people like the author of “A Game Chicken.” The heroine in this play is more than “game.” With her great talents and beauty she saves a hopeless and mannerless play from becoming an absolute failure. Eventually “A Game Chicken” will drift to South America, and no doubt it will help to boost the American motion picture industry.

People who are too narrow minded to overcome their ingrown prejudices, people who want to use the screen to make propaganda for their pet theories and bigotries will do well to stay with their present vocations of manuring cows, grooming bed-rooms and posting ledgers. The motion picture industry will be better off without them.
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Meeting the Men Whose Books You Read

"I must meet Bernard Shaw," said Charlie Chaplin when he arrived in London. So his friends took him to Shaw's home. He notices on the door a little brass plate and wonders if there is anything significant in Shaw's name being engraved in brass! He is about to lift the knocker when he remembers reading somewhere that every movie actor arriving in London invariably visits Shaw. So, "No, I don't want to meet him," says Charlie and retreats hastily.

But he does meet H. G. Wells and Sir James Barrie and Barrie asks him to play Peter Pan.

In Berlin Charlie meets Poli Negri. He is enchanted. "She is beautiful. She is Polish and true to the type. Beautiful jet-black hair, white, even teeth and wonderful coloring. . . I ask Kaufman how to say in German, 'I think you are divine.' He tells me something in German and I repeat it to her. She is startled, looks up and slaps my hand. 'Naughty boy,' she says. The table roars and I sense that I have been double-crossed by Kaufman. . . I learn later that I have said 'I think you are terrible.' I decide to go home and learn German."

This is just a peep into the fascinating book, "My Trip Abroad," by Charlie Chaplin. Screenland has just secured exclusive publishing rights of this amusing account of the great comedian's triumphal journey in Europe and will publish it serially, beginning with the June issue.

No writer should miss these intriguing glimpses into the lives and thoughts of the greatest modern authors. If you would know Barrie as Chaplin knows him; if you would meet H. G. Wells in his home; if you would wander through London slums with Thomas Burke, the gifted author of "Limehouse Nights," by all means read every instalment of "My Trip Abroad."

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"The Key to the Studio Door"

By Vianna Knowlton

Of the Famous Players-Lasky Scenario Staff

"I heard, Miss, you're in the movies, an' I want to get in an' I wondered if you could tell me how?" The mail carrier in a small town voiced the plea. How could he get into a Studio? 'Oh, no! Not as an actor, but as a writer. He had "lots of grand ideas for pictures" and he knew that he could write "just as good as the one who wrote 'Twiddle Your Thumbs' for that new star, Flossie Fairhair."

He confessed that once, in a burst of enthusiasm, he had written to the Studio which produced Flossie's picture, saying that he would "take any job at all so's to learn how to write," but the Studio replied coldly and honestly that it was not a classroom and had not time in which to teach aspiring beginners. It was, however, always interested in original stories and a good original had been known to open the door of the Studio to the writer. The letter from the Studio had fired the mail carrier with ambition. He would write an original, an original so good that the Studio would pounce upon it and buy it, after which it would present him with the key to the Studio door. He, at once, had visioned himself adding that precious key to his key-ring and proudly strutting through the door to the fame and fortune which were sure to lie beyond.

Alas, the dream had never materialized. He had discovered that other townspeople, the doctor, the lawyer and merchant, down to the butcher, the baker and the candlestick-maker were writing scenarios and bombarding the Studio with them. And it was his sad duty to deliver in the mail boxes of his fellow-townsmen the long thin, bulky envelopes containing the manuscripts rejected by Miss Fairhair. Never a manuscript was sent out that did not, in time, return,—and the manuscripts of the mail carrier were no exception. Discouragement had set in, and the whole town, plunged in despair, had muttered, "there ain't no key to the Studio door, and if there be—it ain't an original story."

Said the merchant, "And I hated to give up, because I know there's a fortune in waiting for the screen if you can just land a story once. But we, outside, don't stand a chance. They never read our stuff, or, if they do, they pick out the good ideas and keep them and send back the story to us. But I would like to be on the inside, for that's where the money is."

The baker's complaint was this, "But I can't see why they don't take my stories. D'you remember how big those mother-love stories went over? Well, I wrote a story about a mother and her kids. Some-
thing like all the others but different, too. Did they buy it? No! And yet, it was packing the theatres. I worked on my story, too, and it was in good shape, good characterization, good plot and everything. Now tell me why they didn't buy it? But don't tell me that a good story will get you through the Studio door. It won't!"

The candlestick-maker grumbled, "Naw, it don't pay to write your story up too careful—all they want is the idea, I jus' jot my big ideas down an' send 'em off. Once, I almos' sold an idea but they said they wanted elaborating. Naw, I didn't sell it. Thought they could do the elaborating themselves. What else do they do? Don't they change every story, anyways?"

And the mail carrier ventured timidly again, "You're in the movies, an' I wondered if you would tell me how to get in?"

To those who, like the mail carrier and his friends, continue to write in the face of innumerable rejection slips one can only say, "Go to it!" For the key to the Studio door will be in the lock for the writer who can produce an "original" original, written according to the rules of screen technique.

"If that's true, then why don't we get in?" clamors the mob. "We write good stories, if we do say so ourselves."

Many reasons might be given for the failure to hit the mark of the majority of scripts submitted to a Studio, but no three are more fundamental than those which have been illustrated in the complaints of our friends the merchant, the baker and candlestick-maker. Too long have the "merchants" believed that a fortune could be gathered over night if once they could get inside the walls of a Studio. And with the dollar sign for goal, many a "merchant" has turned author. To them money, not the play, is the thing and, consequently, the scenarios of the "merchants" continue to be ticketed as unavailable.

Imitation—and in many cases unconscious imitation—is the second stumbling block. How often, after having seen a successful picture, do we thrill with the desire to go and do likewise and, hastening to our desks do we grope about for an idea. Naturally, the first one which comes is similar to, if not identical with the theme of the story just witnessed. "A-ha," say we gleefully, "what was successful once will be again, particularly when dressed up in new clothes." Forthwith we spend hours, days, weeks in preparing our story—only to have the producer glance at it wearily and sigh:

"Yes, it's a creditable piece of work. Only trouble is, I've done it before. Why can't these authors keep one jump ahead of me?"

The "candlestick-maker" labors over the design for his new candlestick. He carves the stick carefully, measuring every curve, planning every detail. He paints it and furnishes it until it shines. It is as nearly perfect as he can make it. When he writes a scenario, however, he just jots down his big idea. Someone else can prepare the script, someone else can measure and construct it, someone else can polish it. But let someone else try to get the credit for it. No indeed! It was his big idea.

Do you see what I mean?

Thus, last but not least, comes the greatest factor for success, preparation. As the candlestick-maker prepares his candlestick, so must he prepare his story for Flossie Fairhair.

So, Mr. Mail Carrier, write your original story, not forgetting about the Merchant, the Baker, and the Candlestick-maker, and you will find that the key to the Studio door is almost in your hand.

(Editor's Note: Some months ago, Miss Knowlton, just graduated from Radcliffe College, submitted an unusually powerful 'original' photoplay to The Famous Players-Lasky Studio, when it was brought to the attention of William C. DeMille he lost no time in sending for her and in giving her a position on his scenario staff. From the very first, she "made good." Those who believe that "pull" is needed to get into the studios, and that training and ability are secondary should read her article thoughtfully.)

Yoricks of the Screen

By W. Arthur Williams

Mummers of life are we;
Maskers of personal pain.
But the wile of the smile
That our hearts beguile
May be the whole world's gain.
Building the Photoplay Plot
Basic Situation is Foundation Upon Which Screen Drama Must be ERECTED
By Adolph Bennauer

TTHE Basic Situation of most photo-plays may be said to be due to inspiration. Somehow, somewhere, we hit upon a novel and dramatic predicament, powerful enough to form the basis of a story, which is beyond the deliberate creation of any man. But inspiration is only second best, and never yet furnished an idea which, of itself, was sufficiently complicated to hold the interest of the spectator through more than two reels of action. The remaining three or four reels of a feature photoplay must be built up by Elaboration, a process which requires the keenest application of the photoplaywright's art.

The worst way in the world to elaborate a story is by expanding the Basic Situation. This process may be compared to that of enlarging a photograph, and really gives us no more story than we had in the beginning, but weakens the whole structure by irrelevant padding. We must leave this situation just as it stands, allowing it to form one of the three big crises of our plot, and prepare to build our finished photoplay from the elements that compose it,—namely, the Characters. Since Plot gives us Characters, quite as frequently as Characters give us plot, we will find that we have a Hero, a Heroine, and a Heavy already provided for. Each of these characters has cherished an ambition of some sort which led him into their present predicament and we must now study these Ambitions closely and endeavor to find out what other predicaments they are potentially capable of.

First in importance is the Ambition of the Hero. This Ambition may be for riches, for the restoration of honor, for the amelioration of the race,—or for any one of a hundred other goals; but whatever its nature, it constitutes the Theme of our story and is its dominant Motif. The one big situation that should be derived from this Ambition is the Main Complication, that situation immediately following the introduction of the characters, which gives our plot its forward movement and tells us, in plain words, "what the story is about." Other manifestations of the Hero's Ambition should appear as the story progresses, but this should be by far the most pronounced one.

Next in importance is the Ambition of the Heavy. This Ambition rivals in intensity that of the Hero, himself, and forms the Obstacle which the latter must overcome before he can attain his goal. It will be observed that Simple Ambition here gives way to conflict of Ambitions. This Conflict of Ambitions finds its first expression in the Big Predicament that situation located near the middle of our story where the Hero and the Heavy have their first open clash and
the Heavy becomes temporarily victorious, and its second expression in the Climax, where the two clash again and the Hero comes out triumphant. The situations involved in this conflict form the back-bone of our plot and should, in consequence, contain all the mental and physical punches that we are capable of injecting into them.

Of least importance is the Ambition of the Heroine. In most photoplays (unless the story contain a feminine lead) this is only a nominal Ambition and finds its chief expression in the Conclusion, where the Heroine gives herself to the Hero as the reward of his success. Our story will be made more powerful and dramatic, however, if we imbue the Heroine with a stronger Ambition, one even conflicting with that of the Hero, himself. This will not only give our story more action and better suspense, but the eventual capitulation of the one character to the other will provide a most delightful denouement.

Yet another person is needed—the accidental agency. Here is a character who does not always appear in our Basic Situation. If he does not, we must create him, for his presence in our finished photoplay is quite as important as any of the characters named above. The chief function of the Accidental Agency is to provide the means of incentive through which the Hero overcomes his Obstacle and achieves success. It may safely be said that the Principal Characters get themselves into a predicament and the Accidental Agency gets them out of it. Like the rest of the characters, the Accidental Agency represents an Ambition. This Ambition manifests itself most forcibly at the Crucial Situation, that point between the Big Predicament and the Climax where the Hero, having been temporarily defeated by the Heavy, is once more inspired to attain his goal. In "Forbidden Fruit" the Accidental Agency may be recognized as the rascally butler who induces the drunken husband to write the note that brings about the reunion of the Hero and the Heroine; in "The Miracle Man" he is no less a person than the old idealist himself.

"Les Miserables"
By Herbert Sutton

They sit before my flickering, whitened shrine,
With careworn face and sorrow-stricken eyes.
And seek to pass the leaden hours of time
Hand in hand with Fancy 'neath summer skies.
All human frailty I reflect from out their ranks;
All human folly from their past I call;
And, without one "by your leave" or "thanks"
I give to them the Drama of their Fall.

I make them weep, they who have no tears to give,
I make them smile, who sorrow's cross must bear.
I lure them forth with me to laugh again and live,
And free them from their crushing loads of care.

Then when Dawn comes, they go!
Back to Winter's hunger-gnawing blast,
The Derelict, the Faltering, and the Weak.
What the Screen Actor Thinks
Of the Photoplaywright

By Guy Bates Post

The photodramatist has inmeasurable advantages over his brother—or sister—who is content to write for the stage. Primarily, the desire of the storyteller is to get his tale to an audience, through the medium of the actors portraying his characters; and surely no theatrical tour—no matter how many years it lasts or how many countries are included in its itinerary—can compete with the international audiences which see the successful motion picture. Therein must lie the greatest source of satisfaction to the screen writer; added to it, are the technical opportunities before him on the screen, over and above the possibilities of the theatre, as well as the economic benefits.

What the actor thinks of the author is what every conscientious worker should think of his co-worker—what the soloist should think of the composer, what the builder should think of the architect,—or, to put it in the blunter terms of the commercial world, what the salesman should think of the manufacturer! The analogy is not always exact, but it is indicative of the truth. For the actor sells the photodrama to the public, the ultimate consumer.

The old-time star vehicle type of picture, written to exploit the appearance or the favorite mannerisms of an individual player, has gone from the screen. And with it went the fervent prayers of all of us who are sincerely interested in the welfare of the screen, that its going shall be permanent. Happily for our wishes for the film world in general, it seems that our prayers will be answered—except for sporadic instances.

As an actor, as well as a student of the films and of which pictures attain the greatest popularity, I should like to take this occasion to say a word of warning to the budding photodramatist. Beware of yielding to the great temptation, which undoubtedly exists, to let your typewriter ramble too far ahead in the world of fancy. Practically nothing is impossible for the clever producer,—i.e., in the line of scenery and mechanical effects, like double exposures, dissolves, et cetera. As a result, many scenarios read like the dreams of a hashish intemperate. The story shifts all over the world and sometimes even enters unexplored realms of dreamland and other hitherto unnavigated worlds.

Guy Bates Post may be numbered among the few really great actors of the speaking stage. His recent entry into the film world—for the purpose of aiding Richard Walton Tully in screening "Omar, the Tentmaker," and other of the latter's big successes—should be a distinct benefit to the motion picture art.

Keep your story real. The object of the screen writer should not be to utilize the keenest imagination among his audiences: remember the multitude you are reaching and, while I have never advocated writing down to the lowest intelligence, let your story be such that it may be
grasped by the great average, to which most of us belong. Do not make your audience strain its collective imagination; let your screen story give it the opportunity for relaxation. Not only will you please the people who see your photodrama; but you will do them a lot of good, give them a lot of pleasure, and attain a lot of popularity. Remember that—in the words of a certain dramatic critic—"the theatre is not a place to which one goes in search of the unexplored corners of one's imagination; it is the place to which one goes in repeated search of the familiar corners of one's imagination. The moment the dramatist—and this applies to the photodramatist even more strongly—works in the direction of the unfamiliar corners, he is "lost." The most popular pictures are of the type which is familiar to the ordinary experience; the spectator can respond to its action with ease, hence it holds his interest and, if the story is worthy, it gains his approval.

These words of advice are not the result of a swift survey, but rather of a long careful study of the screen and its photodramatic material. Moreover, I speak them here not merely as a layman, but also from the viewpoint of the actor. We can interpret far better when we ourselves understand—for understanding begets sympathetic interest and this, in turn, begets an artistic, convincing portrayal. Remember that you must write your story so that the actor can grasp its underlying purposes; thus alone, can he cooperate with you to "put it across."

Many a screen writer will write down to his audience—that is fatal. In the course of extended tours of this country—and others—with various plays, I have always found the public everywhere will respond gladly to the best and most artistic. Concretely, even last year, when so much depression was in the air in the amusement world, I maintained the three-dollar-top scale of prices with the stage version of "The Masquerader." In one evening, at Tulsa, Oklahoma, our box-office receipts were $4301.00, a record for that city and, I believe, a record for one night's receipts in a standard theatre for a dramatic attraction. I mention this here, because it is within my personal experience and because it illustrates the point I am trying to make.

Similarly, do not write down to your actor. Fortunately, the actor in films today has a greater experience, a finer background, a wider education, a higher intelligence and a more artistic capability than of yore. Remember this and take it into account, when you are tempted to decry his ability to characterize the personages in your creation. The combination of a good story and a good actor, speaking of the profession collectively, is sure to mean a popular success as well as a worthwhile photodrama!

The dying out of the stellar vehicle—strictly speaking—indicates firmly that the successful photodrama should be not merely a chance for the actor to display his tricks of technique. Give him something with innate dramatic force, something that is within the ken of himself and of your prospective audience—in short, a real good story, and you will have "arrived" so firmly that you will be successful thenceforth.

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**The Miracle**  
*By Alice Musser*

Hushed fell the wind,—and darkly  
Like a pall across a hier,  
Black clouds obscured the sunlight;  
And softly, as a tear,  
The rain fell down upon the earth  
Brown-burned and sear from summer's sun.  
The dead thing stirred as at God's word;  
And swiftly, joyfully, the Spring had come.
"Simple—but Gripping"

Greatest Screen Dramas Achieve Fame by Appealing to the Heart of Humanity

By Douglas Mack

The trouble with most writers for the silver sheet is that they under-estimate heart appeal, the factor that I have come to believe leads all others. We attend the theater and witness a story which has no given star performer, and is, in comparison with many features of the day, literally unadvertised. We find it to be a picturization rated by fandom as a "simple little story." It features no unusual stunt or plot, not even, perhaps, bearing a thrilling climax. Yet we leave, possibly after a second showing, feeling like a new being. Our emotions, which do not differ from those of the majority who attend the movies, have been aroused by heart interest. Thereupon, a resolve is made to begin at once the writing of the greatest photo-play of all time, with heart interest the main appeal.

But while rummaging about in the recesses of our thought corners for the proper idea, we attend the performance of a picture that advertisements have told us cost "umsteen" thousand dollars and required many persons in the making. Critics have been very kind to it. Thus we are prepared to witness what we presume will be the greatest yet.

As the scenes are unfolded the realization comes that the picturization is letter perfect, the acting well done, the writing exceptionally clever. Yet there is something lacking. Outside, though, we see the box office besieged by a waiting line; naturally, as writers, we glean that this is what Mr. and Mrs. Public demand and realize we must cater to them, if success would be ours.

So we retire to our studios, smoke innumerable pipefuls of the favorite brand (if men) and burn midnight electricity attempting to write a great scenario. Mostly they are rejected.

Meanwhile, a brother or sister writer pens a little story of love and human heart and its value to a weary world, and it is accepted. When produced it does not come forth with trumpets blaring, but John and Sarah Jones review it at the Neighborhood Playhouse and more than one real, honest-to-goodness sniffle is detected emitting from their locality.

Next morning John tells his business partner "The Unusual Boom and" is well worth seeing, "simple but gripping," he declares. Mrs. Jones informs Mrs. Miller of the dandy picture.

That night, at The Neighborhood, the attendance is swelled by unpaid advertising. Eventually the modest success is bound to come back to the writer of the story in the form of a request for more efforts of similar appeal.

(Continued on Page 36)

"Stories that reach the heart, stories of true love and its value to a weary world—these will bring a real reward to the one who writes them," says Mr. Mack. Those who write, not for money alone, but because they wish to make the world happier, will agree with him. The others, we believe, must eventually accept his point of view—or meet with failure.
Beauty and Brains

is a rare combination. However the steady rise of Colleen Moore, shown above, indicates that she possesses both. She has been selected to play the lead in "Broken Chains," Winifred Kimball's $10,000 prize photoplay.
The Screen Drama of Tomorrow
Successful Photoplay of the Future Must Give
Public Real Food for Thought

By Colleen Moore

A FRIEND of mine—a newspaper woman—says she has never in-
terviewed a woman from any walk of life who has not sometime dur-
ing the interview said, with a tender smile, that she has often considered
writing as a possible expression for her thoughts.

There is undoubtedly something ro-
manic about the idea of writing. Prob-
ably this comes from the fact that the
medium is so simple that almost everyone
can afford the necessary instruments for
the art—a pencil and some paper.

Comparatively few persons who have
never received any training think they
can leap in and paint a masterpiece be-
fore breakfast, but any number believe
it quite possible to evolve a plot, write
it out as a synopsis, and sell it before
time for dinner. The peculiar thing
about this is, that it is quite possible to
do it—if one knows English and has
thorough technical training.

Undoubtedly it would have been
good form for me to have announced
at the very begin-
ning that I am not a writer—but it seems
more reasonable to just proceed and let
whoever happens to read this deduce
that fact as he goes along.

That there is something wrong with
screen stories, most persons in the pro-
fession and many outsiders are willing
to admit.

If a popular book is scenarioized and
produced there is almost certain to fol-
low a flood of criticism—which would
seem to prove that after all, writing di-
rect for the screen, as Rupert Hughes
advises, is one of the answers.

Frequently I see a much advertised
and exploited picture, which just escapes
being clever because there is a weakness
in the story. When I mention this to
some of my writer friends, they tell me
the weakness was in the direction and
acting, so it becomes a matter of per-
sonal opinion.

I doubt if those of us who are active-
ly engaged in some angle of the making
of moving pictures can properly gauge a
screen production. We pick flaws in
the wrong places and put the emphasis
where it is least required.

However, I have observed of late that
those who are most vitally concerned in
the making of pictures—namely the pro-
ducers—have conceded that the trouble
with many of their productions has been
the story.

Concerning the technical end of
scenario writing, I know nothing, but
judging by the scripts that are giv-
en me to read when I am to have a part
in a picture, I should say the art of writ-
ing for the screen and that of writing
for any other medium is as different
as doing a pencil sketch or a portrait
in oils.

What does the

"Think In Pictures

when you write photoplays," is
the advice of Miss Moore,
who states that there is a
tremendous demand at present
for really good stories, written
directly for the screen by per-
sons who are willing to master
the principles of scenario
technique.

A well known theater owner told me
the other day that the public wanted
something that it could afford and that
would cost it no mental effort.

Personally, I do not agree with him.
I believe the public has arrived at the
place where it will be glad to do a little
thinking, and that the picture of tomor-
row will depict life in a much more sub-
tle and scientific manner.

The lily-white heroine and the gold-
lined hero are all tired out—even though
they have found themselves in many and
varied situations. Also the Good Old
Public is a bit fed up on them.
Reviewing the various pictures that have been presented with booms and bangs of propaganda, one discovers that nearly every form of life, ancient and modern, has sometime been picturized.

We have had Bible films, metaphysical pictures, sex themes, home and mother stories, humorous, satirical and comedy scenarios, sordid, sad, heavy and light pictures; and there have been done into screen productions most of the extremely popular plays and short stories of the past decade.

Yet with all the material that has been produced, despite all the books, stories, and plays still available, there are many writers who are writing salable "originals" for the screen—and scores of them have had no previous writing experience.

This fact, together with the tremendous demand for screen stories, should encourage those who think they have scenarios lurking in their brains.

In any event there is nothing to be lost by writing down one's ideas—and if there is a life story that has interested you, it may easily happen that it will be interesting to portray on the screen.

The expression: "Think in Pictures," would seem to be reasonable advice—if one knew exactly what is meant by it.

Naturally because I have been thinking in screen language for some time, I can't think in any other way than by visualizing the story that presents itself to my mind, but I imagine there are those who know more about writing who will find it very difficult to "think in pictures."

Presenting life on the screen is the aim of numerous producers, and this after all is the answer to the scenario—but life is varied and complicated. Yet it must be translated into simple, practical picture expression if it is to be successful.

OPTIMIST—a picture producer who believes that his coming production is so clean that it will be passed by every Board of Censorship.

AN Eastern politician advocates "intelligent censorship." Ere long, we presume, we shall be hearing of "artistic ditch-digging."

"The Eternal Three"

By Mabel Young Strohm

"The Eternal Three" is certainly a correct title—for everything. I read constantly about the "Eternal Three" as being used so often in photo-plays, and I fell to wondering where one could find anything else, even in the case of a woman, doing her housework: the woman, cleanliness and dirt. Sometimes dirt predominates; and sometimes cleanliness, aided by the woman, whips the villain and he disappears.

When a woman takes care of her sick child, there's the woman fighting death, and trying to re-instate King Health who has lost his throne.

If a housewife wishes to do a little fancy-work there's pleasure trying to win the woman from house-work, who holds her as a slave.

One would think a disobedient child would be one character; but there, mischief is trying to get the upper hand of duty, with the child as the object to fight over.

They tell us we see too much of the "triangle business" in stories and plays, but it seems as though it must be a triangle to be true to life.

What is life itself but the "Eternal Three?" Man, Life and Death. And even after death, there is Man, Eternal Happiness or Eternal Misery—so we are told.
Don't Be "Half-Baked"
Proper Preparation for Photoplay Writing Urged
by June Mathis, Noted Scenarist

By Charles E. McCarthy

If you would write—don't be half-baked.
That's June Mathis' advice to young
and ambitious scenario writers.

"Be sufficiently prepared so that you under-
stand story logic," explained Miss
Mathis. "Many amateurs get very clever
single ideas, but they are unable to fabri-
cate other incidents to back them up. A
plot is a mosaic of many things. A clev-
er original idea may be the central point
that sells a plot—but unless the plot
as a whole is fundamentally correct
from a dramatic standpoint it will not
sell."

When June Math-
is urges preparation
she knows what
she's talking about.
She prepared for
two years before she
tried to sell a story.
She was a girl
who had a reputa-
tion as an actress.
She had played ingenues and leads with
such stage successes as "The Vinegar Buy-
er" with Ezra Kend-
dall, "Brewster's Mil-
lions" and with Julian
Eltinge in "The Fasci-
nating Widow." Then she decided to
write and now she is
one of the best-paid
and most successful
scenario writers.
But June Mathis
has never written a half-baked scenario.
Her debut as a motion picture writer
was vastly different from that of
the average person who gets a story idea,
sends half an hour writing it—ships it
off to a motion picture company—and in
two weeks receives the story back plus
a nicely worded rejection slip.

Stories thus written—and they make
up 99 out of every one hundred received
at the average studio, are truly "half-
baked" because the writer is not trained
in dramatic essentials; he knows nothing
of motion picture procedure, he is not
even familiar with the great literary
classics which form the background for
all truly successful writings. In many
cases your "half-baked" scenario
writer is not sufficiently thorough
student of pictures as they are shown
in the theaters to be aware of the chang-
ing fashions of cinema.

As an actress June
Mathis was once
asked to write an
article for the paper
of a town in which
she was playing with
Eltinge in "The Fasci-
nating Widow."

It was a good article.
"Why don't you
write?" said the edi-
tor, "you have splendid ideas."
The seed stuck and sprouted.

Success as a writ-
er meant a cessation
of a ten-year's tires-
some one night stand, of moving
from place to place:
for Miss Mathis and
her mother.

"But I was an actress and knew noth-
ing at all about writing as a profession,"
Miss Mathis relates, "I knew acting—
but putting acting in words, that was a
different matter. Who was I to start

Few screen dramatists have
achieved the high position held in
the motion picture world by Miss
Mathis. She has written thirty
successful "originals," as well as
having adapted a number of books
among them being "The Four
Horseman of the Apocalypse," one
of the great pictures of all time.
right out, immediately to emulate professional authors who had been studying their jobs for years?"

And so Miss Mathis did something all young writers could well emulate—but they never do! For two years she did nothing but study writing. She read everything Shakespeare ever wrote. She read drama from the early Miracle plays to Oscar Wilde and Augustus Thomas. She read Poe, deMaupasant, Dickens, Thackeray, Balzac, every writer who possessed a point of style that might be valuable. She read books on construction. She wrote thirty stories and rewrote them so that each had two or three different beginnings and two or three different endings. She’d take a story and chop it up and twist it around and play with it—and then put it back in her trunk and start on another idea.

She didn’t make the mistake of submitting a “half-baked” scenario. She never tried to sell herself as a writer until at the end of two years she KNEW that she knew the fundamentals, the basic principles of the art she was entering.

At the end of that time she wrote a scenario around the play of a well-known playwright.

After several days Director Edwin Carew phoned the playwright.

"I don’t want your play," he said. "But I would like to talk with the young woman who wrote that scenario. It shows cleverness and a knowledge of dramatic requirements."

And in one little phone call—and a two years’ wait—June Mathis achieved her goal. And all because two years didn’t seem too long as a training for a profession which above all requires both wide and definite knowledge.

She became scenario writer for Metro, wrote there for several years, and then sprang into instant fame with “The Four Horsemen.” Now she is with Famous Players-Lasky where she has just completed the adaptation of “Blood and Sand,” another great story by Vincente Blasco Ibanez. “Blood and Sand,” with Rodolph Valentino as star and Fred Niblo directing, promises to be one of the most colorful pictures of the year, carrying still further the fame and fortune of the young woman who had sense and patience enough to wait.

“I don’t wish to set myself up as a supreme example,” says Miss Mathis, “but I do think that 99 out of one hundred would-be scenario writers would save themselves disappointments if they’d take a long period of study and practice before attempting to sell a story. At the end of two years you either know that you have writing ability—or that it’s all hopeless."

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**Palmer Photoplay Corporation Plans Move to Heart of Filmland**

READERS of The Photodramatist who are, or have been, students of the Palmer Photoplay Corporation will be interested in the following item from the Hollywood Daily Citizen of Monday, May 22nd:

"Officers of the Palmer Photoplay Corporation began, this morning, active preparation for the moving of their business to Hollywood, where they will occupy the second and third floors of the Palmer Building and a fourth floor, work on the addition of which will be commenced immediately.

"An indication of the field of activities of this corporation was given in the remarks of Marion Fairfax at the dinner tendered by the Chamber of Commerce to Dean Woods of the University of California summer schools, when she stated that one of the biggest needs of the motion picture industry today was instruction in the work of scenario writing, and that the only course to which the Screen Writers’ Guild had given its endorsement was that being offered by the Palmer Photoplay Corporation."
PAST -- AND FUTURE

THIS is our anniversary.

Anniversaries signify growth, and we cannot help but feel that the growth of The Photodramatist has been phenomenal. Started three years ago as a mere pamphlet, it has steadily increased in size, appearance and circulation, until today it stands preeminent in its field—a magazine of international importance, which has repeatedly been recognized as the most reliable authority in the world of screen drama.

Credit for this achievement may be laid to the absolute sincerity of purpose which from the first has marked its editorial policy. There has been no attempt to advance by means of false promises, bluster or misleading advertising; no effort to build upon the shifting sands of sensationalism. Instead, those behind The Photodramatist have clung tenaciously to the idea that real success must inevitably follow a conscientious effort to render a truly constructive service to screen writers, and the results have more than justified their faith.

However, as satisfactory as the progress of The Photodramatist has been, the publishers have no intention of resting upon their laurels. They realize that no success is so great as to justify the possessor thereof in ceasing to strive for higher standards. With this thought in mind, plans have been perfected for a bigger and better magazine—a publication that will be as greatly superior to the present Photodramatist as it, in the past, has been to the other magazines in its field.

This radical change will be inaugurated with the July number, when The Photodramatist will be issued as a standard, flat-size magazine, as perfect mechanically and artistically as human ingenuity can make it. Not only will it be larger by fully fifty per cent than it is at present, but we believe that, with the addition of new departments and articles which the increased size will permit, it will be of infinitely more value to those who write, or who aspire to write.

Most notable of the new features will be a short story department, wherein fiction writers of international reputation will discuss each month the technique of the short story. This feature, however, will be different from any appearing in other magazines, since especial attention will be given to the construction of stories which will have value not only as fiction, but also as motion picture possibilities. A series of instructive, yet interesting, articles on the use of good English, contributed by noted authorities, will also be an institution with the new Photodramatist. H. H. Van Loan’s "Own Corner,” by special arrangement with this well-known scenarist, will be greatly amplified, while the other departments will be even more valuable and helpful than they have been in the past.

In fact, The Photodramatist for the coming year will not be a magazine for scenario writers only. It will be a fountain head of inspiration and instruction for all writers—larger and better than any other similar publication in the world today.
Corrupting the Children

Much arrant nonsense has been written within the past few months by persons who believe, or claim to believe, that the morals of our children are rapidly being corrupted by motion pictures, and that unless "something is done about it" very soon, we shall become a race of criminal morons.

The editor of The Photodramatist has been greatly interested in this movement to save the children. Like all good citizens, we do not want the children corrupted and are willing to do whatever lies within our power to see that they are not. We must admit, however, that we have had our doubts in the matter. For one thing, we have never believed that the present day youngster is one whit worse than his father and mother were in their adolescent days. In fact, we have always considered that the boys and girls of today are, on the whole, more advanced, both morally and intellectually, than their forbears. They ought to be. The world has progressed rapidly in every branch of science and of art. What reason is there to believe that it has gone backward in the matter of morals and of intellect?

Motion pictures became popular some twelve years ago—at which time, by the way, "reformers" were bewailing the "corruption of children" just as vehemently as they are at present. The progress of the screen art was rapid. Mistakes were made, we must admit. Some of the early productions were lurid. Yet persons of today who, at the age of fifteen, were subjected to their influence, are now, by some curious quirk of fate, substantial young men and women attending to business and to their homes just as diligently and conscientiously as the ones who went before them.

We have never yet, as a matter of fact, seen any accurate proof of the statement that the morals of the present day child are at a low level. Despite the ranting of paid speakers and writers, none of them has as yet produced statistics to show that young America is drifting toward degeneracy. However, we have found ample proof that the children of today are much more advanced morally and intellectually than those who did not have the opportunity of visiting the neighborhood film theatre.

When one wants information regarding the health of the country, one must go to the physicians who can produce accurate records of illness and of death. Accordingly, in search for the truth regarding the morality of present day children, we must inquire not of the so-called "reformers" but of men whose profession brings them into close contact with the misdeeds of the young and who keep on file the statistics concerning them. Such a man is Presiding Justice Franklyn Chase Hoyt, for years in charge of the Children's Court of New York, a city in which, because of the congestion of its population, juvenile delinquency is probably more prevalent than in any other.

Judge Hoyt states emphatically in his latest annual report that "the court statistics for the past ten years show a continuous and gratifying improvement in the matter of juvenile delinquency." Moreover, in his report—which is considerably too long to reprint here—he gives the figures to prove this assertion. Analysis of the statistics he presents shows that, despite a steadily increasing stringency in juvenile laws and the growth in population, the number of children brought before him since 1912 has been smaller each year than in the one preceding. Considering that there are over seven million persons in New York City, it is astounding to learn that during the year 1921 there were but 10,445 children brought before the Juvenile Court, of which number 5,490 were arraigned merely for the purpose of appointing for them proper guardians. In the light of Judge Hoyt's experience and that of juvenile workers in other cities, who, in the vast majority of cases, report a similar decrease in immorality and law-breaking on the part of children, we cannot help but believe that the "reformers" who are assailing the motion pictures on the grounds that they "cor-
rupt" our children are either plain liars seeking political or financial emolument, or that they are at least ignorant and a greater menace to America than they would have us believe that the films are. Certainly none of them, so far, has been able to back his vitriolic statements with proof. We are convinced, as a matter of fact, that the motion pictures, far from corrupting the children, have been the one influence that is responsible for the steady improvement reported by Judge Hoyt and others since 1912. At any rate, it is significant that this improvement began in the very year that motion pictures took their place as the highest form of amusement in America.

A Step Backward

PERSONS who have followed the career of Charles Ray cannot help but be interested in his recent announcement that he is abandoning the policy of producing original photoplays and will hereafter film only published fiction and successful stage plays. In a statement to the press Mr. Ray says that a clause to this effect has been incorporated in his new contract with United Artists. Whether this policy is a result of the young star's own desires or whether it has been adopted at the request of his advisors, we do not know. We do know, however, that both Mr. Ray and the United Artists are making a decided error. Even were it not for the fact that all the larger studios are veering away from adaptations and more and more toward originals, the fact would still remain that Charles Ray achieved his early success largely because his stories were written directly around his personality, and one would believe that a moment's thought would cause him to realize that he is treading upon dangerous ground indeed, when he enters into an agreement to produce only adaptations. We have in mind two Charles Ray productions, "Forty-five Minutes from Broadway" and "The Midnight Bell," adapted from stage plays, both of which were huge disappointments to his followers, although he is reported to have paid large sums for the picture rights.

On the other hand, every lover of motion pictures remembers such Charles Ray successes as "Alarm Clock Andy," "Greased Lightning," "Paris Green," "The Busher" and many others based upon original scenarios. Although we regret, having admired Mr. Ray's artistry, that he has failed to profit by past experiences, we presume that possibly his two coming years' experiment will be of value to him in that it will teach him that no man is so well grounded in his profession that he may abandon the policies that brought about his success. And we predict that at the end of the two year period Mr. Ray will be once more an ardent advocate of original photoplays.

Something to Think About

A YOUNG woman in San Francisco, a nurse by profession, wrote us recently to the effect that she was "through with photoplay writing." She informed us that although she has studied diligently for more than six months and has written two screen dramas, her efforts have been received so frigidly by the studios to which they were submitted, two scenario editors having returned her stories without comment, that she realizes the "utter futility" of ever hoping to succeed in the world of motion pictures.

This letter is different from many received by the editor of The Photodramatist each month. It chances, however, that we have been acquainted for some years with the writer of the missive under discussion; and, knowing the facts pertaining to her career, we

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Faith

By Elbert H. Saulmon

HAVE Faith. Make Faith your trustworthy servant. Faith will serve you! Take Faith into your confidence—into your heart. Let Faith represent you to your God—the Power Supreme! Put Faith into your work. Remember, works without Faith are dead! Inasmuch that you have Faith, in so much will you create. You may never build the Master Photodrama, but your efforts will be fitting to your amount of Faith! Faith in creating and creating in Faith are one and the same. They are mortally inseparable. But Faith is to creating what the soul is to the body—it is the Life! So have faith in yourself, in others, and in your God. Faith is of the Infinite, limitless, powerful!
The man doctor part solid unusual drawn is the the great army necessary knowledge man form successful ridiculous.

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The Photodramatist for June

feel that a great lesson for aspiring photodramatists may be drawn therefrom. We know, for instance, that she is considered one of the most capable nurses in the Red Cross. Her record during the war was so unusual that it elicited favorable comment from those highest in army medical circles, and she is at present the wearer of several medals awarded to her for efficient and intelligent service in Europe during the recent hostilities. As she is the author of an unusually interesting and well written book upon Red Cross work, we know also that she possesses a solid foundation in literary skill, upon which undoubtedly she could build a successful career as a scenarist as soon as she has mastered the different technique of the photoplay.

Undoubtedly there are many others similar to this young woman—persons who, possessing every qualification for scenario writing excepting the necessary training—become discouraged before they have barely knocked upon the doors of the studios. Many of them are masters of other professions and did not think it unusual that from three to five years were required for the special technical training pertaining thereto. A nurse, for instance, to become really proficient, must undergo at least three years of rigid discipline and study before a doctor will entrust even ordinary cases to her care. Yet, nursing, as compared to scenario writing, brings a very small measure of fame and even smaller financial compensation.

It is high time that people ceased considering scenario writing as a trivial profession that may be mastered by the most casual study and within time limits which would be considered ridiculous in any other line of occupation. Despite the occasional example of so-called "sudden success"—which, upon investigation invariably reveals the fact that years of study are behind it—the fact remains that the rewards in the scenario writing profession go to those who are willing to give it the same measure of attention that they would accord to any other line of endeavor.

Vision

IT WAS Solomon who said, “Without vision the people perish.” Vision is a part of our lives. It isn’t so much what a man knows as it is whether or not he has foresight to apply his knowledge—and, lastly, to apply that knowledge to his everyday life.

Vision is a part of one’s imagination. Imagination can be developed and expended through his creative powers. One sure development of all his powers is through study of the eighth art—screen drama.

Imagination enables a man to muster his knowledge of a subject into real action. Knowledge without action is a form of decay. By invigorating the imagination man automatically obtains this knowledge.

The difference between the digger of ditches and the captain of industry is the relative ratio between the two elements—creative imagination and visualization. Without either, man sinks into oblivion.

Vision and imagination give a man a practical way of thinking. They awaken smouldering ambitions. They make the desire to do almost overwhelming.

Therefore let us never forget this one great truth—before a man can possibly succeed in anything (and this includes all of us) he must have knowledge, imagination and creative power.

The Time I’ve Lost

By Gordon Kyle

The time I’d lost in trying,
In ignorance defying
The artful maze
Of Photo-plays
Had set my Hope relying.
When Wisdom one day sought me
To learn the Art that taught me
The only way
To write a play.
And Wealth is what it’s brought me!
The Screen Drama League
An Organization to Combat the Censorship Evil

Political censorship—with all the vicious, insidious elements that enter into that plan of regulating motion pictures—seems doomed for early defeat in every locality in which it has gained a foothold, according to press reports from all sections of the country. The Screen Drama League has exerted no little influence in impressing upon the public the utter futility of a system of control that is based upon principles extant during the Dark Ages. At all times, however, we have been in the forefront in the fight for better pictures.

In all probability, many advocates of censorship are in sympathy with the very ideals which the League has attempted to champion. In fact, a large majority of persons who have voted for censorship have been deceived by misinformed, picture-seeking leaders, who see in censorship a source of income and would use their official positions as a club with which to gain more power.

Everybody wants clean pictures—everybody, that is, excepting a few evil-thinking morons. And these latter persons are not within the range of the picture, producers either, despite the efforts of demagogues and so-called "reformers" to make the public believe that they are. Indeed, considering the ability that certain censors possess to "read" evil into the most innocuous productions, we sometimes believe that more than one salacious-minded person sit on the very boards that have been elected, or appointed, to judge what the people shall, or shall not see.

Members of the Screen Drama League will be pleased to learn that there is a strong movement on foot to maintain high standards in motion pictures through the people themselves. A standard, of course is always a variable thing. What is the highest form of art, to one person, is veritable rubbish to another; what might be termed rank indecency by John Smith would not suggest any evil whatever to Jim Jones or Mary Jane. This is a situation, however, that cannot be altered. Those who seek better pictures can only work for productions that will be approved by the great majority. And the small minority, be they too far to one side, or too far to the other, cannot be considered. One-hundred percent perfection—in an art—may come with the millenium; but until Providence casts all human beings in the same mould, no two persons will form the same opinion of any one book, story, play or photodrama.

Censorship, as the Creed of the League plainly states, is based upon minority control, and must be abolished. In place of it—if any regulation at all is necessary—a system must be devised whereby the voice of the majority will be heard—and heeded.

This sentiment was voiced at a recent meeting of the Better Pictures Association of the World, held in Los Angeles on May twelfth. Among those who addressed the audience were ministers of the various churches, business men, club-women and the president of the Southern California Parent-Teachers Federation. The motion picture interests were represented by Frederick Palmer, for years a leader in the movement for high standards in the picture world. Mr. Palmer, in his talk, spoke especially upon the difficulty that producers are having in securing stories worthy of artistic production. In fact, he said, faulty stories have had much to do with the dissatisfaction expressed by many with motion pictures in the past. However, he stated that (Continued on Page 36)
DURING a chat with House Peters the other day, that excellent actor remarked: “When the author, actor and director get together on the ‘set’ we’re going to have better pictures.”

I doubt whether his statement needs any qualifying whatsoever. That day is on the edge of the horizon now, and it won’t be long before many authors will be directing their own stories. Charlie Logue is doing it. He’s the chap that wrote “The Infidel”—Katherine MacDonald’s latest picture—and adapted “My Four Years in Germany.”

* * * * *

A YOUNG LADY said to me the other day: “If I could only sell one story, I’d throw up my position and devote the rest of my time to writing.”

Hollywood and Los Angeles are filled with aspiring writers who have done that very same thing. Some people have done a thing once and never were able to do it again. It requires more that the sale of one story to prove to yourself that you can write. Then too, there are lots of people who have only one story in them, and book publishers, play producers and moving picture producers will vouch for the truth of this statement.

* * * * *

WHAT is hokum, anyway?” This is the question Edwin Schallert, Dramatic Editor of the Los Angeles Times, asked me the other day. I told him that; “Hokum consists of all the sure-fire situations, designed to stir the greatest emotions in the human breast, which have been recognized as excellent ingredients in every melodrama since the days in Eden. It’s the stuff that you’ll find in every successful novel, play or photoplay, and if you’re looking for a concrete example, go and see how Griffith handled it in his screen version of “The Two Orphans.”

He tears the blind Louise from her sister, Henriette, and then takes his time in bringing them together again. And, all the time he’s doing it he’s working on the emotions of his audience to such an extent that when he brings you to that scene where Henriette sees Louise from her balcony and yet is unable to reach her, you are not occupying one-half of the seat you paid for when you entered. It’s hard to equal that sort of suspense, and it’s always sure-fire. But, it’s nothing more or less than plain, every-day, dyed-in-the-wool, blown-in-the-bottle hokum. Griffith is a master of it. He knows the value of it. He knows how it sets the blood tingling and the excitement it arouses in the breast, and he knows that the public loves that sort of thing with all its heart and soul. Every “best seller” has it; every great play has it and every successful moving picture production has it. Put it into your story and you’ll sell the story.

* * * * *

HITCH your ambition to a star, but don’t hitch your story to one. This is the advice we give those who keep a particular star in mind as they write their story. If there is another character in the story which can be built up and made into a strong role, don’t hesitate about doing it. The day is fast approaching when the majority of our productions will be composed of well-balanced casts, and each role will be interpreted by famous actors.

* * * * *

DRESS it up, if you so desire; put it in an aristocratic setting or make the background one of poverty; put it on an island in the Red Sea or in the barrens of the Klondike, but make it melodrama. That’s what the public wants. Real red-blooded, suspense, thrilling, romantic drama, with smashing climaxes and flavored with mystery and intrigue. We like that sort of stuff because we’re all youthful at heart, and youth loves action and excitement.

* * * * *

FOR the benefit of those who are of the opinion that nearly everyone in the world is writing, or is about to write, a photoplay, we might inform them that two of the most popular feminine stars are at present idle, because they are without suitable stories. They would pay almost any reasonable price for the right kind of stories, and yet, at the present writing they have not been able to find the particular type of story they think most acceptable to their peculiar ability. All of which leads us to wonder how many stars are capable of deciding the roles they are best in. We have watched a goodly number of them
The Photodramatist for June

fade into the background during the past two or three years, and the main reason for their waning popularity was due to the fact that they picked the roles they were least fitted to portray.

* * * *

W hen the novelist, playwright or photodramatist starts to write fiction he usually turns to facts for his material; when he writes facts, the public very often brands the results as fiction. Today we wonder just how much of everything is fiction and how much is fact. For example: I recently wrote my first sea story, entitled, "Wreckage." The other day a correspondent wrote me that he believed I had taken my material from facts. He said he knew of a "William McCabe" in real life, and that the legal part of the story was made public in a Los Angeles divorce court some time ago. This, in spite of the fact that I believed I was writing a fiction story, and never heard of a case of similar nature being enacted in real life. The story was original with me, and was inspired by having come into contact with the crews of various lightships throughout the world. I was rather pleased with the comment of the correspondent, for it assured me that my story must be human, and therefore not an impossible one. All of which goes to prove that a writer may honestly and sincerely try to be original, but it really can't be done. For, after all, life is stranger than fiction.

* * * *

T he following communication was received recently from a modest young writer who illuminates a certain town in Illinois. In these days of egotism and vain-glorying boasting, it is pleasing to find one individual who refuses to become inflated with self-adoration, and I am going to reproduce it verbatim in the hopes that it will serve as a soothing cure to those afflicted with too much blatant, floundering, personal importance. So here it goes:

"Gentlemen,—I am enclosing herewith one of my great five reel feature photoplays entitled "The Flu Fighting Serenade" which I want you to please read over and then please buy it from me. I want to tell you that I want from between $100,000 to $500,000 for this great photoplay which I am sending to you. This is not very much money for a great five reel feature photoplay. This is all that I want for this great photoplay entitled "The Flu Fighting Serenade" is only from between $100,000 to $500,000. It took me from between two and three weeks time to make up this photoplay and write it out. I never copy a word of it. I made it all up out of my own head. I bought myself a book on "How To Be-Come A Expert Moving Picture Photoplay Writer" and I studied it for two or three months time, then I learn how to write photoplays. Awaiting your early reply at once by return mail, or within five or six days from now.

"I remain,

"Yours Very Truly,

"John Blank.

"P. S. Please send check for between $100,000 to $50,000 to my name who is Mister Blank. Please write me a good letter, and then address the envelope with my name on it, then pin the check for from between $100,000 to $500,000 to the letter, and then seal the envelope, and then have the envelope Registered. This is the best way and the only way.

"With Many Thanks.

'I am affectionate with my speech, and I can't talked very plain, and it certainly would help me out a great deal with my speech if you people will buy this great five reel feature photoplay from me for from between $100,000 to $500,000.

"My New Address is as followed.

"The Blank Moving Picture Writing Co.,
"Executive Headquarters.

"Please used my old addresses."

From the foregoing, it is really unnecessary to state that the producer who received this remarkable communication did not purchase the story.

* * * *

O ccasionally, a writer blooms forth with the announcement that he is going to give patrons what they should have, instead of what they want. Such an author never worries anyone but himself. Ride along with the procession: stick with the crowd. The fellow that gets too far ahead of the drum-major is in danger of losing the parade entirely.

* * * *

A ccording to the exhibitor, the public, although it has plainly manifested what it wants, doesn't know what it really does want. It wants a good story; that's what it wants. That's what it always wants. The producer and the director admit today that the story is paramount.
SITUATIONS grow out of conflict. The probabilities are that in many instances the scenario writer has difficulty in getting conflict into his story because the motives of the characters are not strong enough. Study the purposes and desires of the characters in a particular incident. If you were to increase their motives, they would be aroused to greater struggle in order to accomplish their respective purposes. Thus, by making the motivation more powerful—if done logically and convincingly—situations will naturally develop.

In a recent interview, Oliver Morosco, the veteran producer, stated that no theme has greater appeal than that of self-sacrifice. Mr. Morosco is undoubtedly right. The screen writer who is casting about him for a solid foundation upon which to build a “sure-fire” photodrama cannot go wrong if he selects this powerful, elemental theme and bases his story thereon. The very words “self-sacrifice” suggest love, heroism, courage—humanness. Since the beginning of time, the progress of mankind has been marked by remarkable examples of sacrifice. They are recorded in history; and every one, although true, is a story, containing all the elements of true drama. Go to your library and read some of them. We venture to state that, when you are through, a new and powerful photoplay will already have found birth in your mind.

CAREFUL scenarists will bear in mind the fact that the “highlights”—the big moments of their screen stories—must not be neglected. Although attention to detail is an excellent thing, the writer must not allow his story to become so replete with comparatively trivial, unimportant incidents that the climactic portions thereof will lose power. Scenario editors are only human, and they are busy men and women. Although always seeking for screen “gold,” they cannot be expected to spend hours digging it from a mass of clay. Dig your own gold. Throw the clay to one side, leaving the precious story-metal exposed in such a manner that the busiest of busy men cannot help but find it.

The tendency of film producers at the present time is to give more careful attention to subtitles than formerly. There is much interest now in making them of a literary standard that will equal the high quality of the production itself. Usually the subtitles are written by the continuity writer and later edited during the cutting of the picture, to suit the action of the particular scene. But it is a good idea for authors to give a great deal of attention to subtitles, and if they have some especially good ideas, to put them into their synopses. The ideal picture has the fewest possible subtitles, but these few should be of the highest literary quality.

It will often be found that characters develop inconsistently with the situations arranged by the writer. In this case, neither characterization nor plot should be sacrificed. The difficulty is that the play has not been properly “screened” in the mind. Of course, the ability to do so is a high attainment. Character conception is largely intuition-al, but when it comes to writing you must apply some matter-of-fact tests. Consider your plot with an analysis of cause and effect. Likewise, consider whether you have a “convenient” character or one that is realistic. If you have visualized your story scene by scene, concentration together with this visualization will help you to straighten out the difficulties. Remember that it takes time to write a photoplay.
From Pen to Silversheet

By Melvin M. Riddle

VII—SCREEN MAKE-UP

MAKE-UP, or the art of making up for the screen, while it cannot be defined as one of the branches of film production, is nevertheless one of the incidental arts, vital and necessary to the making of motion pictures and is thus, one of the major steps that must be taken in our journey from pen to silversheet.

Many are perhaps of the impression that make-up is a very simple art and involves merely the application of a little grease-paint on the face of the actor or actress. On the other hand, it is a very intricate art and one which requires much patience, study and practice before it can be successfully and thoroughly mastered.

A well-known screen character actor has observed that the art of making up should be divided into three separate and distinct branches. These are facial make-up, physical make-up and mental make-up. Of course, the make-up of the leading man, juvenile, leading woman or ingénue is the simplest kind and is generally known as a straight make-up. It consists merely in putting on a ground tone of grease paint, lining the eyes and eyebrows, beading the eye-lashes and toning up the lips with a little rouge. But the character artist or the man or woman who makes up his or her face to portray various kinds of characters or personalities, must be a genuine artist, inasmuch as by the aid of make-up he must often change his entire physiognomy and personality to suit the role for which he has been cast.

The essential foundation for all facial make-up is the grease paint. This is first applied evenly over the face and this first application is known as the ground tone. If this tone becomes spotted or marred, it cannot be patched up, but must be completely removed and a new coat applied. If the subject has a pink or ruddy complexion, pink grease paint is used, and if the complexion is brunette or sallow, a yellow tone is applied. This is because the make-up must harmonize with the complexion because if a contrasting color is used, the camera will register spots on the complexion where the make-up is thin and the skin shows through.

The basic principle of character facial make-up is the principle of high lights and low lights. Certain colors, such as red, brown, black, dark grey, orange, purple, etc., register photographically as shadows and thus when applied in the proper manner can be used to accentuate wrinkles, make sunken cheeks or other like effects. These colors, when applied, are known as “low lights.” It has often been asked why screen actors, unlike those on the legitimate stage, use no rouge on their cheeks in their make-up. This is because the rouge would photograph dark and register as a shadow, making the handsome leading man or pretty ingénue look thin and emaciated in the face.

The opposite effect to the low light is the high light. Any light color, such as white, light grey, light blue, etc., is a high light and is used for a purpose directly opposite from that for which the low light is used. The high light color, photographically, produces a convex or outstanding effect. A low light is generally edged with a high light color to further accentuate the low light, and vice versa. This important principle is applied in making up wrinkles, sunken cheeks, lines, scars, sagging skin, overhanging eyebrows, sunken eye sockets, etc. The wrinkle is made by a line of low light color, edged on one side with a faint line of high light. The red low light is of inestimable value to the actress who as the
years go by develops the fatal double chin. The red streak of rouge throws the invisible mantle over this drawback to screen beauty.

The made-up scar is produced in a way directly opposite from the method used in making up a wrinkle. The scar is a high light color, lined or set off with a low light color. For freckles, little daubs of brown grease paint are used. An important point to be remembered is that make-up is chiefly an accentuating agent. When the character actor makes up wrinkles or other facial lines, he should first assume the expression of the character and then accentuate lines natural to that expression and should never make wrinkles or lines where they do not naturally occur. The good make-up artist must also be familiar with the many varieties of wigs, beards, moustaches, false teeth, etc., and must know for which kind of character type each is best fitted. There are also many artificial effects in make-up such as the pulling of certain muscles by attaching strings to the muscle by the use of putty and then tying the strings and pulling the muscles until the desired effect is obtained. This method is often used in the Chinese make-up, when the eyes are pulled back at the corners, making them resemble the eyes of a Chinaman. Putty is also employed in making enlarged or crooked character noses.

After completing his facial make-up, the character artist must look to what we have already termed his physical make-up. He must be sure that his wardrobe is right, for his wardrobe, after all, is a part of his make-up. If he is playing a tramp, he must be sure his clothes look old and ragged and if they are in too good a state of preservation, he must take a file and make a few frayed spots or ragged edges in the material. He might also use a little soap or Fuller's earth to give the proper effects. Physical make-up, however, also includes the assumption by the actor and the physical expression of all the proper mannerisms and physical conditions characteristic of the role he is portraying. If the character is awkward in his movements, the actor must also remember to be awkward in every scene in which he appears before the camera. If the character has a wooden leg or a wooden hand, the actor must make up his hand or his limb so that such an impression is conveyed to the audience. In a Paramount Picture starring Wallace Reid, entitled, "The Love Special," Clarence Burton, well-known character artist, performed a perfect feat of make-up art by making his own perfectly good hand look exactly like an artificial hand. Many pictures have been seen in which the actors have been photographed in various difficult physical make-ups and one, in particular, will be remembered by many, in which the character player was made up so that he most strikingly resembled a huge ape. In some of these most difficult make-ups the services of a professional make-up expert are required.

By mental make-up is meant the mental state of the actor when playing a character part. It can easily be seen how it is most necessary that the actor strive to be, in thought, as well as physically, as nearly like the character he portrays as possible. This makes for sincerity and promotes a more faithful interpretation of the role. The correct mental attitude is a keynote to a perfect character portrayal. It has been said that a person's face and physique are only an outward expression of his mentality. Therefore, if the actor keeps the right mental attitude during his work, the other will conform. If, for instance, he doesn't lose sight, for a moment, of the fact that for the time being, he is an awkward, ungainly, bowlegged cowpuncher, his physical actions will more readily respond to this condition of thought. Or, if he will keep in mind continually that he is impersonating a county judge or a military officer, the natural dignity characteristic of such characters will be reflected in his every physical move and expression. This will apply to any kind of characterization he may interpret.

Lucien Littlefield, one of the best known stock character actors at the Lasky studio said recently: "I never fail to carefully observe any odd or striking character whom I chance to see on the street or outside my studio work," he explains. "I have a mental list of characters upon which I draw when in need of inspiration for some role. When I see an unusual character, I watch his actions, engage him in conversation if possible, observe his mannerisms, his outstanding features and even, through conversation get a hint of his character, temperament or philosophy, if possible. When I can think of no model to fit an important character role, I have often gone down on the streets and kept my eyes open until one has come under my observation. Then I make him my model, for my make-up, mentally, as well as facially and physically."
The Guild Forum
A monthly department devoted to the interests of the Screen Writers' Guild of the Authors' League of America, the official organization of recognized photodramatists and studio staff writers.

The Screen Writers' Guild
OFFICERS
Frank E. Woods, President.
Marion Fairfax, Vice-President.
Elmer Harris, Treasurer and Executive Secretary.
Lucien Hubbard, Recording Secretary.
Executive Committee
The officers and Thompson Buchanan, Waldemar Young, Eugene W. Presbrey, Jeanie MacPherson, Mary O'Connor, Milton Schwartz, Al Cohn.

THOREAU CRONYN, special correspondent for the New York Herald, who was sent to Hollywood following the Taylor murder, pays a pleasing tribute to the Screen Writers' Guild in one of the articles which he has written for his paper since his return from New York. Among other things he states:

"Then there is the Screen Writers' Guild. It is a distinctly cheering institution. Before going to Hollywood I had never heard of it except through a newspaper announcement that it had offered a reward of $1,000 for the capture and conviction of the Taylor murderer.

"That's the crowd that gave the big dinner a while ago, the Writers' Cramp, an outlander told me. So it is, and much more. It is a flourishing alliance of the men and women of a new profession—the writers of stories and scenarios for the motion pictures. It is an offspring of the Authors' League of America, born two years ago at a meeting in the home of Thompson Buchanan, whom theatre-goers remember for "A Woman's Way" and other plays of the legitimate stage.

"It strives to get adequate recognition for the screen writer, to co-operate with the Authors' League in improving copyright laws, to make sounder the contracts of writers and producers and to ply visiting celebrities with food and moral entertainment. It has in Hollywood a $20,000 clubhouse, for which it is paying by the month, without missing an installment thus far. It dispelled forever the impression that writers are poor business men by making a profit of $6,047.54 from its first annual dinner, the Writers' Cramp, held in December in the Ambassador Hotel.

"It has succeeded in settling out of court disputes between producers and writers, so that now its services as arbiter are sought even by the 'magnates.' And when the scandals threatened Hollywood the Screen Writers' Guild leaped to the defense."

Writers Lose Friend
Members of the guild were greatly shocked to learn of the sudden death of Maxwell Karger, formerly Production Manager for the Metro Pictures Corporation and one of the best friends that members of the writing fraternity had in the screen world. His demise occurred while en route to New York for a conference with the directors of the Metro corporation. Funeral services were held at the Church of the Blessed Sacrament, Hollywood, on Thursday May 11th.

June Mathis, noted scenarist who worked with Mr. Karger for many years has offered the following appreciation which is echoed by every member of the Guild:

"Honorable in business and friendship—his word was his bond. In my six years' association with him, I never knew him to do a mean, underhanded action. He shouldered the burden of many others and if in the stress of this nerve-racking business which we all know so well, he at times was cross, irritable or excitable to one of his employees he was ever ready to express his regret and hold out his hand to help them in time of need—returning good for evil. An untiring worker, a genius—a personality that one cannot forget—vibrating the vitality that makes one realize that though lost to the world, it cannot die! "June Mathis."

Refute Propagandists
In pursuance of the campaign inaugurated by the Guild to combat the malicious, untrue propaganda against Hollywood, so widely circulated in the Eastern states, a number of its members recently contributed articles in magazines covering the truth regarding this beautiful suburb of Los Angeles and the motion picture profession. Among the best of these articles was one written by George Ade, the noted humor-
ist, which recently appeared in the American Magazine. The enormous circulation which this answer to the "reformers" has received through that publication is expected to exert tremendous influence toward enlightening the public as to the type of community that Hollywood really is.

*Elect Officers*

At the annual meeting of the stockholders in the Holding Company, owners of the club house which is the home of the Screen Writers' Guild of the Authors' League of America and the Writers' Club, the following officers were elected:

President, Thompson Buchanan; Vice-President, Mary H. O'Connor; Secretary and Treasurer, J. E. Harris; Acting secretary and treasurer, J. E. Nash.

The following Board of Directors was elected: Frank E. Woods, Thompson Buchanan, Marion Fairfax, Richard Willis, June Mathis and Mary H. O'Connor.

It has been expected that action would be taken on the matter of improvements which are to be made on the club property. Two sets of plans were submitted but no definite choice was made. It is tentatively understood, however, that the dining room will be enlarged, a billiard room will be added and the athletic field will be equipped with tennis courts, showers and perhaps a swimming pool.

The club has become a popular gathering place for celebrities, and a roll call at any of the noonday luncheons would reveal a long list of names famous on the screen, on the stage and in literature. As a result of the popularity of the dining room, it seems to be essential that some definite agreement be arrived at and improvements be started as soon as possible.

Gilson Willetts, veteran screen writer and at present editorial head for Pathé is exceedingly ill at the Clara Barton Hospital in Los Angeles. An operation for stomach trouble was recently performed and Mr. Willetts' condition has been serious ever since.

*Guild Activities*

Albert Shelby LeVino, accompanied by his wife and child, have left Hollywood to spend several months in New York. Mr. LeVino will be busily occupied at the eastern studio of the Famous Players-Lasky organization during his eastern "vacation."

Clayton Hamilton, who has been busy at the Goldwyn studios, in Culver City, California for many months is about to start on a trip to Honolulu which will be followed by a tour of the South of this country. Mr. Hamilton will return to his studio work sometime in August.

Miss Jeanie MacPherson has been working day and night on the Cecil B. DeMille feature "Manslaughter" which is nearing completion. Miss MacPherson wrote the manuscript and has been in close conference with Mr. DeMille throughout the production activities.

Charles Kenyon, well-known scenarist who has been with the Goldwyn company for many months, has resigned to accept a position with the Universal Film Corporation. We understand that Mr. Kenyon, under his new arrangement, is to have charge of two production units.

"Main Street," Sinclair Lewis' famous novel, is being adapted for film production by Arnez Johnston and Frank Dazey who, by the way, have a long string of successes to their credit. Mr. and Mrs. Dazey (which is the name of this writing team in private life) also report the sale of two originals to the Ambassador Film Corporation. The latter will be directed by Louis Gasnier and released through First National.
SADA COWAN is the first American writer to work in Europe with foreign directors. Miss Cowan is now writing an original story, based on historical episodes, for Dimitri Buchowsky, the well known Russian director.

ARTHUR S. KANE recently signed a contract with Edward A. McManus for four features for Associated Exhibitors. McManus, Charles A. Logue, May Allison, Robert Ellis, a complete cast and a full complement of cameramen are enroute for Porto Rico where the four pictures will be made. The first story is from the pen of Chas. A. Logue.

FILMING OF "Under Oath," the first Elaine Hammerstein production to be made on the West Coast, has been started by Selznick. George Archainbaud is directing. Edward J. Montague wrote both the story and scenario.

PARAMOUNT will soon begin production of "The Impossible Mrs. Bellew," starring Gloria Swanson. The story is being adapted by Elmer Harris and Percy Heath.

WILLIAM DUNCAN is co-starring with Edith Johnson in a screen drama of the north woods, the continuity of which was prepared by Bradley J. Smollen.

STUART PATON will direct Marie Prevost in Bernard Hyman's original story, "They're Off!"

"HUSH MONEY" is the first original story written by the popular author, Samuel Merwin, directly for the screen. Alice Brady will portray the leading role.

COLLEEN MOORE will play the leading feminine role in "Broken Chains," the $10,000 prize scenario by Whitfred Kimball.

A GREAT collection of types—native women of the South Sea Islands, beach-combers and the off-scourings of the seven seas—appear in a very interesting episode of "The Bonded Woman," which was written for Betty Compson by Albert Shelby LeVino.

JACK HOLT is still on location for "The Man Unconquerable," his new Paramount picture directed by Joseph Henabery and adapted by Julien Josephson from the original by Hamilton Smith.

GOLDWYN wants to know what has happened to all the amateur scenario writers, as, since the close of the Chicago News-Goldwyn scenario contest there has been a great scarcity of contributions.

"KENTUCKY DAYS," a special Fox production, boasts fifteen leading characters. The photoplay was written by Paul H. Sloane.

GEORGE WASHINGTON OGDEN'S "The Bond Boy" is being adapted to the screen as a starring vehicle for Richard Barthelmess.

VITAGRAPH has loaned Patsy Ruth Miller to Goldwyn as leading woman for Earl Williams in the picturization of a story by O. Henry.

ALBERT SHELBY LEVINO is leaving for New York shortly to write two pictures for Alice Brady, whom Joe Heneberry will direct.

GEORGE HIVELY has just finished the script on "Come Through" for Herbert Rawlinson.

ELLIOTT CLAWSON is working upon the scenario of "Trimmed in Scarlet," for Priscilla Dean.

"NEVER MIND TOMORROW," Marie Prevosts next picture for Lasky, was written by Bernard Hyman.

HARVEY GATES is writing a series of two-reel pictures for Tom Santschi.

CLARA BERANGER, scenarist for William C. deMille, is due back from New York within a week.

HECTOR TURNBULL, widely-known author, has gone into scenario writing.

CLAYTON HAMILTON, whose writing contract with Goldwyn expires next month, will go to Honolulu this summer.
“REMEMBRANCE” is the tentative title of another personally directed Rupert Hughes production, which is said to be of the same genre as “The Old Nest.”

William Fox has purchased the motion picture rights to “The Shadow of the East,” by E. M. Hull, the English novelist, before the novel has been published in this country. E. M. Hull is the author of “The Sheik.”

FOR ONCE the movies have got ahead of the magazines in the publication of a story. Clarence Budington Kellard’s “Across the Deadline,” written for Frank Mayo as an original story, is shortly to be published in a national magazine.

IT IS NOTHING new when a producer adapts a stage play for screen purposes, but a reverse of procedure should prove interesting. There is insistent talk that C. Gardner Sullivan’s original screen play, “Hail the Woman,” is to be considered seriously as a stage production next season.

A COUNTRY-WIDE canvas of the Goldwyn Scenario Department shows that public taste is swinging toward society dramas. Consequently, the company is in the market for a series of stories depicting life among the well-to-do. The announcement says these stories must have big, human themes.

SOMEONE has been poring over the “best American photoplays of 1921” selected by various critics and finds that they agree on the following: Charles Ray’s “Scrap Iron,” Chaplin’s “The Kid,” “A Connecticut Yankee,” “The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse,” “The Three Musketeers,” “Little Lord Fauntleroy,” “Disraeli,” and “Sentimental Tommy.”

BUSTER KEATON has completed a film without an ingenue.

WILLIAM LE BARON has been advanced from scenario editor to director-general of production for Cosmopolitan Production, and Verne H. Porter, editor of Cosmopolitan magazine since 1918, has been appointed scenario editor. Howard Irving Young has been named film editor.

Richard Butler Glaenzer, poet, short story writer, and critic, is the latest literary celebrity to hear the call of the movies. Mr. Glaenzer has been added to the Goldwyn scenario department.

JULIAN JOHNSON, former editor of Photoplay Magazine, has been created manager of the editorial department of the Famous Players Lasky Corporation.

CHARLES LOGUE is a busy man these days. He recently sold the following stories which are now under production or will be shortly: “Gay and Devilish,” and “Breaking Into the Movies,” both starring Doris May; “Friday to Monday,” and “The Heart Dealer,” featuring Katherine MacDonald. Mr. Logue also wrote “The Infidel” for Miss MacDonald.

LOUIS STEVENS has just had the good fortune, even in these hard times, to sell three all at one “pop.” One of them is called “The Woman Breed,” and is to serve as a vehicle for no less famous a star than Pauline Frederick. The others have been purchased by Victor L. Schertzinger. They are, “Dollar Devils,” and “The Kingdom of the Blind.”

MRS. LILIAN Trimble Bradley has joined the Lasky scenario staff. Mrs. Bradley is the author of such successful stage plays as “The Wonderful Thing,” and “Mr. Mid’s Mystery” and co-author of “The Moon on the Index.” She has been for four years stage director of such George Broadhurst productions as “The Crimson Alibi” and “The Storm.” Mrs. Bradley is now at the Lasky studio to study photoplay construction and technique.

TENNYSON said, “The babbling brook goes on forever.” But don’t let your photoplay be a brook.

SUDDEN SUCCESS is the worst enemy of the aspiring photoplaywright.
“MIND YOUR OWN BUSINESS”
By Erwin Pledger

It seems to me that if people would mind their own business, there would be no blue-laws, no censorship.

I refuse to believe that such people are actuated by altruistic feelings or charitable motives; rather am I convinced that all their activities originate, first, from jealousy and, second, from a desire to rule, or interfere. Intermixed with these is a desire to hold positions, draw salaries, do something and be IT.

The normal man or woman cares not a whit what another takes into his aero-quadru, what kind of pictures he sees, or whether or not he indulges in pet vices, or witnesses prize-fights, because, in plain language, it is none of his business.

These busybodies set up for themselves rules of conduct tending to asceticism and abstention, and most of them do this, probably, because of the necessity of combatting an abnormal desire for indulgence in worldly pleasures; or, if the desire does not exist, because of a mental bias giving undue valuation to such things.

It is their right for them to make such rules for themselves, but have they any right to make rules for me? And why do they try to do this?

Jealousy is the answer. They go about and see others enjoying things which they themselves may not enjoy because of their own self-inflicted restrictions, or, more likely, because of mental ineptitude or physical incapacity, whether due to age or natural wear and tear.

Whereupon, they immediately become Dogs-in-the-Manger—they wish to keep others from eating the fruit they may not eat. Surely, this is jealousy underscored and upper-cased.

The blue-law people have been, and will be still further successful because they are active and militant, while their victims, the great “let’s-pop” public, are inactive and non-resistant.

“PADDING” IN THE PHOTOPLAY
By Philip Double

When, years ago, Herbert Spencer enunciated his interest-compelling principle of the Economy of Attention, he gave to the world of varied arts a law that was to afford latter-day producers of a new and now flourishing art supreme pleasure in its flagrant violation.

This principle applied to projected images through the medium of the written word; but it can as well apply to the medium of the screen story, since primarily the latter’s appeal is to a public assembled in a theatre, its mental faculties fully receptive of the images or impression to be conveyed to their mind’s eye by the screen.

It has always been a great mystery to me why a long-suffering public tamely submits to having thrust before its palpitating eye endless footage of superfluous screen material painfully dragged in to cover obvious gaps between the culminating scenes. The explanation, of course, after some study of the situation, would seem to be that the act of padding is nothing more than the forced fattening of thin, anemic arguments to pictures expanded into watery six or more reels of doubtful consistency, the better to afford a grasping producer of lame artistic conscience with a pretext for collecting returns on excessive footage.

I am one of Lincoln’s many who permits himself to be “fooled some of the time.” But my plaint is in this instance, from the point of view of the layman, but more from the viewpoint of the writer who seriously sits himself down to write a compact plot developed within definite bounds, only to have his brain-child’s Climactic points diluted beyond recognition by needlessly injected inanities whose only function is presumably to rouse lagging interest, an interest that cannot help being dispersed by the disruption of the organic compactness of the original argumental structure.

A wilful distension of the plot must inevitably produce a consequent weakening of the entire fabric of the author’s conception. A chain is no stronger than its weakest link. I draw from this truism the conclusion that the full appeal of a finished art product can be no stronger than the partial interest aroused by its weakest feature; therefore, when there is a deliberate effort made to enlarge on the fabric of a composition that has its scope already limited by its creator, there can be only one result, and that is the weakening of the original strands of interest by vicious stretching.

TOO MUCH HASTE
By George May Randolph

As most of you have, I answered the call of that strange little something deep within, which suggested to me that I possessed a creative imagination. I gathered about my desk a perfect library of delightfully University-ish looking books and went to work. First I read and read, then I thought and thought, and in a short time I began to write and write, rewrite and then write again, passing only long enough to sleep some, eat a little, before again taking up my precious books and chewed-up lead pencil.

I became desperate after working two long weeks on two heavy Dramas, which I judged to be of two real strength. I slammed a heavy French-English dictionary upon both of them and seizing a passing idea, sketched it that afternoon, hastily revised it the next day, and bored my husband’s stenographer to tears in the typing of it. (I must state that my touch system on the typewriter is of slow progression). For two weeks I celebrated by resting.

(Continued on Page 80)
THE NIGHT ROSE
Reviewed by Elizabeth Niles.

Comment: This story is exceptional in that Leroy Scott wrote it with Lon Chaney in mind as the star, but playing the role of the antagonist. Since but few stars care for such a part, this type of play is seldom seen. With a background of underworld plotting and political intrigue, the story is exceedingly melodramatic, but fortunately avoids most of the hackneyed situations usually found in this sort of story. The action is tense and at times suspenseful, but has not the gripping power of human touch of the similar picture of "The Penalty" with which it is certain to be compared. The characterization is a little above the average in all the roles except that of Red O'Rourke; which is an exceptional portrayal of a suave and well poised plotter who is cunning enough to conform to the conventions for safety's sake. The least in character is the mother who is not shown to be so straight-laced until her daughter offends. The dramatic triad is well sustained throughout, with a highly commendable complicating force in Red's former sweetheart Sally.

For a hero Jimmy has but little to do; but the story was not written for him. The climax is altogether satisfactory since Sally prevents the heroine becoming a murderess. Though criticized in some states by the censors, there appears little cause for this, since but little of the underworld life is made attractive and justice is meted out according to law.

Synopsis: At one table at a Barbary Coast café sits Georgia Rodman and her rather unsophisticated escort Jimmy; at another is Red O'Rourke who is impressed with Georgia's innocence. A gangster, fleeing from the police, enters and at Red's suggestion seats himself at Jimmy's table. When the police come, he shoots one of them and escapes, but Jimmy is held. Red bails Jimmy out and offers to protect him from District Attorney Graham; he also gives a home to Georgia when she is not believed by her mother. This arouses the jealousy of Red's Sally. Meanwhile the police and Graham are out to get Red. Learning he is closely beset, Red plans the killing of Graham and Jimmy the night of his big ball. Angered by Sally's jealousy he tells her his plans for Jimmy. Just as Sally tries to warn Jimmy and Georgia, Red's man shoots Jimmy. For revenge Georgia goes to the ball and, in passing in a dance with Red, deposes him and pulls a pistol. Sally, still jealous, seizes the pistol and claims the right to shoot Red herself. Graham recognizes Georgia and takes her home to her repentent mother and the recuperating Jimmy.

ORPHANS OF THE STORM
Reviewed by Elizabeth Niles.

Comment: First of all this is a spectacle, but also it pictures a very human story; it has great warmth, feeling, and depth and it plays on the heartstrings of the spectators. In places the appeal is over-emphasized, as in the fierce intensity of the courtroom scene in some of the battle and mob scenes, the people appear to be merely milling around. In an effort to arouse suspense before the capture of de Vaudrey, a half dozen soldiers dash madly about falling over one another in a small entry hall and running up a few steps and then down again for a prodigiously long time before they finally do the logical thing of ascending the stairs and trying each door on the floor above. Aside from a few extravagances of this sort, it is a magnificent picture both as a beautiful vision and as a gothic horror. Since the story is an old one taken from the famous play the Two Orphans, it has a number of situations which in modern settings would be considered hackneyed; against their proper background, however, they hold the spectator entranced from the moment of the kidnapping of one of the orphans through the race with the pardon just as the great knife of the guillotine is about to fall. The characterization is admirably consistent throughout; especially pleasing is the impetuous love-making of the young aristocrat and the swift changes of mood of Henriette from the playful child to the motherly protectress of anyone in distress. Historically there is an occasional slip, but more such pictures would tend to increase the popular taste for knowledge of world history.

Synopsis: Henriette Girard and her blind foster-sister Louise, left as orphans through a plague, are on their way to consult an eye-specialist when a rope is struck with Henriette's beauty. He has her kidnapped, leaving Louise helpless, and carried to a magnificent fête. When her struggles with the nobleman are recognized as genuine, a young aristocrat, de Vaudrey, effects her escape, secures her lodgings, and assists her search for Louise. Meanwhile Louise has been befriended by Pierre, a grinner, but his mother forces her to sing and beg for her. Stirred by the speeches of Danton, the feeling between the people and the aristocrats has become so strong that Danton is forced to seek a hiding place. When he dashes into Henriette's lodgings she binds up his wound and protects him at risk to herself. Because of de Vaudrey's refusal to marry anyone but Henriette, he is exiled, but his aunt goes to see Henriette and hears her story of her search for Louise. From a locket, she recognizes Louise as her daughter, just when Henriette hears Louise singing in the street. Before she can reach her sister, however,
the police arrive and peremptorily drag Henri- riette off to the Bastile. She is freed when the people drive out the aristocrats and take pos- session of the city. De Vaudrey, escaped from his prison, returns to the city as a commoner, but is recognized with Henriette, who tried to protect him, is arrested and tried. At the trial Henriette finds Louise, only to be separated when she and de Vaudrey are carted to the guillotine. When Danton recognizes these last victims, he makes such a strong plea for mod- eration and mercy that the people rise against the court and demand their pardon. By dint of a hard race Danton arrives just after Bérurier has stayed the execution a few moments by stabbing the man about to let the knife fall. A few years later the four young people are made supremely happy by a successful operation on Louise’s eyes.

TRAVELIN’ ON
Reviewed by Laura Jansen.

Comment: A Bill Hart picture, written by him- self. There is quite some suspense and drama but one very unconvincing bit. Hi Morton, the parson wants to build a church to convert the lawless people of Tumble Bluff, but he holds up the stage to get money to finish his church. It would have been more effective to have J. B. steal the money and accuse the par- son, later saving him. On the whole it is rather a machine-made picture and not as good as some of Hart’s earlier ones.

Synopsis: “J. B.” a wanderer, a man who takes always what he wants, wanders into the mining town of Tumble Bluff almost on the heels of Hi Morton, a traveling parson and his wife. Dandy Dan McGee has been attracted at once by Susan Morton. He is the ruling power in the small town.

Hi decides to build a church and always comes up against McGee. J. B. attracted by Susan decides to stay in town and protects her from one of McGee’s men, when she sells Bibles to the gamblers. She sells one to J. B. but he cannot read it. He tells her he does not believe in God.

Mary Jane, Susan’s child makes friends with J. B. and teaches him to read. She loves the monkey J. B. rescued from McGee’s hands when he wanted to kill it. This monkey belonged to one of his girls and he resented the fact that he resembled it too closely.

Finding it impossible to complete his church and seeing a box with gold belonging to McGee taken on the stage. Hi holds it up during a rain storm, while J. B. hunts up the lost monkey. McGee has offered Susan to help her husband if she gives herself to him. She is rescued from his arms by J. B. but is staggered to find that he wanted to abduct her. J. B., however, ex- periences a change of heart.

Coming home with the monkey, J. B. finds his horse wet and tired. Hi used it. He sees the men come and arrest Hi. Susan comes to him and begs him to save her husband, offering herself to him in exchange. J. B. seeing the noble character of Susan, for her sake, goes to the saloon and arrives in time to save Hi and clear him from the charge, saying he stole the gold. He kills McGee as he leaves and goes travelin’ on. The last picture shows him rid- ing in a field of cactus, consulting first Mary Jane’s primer, then the Bible. Hi finishes his church and devotes his life to reforming the wild people of Tumble Bluff.

SMILIN’ THROUGH
Reviewed by Elizabeth Niles.

Comment: Though built with an extremely simple plot, the story has a big theme and an intense heart appeal. Taken from a play pre- sented some years ago, it made some of this appeal through the departure and arrival of the soldiers, but the love interest is universal and the idea of the influence of departed souls always possesses more or less popularity. The idea that Monyeen is trying to return to John Carteret, but is prevented by his retaining his hatred for Jeremiah, is gotten over most effectively. The subject is treated very simply in the picture; even the death of Monyeen is made beautiful rather than terrifying. In its plot the story is impressionistic, though the antago- nism of the uncle and the young lover is intensely felt and the gentle determination of Kathleen wins the loyal sympathy of the spec- tators. The shooting in the earlier scenes would be melodramatic were it not presented against a background of high ideals and fragile romance. More stories of this high order would certainly be appreciated by those seeking better films.

Synopsis: At the wedding of Monyeen and John Carteret, her rejected suitor, Jeremiah Wayne, shoots at John but kills Monyeen who runs between the men to protect her lover. John nurses his hatred of the name of Wayne long years afterward. Meanwhile, when Monyeen’s sister dies, she leaves her little girl Kathleen to the care of Carteret. At a dance she meets Kenneth Wayne, a nephew of Jeremiah’s, and despite her uncle’s protests meets him again and falls in love with him. When war is declared he comes to say good-bye, but her uncle orders him away. To lessen Kathleen’s anger against herself Carteret tells her of his great sorrow. Four years later when the soldiers come back, Kenneth returns wounded; he goes to Carteret to tell him he won’t ask for Kathleen now that he is crippled. He meets her in the garden and lets her think that he cares for someone else. When he has gone she upbraids her uncle for having separated them even as Jeremiah had taken Monyeen from him. In repentence he sends for Kenneth and all ends happily.

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Q. How do I prepare a brief synopsis to attach to the finished story? D. G.

A. I suggest that after the story is finished and ready for submission, you read it carefully, then write a resume of it, touching the high points of interest and connecting them with the thread of the story. Make it as brief as possible, but include sufficient material to give a complete idea of the finished product.

Q. What is meant by a situation of "convenience?" A. G.

A. It means the elimination or transposing of characters or interest simply to obtain the desired effect. For instance, Mary and John are unhappily married. Mary is in love with Tom. John is killed in an automobile accident, and now Mary and Tom may be married. Is this clearly defined?

Q. Have been told that my story was not submitted in the proper form. Will you kindly tell me what the proper form is? H. P.

A. Story should be typewritten, on a good quality of paper, 8 1/2 x 11. It should be double-spaced, and bound at the top. Place a title page as the first sheet, a cast sheet next, followed by the brief synopsis, then the story itself.

Q. A story of mine has been rejected with the criticism that it lacks theme. What is really meant as theme? D. M.

A. By theme we mean the underlying current of the story. For instance, we will cite you to "The Old Nest," the theme of this is "Mother Love." By viewing this story you will gain a better idea than from pages of written explanation.

Q. Is it advisable to employ spoken titles in writing my synopsis? L. C.

A. If a good spoken title will help you "put over" a particular scene more clearly than you could otherwise do, then use it; but the great thing to remember is the old proverb and do not fall into the trap—"Given an inch, take an ell." Do not let the title idea carry you away until you are writing dialogue or until you are getting deep into the realms of the continuity writer. In comedy drama a few good titles are often a great help to the scenes and also help the characterization.

Q. Why am I told that retrospect action is best avoided. I have a story under way and it is necessary in the climax to tell the entire early life of the hero's father and I cannot put this in the form of a prologue or the mystery around which my story revolves will be 'given away'? D. B.

A. Retrospect should never be used if it can be avoided. It has a tendency to break up the smooth running of the picture and is more or less distracting to the audience. The idea is this: You have keyed up the audience and then disappoint it by breaking the tempo.

Q. I sometimes see pictures which do not seem to conform to the rules of dramatic construction as set forth in the text books; for instance Rudyard Kipling's, "Without Benefit of Clergy." In this there was no conflict and no dramatic triad and it seems to be entirely "narrative" in form. Now when I write narrative stories for the screen they are turned down and I am told to stick to drama; why is this? F. R. K.

A. It is true that "narrative" pictures are occasionally seen on the screen but the percentage of these is very small compared with the dramatic type of picture. This means that the amateur has far less chance of putting one over than he has with a dramatic work. The narrative picture is nearly altogether dependent on the remarkable characterization and the fine acting brought out by the director. It will be noticed that nearly all these stories are from the pens of the masters of fiction. The amateur cannot paint the same picture and make his characters live like the well known author, his narrative stories are too colorless, and the characters are cold and unconvincing.

Q. I have written a dozen or more stories which to my mind are just as good as most of the pictures which I have witnessed lately. What is the trouble? Why can't I sell them? O. P.

A. Producers are not seeking material as good as one sees, but something better. Nearly every studio has plenty of staff writers who can reel off by the yard plays as good as the average, and it is to the original writer that the producers are now looking to supply the greater demand for something a great deal better.

Q. Is it necessary for a story to be written in a perfect technical form in order to sell it? D. F.

A. Very few pictures can boast perfect technique. But, if you will look closely in witnessing photodramas upon the screen, you will generally find that the successful picture possesses certain outstanding qualities that "put it over."

Q. I have a splendid story written around a criminal court. Would it be censorable? R. A.

A. A story written around a criminal court would not be censorable so long as you show due respect for the law in the action and situations. Any subject is censorable which attacks the offices of the law, or has a disrespectful tendency toward law and order.

Q. Are disguises permissible in screen stories—this is, are they attractive to the producer? L. I.

A. The motif of disguise has been used to excess on the screen and is often not thoroughly convincing, so be careful in dealing with this rather questionable element.
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Please send me, without cost or obligation on my part, your questionnaire. I will answer the questions in it and return it to you for analysis. If I pass the test I am to receive further information about your Course and Service.
“Simple But Gripping”  
(Continued from Page 11)

This appeal, which can be built into almost countless situations or applied to any characterization, is fundamentally misunderstanding being supplanted by understanding or the conquering of good over evil, the latter sometimes handled in such a delicate manner as to make the word evil seem a misfit. Allow me to refer to “The Old Nest.” We cannot, of course, all hope to write stories with a similar grip upon the emotions of the audience, but we can continue the endeavor; who can say we have not the ability to produce fair duplicates.

I was viewing a play of everyday life, where the real heart interest exists most freely. Sitting directly in front of me were a couple who presumably had not spoken to each other for hours at least. As the climax was unfolded and peace came to the screen characters who had been engulfed with misunderstanding and grief, the man in front allowed his arm to fall upon the seat back and encircle his companion’s shoulders. How quickly she relented and crowded close!

Just a commonplace plot, old as the proverbial hills, yet the knowing author, merely by applying doubtful tension throughout the action, then releasing it at the climax by logically righting the wrong, has raised his effort to the sublime.

When you and I, fellow writers, can do this we will have started well on the way to real success in writing for the screen.

Screen Drama League  
(Continued from Page 21)

Asks Proper Credit Given to Author

Editor, The Photodramatist:

I would greatly appreciate your bringing to the attention of your readers an inadvertent oversight on the part of the publishers of “Opportunities in the Motion Picture Industry,” a set of books which has just been brought out by the Photoplay Research Society, of which I am president.

An article entitled “The Art Director—His Duties and Qualifications,” credited to Mr. Max Parker, art director of the famous Players-Lasky Corporation, was in reality written by Mr. G. Harrison Wiley of the Lasky art staff from an interview with Mr. Parker. I feel that it is only just that Mr. Wiley receive full credit for this very able contribution to the literature of the screen.

I also want to take this opportunity to thank Mr. Wiley for his generous assistance in aiding us to secure material from other departments of the Lasky organization.

Yours very truly
Roy L. Manker,
President, Photoplay Research Society

Student Comment  
(Continued from Page 31)

as did the other interested ones, after being convinced that a sample of my ability had been sent out, to bless the world.

Do you know that a kind editor, firmly, very firmly, consumed the space of several pages in order to enlighten me to the extent of seeing that I had submitted a fairly decent “climax” in the one reel enclosed within my lovely blue coverlet, and in a tactful manner suggested that I supply the first, reel so that the second reel might have something to tean upon?

I had “seen” my picture through in such haste, and was wrapped up to such extent in the climax, that the half portion submitted was all climax. It is needless to say here that I am building the front, and have donned the sackcloth-and-ashes costume to work in.
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If you are working on a Western, either for the magazines or for the screen, this amusing but enlightening article on what to avoid in painting the alleged wild and woolly West will be invaluable.

This is only one of the features of direct interest to writers in the June issue of Screenland. The "What's the Matter with My Story" department, giving constructive and unbiased criticism of scenarios to subscribers, has been the saving of many a fundamentally sound but technically weak scenario.

"Behind the Camera with Elinor Glyn", the second of a valuable series of articles explaining the intricacies of picture-making, is of very real value to the aspiring scenarist.

Louis Weadock's stories of film people fairly reek with studio atmosphere which screen writers would do well to absorb.

H. L. Mencken, Edgar Rice Burroughs, Charlie Chaplin and Walt Mason are other noted contributors to this smashing issue of the writer's own screen magazine.
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PHOTODRAMATIST
THE MAGAZINE FOR WRITERS

July

THE BIBLE IN MOTION PICTURES
Elizabeth Niles, A. M.

WRITING THE SHORT STORY
Carl Clausen

BUILDING THE 'SETS' FOR YOUR PHOTOPLAY
G. Harrison Wiley

FROM PEN TO SILVERSHEET

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His reviews will be authoritative, analytical, unprejudiced. To the student of scenario writing they will be invaluable. To the reader who is not a photoplaywright, but who enjoys motion pictures, they will be an excellent guide to the best in screen entertainment.

Even though you may frown upon film plays and have no interest in writing, you will enjoy reading this department; for Mr. Sherwood has the knack of telling even the most technical facts in a joyous, concise manner that lifts them out of the ordinary, ham-drum type of literature.

There will be a heavy demand for the August Photodramatist. Reserve your copy now.

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Entered as Second Class Matter February 1, 1922, at the postoffice at Los Angeles, Calif., under act of March 3, 1879.
MOTION picture producers are searching the country for new writers of great screen stories, not among the foremost novelists and fictionists, but in the offices, homes and factories from coast to coast. Through national scenario contests, in which more than $40,000 in prizes has been offered for the best stories submitted, the industry has sought new writers to be trained to supply the shortage of screenable story material. It is a notable fact that more than $20,000 of the $40,000 offered in prizes during the last year or so has been won by Palmer students in different parts of the United States.

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Mrs. Thacher, the Montana housewife, whose first story we sold to Thos. H. Ince; Mrs. Elijah of New York, who sold her first story to D. W. Griffith; the man in the Arizona State Penitentiary who recently sold his story, "The Man Under Cover," to Universal through the Palmer Sales Department; the three winners of all the prizes offered in the J. Parker Read Contest, and Miss Winifred Kimball of Florida, who won the recent Chicago Daily News-Goldwyn scenario contest with her story, "Broken Chains," all were Palmer trained. Not one was a recognized author. All were discovered in ordinary walks of life.

If you have the desire to write scenarios and have never tested your natural ability for this work, this advertisement is a cordial invitation to you to try. The Palmer test questionnaire is offered free of all cost or obligation to you. Send in the attached coupon. If you pass you will receive further information regarding the Course and Service. If you do not you will be frankly and courteously so informed by the examining committee.

The Department of Education of the Palmer Photoplay Corporation, in cooperation with its Sales Department, extends this invitation to you in the interests of the motion picture industry and its nationwide search for new screen writers. Who can say what this free test may reveal in you? Send in the coupon for your questionnaire today.

An Open Letter to

Those who desire to write Scenarios, but have never received the Palmer Questionnaire

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PLEASE send me, without cost or obligation on my part, your questionnaire. I will answer the questions in it and return it to you for analysis. If I pass the test, I am to receive further information about your course and service.

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CREATIVE Art! Creative Evolution! The note of the Heart in a Mechanical Age.

Many definitions of Art have been attempted. At least it is something which transmits an emotion. The more completely the emotion is transmitted the more the process has become Art. If the medium of conveyance bungles the transmission it is not Art. 

No matter how deeply one may feel nor how high and inspired the emotion is—if it cannot be expressed so that the other fellow enters into it there is no Art. And what is more important, there is no propagation of emotion. This ability to express what one feels can be had only by study, trial and travail.

On the other hand, without feeling behind the most perfect of techniques, there is no Art, and again what is more vital, there is no song from the heart. A perfect technique, assiduously acquired, without a real emotion behind it, is merely brilliant—and cold. It is at this that the Devil chortles in glee and whispers—"It is clever, but is it art?"

Accepting the dictum that Art is the power of conveying an emotion, of what avail is it? Why has mankind, down through the ages, paid its highest tribute to Art? It is because it is the whisper of the Spirit, breathing across the barren of Time and Space, the ritual of its Immortality.

There are those who, deadened by the hammers of a Mechanical Age, dismiss Art as something which has served its purpose. These submerged ones ask of what avail are the works of Art? In what way do they feed the belly or clothe the flesh? Is not Reason applied to Mechanics of more value to man?

Were the answer in the affirmative at this point, we would be reminded of dust-scattered Kultures which have approximated this goal. Yet the world has rejected each presentation.

We live in our interpretation of Living. No one is without some interpretation of the meaning of things. Those who interpret Life as a Mechanism—the Mechanistics—find themselves bound to the shackles of a machine, hand-forged in their shops.

Those who see Life as free and creative and self-renewing in myriad forms of Beauty, worship at the shrine of Art. To these, belong to the Future of an ever increasing creative joyousness. These are the potential creative artists of the world.

Dream and dream greatly, and hold the Path until you walk in the Garden of your Dreams.

The Mechanistic would decry dreaming. He says it belongs to the Childhood of Man.

It does. It is the Fountain of Perpetual Youth. The early dreamers of the Race held aloft the torch of inspiration in the folk-lore of their time. This Torch, passed in Living Flame from lip to lip, has brought the race forward to where, today, even the Mechanistic sees hope in the future.

Those who hold art as no longer a vital thing, oppose the motion picture as sinful idleness of collective dreaming.

IT IS a collective dreaming. That is why it promises to become the greatest of the Arts. It is the new form of the Lamp that holds the oil of the living Flame and with its light we shall see the manner and the meaning of that far-flung phrase—the Brotherhood of Man.

The Shadow of the Mechanical, cast by this renewed glow, will be but the background to a wider and freer significance of Life. Not the stupid, endless chain of a body sustained in an equilibrium of sensations, but the infinite expanse of the Consciousness of the Spirit, freed, that it may enter upon the ever quickening life of Creative Art to give unconditioned expression to Beauty, Truth and Love.
How Good Is Your Imagination?

Photodramatist Offers Interesting Prize Contest to Stimulate Study of Dramatic Construction

If you have imagination this is your chance to make it known to the editors and the motion picture producers. For in order to encourage imagination and original creative thought, Photodramatist announces a prize contest, the awards of which are to go to the three persons submitting the most original and strongest dramatic situations. Just such an opportunity may never come again.

"During the past five years, the best American short stories"—and photoplays—"have been more remarkable for their technical excellence than for their creative presentation and interpretation of American life," says Edward J. O'Brien, editor of "The Best Short Stories of 1921."

"But now I seem to detect the first signs of a new spirit," he continues, "a spirit which faces and wrestles with life cheerfully and honestly, without prejudice or sentiment, and which sets down in more or less permanent literary form what is after all the substance of American dreams and struggles."

It is in keeping with this "new spirit" that Photodramatist is conducting this contest. What it wants is dramatic situations, told in less than 300 words. Fine literary skill is not essential. The ability to conceive and present a real, dramatic situation is all that is required.

What is a Dramatic Situation?

In one sense a situation may be considered as the crisis or the apex of an emotional conflict. In every conflict, there is the gradual development out of repose, the ascent to a crisis, and the fall to repose again. All human relationships describe such an emotional curve. A situation occurs, in the course of dramatic action, when the characters are so brought together that their contrasts and conflicts are clear and dramatic, that the central character is placed in a dilemma in which he must make a choice, or in a predicament in which a change will be suffered, or is confronted with an obstacle to be overcome. Such a situation is said to be dramatic.

The manner in which the characters are brought together in such a crisis must be logical, natural and seemingly inevitable, if the situation is to produce the desired effect upon the reader or the spectator—that is, if it is to arouse his curiosity as to the outcome and to hold him in a state of suspense.

EVERYONE who aspires to write at all has some such situation in mind, a "pet" situation, which he, or she, intends to write "some day." Surely anyone can find time to write it down in 300 words or less. If it does not win a prize he or she has at least made the effort, which will make succeeding efforts easier. And if it does win a prize, the writer should feel justified in amplifying it, in building it into a real photoplay or into fiction, with the idea of eventually selling it.

To be sure, the time when editors—scenario or fiction—would consider "ideas" or situations has gone by. But then, most of the material submitted to them neither contains situations nor indicates an adequate technique. If your situation, or idea, is dramatic, you have demonstrated the possession of talent, and the rest is comparatively simple, merely the matter of acquiring a technique in keeping with the medium you have chosen. Submit an idea, or a situation, in this contest, and find out just how much your imagination is worth.

Your manuscript must be typewritten, on one side only, double spaced. The Photodramatist cannot return unavailable manuscripts—keep a copy. Your idea or situation remains your property; Photodramatist merely decides which is best and awards prizes to the winners. Each month it will print the best of those submitted, copyright them and release the copyrights to the Contestants. Remember the contest closes October 31st, at midnight. The winners will be announced in the December issue.

Why not be one of them?

Rules of the Contest

Anyone may participate. Contest closes at midnight, October 31st. Manuscripts arriving later cannot be considered. Winners will be announced in December issue.

Dramatic values, not literary merit, will be the basis for judging. Strong original, situations are desired—not routine outlines of entire stories. In other words, the best basic situation, on which a photoplay or story might be constructed, will win first prize.

All manuscripts must be typewritten, double-spaced, on 8½ x 11 in. paper. Place your name and address in upper left-hand corner. Exact number of words in right-hand corner.

Three prizes will be awarded the winners, as follows:

First ................................................................. $75.00
Second .............................................................. 50.00
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All literary and dramatic rights in submitted material will remain the property of the contestants. Photodramatist will print each month the best situations submitted, releasing copyright to each author immediately upon publication. No manuscripts will be returned. Keep a copy of your work.

The judges will be:

PAUL BERN, Scenario Editor, Goldwyn Pictures Corporation.
FRANCES HARMER, Literary Advisor to William C. deMille.
JACK STRUMWASSER, Scenario Editor, Fox Film Corporation.

Address all manuscripts to:
CONTEST EDITOR, PHOTODRAMATIST PUBLISHING CO., Inc., 411 So. Main St., Los Angeles, Calif.

of 8½ by 11 paper, double spaced. The Photodramatist cannot return unavailable manuscripts—keep a copy. Your idea or situation remains your property; Photodramatist merely decides which is best and awards prizes to the winners. Each month it will print the best of those submitted, copyright them and release the copyrights to the Contestants. Remember the contest closes October 31st, at midnight. The winners will be announced in the December issue.

Why not be one of them?
The ‘Sets’ for Your Photoplay
Their Relation to Screen Art—How and by Whom
They Are Designed and Constructed

By G. Harrison Wiley
Of the Famous Players-Lasky Art Department

Has the human being ever lived who attained manhood or womanhood without having at one time or another during childhood said: “Let’s play house!” Phrased in another manner perhaps, or in tongue strange and unintelligible to most of us, the idea is as universal as is all children’s play, and as common to all ages.

And, though we may recognize in this child’s game the awakening of the instincts of domesticity, of husbandry and parenthood, is it not certainly a play fostered of imagination and the development in the child mind of a dramatic instinct? The instinct that carried on into maturity, leads to the creation of fictional or theoretic form?

Do not the words, “Let’s play house!” awaken memories within your breast, memories of the dreams and hopes and illusions of childhood; of tragedies, perhaps, of heartaches and sorrows? And, if you can hark back, do you not remember, that these same joys and sorrows were the moments woven into your play? There were plays of marriage and visits to loved places; plays of tears and trouble, when perhaps, your dolls were sick and the doctor came: all moments taken from the world of grown-ups about you, imitated, subtly dramatized.

If you have not forgotten those yesterdays, and surely you never have, do you not recall that there was one among the group with whom you played that led, excelled in thinking out the story of the play? That one most probably was yourself, for you are today a creator of drama, or perhaps you hope to be, and to be sure, the dramatist of today or of tomorrow, of screen or stage, was yesterday the child who made-believe in play.

Should you follow me in this journey back to the days of “Let’s play house,” you will further recall, that as children we began the game by marking out with sticks or stones upon the ground, or with chalk upon the play room floor the boundaries of your make-believe world, the rooms lived in and the places visited in “pretend,” and in the full power of our imagination, where the stones lay upon the ground rose walls and towers; there were windows, doors, ceilings and furniture for all the rooms.

Tangible, real they were to us who played, and when there were spectators, children usually, who might not join us in the game, do you remember, with each change of place we’d pause to carefully describe it, then go on.

In the same manner Shakespeare and other early dramatists staged their plays. At the commencement of a scene, some few lines were given to the description of the place, then the action progressed, and the spectators built each in his own mind, massive or fragile, glorious or mean, as called for or to the limit of his capability, the setting of that scene.

One of my chief delights in Shakespeare is the facility with which he pictured his settings. In Macbeth, Act I, Scene 6, the first two passages are devoted to a description of Macbeth’s castle, its surroundings and the climate. Poetically and simply, he has caused to rise in my imagination, and presumably before his audience, where bare floors and unimpressive walls have been a feudal castle, with its massive buttressed masonry, corbels and wide projecting coignings where the martlets, lovers of grandeur, of the strong, enduring, quiet, might safely build their nests and rear their young.
In the days of our childhood, and, of the Master Dramatist, it was not too much to ask of those who were the spectators, that they join in the make-believe, and where doors and windows, furniture and walls were not, to imagine them.

Today, as men and women, writing and playing to an audience of grown-ups, we would meet with but slight success although it is true that Gordon Craig, Max Rheinhardt and Adolphe Appia in Europe, and Sam Hume, Edmund Jones and Norman Bel Geddes in America, have lately presented Shakespeare and other plays in a similar manner and have been to a certain extent successful.

Their audiences have, however, been limited and have been largely made up of people with far greater faculties of imagination than the audience of average men and women to whom the commercial house must cater, though by this, I do not mean an audience of “highbrows,” for “highbrow” signifies to me a person of conscious intellect; of suppressed and pampered tastes, conceit and artificiality; of fluctuating favor; a puppet, dancing on a string that custom, fashion pulls: but children of an ageless life, those Peter Pan-ish souls who won't grow up and still can make-believe.

It is incontrovertibly true that only here and there among a group of average men and women can those with this imagination, this power to make-believe, be found. Modern life has largely destroyed in the great mass of men and women the ability to visualize, to conjure into seeming reality that which their minds may conceive, even as our vision has been shortened by a life of constant attention to things near at hand; our hearing of constant presence in the tumult and roar of mechanical efficiency.

Specialization, that fetish of efficiency which has taken man from doing all the work that sustains his life or brings him pleasure, and has set him turning out one thing in thousand lots: the modern stagecraft, which gives to painted trees and flapping canvas mas-ory the semblance of reality, conceals the imperfections of detail in a marvelous control of light; even, though I tremble to admit it when imprecaions for a thousand other faults are being hurled at us, the motion pictures, whose trend has been to supplant with absolute realism the artificiality that no master of stagecraft might wholly conceal and which everyone will confess required at least a spark of imagination to overlook, have each had a part in the despoiling of the pure flame that should be an heritage from childhood to every man and woman, a full and glorious imagination.

It has therefore become more and more necessary to supply for the spectators of our plays, a material representation of the setting fashioned in the author's mind. Every modern play-house and every motion picture studio today, maintains a staff of specialists in this line of endeavor, men equipped and trained to visualize from the few words the writer of spoken or pictorial drama may devote to its description, the place or structure in which the writer conceived his action as taking place.

In childhood, when the play's requirements were simple, few, this tree would serve to represent the orchard of Grandma's house, that stone to mark the site of "school." Now, as the dramatist's life has grown more complex, as the experiences on which his imagina-ation draws have widened, passions and pleasures, sorrows and situations discovered, draw the field of his characters' visitation afar. There are wide foreign countries where adventure may be found, banks, cafes, palaces and hovels. Places known, loved or dreaded by the writer and places often, far too often we will all admit he has only dreamed about.

These places, real or imagined, far or near, large or small, it is the duty of the Art Director at the studio to translate, from a brief statement of their size and character given in the continuity, into structures that the eye can see and the camera photograph.

If, in the preparation of his continuity, the author has visualized certain action as taking place at a banquet, he has visualized, more or less vaguely a banquet hall; if a trial, a courtroom; punishment by death, a prison house, or, less ceremoniously, a hanging, beneath the widespread branches of some benign, unsee-ing, stately tree.

His greatest concern is in his story, and rarely does a writer conceive his setting in detail. Most vital to him is the effect it has upon the drama, upon the moods and actions of his characters, or perhaps, the effect upon those who will see it thrown in shadows on the screen.

Suppose that at a climactic moment of the story one of the make-believe men or women of the play should be on trial. The dramatist visualizes a courtroom. He sees a grey-haired, somber man raised above the crowd, two men facing one another across a paper strewn table and battling with wits for life or death. Another face,1 tense, drawn with fear, remorse, peers, stares at the judge, at the flushed, excited faces of the attorneys, grasping at, holding breathlessly on to every word and every motion, hoping, against all hope perhaps, for some sign that will mean freedom, life and happiness.

The motives in their hearts, the words upon their lips, the actions of their minds and bodies, the dramatist has seen and known. The room, the judge's bench raised above the floor, the table round which the counsel and affected parties sit, the witness chair, reporter's desks, the clerk, the jury box, all were there, tangible real in his imagination, even as the rooms laid out with stones upon the ground, and have created an impression in the writer's mind. It is this impression, of dignity and justice, the majesty of law or of grimness, cruelty perhaps, that the writer wishes conveyed to the audience in the setting and the action.

It is therefore up to the Art Director to design and build a courtroom which in itself, without any action taking place, will bring up to the audience some sort of emotion. If he is successful, and herein lies his art, he will have created a feeling that the court is dignified, majestic: that here justice, like the temple hunting martlet of Macbeth's castle, surely abides; or he will have created a feeling of foreboding, of cold grim walls that foreshadow death, imprisonment, stern, unyielding, cruel.

You may possibly ask, how can inanimate walls, furniture and such objects, be made to create emotions. Have you ever gone into a room in a home where you had never been before, and found that on entering, some heartstring began to vibrate in tune? Have you felt that here is a place that is really home? That in the placing of each chair and drape, love, harmony and the tranquility of soul of the one who lived within had had a part? Have you felt that here was quiet, rest; that in some great deep chair drawn up beside the hearth, reclining, all the cares of life, all the strife, all

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From Pen to Silversheet

By Melvin M. Riddle

VIII—THE ART OF DIRECTION

The mystery art of motion pictures! That's the art of screen direction. The mystery art, because very few directors, however proficient they may be, will attempt to describe or explain it. Without a doubt the most responsible, the most exacting, the most important executive work in the film production organization—the controlling lever of the production machine, it is for that very reason, perhaps, the hardest to describe, the most puzzling to explain, the most difficult to analyze.

Were one to choose as his subject, "How to direct a Motion Picture," he might write volumes, and those volumes should involve a discussion of every subject from ancient philosophy to modern dress for women; or he might generalize and cover the entire subject in a few words. It is probable that generalities would convey a better idea of the intricacies of the art than a long, drawn-out, confusing discourse, filled with rules and regulations, pointers and suggestions, because the latter would place the limitations upon an art. It must be remembered that screen direction is an art and not a mechanical procedure or formula. It cannot be limited by rules, because then it ceases to become an art.

Art is an expression of genius and no two geniuses express art alike. The mainspring of genius is individuality. Thus, if the aspiring director would read volumes after volume of a treatise on how it is done, were he a genius he would probably then proceed to forget everything he had read except vital principles and do things his own way and as his own individuality dictated. From this it reasonably follows that no two directors direct alike.

SUFFICE it to say, however, that the director must have a fairly good working knowledge of every other branch of production, in order to understand their part in his picture and to supervise their harmonious operation in connection therewith; he should be a keen student of human nature; a broad visioned judge of character; he must have his reserve of history, of art, he must possess a keen sense of dramatic values, he must know life, intimately, in many of its phases, and he must be a genius.

William deMille, whom we can look upon as an authority upon the subject of screen direction, because of the success of such Paramount pictures as "Midsummer Madness," "What Every Woman Knows," etc., when asked to analyze this intricate art, made this unique but startling reply: "I don't know how to direct! I never try to outline just how it is done, I simply make a start and go through with it.

"There is only one qualification that a director must have," he continued, "He must be able to direct! As to how that is done I haven't the slightest idea. With some directors, it is a matter of common sense, with others it is a question of being foolish in the right way; with me it is a matter of trusting in God and sweating. In general, I should like to remark that as a rule the more a director talks about directing the bigger fool he is apt to make of himself.

"I believe it is a great mistake for an artist to try to tell how he paints, because if he is a good artist, he doesn't know. He has no definite rules to follow. He just paints.

The relationship of a director to a motion picture, is the relationship of a general to an army. He is as strong as the army, but the army is no stronger than the general. Without the proper assistance from the various contributing factors of film production and the proper kind of actors, the director is helpless, but if the director falls down the best assistance and the most talented actors in the world won't save his picture. He is the general. To properly utilize and apply the skill and genius of the many various production branches, there must be a central active head. Otherwise, there would be lost motion and a lack of unity and organization. Therefore, his word must be law. He is the final court of appeal. If he doesn't know what to do in an emergency, he simply falls down. He must make the decisions.

"I try to work with my people in the same way that the conductor of an orchestra works on his musicians. He doesn't teach them how to play. He conducts them—directs them. He takes a number of artists and has them play one thing instead of playing individual things. That is all the con-
Tell Your Story

By Mary O'Hara

PROBABLY every continuity writer has some simple little recipe which helps him or her to get ready, set, go! A blank sheet of paper staring at one from the typewriter can be rather appalling when one realizes that it is only the first of a hundred or two blank sheets waiting to be filled up with good picture material.

My recipe is just this: Tell your story.

I have been asked so often how it is that I have mastered the trick of continuity writing in so short a time (for my first continuity, "The Last Card," directed by Bayard Veiller, was made only a little over a year ago) that I have searched for the reason myself and have found it in my recipe, Tell your story.

I have always loved to tell stories. When I was ten I was telling stories to my nine year old sister. Many of them were serials that took six months or more to reach the end. Needless to say, it was always a happy end with the bride and groom at the altar, and the bride’s hair flowing in a cascade down the back of her satin gown. I usually, for good measure, threw in a pair of twins, born to them during their dignified walk

back from the altar to the church door; twins because, if only one were born, into which pair of arms, his or hers, should the infant drop from on high? In fact, my sister and I had such heated discussions on this point that we finally settled upon twins as fairer—one for each.

In all this story telling, my greatest interest and my inspiration was my sister’s face; in search for language, my “audience reaction.” If too many minutes passed without her eyes popping or her breath catching I would pile on the melodrama. When I thought she had giggled long enough I would try for tears.

I have never outgrown this habit of telling stories. Now I am telling them to the public with one eye on my typewriter as I compose and the other eye, figuratively, on the face of the public, looking for its tears and laughter, its eyes popping, its breath catching.

To be a little more definite in describing my system—when I start a continuity, with the material well in mind, in imagination I place a listener in a chair opposite me. If my story is an adventurous tale my listener is a child. If it is a psychological drama my listener is an older person of average intelligence, for we all know that we would tell a story

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Equipping the Literary Craftsman

By Hazel W. Spencer

Perhaps we do not all have these skilled and capable hands but we have it in our power to develop them, and if we are actuated by the definite purpose already alluded to, such hands are the first essentials to its presentation. We must know what we wish to say and how to say it, and having arrived at this stage we may cheerfully attempt anything from a simple love-story to an epic. But neither student's path—are within the reach of all of us and point the way to the veritable kingdom of our dreams if we shall but give them our attention.

THE man who never allows a new word to escape him but runs it to ground in the dictionary as surely as it presents itself will not merely increase his vocabulary, but he will become well educated. And this, although he may never have gone to school a day in his life.

There is a fascination in the pursuit of words that parallels the fine rapture of the chase. It leads you afar field through countries of romance, ancient and modern, acquainting you with the arts, sciences, history, all that ever was or ever will be in the worlds of letters and of life.

If you know words you know men; and you not only know them, but you can write about them.

In this new art of the photoplay words are quite as important as in the spoken drama or in any field of literature whatsoever. We have made the mistake of believing the opposite to be the case. We have insisted upon ideas to the exclusion of all else. But ideas can only be conveyed by means of words and some words are vastly more appropriate than others.

The English language is particularly rich in point of choice. It has no dearth of words expressing action. Indeed, a photoplay may be written with entire fidelity to screen requirements and still be presented in language worthy of "Macbeth" or "King Lear." And nine times out of ten, if it is so presented, it will be eagerly seized upon by the producers who are utterly weary of wading through ungrammatical and poorly constructed scripts.

The ancient slogan of the in-

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On the ‘Lot’ With the Cameraman

By Virgil E. Miller

Member, American Society of Cinematographers

It’s a far cry from the Holy Trinity to the more or less unholy tripod, but between them lies the gamut of the mystic numeral “three,” with its triads, triangles and trinities that enter so largely—and sometimes uncannily—into the world’s affairs. Our every day, our life cycle, our universe, our Christianity, our physical science—all these and many other phases of life’s phenomena can be graphically represented by our mathematical triangle and its adaptations.

Thus has the triangle become symbolic of strength and symmetry; it has lent itself to our conception of the completed cycle, and given us our “eternal triangles” of mental, moral, and physical activities.

That much for generalities. Now look for a specific analogy in the interesting work of producing motion pictures. We will attempt to find the triangle that must obtain for a strong and symmetrical producing organization. Needless to say, the triangle exists; sometimes it is equilateral, but more often it is irregular in shape—giving rise to some of the problems of the studio.

To complete the analogy: It is evident that the author, the scenario writer, and their product—the story—form one angle of our triangle. Looking further, we recognize the director as being a rather important personage—at least his work is important—so we must allot him an angle in our hypothesis. The third angle must be someone whose work is just as important as the director’s and the writer’s so far as the finished product is concerned. He must be the instrumentality through which the writer and the director fuse their labor into a tangible asset—the picture on the screen. Thus we come to the cameraman—our third angle. Join these fundamental angles with their correlated sides (all other studio help) and we have the triangle—our producing organization.

Much could be said concerning the relation to each other of the three angles; each is dependent on the other, but, being variables, the dependence varies, hence our irregular triangles. Should anyone of our three angles become obtuse, the other two, by mathematical law, must become acute. In other words, should the writer, or the director, or the cameraman from an exaggerated opinion of himself, the others must suffer; their work will lose some of its intended value. A perfect story perfectly directed and perfectly photographed, gives us the perfect picture—gives us our equilateral triangle; this should be the aim of these three most important units; and this consummation of their united efforts calls for splendid cooperation.

Such cooperation naturally manifests itself between the writer and the director; again between the director and the cameraman; but seldom has it been apparent between the writer and the cameraman. No doubt this is accounted for in that the writer and the cameraman are not nearly so closely associated in their work as are the other two groups, but it can be shown that their work is interdependent, and that they can be of much assistance to each other.

Space does not permit dwelling upon the relation existing between the first two groups just mentioned, only insofar as is necessary to present the relation between the cameraman and the writer—the general theme of this article.

To be an author (and this includes the scenario writer) presupposes a creative imagination, but a creative imagination unsupported by knowledge of the cameraman’s magic is somewhat handicapped, for such knowledge equips him with the power of visualization; and visualization is the picture alchemist’s secret in the transmutation of thought into action. The crystallized thought-action is passed on, through the vehicle of the screen, to the ravenous minds of the multitude.
The cameraman, with his chiselled sunlight, is the medium of this thought transference; if the screen-sculpture fails to present the writer's thought, there is an evident missing link in their co-operative chain of mutual understanding. Is this appearance of a missing link due to a certain disrespect accorded the cameraman, because of the manual labor that falls to his lot? Possibly, and if so, it will unconsciously be reflected back, and a story's potentialities will be lost; it will receive only a literal interpretation, and the breach will be widened.

I do not like to think that this condition exists, except in isolated instances, but I do believe that the cameraman has not received and does not receive the credit due him in the success of a picture; he too often has been considered a mere mechanic—a camera operator, if you please—instead of the person best fitted to clothe the writers' thoughts that they may be properly presented to the world. We know that a monkey can crank a camera; a motor is even better than the man or the monkey, but they cannot supplant the cameraman. Any fairly intelligent boy with a strong back can move tripods and handle equipment, but that doesn't make him a cameraman.

A knowledge of this manual labor, and of the number of crank turns per second, and a general understanding of photographic terms and equipment, does not prove of much worth to the writer; he must know, or be told, of what can be accomplished after the camera is in position and the director calls "Camera!" In other words he must know what can be obtained by either trick camera work, composition, color values, and most of all, the multitudinous values of light and shade—for after all, photography is but a record of light and its many manifestations. Let him master these things, and he can then be more or less independent of the cameraman. But if he lacks this information, then he and the cameraman can reciprocate to each other's advantage.

Since most writers are specialists in their work, it is apparent that they do not have the time nor the inclination to master the details of cinematography, therefore they do have a need for the cameraman's advice, not so much in the building of the plot, but in the rendition of characters; the lessening of the costs by the substitution of "faking"—for the camera can be made to tell untruths—and the "atmosphere" that can be created by light manipulations.

As the writer's success is dependent on the screen success of his "brain children," we can readily see how poorly rendered characters, in an atmosphere that doesn't "ring true," will greatly offset the picture's success; for the audience does not then see the picture as conceived in the writer's mind.

A cameraman, knowing the desires of the writer, can transfer them to the screen in such a way that the audience lives and laughs and cries, and forgets that they are not the actual beholders of a story's unfolding. He can light his "sets" so that the intangible something, called "atmosphere" becomes tangible and real; he can heighten any portrayal or characterization by the actual "lightings" that an audience associates with the visioned environment as they know it in their own experiences.

Being more specific, an underworld setting cannot be lighted like a ballroom. In the underworld den we play for the weird, shadowy, suggestive effects—lights from beneath suggestive of internal fires—feeding the imagination, and breathing that into the picture which makes the observer feel as well as see the story. In the ballroom we look for brilliant overhead or "face-level" lightings—suggesting cheerfulness and freedom from the shabby things of life. Again we know that flat lighting (from the front) lends distance to our exteriors, and cheapness to interiors; whereas "backlighting" (lights towards the lens) tends to fore-shorten, to bring the scene closer to us, as well as to enrich interior settings, and a judicious mingling of these two lightings gives us the beautiful "modelings" so much sought for, and which we so much admire on the screen.

Speaking of the camera's untruthfulness, we know that it is an honorary member of the Annanias Club, and as such proves of great value to the writer. As the magic carpet of old transported its owner at once to any country, the camera of today, through the medium of the screen, will transport a Los Angeles circus parade to an Indian Durbar or set a Hollywood mob in front of Buckingham Palace, unknown to the participants until they see it at their local theatre.

Should the scenario call for an old castle, it is not
necessary to send a director and his troupe to Germany or Spain; its exact counterpart can be built in Hollywood, and not even the Hollywood-ite may know of its existence—because it will often be built in miniature—yet when it appears on the screen, the audience will see a real castle, with its peopled drawbridge, its moat, and all action called for in the script.

Another story calls for a storm at sea, with the collision of the two ships; one sinks and the other becomes helpless; lightning adds its terrors; the audience sits and gasps, bodies tense with the action that thrills them.

Two years ago such a scene would have been impossible; today it can be done on any studio lot. The Pyramids of Egypt can be set on the San Pedro hills; the bay of Naples can be set in a crescent below Hollywood, Mount Hollywood turned into a Vesuvius, and the audience will believe they are seeing an Italian wonder-scene. It would be a wonder scene, but not Italian.

These things are possible, because the camera does lie. But in lying it speaks a great truth. After all, the camera is only a thing of metal, a dead thing until touched by a Midas of thought. Guided by the cameraman’s knowledge of its functionings, it performs the miracle of motion photography that transforms the writer’s abstract thought into concrete images—that he who sees may understand.

It is such knowledge as this that the writer must have or be able to obtain to enable him to further his story values and give his audiences cause to wish for more of his work. If the cameraman can, with his lightings, illusions, “fakes,” etc., enable the writer to create a demand for his stories, he welds together the triangular producing organization by bettering good stories and giving to the director a script that makes his work a pleasure, and insures a mutual co-operation that makes for better pictures.

In Defense of the Happy Ending
By J. R. McCarthy

“A NOTHER happy ending play,” writes the Sad Critic, “a pollyanna picture by a mollycoddle author and a hooligan director; afraid of fate, ignorant of realism, denying life. Another conglomeration of hokum, with the puppets happy ever after.” Thus the Sad Critic weeping over a typewriter.

It is marvelous how much your hibrow can forget, especially when typing what he hopes to be salable copy. Or perhaps (forgive us, arbiters of movie destiny) it is marvelous how little the Sad Critic knows.

Obviously, the end and aim of a play, or any work of fiction, is to entertain. The more people it entertains, the more nearly it fulfills its mission. A story so conceived, so arranged, so directed and acted that every human being who sees it, from Bernard Shaw to a blue law advocate, actually is entertained—such a story is the ideal toward which all tales endeavor.

There are many reasons by which a drama may entertain. The three dozen odd dramatic situations, with their three hundred million twists and angles, form the basis of interest.

So far so good. To gain interest we must present a problem, the sort of problem that might conceivably confront our hopes for spectator. What actually do we accomplish in gaining his interest? In what manner is his mental inertia changed into active concern? Merely by so presenting the trials or joys of our characters that the spectator’s sympathy is aroused and he assumes the burdens, or pleasures of the characters as his own. In fine, we gain the attention of the man in the gallery by making him see himself upon the screen.

It is not an author’s pet story that Matilda Pink watches from 7:15 to 8:45. It is rather Matilda Pink herself, determined upon some sort of success in this gray world, thwarted by fellowmen and by elements, betrayed by fate and tripped by chance. It is Matilda that Matilda watches, with an interest punctuated by sobs, sudden seatarm gripings, nervous laughter and wide smiles of approval.

What saleslady is so base, what minister so graceless, what newspaper editor so humble as to believe that he himself (or she herself) will come to a bad end, or a sad end? Who believes himself to be a failure? Other people may have tragic finales awaiting them. Other people may die just before the oil well comes in a gusher—but those are other people. And the spectator sees not others but himself upon the screen. The last reel is the end of his own dramatic experience, it is the summit, the climax of his own life. And the Sad Critic wants that climax tragic! Pity the Critic, who understands so little this simian world.

So much for the mechanics of the problem, the isosceles triangle of author, play and spectator; and the practical necessity for the so-called happy ending.

The Sad Critic, of course, will laugh at this “practical necessity,” or weep over it. His comment will be chiefly “Bah! Bah!” (so complains also our neighbor’s goat.) The Critic will tell us we must mirror life, and that life is thus and so. We must be realistic, forsooth. We must indicate that there is an end to all things, and that an ending is a sad, sad thing.

Realism, quotha? D—n realism! One has realism every morning for breakfast.

Life? Well, life is gay enough, if one but look at it squarely and avoid jaundiced spectacles. The Sad Critic forgets the one indisputable concomitant of life—hope. You can get yourself into the most deplorable of messes, or fate can do the work for you, as in the case of Job, but always, shadowing somewhere on the scene of disaster, is man omnipresent angel-hope.

Thank goodness, it is hope itself that accomplishes the defeat of the Sad Critic. For there is no

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Writing the Short Story
A SERIES
By Carl Clausen

Today is the day of the trained writer. Conditions in America have never been better for success in this field than they are now. Twenty years ago when O. Henry was still a struggling unknown, prices for the best stories ranged about the hundred dollar mark. One hundred dollars was considered a very good price, indeed, for a story which might have taken the author anywhere from one week to a month, to write.

Today there are a few magazines that never pay less than three hundred dollars for a short story—and often several times that sum—because they hold, and rightly so, that a story which is not worth the minimum of $300 is not worth printing in their pages.

It is not a matter of price to them. Quality is what they are after. Of course I hear a general roar to the effect that even the best magazines publish poor stories. And so they do occasionally. Editors are human, subject to spasms of poor judgment like the rest of us. Again a magazine has tied itself up by contract with some famous writer for a series of stories.

This is poor business for both writer and magazine. Too often we have watched the ghastly result of the writer straining to deliver a series of such stories. The first three or four are good, the next few are less good and the rest are good—for nothing.

I defy any writer of genuine creative ability to sit down and write a series of, say, ten stories about the same characters, and keep up the quality to the last of the ten. It simply can’t be done.

Imagination depends upon variety for stimulation and freshness.

Don’t let the fact that you read “rotten” stories every now and then in your favorite magazine, when your own good ones have been rejected, discourage you. Don’t think that the editors are bandied together to keep you out of print.

Once had a story refused by fourteen editors and when published by the fifteenth, it won place among the best short stories of the year. The fourteen other editors did not refuse it because they didn’t know a good story when they saw it. The finest masterpiece on earth would have no chance with them if it did not fall within the editorial policies of their magazines.

There you have the thing in a nutshell. You must write to fill a demand or if you are big enough, and willing to wait, create a demand for your work. This last way is the best. But few writers can afford to do this. While they write they must eat, and to eat they must create salable stuff. Don’t think you are lowering yourself or your art in doing this. It is perfectly legitimate and consistent with the scheme of things.

A realty operator does not build an office building in a factory district and expect to rent his rooms to doctors and lawyers. He selects a site on a busy downtown retail thoroughfare.

Remember this when you begin to write. Your

Sixteen years ago, Carl Clausen was a Danish seaman unable even to speak the English language. Today he ranks among the leading short-story writers of the world, stories from his pen having appeared in practically all the best American and British magazines. His success, gained against terrific odds, has been due largely to his tireless energy and his careful study of fiction technique. The editor believes that this series of articles is one of the most valuable contributions ever made to the literature of the profession the author so capably represents.
business is to fill or create a demand. Your success either way will depend upon how big a man you are, and how much you are willing to sacrifice for your art.

But you have everything in your favor, now, as never before. The copyright laws protect you, absolutely. You have first and second serial rights, book rights, dramatic rights and last, the motion picture rights, which—sometimes are worth more than all other rights combined.

A story which would have netted O. Henry even at the height of his fame less than $1000 will today often bring three times that amount to some obscure writer.

In the art of story telling the most important thing to me is the selection of the incident or the incidents upon which to hang the tale.

My filing system contains something like a thousand items and clippings gathered at random. At the moment of clipping them or jotting them down as they first flashed into my mind, each seemed charged with the germinal elements of a story. But now, after one or two years of culling over, they have become mere dead, uninspiring facts.

The answer to this would seem to be: Write your story when it first hits you. But since ideas for stories hit the trained writer as often as half a dozen times a day, this is manifestly impossible. And so I keep a filing system where I store away these bright effervescent ideas for future use, until the story upon which I am working at the time is done.

This story finished, I turn to the filing system only to discover there a lot of situations that might have served Mr. Noah and family as rainy day entertainment, so I sally forth in the lanes and by-ways for the new ones. I tell myself that the world is big and full of new, undiscovered plots. Three days later I return to my desk with a worried look, dig up the old file again sort out half a dozen of the most promising situations and proceed to put them through their paces.

After several hours of deliberation I decide upon one of them, throw the rest back in the file, and begin spinning my yarn—in my mind.

The first thing to be decided upon is the climax—the punch in the end—the denouement—which ever you prefer to call it. I must have this climax perfectly worked out before I begin writing. The reason for this is quite simple: There wouldn't be any story if there wasn't a climax. The story that "peters out" gradually is not art, no matter how well it may be written, for the art of story building—the temperamental dervishes notwithstanding—is a matter of mathematics, more exact than the spanning of a river by a bridge engineer, more accurate than the adjustment of the most delicate attuned instrument of science.

The perfect story is planned, assembled and built precisely as they are. But it is something more than either of these. The personality is called talent or genius according to the strength of the life-breath with which the story is invested. After the climax is worked out, comes the selection of the characters and setting. Both are equally important. They must be in sympathy with your climax, or your story will lack unity.

Many writers begin their story from this angle, selecting their characters and setting first, and then turn the characters loose so to speak, to browse in the setting, and watch the result. I too have watched it often. The result is nearly always a loose and rambling story.

But when you have your punch in mind from the opening sentence of your story, the effect will be altogether different. Your characters have no time to browse. They are too busy working up to the climax logically, from situation to situation, to go gathering goat-feathers in the alleys and by-ways of digression. You'll find that your story will move towards its consummation in bold, swift strides. You will not find it necessary to resort to "padding." Indeed, unless you watch your step, your anxiety to confront your characters with the climax will often cause you to "jazz" or speed up your story too much. This is a good fault, however, and can be easily ironed out by careful reading and by the inserting of a slowing-up sentence here and there.

Most editors will forgive you for exceeding the speed limits, but never for dragging your characters across the page to Chopin's Funeral March.

By your characters and setting being in sympathy with your climax, I mean this: If, for instance your punch is a startling denouement of a brutal murder, don't make the mistake of selecting for your victim, a lovely character. Readers don't like to see heroes waltering in their blood. Make the victim a character whom the reader would not waste a tear upon, or make him simply the conventional "well-dressed" stranger, unknown to the reader.

Further, do not make your characters "true to life." There is nothing more deadly dull than the scrupulously "human" character, nothing more uninteresting than stern realism. A story is a dramatic episode in the lives of a certain set of people, not a biography of their daily doings.

By a dramatic episode I do not mean startling murder, bloodshed, death, sudden elevation to the English Peerage or the falling into a man-hole and waking up in the hospital two hours later and finding that the nurse who is bending over you and uttering the banalistic words: "Drink this and you'll feel better," is Rosie, your old sweetheart from Kaggick, Ohio, still single, etc.

All of these things may be dramatic if done right, and they have been done right by masters by the score; but if you are a Tyro, you'll not be able to do them thus, so shun them like poison. But when you hear of a girl and a man living in the middle of the desert, with a water supply hardly sufficient for their daily needs, and you catch the girl carrying water in a tea cup to a stuffed rosebush by the back door, just to see it bloom, then grab your pencil, quick, and get busy, for you're on the trail of a real story.

Would like here to give you an illustration of what I mean by the selecting of the climactic situation, the characters and the setting of a story. The story I have in mind is "The Perfect Crime," Saturday Evening Post September 25, 1920. I am taking this story as an example because the conception of the initial situation was perfectly in harmony with the climax. The reason for this was that both occurred to me almost simultaneously. It was an "inspirational" story.

My first idea was to have a man, a trusted employee of a bank steal a large amount of money and hide it on the premises, then claim the reward for finding and returning it. What would be his motive for doing this outside of mere pecuniary gain, I asked myself. A powerful justification would be necessary or the story would be merely a slight variation of the common type of "trusted employee turning embezzler."
I had worked in a bank at one time. I knew that it was the practice of banks, when they hired a new man, to leave small sums of money—from a nickle to a five or ten dollar bill—lying around in conspicuous and inconspicuous places, to see if the new man would take them.

This way of testing a man’s honesty savors somewhat of the agent provocateur. It struck me as being very unjust. The salaries of bank employes are barely large enough to support a family decently on. A man with sickness in his family, or in debt, might easily be tempted to keep such sums, and I cannot think of him in the terms of thief, if he should do so. I could think of much worse names to call the institution who so tempted him.

Here was the justification for the crime if it was handled properly.

THE next step was to select the character. He grew naturally out of these two situations—Wally Griggs, the elderly, underpaid bank messenger, integrally honest, but smarting under the continued insults to his character when he finds these money traps laid for him even after years of honorable service.

His silent resentment of the impeachment to his character of finding such money. His brooding over the fact that no matter how honorable he proved himself he was still under suspicion.

He had the reader’s sympathy from the start. This was necessary because my climax called for a get-away.

The building of the frame-work of the story from these three well established elements—the man, the motive and the climax—was not difficult. The selection of the setting was also easy: the conventional large city bank. I chose the very one that had employed me—changing the name of course. I knew the inside of that bank so well that I could have found my way about it blindfolded.

I spent two or three days working out the whole story in detail in my mind—my usual procedure. Then I went at it. In seven days the story was finished, 14,000 words. Eight days later I received a telegram from my agent to the effect that the Saturday Evening Post had taken the story.

The film rights were sold three days after publication, for a sum well up in four figures, and in a short-story anthology for 1920, the story, together with another one, was asterisked, as among the best short stories of the year.

THIS, in brief, is the history of a story that “went over” because I had observed the first rule of short story writing: Correct selection. I do not take any special credit for this. But it gave me food for thought. I analyzed the yarn—literally dissected it. I took it to pieces like a small boy taking his first dollar watch to pieces to see what made it tick. I wanted to find out why this story was so much better than the sixty or seventy others I had published up to that time.

I found out. The characters were consistent with the theme. The setting harmonized with both, the plot was the inevitable result of the workings of the leading character’s mind, and finally not a word was written or spoken that did not tend to accelerate the action, or to prepare the reader for the big “punch” in the last paragraph.

Without knowing it, I had observed Iron Clad Rule of short story writing, Number 1, and anything the story lacked in other respects was far overshadowed by this.

After years of writing, selection becomes instinctive. Your past performances will guide you. But in the early stages of the game, there is nothing to tell you if you are right or wrong. You are kneading, blindly, and with groping fingers, the same clay which responds so readily to the touch of the trained hand.

If you are the born writer who simply must write or die, I would like to tell you some of the things which I found out for myself after much wasted labor and many mistakes.

My next article will be devoted to unity—the old Greek unities of time, place and action, and the fourth, which is the result of the observance of these three—the unity of impression.

Character Drawing
By Hewes Lancaster

I NEVER read a critic’s review of book or story I published that I did not wonder—“Where the dickens did he get that?”

What I had written into the book, the critics never found. What they did find was something I did not know was there. I am therefore convinced that a creative mind is one thing and a critical mind another—quite another. To require a mind to create and then to criticise its creation is to ask the impossible—“Men do not gather figs off thistles.” No! nor do they gather thistles from fig trees.

“Authors Are Not Jupiters” says this veteran writer. “Their brain children do not spring forth full-grown, as Minerva sprang from the head of Jove. They toddle about at first on feeble feet. But give them proper care, and they will grow to be as noble heroes or as ignoble villains as you can dream of.”

Knowing this and knowing it well I jumped all over with impatience when I read a line advising the youthful author to criticise his own work.

Oh youthful author, to whom so much advice is given—know this: You cannot criticise your own work, nor can you criticise the work of any man. The critic belongs to the breed that reads; you belong to the breed that writes. Write, therefore, and keep eternally at it. Get a bunch of good live people together and let them fight it out while you flag after them with a keenly pursuing pen. You cannot build up a plot or a tree as you would a brick wall and get a green and growing emblem of life.

(Continued on page 40)
The New ‘Photodramatist’

PARDONABLE pride impels us to call to your attention the fact that Photodramatist, in its new form, is the largest and best publication for writers ever issued. It is not our intention, however, to go into details regarding the strides we have made. The magazine, we believe, speaks for itself. It is in your hands. By turning its pages and perusing the contents, you can judge of its value to those interested in creative art.

The editors have put their best efforts into the issue now before you. We do not, however, intend to rest upon our laurels. Coming numbers, we feel certain, will be even better. The best writers, the best artists and the most prominent authorities will contribute to them. No phase of the motion picture art nor of creative writing will be slighted. No significant changes in the screen or fiction fields will be overlooked. ‘Readers of Photodramatist may rest assured that they will be kept fully informed, from month to month, on every topic that may be of the slightest possible interest to them. Photodramatist has no “axes to grind,” no “logs to roll.” It is independent, fearless and authoritative. Its reviews of current film productions—to be written in the future by Robert E. Sherwood, nationally famous critic—will be an infallible guide to the best, or worst, in motion pictures. Its technical articles, compiled only by men and women of many year’s experience, will be invaluable to sincere students of the screen or fiction arts. Its news departments, devoted to the contemporary history of the screen and writing professions, will be accurate, up-to-the-minute and thorough. And its editorial comment will be untinged by personal bias or financial influence. There is no magazine published today, we believe, which combines all these qualities.

Despite the fact that Photodramatist, in its new makeup, will cost the publishers considerably more than formerly, there will be no increase in the subscription price, for the present, at least. If you are not receiving it regularly, you are imposing an added handicap upon yourself in your chosen work.

‘Sic Semper Tyrannus’

AFTER a brief, but stormy, career as guardian of the people’s morals, Mrs. Evalyn F. Snow, “czarina” of the Ohio State Board of Censorship since last July, has been summarily dismissed by Director of Education Riegel. “The reasons for discharging Mrs. Snow are neither political nor personal,” said Riegel. “I gave her no reasons and I don’t think I should give reasons to others.”

We wonder, perhaps, if Mr. Riegel—being a politician—might not have had an ear to the ground. Election day has a disagreeable habit of recurring at stated intervals. We also are somewhat surprised that Mr. Riegel, considering that Mrs. Snow’s unpopularity was largely due to her refusal to consider the people she was supposed to represent, has not learned a lesson therefrom. His refusal to offer any reason for his official action stamps him as being a political autocrat quite similar to the late “czarina.” We venture to predict that neither he, nor any other person entertaining similar mediæval ideas upon government, can endure long in a republic. The people, being responsible for the deeds of their representatives, besides paying the salaries, are entitled to immediate and fullest explanation of every step the latter may take.

Other censors have been appointed in Ohio. By the time they have gone the way of all censors—have become inoculated with the same virus of self-importance that enters the minds of any persons appointed to judge the morals of their fellow beings—the voters of the great commonwealth of Ohio may awaken to the fact that censorship has no place whatsoever in a free country, and will let the people judge for themselves as to what they may, or may not, desire in the way of entertainment.

Educating The Children

WHAT value has the motion picture in the education of children? Is the influence of pictures demoralizing or uplifting?

Considerable enthusiasm is being shown in this method of bestowing knowledge upon the young boys and girls of the country, while at the same time the plan has met with much opposition.

In order to determine the facts in the controversy, Dr. Frank N. Freeman, professor of educational philosophy of the University of Chicago, has been granted ten thousand dollars by the Commonwealth Fund of New York to conduct an extensive research during the next twelve months.

“There seems to be two general problems presented for solution,” said Dr. Freeman in a recent address. “One is to determine what can best be taught by motion pictures and to devise means of enlarging this field, and the second is to find ways of improving the pictures themselves.

“Some of the films in use in the schools are of a purely educational character, but more of them are in the nature of literature, in that they are partly entertainment. There are, of course, biological and nature study pictures that might be classed as strictly educational. There also are in this class the animated diagrams showing the circulation of the blood, nerve action, etc.

“Motion pictures will not spread over the whole curriculum but will be incorporated as a part of the school work. What is best to show is a matter for much study. Some subjects, of course, lend them—
selves very readily to the film, as the hatching of salmon and of orange culture. Pictures of the various stages in these industries are, I think, readily understood by the children.

"Valuable results are obtained in the presentation of objects which the child has never seen. If, for instance, the child never has seen a ship or a picture of one, a film of a vessel moving over the water would convey much more meaning than oral information. I am of the opinion that the film is not so far superior to other methods as to be substituted in a wholesale way, but that it has its definite field and is excellently adapted to certain things seems beyond doubt."

The project that Dr. Freeman is guiding is only one of many recently to be announced. At the present time a theatre whose purpose is the entertainment and education of children exclusively is nearing completion in New York City. No admission is to be charged. Instead of barring the children from seeing pictures—as a few vegetating "has-beens" would like—the greatest educators of the country are putting forth every effort to assure that the children of America receive every benefit encompassed in the field of motion picture potentialities.

We disagree with Dr. Freeman, however, when he says, "Motion pictures will not spread over the whole curriculum but will be incorporated in certain courses only." We cannot bring to mind a single subject which may not be illustrated upon the schoolroom screen. We have already seen from the great historical plays which have been shown in the public theatres how easily and entertainingly history can be told by films; likewise the famous literary classics, including the Bible. With the use of animated pictures, the most intricate phase of mathematics, physics, biology, psychology, physiology, medicine, law, economics, and every other science may be disseminated more successfully than has heretofore been possible through the age-old means of the printed page. And with the advent of colored photography, even art may be accurately taught. Perhaps Dr. Freeman had in mind music as an exception to the curriculum, but we wonder if he had weighed the possibilities of the radiophone in connection with the motion picture projection machine!

The children of America—and of the world—are not going to be banished from viewing motion pictures in any form; motion pictures are as essential to the development of young brains as bread and butter is to their growing bodies. And this applies to the entertainment values as well as to the educational.

"Waking Up"

For some time, critics have been asking the question: "What is the matter with English films?" With every facility from a technical standpoint, with a wealth of unusual locations at their command, and with capable actors and actresses—trained in the rigid school of British drama—the producers across the water have seldom been able to turn out a picture up to American standards.

Upon following closely the reviews of British productions, as they appear from time to time in the trade magazines, we discover that in nine cases out of ten, critics have condemned the stories around which these pictures were filmed, and that in the few instances where the story has been praised it has proved to be an "original."

Britons, as a people, have always been inclined to ultra-conservatism. This trait has undoubtedly affected their pictures. Fearing to break loose from traditions, unwilling to give proper credit to the new art of photoplay writing, most of the producers have confined their efforts to adapting standard works of fiction—books, and plays, admittedly great from a literary and artistic viewpoint, but utterly unsuited to picture production.

However, a few of the prominent English authorities are beginning to "see the light." Recently, no less a personage than Kinchen Wood, discussing the faults of British pictures in the columns of The Motion Picture Studio, leading London film journal, made the statement: "When screen authors are paid a fair sum for original stories and scenarists are allowed reasonable time and remuneration for the preparation of continuities, a marked improvement in British films will be the result."

No Compromise

THINKERS and teachers receive little reward from their contemporaries. Their achievements are ridiculed; their mistakes enlarged upon. Let a scientist or a philosopher but once advance an original thought, and the reactionaries of his period leap upon him. Socrates was given poison by the authorities of Greece. They argued that he was corrupting the youth of Athens. We know, now, that few philosophers have ever taught lessons of more value to the world than the very ones for which he was executed. Jesus Christ taught love, humility, compassion for one's fellow men in an age of hypocritical dogmatism—and paid for his temerity on the Cross of Calvary. The public—led by jealous demagogues—could not bear the truth.

Learned men, of every generation, have realized how unfair and thoughtless the public, as a mass, inevitably is. When one looks back through the pages of history—remembers that Christopher Columbus rotted in jail, following his great discoveries; that Galileo narrowly escaped torture and death; that Joan of Arc was burned at the stake—then wonders, sometimes, whether the yelling mob known as "the public" is worth bothering with. With rare exceptions, only opportunists, political lightweights, forgotten almost on the day of their death, seem ever to have influenced a majority of their generation—and then almost always by appealing to prejudice and elemental passions; never to reason.

Still, taken individually, the public represents average men and women. Alone, they are generally capable of the highest reasoning. The great teachers were worshipped by those who knew them intimately—hated only by wrongly led masses. Could they have reached individually the members of the very mobs that cried for their blood, there would have been no mobs.

It is to the individual that books, magazines and motion pictures appeal. Consequently, in the present decade, we have fewer mobs—fewer instances of brutality toward the really big men of the day. It is essential, therefore, that the press and the motion picture—the two greatest mediums through which the individual may be reached—be kept untrammeled, free
from the degenerating influence of political restrictions, from regulation at the hands of those whose appeal to the people is only through prejudice, who, in pulpit and legislature, lift their voices in protest against influences which, through the very truths they teach, would detract from their self-assumed leadership.

Motion pictures should reflect life. Life is not always pleasant; but he is a coward who rejects the truth because it is not sugar coated. The worst mistakes those in the profession of the cinema have made have been the result of attempts to give the public what they think it wants. The public did not "want" the lessons of Socrates, because the people of his day were becoming sensual, warlike, materialistic. The public rejected Christ because he exposed their vices, condemned their hypocrisy, and sought to turn them into the paths of right thinking. As always, the public invoked "the law" to rid themselves of these two great teachers.

Politicians would now invoke "the law," or pass new laws where none exist, to rid themselves of films that have a troublesome habit of exposing evil in high places. Their plea—just as in the days of Socrates—is that the films are "corrupting the youth of the nation."

Certain producers and publishers are playing into the hands of these politicians. By appearing to welcome political restrictions, they hope to gain monetary rewards. They are sacrificing their inherent beliefs—selling their artistic birthrights for messes of potage. In their hearts, they realize that any compromise means the ruin of the screen art. And they are rearing a Frankenstein Monster that, eventually, will turn upon them and destroy them. If they think the politicians, the demagogues who are seeking personal gain through the age-old process of strifing a new medium of thought, will stand by them when the deluge occurs, they are sadly mistaken.

It is the true artist—the man possessing sincerity, bravery, ability to think and to project his thoughts into the minds of the individuals who witness his productions—who will live in the hearts of posterity. Such a man does not compromise with materialism, even when it appears in the guise of "reform." He knows that no man-made law can regulate an art; he acknowledges no restrictions aside from the universal precepts of truth and of service to one's fellow men. He does not seek to give the public "what it wants," as expressed through politicians. For he realizes that the people have been led far astray from the truth by these selfsame leaders. He will show life on the screen—and draw subtle lessons therefrom. He will set the world to thinking. He will not make as many pictures, nor as much money, possibly, as his fellow producers—whether they be those who cater to extreme sensationalists or to pussy-footing dogmatists—but he will retain his self-respect and the respect of everyone who comes in contact with him or his work. Even though, as is quite possible in a law-ridden country, he is eventually forced to drink political Hemlock, he will go down with a smile, content, with the thought that he is leaving the world a heritage vastly more precious than the swollen fortunes of his vacillating associates.

The Age of Wonders

A SCIENTIST in Rome, Italy, transmits a photograph by wireless to Bangor, Maine—some six thousand miles. A professor in Paris goes even farther; he sends a color picture in its original colors over radio, three hundred miles to Marseilles. Newspapers devote less than a quarter column to each of these items, and quarter pages to the latest divorce scandals. They do this because the people do not care, especially, to know that the world is on the threshold of the most wonderful era of its existence. The people, it seems, would rather read a two column interview with some notorious heart-breaker and her rather amusing "Advice to Young Girls."

The first message sent over the telegraph was, "What hath God wrought?" That was some years ago. At that time people were capable of deeper appreciation for man's God-given power to invent, to create. They believed with a degree of awe that when man really needs a thing, Providence, through science, gives it to him. When the first telephone message was transmitted, without doubt every newspaper in the country "extra'd" and headlined the marvelous news. But the advent of the radiophone, for instance, has been so little heralded that it has taken its place in the commercial world with proportionately scanty comment—which shows that we of this modern age are getting so used to the on-sweep of science and invention that, like the spoiled "only child," we take all bestowments unconcernedly, with never a thought of the how or wherewith.

How much more seriously, even, should the knowledge be received that a photograph has been transmitted by wireless. What percentage of the public have given the news a thought? A few deep-thinking scientists, of course. Perhaps it will be the subject of a few college lectures. Outside of that most of us will go along unknowingly, until some day soon we shall see salesmen going around offering a wireless moving picture "show" for twenty-five dollars. Then, it will be so common a thing that one will be afraid to show his ignorance by saying "Why I never heard of one!" and proceed forthwith to install the apparatus in his breakfast nook or window seat.

The scientist in Rome invents wireless photography. The professor in Paris simultaneously learns how to send colored pictures by radio. Now, the man in Rome and the equally brilliant man in Paris, and others, undoubtedly will get their heads together. What will be the result? Colored motion pictures by radio. We already have the radiophone in the office, in the home, in the auditorium, in the school—everywhere. We know that light waves may be transmitted over the air at the same rate as other radio waves. The problem solves itself—colored motion pictures with music and with spoken lines.

This is truly a wonderful age. We are passing through an epoch that in the future will be famous in history, an era noted for the greatest war the world has ever known, followed by the most turbulent economic period recorded; and that economic disturbance accompanied by the greatest discoveries in the Arts and Science.

And of these, the radio-motion picture, even though now in embryo form, bids fair to surpass them all.
The Bible In Motion Pictures
Premier Showing of Sacred Films Marks Epoch in Screen Art
By Elizabeth Niles, A. M.

At last the picture world has something finer. something better. While in the beginning the motion picture offered little more than a flickering suggestion of some world event, the chief interest for the past ten years has centered in presentations of the drama. Quite recently, however, there has been a cry for something different, for something not primarily theatrical but which would carry some elements of entertainment.

The scenes and the cartoons have done their bit toward filling this demand, and some effort has been made to entertain the more thoughtful of the spectators with more or less instructive scientific pictures. But such attempts have left the public cold, if somewhat amused or enlightened. The heart interest was lacking; the deeper emotions remained unstirred; and the spectator still felt the inner need for something more.

Only a few of the better class of pictures satisfy this ever increasing critical public; programs as a whole leave much to be desired. The demand is not alone for better feature pictures; it is also for films which will amuse and instruct the children and for those which will give older people adequate entertainment and food for thought. The day of the picture purely for children is surely coming, when at special hours the theaters will offer stories as suited to the interests of their little patrons as are the books of the children's sections in the public libraries; many grown-ups will enjoy these shows, even as a number of them still read their Alice in Wonderland. But that day is not yet here, and meanwhile the call is for program pictures with a sufficient variety of good entertainment to suit all tastes and ages. At present beside the feature picture, we have the usual comedy, so wofully in need of new ideas, and we have the news reels, which are too sketchy to be either interesting or edifying, and finally we have the beautiful scencics, many of which inspire the spectator as might a work of art, though the beauty of the composition is too often lost through the swinging of the camera from point to point. But there is still a demand for other forms of non-theatrical pictures.

To meet this demand there have been offered in the past sincere and praiseworthy attempts at filming the Bible, but invariably these films have failed to please the general public. Why? Usually for one of three reasons. They were a dull uninteresting series of pictures of little artistic value; they were so sectarian in their interpretation that they offended spectators of other denominations; or they were so illogical and inaccurate chronologically and archaeologically that they failed to interest even the averagely well-informed beholder. Now, however, the public is presented with a new type of Biblical picture—non-theatrical, and yet embodying enough of the elements of the theatrical picture to extend an universal appeal.

It has been left for Sacred Films, Inc., to give us not only inspiring pictures, but also an artistic entertainment. At the recent preview in the Auditorium of the University of Southern California, the spectators included church dignitaries, leading educators, and film producers and stars, as well as public-spirited, non-professional critics of screen drama—all gathered to study not only these particular films, but this type of picture as an exponent of the special work to which they might be adapted. These spectators were presented with a distinct
contribution to a newer and finer cinema art, carrying the essentials of other types of pictures, both theatrical and otherwise, and in addition a certain spiritual quality. They are bound to make an universal appeal and satisfy this strongly felt demand for something more than the average program offers. Whether viewed by the seeker after entertainment, the acquirer of knowledge, or the religiously inclined, they should meet all requirements.

In this modern world, others than the cynic must admit that to get the approbation of the mass of the people, you must give them not food and shelter alone; they insist on positive amusement. Even the learning of one's letters is now made a game in the schools. The older child is not forced to study what does not please him; he is offered all sorts of alternatives that he may select what will give him the most entertainment. The tired business man no longer reads Emerson for solace from the day's carking cares; he seeks entertainment away from home. The mother treats her child as an amusing toy rather than as a burden or a duty. It is the age. ChieFLy has this urge found vent in the motion picture theaters. Therefore, to retain its hold on the people, the church has accepted the situation, and many an altar is now hidden from view on week nights—yes, some even on Sunday evenings, with an expanse of white sheeting. By offering the entertainment of a moving picture, the church brings in the congregation to hear the words of God even though they are sandwiched between a moving picture of quite ultra-modern life and a discussion of the immorality of some certain picture not to be shown there—but seen by many of the congregation later at some downtown theater. Thus has been created the demand for entertaining, so called untheatrical pictures. Next comes among the more thoughtful members of all communities, both in and out of the church, the consideration of the problem of how to get this clean entertainment which should at the same time be something different from the usual feature picture. The answer has been found to a large extent, I believe, in these Sacred Films.

Beyond question they carry the prime requisite—entertainment value. No jaded picture fan but would be brought to the edge of his chair as Abraham lifts his knife above his own son who lies bound on the sacrificial altar. The suspended guillotine knife in the Orphans of the Storm was no more dramatic. If the public wants melodramatic "hokum," as H. H. Van Loan insists, they will find it at its finest in this scene. No presentation of a father's struggle between love and duty could be
more poignantly portrayed than in Abraham’s decision to sacrifice his first born; nor is there a delineation of a mother’s grief deeper than Sarah’s at the discovery of the loss of Isaac. Over the Hill and the Old Nest seem mere imitations of this oldest story of parental love which has lived through the ages. The first expression of hatred and rivalry between brothers is shown in the episode of Cain and Abel, and we have no more perfect picture of faith than in that of Noah awaiting the deluge. There have been many spectacles filmed, but few to surpass the realism of the sacking of Sodom, that city of iniquity and tragedy, or to equal the vigor of the rout of the armies of the Mesopotamian kings. The thrilling scenes of the great night battles are favorably comparable to any in the well known film, Civilization. And in addition these possess the merit of brevity—a fact to be appreciated by those of us who, in other spectacles, have grown weary with yard after yard of struggling warriors which we could not but suspect were mere repetitions, even as in the old stage effects where the string of horses, circling the wings, crossed and recrossed the stage to round after round of applause. For any spectator who is looking purely for an entertainment, for a picture replete with dramatic situations to arouse his emotions and hold him spellbound, this expression of the old Bible stories equals any program picture of modern or ancient times.

Or if it is the finer emotions to which a more subtle appeal is to be made, the love passages between Abraham and Sarah express the highest and purest of passion. The repression of the acting in these scenes as well as in those of the quarrel between Lot and Abraham over the pasture lands, gives the spectators the feeling that here are people who feel intensely and yet control their great emotions and passions through a higher instinct. The magnanimity of Abraham’s sacrifice to Lot of the better lands wins him intense sympathy and admiration, at the same time it carries the lesson of many sermons while doubling their weight, because it is soon followed by the evident proof of Abraham’s success and prosperity in spite of his sacrifice. And ever and again in strife and in peace is seen the tendererness of the shepherd with his newborn lambs.

From an educational point of view these films are as nearly perfect as possible, supervised as they are by a board of educators and Bible scholars. At the head of the board and acting as chief director of the filming is the Rev. Harwood Huntington, L. L. B., Ph. D., one of the best known clergymen in America. He is devoting his entire time and his very high enthusiasm to this effort to give the world the best
The Photodramatist for July

possible pictorial version of the Bible. While in places the pictorial value might have been increased with greater detail, the director and the supervisors have taken pains not to draw on imagination and have given the events exactly as they are told in the simple straightforward style of the Bible. The interpretation of no one sect has been allowed to intrude to the exclusion of any other; yet no sect could take exception to the presentation. The aim has been to give a faithful picture of universal appeal, regardless of individual or sectarian preference. Herein lies much of the success of the films.

But not only faithfulness in spirit has been the aim; there is also truth and accuracy in every visualized detail. Neither pain nor expense has been spared. For the historical details of the films there is no less an authority than America's foremost Oriental archaeologist, Dr. Edgar James Banks. He has given these films the benefit of his many years of experience in archaeological research in the ancient lands of the Bible. Not only has he given the best of his knowledge, but he has also inculcated into the films his enthusiasm and belief in the motion picture as a means of broadcasting culture and of extending the mental horizon of all spectators. He sees the center of the film industry becoming the cultural center of the country, due to the gathering at the studios of some of the best representatives of every form of art as well as of the many forms of science which go into the making of the modern picture. Dr. Banks' work on these films has consisted in the supervising of the scenic backgrounds, the details of the costuming, of the architecture, and of the interiors of the houses and tents. The backgrounds, while recognizable to the observant Californian, are nevertheless distinctly true to our best knowledge of the Promised Land. The rugged and stony hills and the almost barren stretches of desert carry the atmosphere of the Holy Land as we have been taught to picture it.

In an article recently published in Photodramatist, Dr. Banks told his readers just how he learned to dress Sarah's hair and to select her garments and her jewelry. Similarly, he knew the correct costumes for the warriors, arming them with bows and arrows, with sling shots, or with clumsy wooden bludgeons with heads of bitumen. Many carry oblong shields almost as tall as a man. The data for these accoutrements were found in the ruins excavated under Dr. Banks' direction in Mesopotamia. There are a number of exteriors of the ancient cities of Ur and Haran which give one an accurate picture of the architecture and city planning; in fact, Dr. Banks claims that Abraham could find his way at night about the sets at Burbank where these pictures are being filmed. The interiors are carefully designed to give an accurate idea of the domestic life of the people of that time. The tent life of Bible days, extending as it often did over many long years, as in Abraham's life, became a distinct feature of existence. It needed some such skillful hand as the archaeologist's to give the filmed tents the semblance of reality and an historical value. Of exceeding interest to the modern school boy as well as to his teacher and parents will be the scene of the school in the city of Ur and the close-ups of the clay tablets on which before drying are scratched the odd hieroglyphics of the Chaldeans.

Nor has the artistry of the cinematographer been neglected in these films. The progress of Abraham's train along the desert skyline equals anything in Cabiria, which has long been our standard for beauty in scenes involving camel trains. There are several views of the sheep covered hillsides which remind one of a painting by Millet. The closeups of various characters please the eye so well that more of them throughout the pictures would have increased the artistic quality as well as the entertainment and emotional value of the films. The charming feature about the actors is that though no names are presented to the public, many stars were employed, despite the foreknowledge that there would be no publicity for them. They were chosen solely for their ability to look and act the intended roles. Cain was one of the most difficult characters to find, partly because so few of the actors were just the proper type, and partly because no star wanted to play such an unsympathetic role. Yet, in the end, a very prominent star agreed to sign, when informed of the no-publicity clause in all contracts. The question of the artistry of the pictures cannot be dismissed without some comment upon the most unusual sculptured title backgrounds, the work of an artist who is certainly to be heard from in the near future. These backgrounds, combined with the beauty and dignity of the Biblical quotations used for the most part as titles, add immeasurably to the artistic quality of the pictures.

Up to the present time there have been but a few of the episodes of the book of Genesis produced. The first, the Creation, is a profound visualization of the origin of the universe and its great efficiency. The reel of Adam and Eve typifies the life of nearly every human being and carries the distinct message that, although expelled from Eden, and punished, everyone finds at the end the glorious promise of redemption. The message of the reel of Cain and Abel is the manifold mercies of God, for instead of killing Cain, He gave him opportunity for betterment. Taken with the previous reel, it shows the increase of evil, in that Cain feels no shame but boldly tries to conceal his guilt. Naturally the punishment is worse; Adam was to till the ground with labor, but Cain is to receive no longer from the earth her strength. The next two films, Noah and the Ark and the Deluge, carry yet another message of hope. The life of Noah is centered not so much on the flood or the building of the Ark, but on the fact that he attempted a moral leadership; he had a divine discontent with the world and made a supreme effort at reform. He is shown as the sort of man God remembers. The final scene of the gorgeous rainbow gives to people weary with a seemingly unequal contest, a new hold on life and a determination to serve this sort of God in fear and in love.

The Abraham series presents a Prophet in search for the one Supreme Being, beginning with Abraham's disgust for the idols worshipped by the Chaldeans in the city of Ur and his refusal to have household gods set up in the new home to which he has brought his bride, Sarah. The quarrel with Lot is followed by the magnificent spectacle of the sacking of Sodom and the rout of the Mesopotamian kings. The keenest drama of the series lies in the
story of Isaac and the banishing forever of human sacrifice from Hebrew ritual.

For non-theatrical entertainment it would be difficult to find anything to take the place of these Sacred Films. In the school room or lecture hall, without attempting to preach, they are morally constructive as well as a means of presenting the facts of Biblical history far better than any text. Realizing that seventy per cent of the human race is eye-minded, rather than ear-minded, many universities throughout the country are planning to use these films in their ancient history classes. For use in the churches, they carry a spiritualized message from the Old Testament of a more potent appeal than any reading of the Bible or any discourse thereon. But these films will reach far beyond the school or the church and will compete in the theatrical field because of their entertainment value and their sincere heart appeal to a world weary with its petty modern problems.

Yet another service of these films and all others of a similar type is that they will correct the narrow prejudices against all pictures and the entire industry which fills the minds of a few of the more radical church representatives and reformers. This is offered as a new solution of the censorship problem, since the public will see that the only evil in such pictures lies in the minds of the spectators. As the Sacred Films progress, it will be necessary, in order to preserve their integrity, to show facts as they are told in the Bible. To this surely no censor could object, and through it the public will learn to judge the act by the motive of the actor, and not from the spectator's personal interpretation of the act.

Looking yet farther into the future, it is altogether probable that this type of film will set the precedent for others, both those carrying similar messages, but not based on Biblical history, and those dealing with later periods of history. That such pictures to be a success must be entertaining as well as instructive and that this is a possible combination has been definitely proven in these Sacred Films. This new type of picture will offer a happy combination of what the idealist thinks the people ought to have and what the people think they would like to have, thus giving the public what the thoughtful producers know is really wanted. There is no need to extol the power of the motion pictures; it is to be hoped that this type of film will be able to use this power to bring about a greater cooperation between the spiritual and the physical in man. In former civilizations the church was always the sponsor for the plays and the plays were almost invariably expressions of religious feeling. Consequently it is perfectly reasonable that instead of the present antagonism between these two great educational cultural sources, there should be perfect cooperation. Man is incurably religious. Therefore it should not be difficult for this branch of the film industry to bring about harmony and to inculcate in the lives of the people the really great force of all existence—the soul life. This contribution to the films of the world is a contribution to the civilization of the world, though but a small beginning toward the great end towards which they are aiming.

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Life

By Elizabeth Jones Browning

You ask, what mean'ta it to live?
Then I to you this answer give:
A little ease, a little pain,
A little sunshine, then the rain;
Somewhat of sickness, more of health,
Somewhat of poverty, or wealth,
A mixture—light and darkness, sorrow, joy
With much pure gold—but some alloy.
A MERICAN producers need have no fear of an European invasion; especially after they witness the Fox production of "Nero," which is scheduled for a Fall release. This remarkable picture was written by Charles Sarver and Violet Tracy, both Americans. It was directed by J. Gordon Edwards, an American, and produced by an American company. The picture was made in Rome, and promises to be the biggest production of the forthcoming screen season. It surpasses all foreign productions which have been shown in this country, and has more thrills than all of them combined, while the mob scenes, in which thousands appeared, prove beyond any reasonable doubt that American directors are the best. The one objectionable feature of "Nero" is the over-acting of the Italian actors whom Edward employed. The European actor doesn't seem to be able to master the art of repression and restraint. William Fox must have spent a tremendous fortune on this spectacle, and Edwards was a year making it. But, both will be rewarded. Fox will get it all back, and a great deal more, while Edwards will take his place as one of the few great directors: an honor which he richly deserves. The photodramatists will not overlook the names of Charles Sarver and Violet Tracy, for they have told a logical story with smooth continuity and they must not be overlooked when the credit for this great production is being apportioned out. European producers will never be able to send a greater picture to America during this generation, and everyone interested in photoplays and their construction should see this great work, even if they have to be inconvenience in so doing.

A LEADING producer has informed me that he has noticed a decided decrease in the number of scripts received by him during the past few months. He also stated that those received showed a marked improvement, indicating that more care and thought are being taken by the aspirants. If those who are endeavoring to write for the screen would appreciate how much depends on the presentation of their story they would spend more time in its preparation. An inventor will spend months perfecting his invention before he is willing to apply for a patent. He realizes there is no need for rushing it, and for each improvement he makes the greater will be his reward in the end. A writer is an inventor of plots and he depends on his ingenuity and creative ability to develop a story. The more time he spends on it, the greater will be his chances of having it accepted. There's no need of rushing it.

An intimate picture of Joseph Hergesheimer, author of innumerable stories which have been adapted for the screen, including "The Great Impersonation," is given in the article by an anonymous writer in the May Bookman. Hergesheimer's early struggles are thus described:

"Hergesheimer inherited a bit of money and a weak constitution. As a boy he was a bookworm, shy and reserved. When money fell into his hands he forthwith got married and lived in Florence. There he suffered a nervous breakdown and was nursed back to health by Dorothy after months of care and anxiety. He wrote for fourteen years, urged by a dogged belief in himself, without having a single manuscript accepted. He and Dorothy bore the pinch of adversity and the rebuke of editors with fortitude, and the final triumph was therefore all the sweeter."

This should be encouraging to those who believe their first photoplay should be accepted, and are quick to condemn the producer who dares to return their manuscript. The road to success is not paved. It is a long, hard trail and the journey is filled with struggles and discouragements. It is choked with sufferings and sacrifices. But, if you consult anyone who has reached the brow of the last climb, they will tell you that it was with the suffering and the sacrificing they progressed. In the end, they admit it was the gaining that gave them pleasure: perhaps even more than the attainment.

IN his new novel, "Linda Lee, Incorporated," Louis Joseph Vance makes a vicious attack on the art and morals of the Hollywood cinema colony. The movies are bitterly scored. He proceeds through his characters to elaborate his decidedly unfavorable, and at times unfair and intemperate, opinion of things in general in this corner of the world. It appears that the architecture of Los Angeles is disappointingly commonplace, its sun shines too brightly, the stars twinkle too clearly, the hills are too brown and threatening, the groomed valleys are "mere blurs of iridescent varnish on the desert," the crowds which throng the city streets are made up of unprepossessing and ill-dressed individuals. As for the moving picture people, the producers or "overlords" have indefatigable industry allied with illiteracy, quenchless greed, no moral sense whatever, and, therefore, no scruples of any kind or nature. The directors and continuity writers are still lower in the human scale, since they share all the faults of the producers and are also indolent, outrageously wasteful, unamenable to reasonable suggestions, insufferably insolent and often incompetent. In fact the only chemically pure individuals to be found are the authors whose stories are being filmed and who are all but driven to madness by the manner in which the villainous crew alter, distort and generally deface and falsify their originally enchanting and flawless "works."

It isn't particularly nice of Vance to speak in such terms of a friend. I say "friend," because the moving picture industry has contributed large sums to his support during the past few years: sums very often far in excess of the quality of material re-
ceived. I am inclined to think that his denuncia-
tion of the industry was inspired by some personal
motive. It is true, in this particular case, that he is
killing the goose that laid the golden egg. And the
egg was laid right in his front yard on many occa-
sions. In appreciation thereof he proceeds to deride
and ridicule. I believe the time is fast approaching
when producers will reckon with those writers who
have garnered much of the golden harvest and then
because of some petty grievance have used their
descriptive ability to maliciously attack the indus-
try. When a laborer becomes dissatisfied with his
employer he is usually fired. The industry should
"fire" disgruntled writers, and the producers can
well afford to ignore their works. The writers, es-
pecially the novelists and playwrights, need the in-
dustry more to-day than pictures needs them. I
can better emphasize this by recalling some experi-
ences I have had during the past month. A pro-
ducer desired a story for one of his stars. He had
the novel of a certain well known author in mind,
but said he would not seriously consider it, only as
a last resort. He told men he was going to search
the industry for a photoplay, written by a photo-
dramatist, as he preferred to have a story which has
been especially written for the screen. The novel
was one of the "best sellers" and the author is fa-
mous. He accepted a story written by a screen au-
thor and rejected the book. The next day, a famous
director, who is starting his own company, told me
he wanted an "original" story for his first produc-
tion. Despite the fact that an agent was trying to
sell him the screen rights of a well known novel,
written by another of our famous authors, the di-
rector was firm in his decrees that he wanted "a
story by a writer that knows his screen." He got
one. "We can get along without you," is the state-
ment many producers have been making of late to
actors who have been making unreasonable de-
mands, and they are beginning to repeat that same
statement to novelists who in their bombastic ar-
rogance believe the screen must take their wasres
and pay delirious prices for them. When an indi-
vidual believes the world can't get along without
him that individual usually dies. The cry of the
producer to-day is: "Give me an original story! . .
. I'm sick of books and plays!"

THERE is one virtue which the average embryo
writer doesn't seem to possess. It is patience.
Fifty per cent of the scripts which are sent to the
producers are accompanied by urgent requests that
immediate action be taken, and a decision rendered
at once. This is a very unwise demand to make
and usually results in the script being returned.
those who are attempting to write for the screen
should make themselves understand the importance
which goes with decision. The cost of producing
the story may mean anywhere from thirty thousand
to a half a million dollars. A fortune may be at
stake. Perhaps the producer is going to put his
last dollar in his next production. He must take
time, in fairness to himself, or to those who are
manifesting their faith in his judgment by financ-
ing him. To expect him to render a quick decision
on a story which may mean an outlay of a hundred
thousand or perhaps more, is not fair. Many pro-
ducers, at present, are working with very limited
capital and are only financed for each production.
The story must be fool-proof; it must have all the
evidence of a box-office attraction—a picture that
will make money. The producer may read the
story, and spend days in reflecting over its possibili-
ties of being a success. He may like certain things
in it, and decide that he will hold it for a little while,
and, if nothing better comes along he will use it,
making the changes necessary. He may lack suf-
cient capital, at the present moment, or, perhaps
he is waiting for the return of his investment on his
last picture, before beginning work on his next pro-
duction. There are many elements which enter in-
to the purchase of a story, and they are all foreign
to those who are on the outside. Give a producer a
reasonable length of time in which to make his de-
cision. He may want the story as badly as the writ-
er wants to sell it to him.

PRODUCERS are, as a rule, charitable, kind-
hearted and generous. But, they cannot afford
to purchase a script because it happens to have been
written by "a poor widow, with six fatherless chil-
dren to support," or a youth who is trying to "make
enough money to pay his college tuition." A novel-
ist wouldn't send such a letter to a book publisher,
and a playwright wouldn't repeat it to a stage pro-
ducer. Then, why pour out a letter like that to a
film-producer? It is a fact that almost all great
writers have done their greatest work in the very
lowest depths of adversity. If O. Henry was alive
he would agree with us on that statement. Poverty
is the greatest incentive a writer needs. It's the
incentive that Bell, Edison, Rockefeller, Twain,
Lincoln, and all the rest of the great men used,
and it hasn't been worn out with handling, either.
If an individual can create, poverty will inspire.
Producers cannot spend a hundred thousand dollars
on the production of a story because the writer
happens to be living in an almshouse and is pennis-
less. But, if that particular writer has the right
kind of stuff in him, that condition will bring out
the best that is in him, and may result in the sale
of a story that will lift him out of it and bring a
success, the like of which he had never dreamed
could come to him. Roosevelt once said that a
President never leaves the White House, at the end
of his term, a rich man. Few rich men write suc-
cessful novels, books, plays or photoplays. They be-
come rich from writing them.

I SAW a little photoplay the other night, which
should serve as a guide to aspiring photoplay-
wrights. It is called "Forget-Me-Not." I've for-
gotten who wrote it. Gareth Hughes and Bessie
Love are in it, and it is one of the sweetest stories
ever told on the screen. It is plain and simple, and
yet, it carries a pretty message, and will live long
in the minds of those who see it. It was pre-viewed
by the members of the industry, and the general
consensus of opinion was that it will be a huge suc-
cess during the approaching screen season. We
will not forget "Forget-Me-Not," and we need more
stories like it, Mr. Burston.
THERE is no such thing as a perfect picture, any more than there is a perfect man. The author of such a picture would have to be divine. The best pictures are those in which the strong points greatly outweigh the weaknesses. In proportion as the weaknesses increase, the picture becomes less successful until it is considered an absolute failure.

Occasionally a strongly dramatic though implausible scene is used in the filming of a photoplay to develop an unusual or highly imaginative and romantic situation. This privilege is taken on the broad grounds of dramatic license. If it is very skillfully and artistically done, it passes muster, provided the production is otherwise true to dramatic rules. However, it is more probable that the experienced author may take privileges of this kind and succeed, than the novice.

Although unity of time and place is an important rule in the technical structure of the photoplay, which is seldom broken, the picture “Forever,” starring Wallace Reid and Elsie Ferguson, admitted a time lapse of twenty years between the first and second reels, and later another still longer lapse. Yet the picture was apparently a success, in spite of this flaw. Any photoplay which contains such weaknesses must be exceptionally strong in other respects to overcome its handicaps. This story interested the public because they were familiar with “Peter Ibbetson,” and wanted to see how it would be interpreted upon the screen. It was well acted and beautifully photographed, and in the later sequences the semblance of unity was produced by the dreams of Peter, in which both he and Mimsey were always young, as when they had been lovers.

The unknown writer must make his stories just as sound technically as he can, and when he has acquired recognition he can take more liberties with the principles of photoplay plot construction.

ONE of the greatest problems confronting motion picture producers is satisfying the ever-changing public taste. People for a time like to see a certain type of play; then suddenly they decide they are “fed up” on it and demand something entirely different.

For instance, during the War only strong dramatic stories seemed to be in demand; topics concerning ordinary problems of life had little appeal. Perhaps this was due to the fact that real drama—with its most gruesome tragedies—was being enacted in the paths of us all. Everything else seemed altogether too trivial. We were “keyed up.”

Now, however, the public is manifesting appreciation of stories dealing with the plain, homely side of daily life; clean, wholesome pictures of the great outdoors; pictures of historical value, and beautiful spectacular productions.

Pictures of this kind—so producers believe—are destined to stay longer in public favor than any of the previous styles, and will fill theatre programs for two or three years, for the reason that they contain a more heart-felt theme and therefore leave a more vivid and lasting impression in the minds of the audience. Human plays, human characters, natural acting, wholesome motifs—these are the requisites that are sticking longer and closer with the “fickle public.”

THE photoplaywright of today finds himself greatly handicapped by the censors. Many of the very situations which delighted the hearts of theatre-goers a few years ago are now absolutely forbidden—forbidden by the ultimatum of such persons as the late Mrs. Snow, Ohio film censor, who, when she says, “The people are not fit to judge for themselves,” is voicing the whole philosophy of Toryism, of Prussianism, of Dark Age-ism.

For a time it seemed that the ruling of censors was about to put a stop to picture production, and exhibitors were beginning to be thankful to have any film at all to show, disregarding the quality. But now a reaction is coming. Photoplay writers are learning more delicate and subtle ways of “getting over” their stories—dodging, in hundreds of instances, those censorial scissors, because the censors have practically admitted that it isn’t what is done on the screen so much as how it is done. However, it is a matter that tries the souls of screen authors and continuity writers.

How fortunate were the old Greek writers who were at liberty to use any one of the thirty-six dramatic situations!

WHEN a picture is made, the title is copyrighted. Therefore, you cannot use the same title. The first thing a producer does before he definitely titles a picture is to find out whether or not the title he has in mind has been used before. This is something which is hard for an outsider to learn. However, if he keeps himself informed as to current productions, it is possible to know what titles have been used and what have not. Producers usually look up records of old pictures and also have a search made at the Bureau of Copyrights at Washington. This, of course, involves expense.

ALTHOUGH in many magazine stories the climax is reached by an accidental happening it is not permissible to use this method of construction in a photoplay, because on the screen there is usually a star enacting the leading role, and it is always better to create an ending where the ultimate defeat of the antagonistic characters is directly due to the actions of the stellar character. The audience likes to see the hero or heroine triumph through his or her own efforts.
THE true pulse of the motion picture industry is the United Studios, the largest center of production by independent organizations, which lease space. When this studio is busy, it means that general production throughout the industry is booming. It is good news, therefore, to read that the United lot is hustling. Richard Walton Tully, America’s foremost playwright-producer and the latest recruit of consequence to the rank of film producers, recently finished his first offering, “Guy Bates Post in “The Masquerader,” and is now actively filming his own adaptation of his successful stage play, “Omar the Tentmaker,” starring this same distinguished romantic actor. James Young, Wilfred Buckland and Georges Benoit are again respectively director, art director and cinematographer for this Tully production. Dorothy Phillips has just completed “Hurricane’s Gal,” a stirring melodrama of the seas which marks her return to the screen after a full year’s absence. Allen Holubar produced and directed it—incidentally, he has gone over to Goldwyn to make just one picture for the Culver City organization, “Broken Chains,” in which Wilfred Kimball’s ten thousand dollar prize story.

**Film ‘Oliver Twist’**

JACKIE COOGAN, that artist who is a miniature only in his physical stature, has finished Frank Lloyd’s interpretation of “Oliver Twist.” Nazimova’s “Salome,” a series of breathings Beardsley paintings with a background of drama, is all cut for release. Constance Talmadge is hard at work on “East is West,” Sam Shipman’s quaintly pleasing combination of real drama and purest hokum; Norma Talmadge will start her production of “The Voice in the Minaret” within a fortnight—Frank Lloyd directing. The comedies are being taken care of, on this lot, by the aggregation which includes Lloyd Hamilton, Jack White and Lige Conley. Likewise the serials—there are with us always—for Ruth Roland has her headquarters here too.

So much for this one collection of production units. Most of these pictures are distributed through First National. The majority of the other studios are owned by companies which combine the production and distribution of their films whether in the one unit or through some close business alliance.

**Goldwyn Busy**

NUMEROUS interesting announcements from the Goldwyn studios presage unusual activity there; Maurice Tourneur, having finished “Lorna Doone,” with Madge Bellamy in the title role.

**Keep Informed**

Not only the technique but also the contemporary history of any art or profession must be studied by those who aspire to success. Unbiased, accurate news of the studios—producers, actors and directors—has heretofore been difficult to obtain, on the part of those residing away from the center of motion-picture activities. To fill a long-felt need, *Photodrama*, with this issue, inaugurates a department devoted to information about those who make the pictures. Conducted by George Landy, who has been associated far many years with various producing organizations, it will be accurate, up-to-date and reliable. Read it every month—and keep informed.

“Lorna Doone,” with Madge Bellamy in the title role.

**On the Lasky ‘Lot’**

THE Famous Players-Lasky studios are still humming—oh yes, Gloria Swanson has returned from Europe and will soon renew her languorous leads—with the directors in the ascendant. William de Mille is filming Booth Tarkington’s delicious “Clarence” with Wallace Reid, Agnes Ayres and May McAvoy—what one might call an all-star cast. Eh, what? Cecil de Mille is doubtless injecting still greater gorgeousness into “Manslaughter,” a recent Saturday Evening Post serial, with Leatrice Joy in the leading role. George Fitzmaurice, recently returned from abroad, has a fine cast in Betty Compson, Bert Lytell, Theodore Kosloff and W. J. Ferguson for his production of “To Have and to Hold.” Irvin Willat is making another tale of billows and bellowing bullies, entitled “On the High Seas,” with Dorothy Dalton, Jack Holt and Mitchell Lewis.

**Metro ‘Humming’**

METRO hopes to return to its former glories with a really fine program. Laurette Taylor has presumably finally settled the controversies about “Peg O’ My Heart” and will make her never-to-be-forgotten vehicle here. Rex Ingram has finished “The Prisoner of Zenda” and is well into “Black Orchids,” which he made originally several years ago at Universal. Barbara La Marr, a rising young talent, has the lead. Billy Dove. Ziegfield’s latest graduate, has come west and is making “Country Love;” and Viola Dana—we hope she is cast better than usual—is making another picture with John Harron opposite her.

**R-C Units at Work**

ROBERTSON-COLE has a new lease of life with an imposing array of stars and productions in the making and soon to be started. Helen Jerome Eddy has finally attained a much-deserved stardom. Ethel Clayton has moved over from the Famous lot. Jane Novak is a recent recruit to the
R-C banner and is just commencing on Marie Corelli's "Thelma" under Chester Bennett's direction. Doris May's latest is "Up And At 'Em," Harry Carey, formerly a Universal star, has just finished "Good Men and True," by Eugene Manlove Rhodes, with Tully Marshall and Noah Beery in the supporting cast. Mr. and Mrs. Carter de Haven are seeking to follow the trail of the Sidney Drews—may their shadows never grow less! And Johnnie Walker, who will be long remembered for his work in 'Over the Hill," has combined forces with Emory Johnson. Their first picture "In the Name of the Law" is a police story and has the advantage of Ralph Lewis and Mary Alden in the cast.

Universal continues its grinding out of film pabulum—most of it program stuff—always popular, however—as well as some real features directed by, or starring Von Stroheim, Stuart Paton and Priscilla Dean.

'Doug' on the Job

Douglas Fairbanks is well into his mammoth picturization of Robin Hood, a production which will doubtless eclipse in size any domestic made photoplay; while Mary Pickford is starting to remake "Tess." Allan Dwan and John S. Robertson are the directors.

Chaplin, Harold Lloyd and Buster Keaton go merrily along their respective comedy paths—for which much joy reigns throughout the world—and sometimes even consternation in the hearts of "dramatic" producers and stars whose feature pictures are often relegated to secondary billing at theatres—and deservedly so. It has taken a long spell of hard times to convince many producers that the mere fact that a picture is seven or eight reels long—even with a well known star in a well known story—does not always mean it deserves featuring.

Back to Normalcy

The film world is definitely on the verge of prosperity again—and this time its footing is solid. The one-idea angle has gone by the board, whether that idea was to play up the star, the producer, the author or the director. Each of these fads has been taken up—and too seriously in most cases—by the makers of our films. They met the fate of all faddists—an early and inglorious end. Now the one-idea angle is to turn out a good picture. If they'll keep this idea all the time, we who see pictures will have cause for a real Thanksgiving next November, and long after that.

George Landy.

TWO BROTHERS

Wonderous are the ways of the censor. On one set in a certain studio a director, famed for the subtlety and delicacy of his stories, films a scene in which the comic character of the play helps himself to three cigars in the home of his brother-in-law. This scene is duly expurgated by the censor as inciting to theft.

In the same studio on a neighboring set, a brother of the same director is spending ten thousand dollars a day to film a Roman orgy. The censor's scissors will delete this spectacle. It represents a "vision" out of history.

Moral: Life today is vicious, history is not. If you want to put a kick in your picture, make believe it does not exist in life as it is lived today.

This is one of those "straight from Hollywood" editorials which may answer the very question you have always asked yourself:

DO I KNOW Screen "Morals"?

Writers are canny readers. They read to learn. The best writers are the best readers. When they read of motion pictures, writers read the magazine that is—

"Made Where the Movies are Made"

Editor, Screenland,
Hollywood, California.

Dear Sir: I read your editorial "Two Brothers," in the July Photodramatist. Please send me, for the enclosed one dollar, the next seven issues of your magazine. Address them to

Name
Address
City
State
**CONTEMPORARY COMMENT**

**DEBIT AND CREDIT**

MOTION pictures have opened to millions new vistas of knowledge and beauty. They have brought the glories of an Alpine sunset, the mysterious charm of the Orient, the cool feathery waterfall—the multitudinous wonders of nature into the drab lives of the tenement dweller, the factory worker.

They have provided countless hours of laughter, or romance and adventure for a great class of Americans who are otherwise unable to afford the luxury of frequent entertainment.

They have given succor from toil, forgetfulness to the troubled heart, courage to the despairing.

The motion picture has given opportunity to millions to see the work of great artists, to know many of the best actors and actresses of the generation; and it will preserve to posterity the histrionic art of this period.

The motion picture industry has played a noble, generous part in every public charity. It has fed the orphan of every land, and during the war it was the Government's greatest propagandist.

How insignificant are its offenses in the light of its achievements!—New York American.

**PROSPERITY AHEAD**

FOR a comparatively long period, Prosperity and the Motion Picture Industry have not been on very friendly terms. There are definite signs that this interval of estrangement, which began when the war period of inflation ended, is due to be closed with the coming season.

Elsewhere in this issue we present the facts uncovered in a nation-wide survey conducted by Exhibitors Trade Review through its correspondents in the key centers. No effort was made to build up a story of false optimism. Our correspondents were told to get facts—and they did. The result shows that those who have believed the picture business was sound at heart, and depressed only because the whole structure of industry everywhere has been under the burden that succeeds every great war, were accurate in their judgment of the situation.

The conclusions which we draw from this survey are in line with the best business thought of the country on the subject of "conditions." There is one theme which runs almost universally through the response of exhibitors to questions by our correspondents.

It is this: a strong belief that the coming season, which opens in September, if not earlier, will usher in one of the greatest periods of normal prosperity the industry has known. The turn in the road is in sight. The worst is definitely over. To be sure, there is a pronounced Summer slump in some sections, but the surprising thing is that in more sections than might have been figured fewer theatres are closing and business is holding up well.

There is no shadow of excuse on anybody's part for crying that the industry's best days are over. The public's attitude toward the motion picture is not antagonistic; it is discriminating—and that fact instead of being an evil ought to be reckoned a positive good.

Why? Because it compels the producer to give the public better pictures; and compels the exhibitor to exploit them in a more effective fashion. The industry, from top to bottom, is undergoing a process of the survival of the fittest.

To those exhibitors who are discouraged, we say: take heart; stick to the fight; keep your theatre open if possible this Summer. In any case, read the lesson that is written for you in our survey, and get ready for better times. They are coming. They will come to you and your theatre—if you go out and meet them half way.

And don't forget this: it is the duty of the producer and the distributor to provide you with pictures with which you can make money, satisfy your patrons, and build prestige for your theatre. It's your duty to give the pictures you book the proper handling and exploitation. And the motion picture trade paper is at work, week in and week out, to help you in that very task.—W. L. Boynton, in Exhibitors' Trade Review.

**IT TAKES A STORY**

RECEIPTS of moving-picture houses fell off $43,000,000 last year. President Cohen of the Theater Owners' Association puts responsibility on censorship and "professional reformers." Hardly.

We like censorship and "professional reformers" about as well as Mr. Cohen does. But we can't charge them with the deficit. That is due partly to hard times, partly to the purple reputations some actors allow themselves to acquire, but largely to the owners and directors of the pictures themselves.

In their photography they have done amazingly well. Pictures, as pictures, are so much better than they used to be that no comparison is possible. But the directors, in their zeal for photographic effects, have forgotten the fundamental thing—the story.

Ask the public. Mr. Cohen. Ask the school boy, the clerk, the teacher, the hired girl, the plumber—anybody who goes to the movies. They will all tell you the same.

The pictures are great, but the stories are poor; incredible, inconsistent, conventionally melodramatic, dull. There are plenty of exceptions, splendid exceptions, but that is the rule.

The public doesn't go to see scenery, or interiors, or life among the rich. It doesn't go to see Norma Talmadge, or Rudolf Valentino, or even Mary Pickford. It goes to see a story—a story well told, engrossing, with real suspense, with real climax.

The magazines are full of them; but when they are transferred to the screen the heart gets pulled out of them. The presentation is of a beautifully photographed corpse, made to antics by means of wires.

No censors or reformers, not even any hard times, can keep the public away from a good story. And in the long run no advertising can pull them in to contemplation of a poor one.—Chicago Herald & Examiner.
Bercovici Signs Contract

FAMOUS Players-Lasky has secured the services of another author—Konrad Bercovici, the well known writer of gypsy stories. "The Law of the Lawless" by Bercovici, will serve as a starring vehicle for Bebe Daniels, who is to play the role of a beautiful, fiery Gypsy girl. This story has been referred to by one critic as "one of the most tragic descriptions of the ruin of a weak man by a strong woman that has ever been written."

Mr. Bercovici was born in Rumania, and is partly of Gypsy blood himself, his grandfather having been a Gypsy who left the tribe to marry a wealthy Rumanian woman. He was educated in music, studying in Paris. He started writing in 1917, and his first story, "Ghitza," was included in E. J. O'Brien's selections of the best short stories of 1920, while his second story, "Fanutzza," was included in Mr. O'Brien's honor list of 1921.

"Peg O' My Heart" Pictured

Laurette Taylor's greatest stage success, "Peg O' My Heart," is to be pictured for Metro Pictures Corporation. Miss Taylor will render the screen version of the title role, King Vidor will direct, and Mary O'Hara is preparing the scenario.

Logue Story For Katherine

After completing the filming of "White Shoulders" for First National release, Katherine Mac Donald's next starring vehicle will be "The Lonely Road," a story by Charles Logue.

Film George Ade Original

Frank E. Woods, supervisor of the Famous Players-Lasky Corporation states he believes intimacy between author and producer in making a motion picture is invaluable. "The best evidence of this," says Mr. Woods, "is shown in the production of Our Leading Citizen, George Ade's first original photodrama written expressly for Paramount. Mr. Ade came to the studio and worked in close contact with Waldemar Young on the script. We all jumped in and helped, but George wrote the picture himself."

Selnick Units Busy

Since the arrival of the Selnick production forces in Los Angeles, President Myron Selnick has lost no time in getting the various units under way on several new stories. Their first production entitled "A Previous Engagement," starring Owen Moore, has already begun. Victor Heerman has been assigned to direct the production. Sarah Y. Mason wrote the scenario. Edward J. Montague has been assigned to the writing of the scenario for the Elaine Hammerstein production, "Under Oath."

Creditable Judgment

Bernard McConville faced a colossal task when he undertook to adapt "The Count of Monte Cristo" to the screen; but the finished picture shows that he masterfully handled the deluge of action and characters in the novel.

Film "Old Homestead"

James Cruze is directing "The Old Homestead" for Paramount Pictures. One of the largest and most effective "sets" ever constructed for pictures is the village and old homestead which has been built at the Lasky Ranch. Houses, hayfields, orchards and many familiar rural details appear most realistic. This is a Denman Thompson play adapted by Perley Poore Sheehan and Frank E. Woods. The continuity was written by Julian Josephson, and Walter Woods is supervising the production.

Moreno in South Sea Story

Antonio Moreno has been signed to play the leading male role in "Captain Blackbird," a romance of the South Sea Islands, which will be R. A. Walsh's first production for Goldwyn. Mr. Moreno will impersonate a young American who falls in love with a beautiful beachcomber. This is his second Goldwyn picture, as he has just finished "The Bitterness of Sweets" in which he and Colleen Moore are featured, under the direct supervision of Rupert Hughes. "Captain Blackbird" is an original screen story by Carey Wilson and was adapted to the screen by J. G. Hawks.

Photoplaywrights League Ordered to Quit Business

The following Associated Press Dispatch, which appeared in newspapers in all parts of the United States on June 25th, may be of interest to readers of Photodrama-
tis:

SAN FRANCISCO, June 25. — The Photoplaywrights League of America, formed to sell "memberships" throughout the country in a scenario writing school, has been ordered by State Corporation Commissioner Edwin M. Daugherty to close up business for alleged violation of the corporate securities act. Daugherty announced here today. The headquarters of the League are in Los Angeles.

"If this outfit attempts to sell further so-called memberships under the plan which it has operated in the past, I will go before the district attorney of Los Angeles, and demand that it be prosecuted for fraud," Daugherty said.

The "memberships," Daugherty said, involve a form of security which is disposed of without the sanction of law and gives no adequate return to the investor. The league, he said, agrees to review and sell, if possible, three scenarios a year for a membership costing $10 but in three years it has sold but one or two stories. The bookkeeping of the league was such that he could gain no adequate idea of the extent of its membership, Daugherty said, but he knew that the "memberships" were being sent in from all parts of the country. Daugherty said his action against the league followed an exhaustive investigation of the scenario schools of Los Angeles.
THE STUDENT'S SECRET

By Douglas F. Munsin

The student screen writer must think in terms of the future. Our real work has not yet begun, and for a seemingly dormant time, we gladly let the honors rest in competent hands.

How we thrill at the mention of a Master Photodramatist. He is the personification of our burning object. How we labor that we also may enter this field of sublime Art, which has no like—no equal!

It is of this earnest, futurist scribe that I write. He is the kernel of the nut; a potential factor to be reckoned with. Work hard, masters, that your accomplishments may not be buried and overshadowed in the future brilliancy of present "nuts." But I know that you are generous enough to welcome any furtherment of our work. For you, benevolent pioneers, the more praise and honor.

I venture to say that every real student has a secret longing to become that discussed Shakespeare of the screen. Is not that a worthy ambition? And it proves only too plainly their well-meaning and good intent. You might mutter, "Presumptuous beasts!" But the present day beginner has a right to expect a greater reward, for an ever increasing price of recognition is being demanded of him. He is pushing forward with superhuman effort; a great strain is against him to hold him back. When that barrier is suddenly removed, who can tell to what heights his impetus may bring him?

The future means all—and it makes one feel good to write of that. The pain and suffering that students are going through at this very moment would be something terrible to witness. It is the purging—the price! The eternal rejection slips, the eternal criticisms, the eternal advice; the "this" and the "that," that seems to lead nowhere, eat into one's very soul as the years pass. Sacrifices are made as a habit.

Things like censors, blue-laws, film invasions and other obstacles are to be swept aside. The industry is too firm for any harmful effect to stand against it. The Photoplay shall play—and in the future freely.

WHY I WRITE PHOTOPLAYS

By James J. Hayes

A t best, a pertinent question. For, where yet breathes there that person who, unless he be of the sort who heralded the wild news that "he was gonna write a real picture," and did so in about fifteen minutes, to be returned fifteen days later, did not get off to himself in silent communion, not that he was ashamed, but there was a sort of hesitancy in dividing with even the most faithful and sympathetically inclined listener—that story inside him which had been raging rampant all these years and just bound to find expression on paper, and eventually he hoped on the screen.

So much for the pertinent part, for it is agreed that with the selling of that yarn he felt no discomfort in explaining, thereafter, that he was a regular feller. Nor must it be understood, that I am the party in question, for in truth I'm not—and more truth—I never sold a synopsis in my life. So it can't be said that I shall propose to sit upon my exalted perch and proclaim, and tersely, that I know the why in the photoplay writing game and would then proceed to send out a series of lengthy boosts to those who will if they keep at it and to the other, it must be said, who never will.

And that's where, as I see it, the why really comes in. From those who disregarding the heart twisting return of their efforts, continue plugging away at the thing that eventually—and it might never be, otherwise—makes them know their postman by his first name.

As I see it, three things drive people to writing photoplays:

1. Necessity.
2. Pastime.
3. Desire.

And taking them as they appear, the Necessity item is of short duration. For, with the return of the third rejection slip, when the urgent need of the return check would have been the most happy thing—there comes a decided disinclination for the assembling of words, that process calculated to bring home the bacon and save the old homestead.

Pastime assembly—I cannot believe to hold enough punch to encourage the learning of the art and the selling of it. Again, if by chance the art is learned, the subsequent everts sold—I cannot believe that they will express anything worth while or draw anything but fire from the serious minded critics of the silent drama.

But—if one has the Desire, nothing short of disaster can check the fever. For photoplay writing then assumes proportions against which rejection slips cannot successfully compete. The Desire is the thing. It is the "why" in the caption of this article. It's that which lives on and carries on after the smoke of outraged indignation has lifted following the hurried return of an equally hurriedly assembled assault. Continued attempts thereafter, depend upon it. They develop it. It is the driving force backed by a stubbornness to "make" somebody buy my work that keeps me everlastingly at it. Some thirty rejections which I have had thrust at me would kill the Pastime end of the business, and just as surely start the Necessity factor on a job hunt for a more "substantial," if not alluring, get-rich-right-quick method of saving the estate.

Desire's the thing. I intend to sell a synopsis—and why? Because I have the Desire, which means: I want to—Like to—Love to—Am going to.
COME ON OVER
Reviewed by Elizabeth Niles.

Comment: In spite of a very thin plot and about two reels of atmosphere this is an altogether entertaining picture. Why? Because Rupert Hughes understands human nature, especially the Irish variety, and because in this picture he has portrayed it with humor and cheerfulness. Even the scenes between the long separated mother and son have their touches of brightness. For much of the humor, one must depend upon the subtitles with many new and odd Celtic phrases and upon the good old Irish jig which closes the picture. The characterization proves again that no matter how thin the plot or how obvious the situations, the spectators are interested in the people themselves and not what happens to them—provided they are real personalities.

From Moyna in her fits of temper over the supposed desertion of her lover and the whole-hearted naturalness of Mrs. Morahan to the old mother with her pipe in the drawing room, each character is drawn with a distinctive touch which makes them all entirely sympathetic. The plot depends upon several remarkable coincidences and it is a long time getting to any conflict, but it is so full of cheer, brightness, and clean humor that while you may not remember it many days, you will leave the theater with the feeling that you have quite enjoyed the evening.

Synopsis: Moyna is left in Ireland until she shall be “sent for out” by her sweetheart, Shane, but two whole years pass while Moyna waits and takes care of Mrs. Morahan. Meanwhile Shane, living with Mrs. Morahan’s son and his family, is losing his jobs through hard luck and his own impulsive nature, as fast as he gets them. He cannot save enough to “send for Moyna out.” One day he meets Judy Dugan and in his efforts to help her father becomes her hero. Mr. Morahan goes to Ireland to see his mother and decides to bring her and Moyna back with him. Immediately upon arrival at the Morahan’s, Moyna learns that Shane has an appointment with Judy at the priest’s; in anger she leaves the house and is rescued later by one of the family who is on the police force. At a party given in honor of their arrival, Moyna will have nothing to do with Shane and scorns his modern dancing with Judy, until she inadvertently learns that the appointment with the priest was to persuade Judy’s father to sign a pledge to leave liquor alone. Then follows an old fashioned Irish jig in which all the party joins Moyna and Shane.

SCHOOL DAYS
Reviewed by Laura Jansen.

Comment: If School days had been cut down to about five reels and even less it might have made an entertaining picture. The beginning is good, but when Speck goes to New York, they have crowded a lot of melodramatic sequences which weaken the story. It becomes monotonous; judicious cutting would have improved it. It is not half as good as Charles Ray’s ‘The Old Swimmim’ Hole,’ although it has good moments.

Synopsis: Speck Brown, an orphan, is taken from the asylum by the Deacon who beats him and compels him to work hard. Speck hates school and avoids going as often as he can. His great friend is Leff, a loafer, who thinks he is an inventor. His wife keeps the house going by hard work. Leff’s little girl is fond of Speck and he likes her.

Speck plays many tricks in school and wearsies the patience of his teacher. One day, after Speck has played hookey, the Deacon brings him back to school and proceeds to beat him up before the class. When the teacher remonstrates, he tells her she should be firmer, that they only took her out of pity because her lover jilted her. This affects the teacher tremendously and the children are angry with Speck for making their beloved teacher cry.

The boy wanders to the cemetery, where his parents are buried. There he meets a stranger, who has bought the mansion of the village. This man is Speck’s uncle, the former sweetheart of the teacher. Speck is invited to lunch and when the Deacon visits the stranger, he is told that he is Speck’s uncle and plans are made for the boy’s education.

Thanks to the uncle’s money, Speck is sent to New York, where he falls in with a genial young man, a crook. Mr. Wallace, who is taking care of Speck, indulges his every wish but Speck is made very unhappy by the snobbishness of the children of the fashionable school he attends. Hadly, the crook, plans to rob Wallace, after suggesting to form a stock company in order to sell a new clothes pin, invented by Leff, an invention which is worthless. The robbery is foiled, Speck’s eyes are opened to the value of education and money. That night, he leaves home via the freight route, makes up with his sweetheart and his uncle and decides to get educated and to learn the value of money. He will stay with his uncle who has married the school teacher. Leff, too, has learned his lesson. He is the one who works now; his wife no longer has to support the family.
**HIS BACK AGAINST THE WALL**

*Reviewed by George F. Wright*

**Comment:** This is one of those "different" stories for which the producers are clamoring. In spite of his efforts to the contrary the leading character becomes a hero of the type which is usually attained only after five reels of aggressive struggle. Jeremy's struggles are aggressive, but in a backward direction away from heroic results. In other words it is the unusual characterization, assisted by the able acting of Raymond Hatton, which aroused the interest of the spectators. The pathetic incongruities of the situations remind one of the sort of comedy so long associated with the better scenes in Charlie Chaplin's pictures. Were it not that Jeremy struggles so hard to get out of his predicaments backward, as it were, he would appear to be the victim of circumstances; but he is never passive, he is always striving to run away. Even when he does shoot the last antagonist, he says, "I really did not mean to shoot him so hard." That anyone could get so much novel comedy out of a tenderfoot on a ranch is almost beyond belief. The conflict is somewhat divided, but since most of the antagonists are of the same type, it has been possible to work up to an intense climax involving a sudden twist that ends the picture with a gasp and a final chuckle. More such pictures would help to end the censorship agitation.

**Synopsis:** Jeremy Dice, though a cowpering assistant to an East Side tailor, proves himself a victorious dancer—at least until the former beau of the girl appears and carries off both girl and loving cup. Disgraced Jeremy starts west to live down his past, but is thrown off the train on to the desert. Running from the unknown terrors of the big spaces, he hides in a deserted cabin. Presently two bandits bring in their loot to divide it, thus trapping Jeremy in the loft. They quarrel, fight, and end by shooting one another. Just as Jeremy is trying to get away from the horrid sight, the sheriff and posses arrive and give him the credit for killing the two bandits. He is too frightened to make his protest plain and soon becomes the hero of the small town. He and the sheriff's daughter fall in love, but each time he tries to explain to her about the shooting, some occurrence interferes. Meanwhile he practices a bit with a pistol. The cousin of one of the bandits finds him so occupied one day; after pumping Jeremy's target full of holes, he rides into town and declares Jeremy never could have killed his cousin. The sheriff issues a challenge in Jeremy's name and rides to tell Jeremy. After a hard struggle with himself, the lad rides to the town and hides behind a building while he takes a look at his challenger; but his horse breaks loose and in running out for it he exposes himself and has to approach the group of men waiting for him. Despite wobbly knees, he comes within range of the cousin's remarks. When these touch upon the Sheriff's daughter, Jeremy suddenly forgets his fear and lands with his left on the bully's jaw and with his right whips out his pistol and shoots the man at close range. He has proven himself and continues to be the hero of the town and of the sheriff's daughter.

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**FOOLS FIRST**

*Reviewed by Alice Marsden*

**Comment:** A story with an unusual expression of the old theme of environment versus inheritance, Fools First was suggested by Robert Louis Stevenson's lines, "I have seen wicked men and fools—many of both, and I believe that both get paid in the end. But the fools first." The parallel lines of the wicked men, led by the Wop, and of the fool, Tommy Fraser, are for the most part very neatly interwoven, though so many feet of film are consumed in the thrilling scene of the poker game with a corpse as one of the players and in other incidents in the life of the gang, that the real story does not begin until almost the second third of the picture. These underworld scenes are directed with such finesse and such a nice distinction between what is crude and what is bound to give an exquisite thrill, that far from considering them padding, the spectator feels almost unwilling for the main action to begin.

Nothing could be more artistic historically than the Wop's manner as he comes from behind the recently agitated curtain wiping the blood from his stiletto. These scenes have been referred to as padding, but one of the distinctive features about both these and the remainder of the picture is the clever elimination of all unnecessary incidents. Consequently the action moves with unusual speed, and yet with perfect clearness. It fairly jumps from one situation to another and at the climax deals out surprises at every turn. Like many of Neelan's pictures it reminds one of an impressionistic painting in that with a few bold strokes, it speaks volumes, and similarly will bear further consideration than a single viewing. With so many surprises in the end, it is a question whether the full value of the picture is fully appreciated at the first sitting. However, it is the sort of picture up to which the public is fast becoming educated and it is to be hoped that more of its type will be seen. The characterization by Claude Gillingwater of the bank president, famous criminologist and ex-convict is exceptionally good.

**Synopsis:** Among the members of an underworld gang, Tommy Fraser feels himself somewhat of a misfit and declines to do more than guide a clever pen. But despite his cleverness he is sent up for three years. On his release he is met by one of the girls in his former office, who suggests that they work together to put over a worthwhile deal. When he agrees, she as private secretary to a bank president, secures him a position of trust in the bank. He is growing impatient for the big deal, but the night it is to be perpetrated, he has a few qualms. After securing the money and meeting the girl at the station, he wavers still more despite her urging, and finally insists on returning the money. Meanwhile the gang has broken into the bank and are just leaving in disgust when Tommy returns. They seize the package they find in his bag and leave him unconscious. When Tommy insists on making a clean breast of it, the girl insists on going with him to the president's home. After hearing Tommy through, the president begins to smile, admits that he knew Tommy was an ex-convict and explains that both he and the girl had each served a term. At first angry to have been so duped by her, Tommy is about to leave in disgust, when the girl recalls him and changes his mind for him. He is reformed for life.
THE 'SETS' FOR YOUR PHOTOPLAY

(Continued from page 8)

the heartaches, you might slip off with your shoes and know contentment?

Have you then, gone into another house that you were oppressed; found that while the furniture was more elaborate, the drapes, the walls more costly, you felt a bareness; that in the careless, jarring placing of a chair or table you could read strife, inharmony and hatred; that, when the door of this house had closed behind you, you would feel relief and not regret?

These are the terms in which the Art Director is trained to think, in terms of the emotions aroused in you, in the average man or woman and in himself by inanimate objects, collectively and individually. Emotion in architecture and decoration is spelled proportion, balance. In general, high, narrow, straight lines associate with delicacy and dignity. Broad, uninterupted planes and massive detail create a sense of mass, stability, and if given proportionate height, of grandeur.

In reading the continuity of a photodrama, with each scene the Art Director considers, as the author has considered, the emotions of the characters and the effect upon their emotions by the background. The scene in the court-room, we will say, has been written into a story. The hero is being tried for a crime for which he is not guilty, and is being prosecuted by an attorney who is his personal enemy. The judge has been fixed, the jurors are hirelings of his prosecutor. The hero is hopeless. The court is to him grim, cruel, merciless.

The author has described the setting in the script only as,

"Scene 256. Long shot, interior Criminal Court.

The hero's trial is in progress. The attorneys clash over a legal point, which is decided in favor of the prosecution. The hero sinks back into his chair, weary, hopeless, discouraged."

He then proceeds to cut from the long shots to a series of close ups or semi close-ups, possibly to return to other long shots from some other point of vision later on. He may, if the later action calls for some business that will require definite structural features, elaborate slightly in the statement of place, and say: "Scene 256 Long Shot, interior Criminal Court, showing judge's bench, counsel table, witness chair, etc., also window opposite witness chair, through which, while seated in the chair the hero sees a condemned man walking to the gallows accompanied by a chaplain."

There are then, first, two things which the Art Director wishes to know. The action that takes place in the courtroom and the emotions aroused by his background upon the leading or other characters. A third, if this is supposed to be some court that actually exists; that is, if the story is laid in New York, it must be a replica of a New York criminal court, so that the resident of New York will recognize it, or it may be just a Criminal Court, anywhere, existing only in the imagination of the writer. In the former case, the writer will probably have said: "Scene 256 Long Shot, interior New York Criminal Court," and so far as design upon the Art Director's part, the matter is ended. It becomes necessary only to secure an actual photograph of the interior of the New York Criminal Court and reproduce such portions of it as will be photographed by the camera. I say only in the sense that this is apart from the idea that I am striving to present at this moment, and not with the intention of conveying to you that this is a simple task for the Art Director.

If the court exists only in the imagination of the writer, the Art Director must proceed with its design. There enter now, however, further elements which must be considered. The first is the element of direction and the person of the Director. The second, the limitations of the camera.

The limitations of the camera as to the field of vision and to the photographic value of color, may be calculated mechanically.

The person of the Director is ever variable, his habits and methods of direction, his view point, the view point, the view point from which the camera will look upon the set, can only be had from him.

With the Director, then, the Art Director must confer before beginning actual design or erection of the set. He will have sketched out more or less roughly his conception for the Director to see. Sometimes, this conception is wholly acceptable to the latter. At others, the Director, in visualizing the action of the story will have conceived the set in an entirely different manner. If it has, he endeavors to present his conception of the set to the Art Director, and a discussion of both ensues.

After this conference complete drawings are made, from which the carpenters and other craftsmen will work, the drawings again presented for the Director's approval and construction starts.

A Message

By Ida M. Thomas

I have a message to the world,
A lesson I would teach,
Of loyalty and truth and love.
Must I go forth and preach
My word of grace o'er hill and dale
Until my little strength shall fail,
That I the world may reach?

One time, that would have been the chosen way;
Now, I shall write it in a photoplay!
I have a message to the world,
Of laughter-giving cheer.

I want to scatter it abroad
Both far away and near.
Must I then, sing a little song,
That those I chance to meet, along
The path of life, may hear?

Oh, not enough hearts can I reach that way—
I'll write my message in a photoplay!
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(Continued on page 39)
Q. I have been told that one of my stories contains many interesting incidents, with possibilities for good conflict, but that they do not lead to situations. Will you tell me just how incidents are developed into situations? R. Q.

A. Situations grow out of conflict. The probabilities are that the motives of your characters are not strong enough to produce conflict. Study the purposes and desires of the characters in a particular incident. If you were to intensify these motives—say a hundredfold—would the incident terminate as it now does, or would the characters be so aroused that they would engage in bitter struggle to accomplish their ends? Try this method of making the motivation powerful; if you do it logically and convincingly, it will lead to situations.

Q. The heroes I see in some of the pictures (especially the serials) are supermen rather than human beings. They win all through the picture. They are not entertaining to me, and if I may believe some of the remarks I hear, they are not entertaining to anybody else. Why do producers make such pictures? Would not these leading characters be just as interesting if they were more human and life-like—if they possessed weaknesses and faults like the rest of us everyday people? Why can't the hero be something of a villain at the same time that he is a hero? T. K.

A. Your questions are very appropriate. The producers who make such pictures as you mention are not the ones who produce the big pictures. The hero who is perfect and who always wins is certainly tiresome. Heroes are not only "just as interesting," they are much more interesting, when they are human and life-like. But they cannot be heroes and villains at the same time, villains because the hero must keep the emotional sympathy of the audience. He may be human, but he must be likable. He may be weak, but the weakness must not be of such a nature that it repels us. You must make his acts of weakness such that we can understand them, sympathize with them, look upon them as inevitable.

Q. Is there any way in which one can tell whether a situation really belongs in a story, and whether it is a strong situation or not? M. Y.

A. There are two tests than can be applied to a situation. Is it novel or original? Does it exemplify and bring out the theme. The second is of more importance than the first. If you have a situation that has been used dozens of times before in the same old way, it isn't a strong situation. But if your treatment of it is different, if you have a big theme which it brings out in a striking, original manner, it does belong in the story, and it is a strong situation.

Q. Assuming that a story is of sufficient merit in plot, construction and dramatic incident to warrant production, would it be condemned if the true character of this Queen is passed over in most popular histories with few remarks, giving no indication of her real character? H. M.

A. It would be permissible to reveal the true character of this Queen, provided these revelations would not clash with the accepted ideas as to this Queen's character, as studied in history.

Q. Could the antagonistic person be made a knight of a religious order in an historical picture? L. B.

A. This might be done, provided that in so doing you would not antagonize any religious sect now in existence, that is directly descended from this particular religious order and would not destroy accepted ideas as to its worthiness but in some manner.

Q. Is it permissible to introduce a fictitious hero and heroine in an historical picture? S. M.

A. This has been done, if no love interest can be obtained in any other way. Although some people would complain because your historical facts are not accurate, others would commend the insertion of the love story. Several years ago Cecil B. deMille did a picture with the story of Joan of Arc. "To make the story more interesting, Jeanie MacPherson, the author, had Joan fall in love with a British officer. This brought down a storm of protests from Catholics because they had always considered and worshipped Joan as a Maiden and they contended that she would never have fallen in love with any man, much less with an enemy of her country, since she wanted to save it from the invader.

Q. I have lived in Japan for many years, and would like to write something for the screen, using that country and its manner of environment. Is there any demand for such a story? M. J.

A. Japanese stories are in little demand at present. There is only one Japanese actor of note, and your market would be limited. It is better to write stories that deal with modern American characters and locale. There is so much expense attached to production of stories laid in foreign settings, that the producers avoid them as a rule. Most of the stories of recent release that have such settings are screen versions of famous novels or plays, and this added advertising value made it possible to put out those pictures without financial loss.

Q. During this time when there is much agitation concerning the drug traffic, would it be a good time to offer a screen story on this subject? J. U.

A. The trouble with a story of this sort is twofold. In the first place the Board of Censors would probably not pass it, as they object to the showing of dens of vice, and of drug fiends, etc., on the screen; and in the second place, it would be very difficult to make such a story attractive. Primarily the screen should entertain its public. If the theme of a story is one of educational value, so much the better, but such education must be done while giving pleasure, not pain. We would not advise you to spend your time on such a story.

Q. Is there any way of making sure that a story will not be changed about in the process of production? I always feel so badly at having a story switched around until it loses all semblance of my original intention. T. W.

A. In the production of any picture it absolutely necessary that a great many changes be made, not only in the continuity but in the actual filming. While a story is being "shot," the producer, the director and the continuity writer are all on the lookout for effects. When a certain scene, or a portion of a scene, fails to produce the desired results, a different arrangement is made. Then, also, in the cutting room, parts of the footage are eliminated because it is felt that they are extraneous and that the story will be more compact and swiftly moving without them. The writer cannot test out material always so as to select just what is best for a picture. This final selection must be done in the studio.
is no room for superfluous phrases, no premium put upon "flowery" description or "word-painting." While we do not play demands before all else is the language of action, and this means language that is virile, red-blooded, absolutely accurate and to the point. Such language calls for no less skill than the language of the narrative; indeed, it calls for even greater skill. A narrative may be forgiven the faults of vagueness and even of verbosity, but a photoplay—never! The photoplaywright may not hide behind a breastwork of meaningless verbiage; he must come out into the open with a battery of words that convey exactly the meaning he wishes them to convey and no other.

This means that he must know words as an artist knows pigments. There is no such thing as a word that is as good as another to express the thing you have in mind. Synonyms will not do. What you want is such control of your vocabulary that the particular word you are seeking in a given instance will spring from its niche in your brain as if drawn by a magnet.

Do not depend upon a "Thesaurus" instead of helping you to develop a vocabulary of your own it will weaken you. Besides, what you are after is not the unusual or the unfamiliar, it is the word of our common speech that will carry your meaning most accurately.

Shakespeare had the largest vocabulary ever possessed by an individual, yet we do not go to Shakespeare for the extraordinary or bizarre; he invariably presents his message in language we all understand. This is the secret of his great power, and must be the secret of the power of any successful playwright, be he creating for the stage or for the screen.

Shakespeare is never obscure, never vague, never verbose, and this is because he makes use of exactly the right word in exactly the right place. His characters live for us as they did for him because he describes them in terms of unswerving fidelity to their peculiarities. And he was able to do this because of his knowledge of language.

We cannot all be Shakespeares but we can possess a workable vocabulary. We can learn to employ language so accurately and convincingly that the pictures in our own minds will become realities for others. Many a story has been rejected by an editor merely because he could not understand what the author was driving at. It was all perfectly clear to the author but in presenting it to someone else he had made use of inadequate language. It is exactly as if an artist, wishing to reproduce a blue sky, should dip his brush inumber. Shades of brown will never register blue, and no more will pure narrative describe action.

In your mind's eye you have a picture of your hero, John Doe. You have, as it were, created him, and are correspondingly proud of him. But how inspire an Editor with the same pride? John Doe is not a type, he is an individual. You have lived with him for weeks. There are a hundred little idiosyncrasies, mannerisms, personal foibles, by which he has endeared himself to you.

His way of entering a room, his manner of dress, his deportment in the presence of women, his habit of quick decision, you know all these as you know yourself.

How then, are you going to describe him to that bored and hopeless person, the Editor? Certainly not by a long-winded peroration after the manner of the novel, but by some slight-of-hand technique known only to the initiated by which the imagination is immediately seized upon and held in a close grip until your character has made his bow and is sure of the floor. Grisp, terse, vigorous English is what you want, and you want it of the best, the clearest, the simplest; as nearly flawless as you can make it; each word standing absolutely upon its own feet and scornful assistance.

It is not more true in matters of morality than in the writing of a photoplay that "by your words shall you be justified, and by your words shall you be condemned."
Are you? Or worse still, are you employed and dissatisfied because you are unable to make the advancement you think you should? Do you know it's your own fault?

How much Determination, Ambition, and Grit have you to go after it?

If you are honest and of average intelligence, possess good manners with a pleasing appearance, then there is no reason why you should not now be engaged in the work or position you have had your “eye” on so long. The average employer cares little for training, for so long as you have the sterling qualities you can quickly be trained by him.

Will You pay $2 to get a good Job or To change your job for a good position

That means just what it says, only $2 to get the position you are fitted for. We are not selling you a long, tiresome business course—you have nothing to study. We have nothing “preachy” or “booky” to sell. However, should you have taken any of the various business courses, here’s your chance to cash in on them.

Just a common-sense plan

Used for Years without a Single Failure

THAT GETS YOU THE POSITION YOU GO AFTER

Not very long ago Ben Trueman, who held many important positions both as employer and employee, found himself at the end of a protracted illness, out of employment, his savings almost gone and with a wife and four children depending upon him for their support.

The Help Wanted columns offered various positions but invariably Mr. Trueman experienced the disappointment of seeing some other man selected. And in several instances he was absolutely sure that he was better fitted to fill the position than the man who was chosen for it. As a result of his research Mr. Trueman finally discovered the ideas which are now embodied, in a completely tested and improved condition, in the wonderful Trueman Plans for Self-Advancement.

Read this Unusual Offer and Send in the Coupon

Send two dollars with your order or pay the postman on delivery, just as you like. In either case the payment will be merely a DEPOSIT. If, on examining the Plans, you do not think you have made the best bargain of your life, notify us within three days and we will refund your money.

You will also receive with the Plans full information concerning the advantages of our Service Bureau to which you are fully eligible without any cost whatsoever.

Our Free Service Bureau

Our Service Bureau is organized solely to see that the fine record maintained by Mr. Trueman is always upheld.

The assistance of the Service Bureau is given free to every purchaser of the Plan and is fully explained at the time of purchase.

This is a very important feature and is absolutely free. If you are looking for a position, or a better position, or if you are just about to start in business, you need this plan.

CHARACTER DRAWING

(Continued from page 17)

Plot, situation, theme, heaven and hell develop out of character. And character is developed by warm, living, loving, hating people—people that you eat, sleep, laugh and cry with. For your constant counsel take that old and familiar story of Thackery who, when he had finished writing the death-bed scene of his dying Col. Newcomes, dashed his fist upon the table and cried aloud:

"By God, that's literature."

When you find your bunch of people have developed will and purpose, reduced you from the office of dictator to the humble one of scribe and set to it, fighting their own battles and living their own lives—when you can see how mean that woman looks when she makes her spiteful speech; when you can see the light of benevolence break over that old boy’s face when he smiles, when you can feel the jump of love in the lad’s heart and the ache of yearning in the girl’s; when your throat binds for your suffering woman’s sorrow and your lips tremble to smiling when her sorrow is turned to joy; when these people of yours are more real to you than the men you meet or the women you bow to; then you have created characters.

All you have to do now is to watch them fight their fight out and tell straightly what you see— and you will have a story. Quite likely your story will have a beginning, a middle and an end. Quite likely, also, a critic will find in it plot, theme and situation, for all these things are inherent in living people.

For your cheering remember: Authors are not Jupiters; their brain-children do not spring forth full-grown as Minerva sprang from the head of Jove. They toddle about at first on feeble feet. But give them dreams, incidents and more dreams—plenty of dreams! And they will grow to be as noble heroes or as ignoble villains as you can dream of.

Do not copy from the people you chance upon. You are not a modeler of clay, you are a creator.

Know your people, and know that they are your own.

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IN DEFENSE OF THE HAPPY ENDING

(Continued from page 14)

climax, however tragic, in the affairs of men that is not somehow made bearable, somehow given a gleam of light by the presence of hope. The dramatist knows that whether he wish it or not, hope is one of his characters. And when he has sent his hero to the hoosegow and put a classic dagger in the jeweled fingers of his heroine, he looks upstage, beacons hope from behind a bookcase, and makes the audience privy to the truth that there may yet be happiness in this household.

There is perhaps a difference of opinions as to what constitutes a happy ending. Some will insist upon osculation, laughter, wedding bells and wealth. To be sure, these are happy enough, and not unknown to humankind; therefore legitimate property of the dramatist.

But if a mind be sufficiently alive, if an author be not too steeped in the more evident moods of tragedy, the element of hope will be found in every supposedly tragic ending. And hope, rather than realization, is the basis of happiness. The dramatist who denies hope to his characters and thus to his audience is perverting one of the verities of life. He is robbing the sewer-digger of his tomorrow, he is stealing from grandmother her one abiding gift of God.

TELL YOUR STORY

(Continued from page 10)

one way to an intellectual person and quite differently to one more simple minded.

Then I proceed to tell them the story. Introductions of characters, descriptions of time and place logically come first; then out of the characters and their relation to each other, the threads of the plot, and before I know it I am in full swing. The eye of my imaginary listener leads me on, I sense his interest or ennui, and above all, I am held to the necessity of making the story clear—clear—clear.
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what producers are making pictures.

You Want to Know—
what kind of stories they are producing.

You Want to Know—
the stars who are in active work.

You Want to Know—
what directors are working and whom they are directing.

You Want to Know—
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One day, without warning, the water came. The Atlantic Ocean burst its walls and swept into the valley, engulfing the tribes. Torrents of rain from the melting ice of the North swelled the inundation. Terror stricken men and women fled to higher ground, but the water followed faster, and where the peaceful valley had been there was a blank, silent sea and nothing more.

Did any fugitives escape this wholesale destruction? Were their memories of those awful days interwoven with the legends of the tribes to which they fled? Was it from this that humanity gained its story of the flood which is a part of the sacred literature of so many lands?

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August

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Not only will he offer practical, authoritative advice concerning the Western story as a fiction possibility, but he will also—from the store of his experience in the film colony—tell the best methods to use in injecting picture values into this fascinating type of literature.

You are bound to enjoy reading this unusual contribution from the pen of one of America's truly "big" authors. Reserve your copy of the September Photodramatist now!
Announcing---

Entry of Palmer Photoplay Corporation Into Film Production

HE Palmer Photoplay Corporation announces an important extension of its service to motion pictures which will launch the organization into the producing field on terms that open wide to the public the closely guarded gates to screenland.

We shall produce, and release for exhibition in the theaters, the best photoplays of new creative genius and fresh imagination. It will be talent which we have discovered and trained in our four inspiring years of experience as the world's largest and most authoritative school of photoplay technique. We shall share the proceeds of each production with its author, on a royalty basis which recognizes the just claim of creative effort to participate as long as the earnings continue. For the first time, the screen will be raised to the same dignified level of professional compensation as the stage dramatist and novelist.

This constructive undertaking is intended—
(1) To provide for the unknown writer outside the gates the opportunity which an autocratic group of big producers still blindly withholds—in the teeth of a veritable whirlwind of public criticism directed at an entrenched monopoly within;
(2) To bring to the screen the drama which springs from the people themselves, who live it and create it, and who can best reflect it in the universal medium of graphic expression, the photoplay.

Our production enterprise is the logical culmination of a vision which inspired the founders of the Palmer Photoplay Corporation four years ago. Our search for fresh imagination for the screen has uncovered a gold mine of vital human drama. Our training has revealed the tremendous possibilities of creative imagination equipped with the technique of screen interpretation.

Our institution has attracted the warm support of a wonderfully imaginative stratum of public intelligence which makes up the student body—a group of earnest, thoughtful, cultured men and women who realize, from the public's unerring point of view, what a mighty spiritual force the motion picture can and ought to become in the life of the whole world. They feel the urge to contribute something worthwhile that lies within them.

Among them are university professors, literary workers, newspapermen, clergymen, professional men and women, business people, scientists, craftsmen of all kinds—persons whose vocations require, and whose personal tastes reflect, a sound educational background and a genuine understanding of life.

Nearing completion in Hollywood is the new building which we shall occupy this autumn, and the time is ripe to realize our dream. We shall now back, with finished productions, our faculty's judgment of talent—and our editors' judgment of photoplays. It is the hope of this organization of 250 earnest men and women that, through a medium which we have the honor to provide, the people shall acquire and permanently retain controlling influence in an art which peculiarly belongs to them; that the better pictures for which the people have longed and implored the reactionary interests which control the industry, shall be produced and shown; and that the author, whose story is the indispensable starting point of every picture, shall have a reward commensurate with his contribution.

This expansion of the Palmer Photoplay Corporation's service reflects the public's challenge to a coterie of authors and scenarists within the industry who have long ignored the outside writer. It is the public's response to the attitude of producers who stand defiant in the face of the great popular demand for better, cleaner, more real pictures—pictures of the spiritual quality which satisfies the people's longing for higher things. Notwithstanding that prominent figures in the industry have publicly proclaimed the need for fresh story imagination, the contributor who accepted the implied invitation faced an almost impregnable wall when he offered his work to the editorial coterie within those same studios.

Dare this coterie longer deny to the writer outside the gate his opportunity to try to accomplish that which the men within have so obviously failed to achieve?

We believe we know the public's answer. And the Palmer Photoplay Corporation, as the great laboratory which has tested and developed the people's most eloquent expression of that answer, feels strongly its responsibility to help make it effective.

The Palmer Photoplay Corporation will carry on with renewed vigor its nation-wide search for creative imagination and dramatic ability. It will continue to train properly qualified persons in the screen technique. Its Sales Department will continue to supply story material for those producers who have the vision to purchase screen stories on their merits. Our producing enterprise is merely an extension of our activities which does not alter our long-established educational and story marketing policies.

PALMER PHOTOPLAY CORPORATION
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA
Imagination

By Sheldon Krag Johnson

IMAGINATION! What an infinitude does the very word open up. Such is the miracle of it, that it means the utmost to each individual. Who then will define it?

It is a striking fact that our dictionaries—those evergreen cemeteries—give no definition which is acceptable to the main within. They say it is fancy, the antithesis of the real.

But the inner man knows that this magic realm is the one sure land of reality. He enters it as a weary traveler, turning gladly from the brazen glare of the fact-paved highway into the cool stretches of his own estate.

In the heart of man, Imagination means, to image-forth. It is a process of creative conception rather than the mere reflection of an actuality. It is not fancy, nor the opposite of the real, for it is that inner source from which the external comes. It is to that external as is the hand within the glove; it is the power that flows through the whirling dynamo; it is the light by which the lantern is seen.

BENEATH its magic, the machinery of Life returns to its identity with the Spirit of Man and again becomes of personal significance to the individual. Within its warmth the frozen shackles of set conditions are melted and man is liberated from their embrace.

There is in each one of us a conscious awareness of being. This I Am is utterly simple and infinitely complex. The Imagination, indissolubly part of this I Am, is at once it and its tool. It is the Way of ways—the Tool of tools.

A tool, to the practical American mind, is an instrument of precision, especially adapted to a specific purpose; but the Imagination is the very principle of the tool itself. It is that by virtue of which there is any instrument at all. It is the need and the fulfillment of that need.

It is the Cause of causes, for it is the Divine Act of Self-Contemplation. In the order of creation it was said: Let there be light and there was light. The contemplation of the primordial light preceded its manifestation. It is the supreme power in the soul of man.

WE come into self-realization in the exercise of the Imagination. It has been said: I think—therefore I am. It could have been said: I image forth and in my contemplation I find self-realization.

In this glorious, free and tireless play of imagery, we enter upon the path which widens and grows swift into the highways of everlasting life. With small beginnings, it grows smooth and clear with the caress of passing feet.

Where haltingly, we timidly send forth our images, feeling that they are at best but half acceptable fancies, our power grows with the use thereof, until at last we come to know that we are one with a mighty force before whose irresistible sweep, both men and mountains move.

IN the Yesterday of the nations of the past, the Many slaved, chained by the imagings of the Few.

To-day, in this age of iron, we have liberated ourselves into a freer bondage. We have imaged forth mechanical creations before which we sweat in willing submission.

To-morrow, by the same power which has enslaved us, we will step forth, truly free, to let play the unconditioned Imagination, in forms divinely beautiful, projected by a Mind infinitely joyous and serene.
Many Entrants In ‘Situation’ Contest

Large Number of Writers Compete in Photodramatist’s Novel

Test of Creative Ability

The Situation Contest, being conducted by Photodramatist to stimulate the study of dramatic construction, already has begun to assume the semblance of actual controversy. Students of photoplay writing are showing more than ordinary interest, as evidenced by the scores of contributions which daily are coming to the Contest Editor’s desk. A careful perusal of the material so far submitted indicates that most of the contributors have a correct conception of what is desired, and if forthcoming contributions measure up to the literary standard heretofore maintained, the contest judges will find it necessary to use greater discrimination in selecting the prize winners. It has been decided, however, that in case two situations receive an equal vote, the full amount of the prize will be given to each tying contestant.

Although manuscripts now at hand show thought and care in their preparation, there are a few which do not fully comply with the rules stipulated at the beginning of the contest. Unlike the usual scenario contest, a completely outlined story synopsis is not acceptable. A concise summary of one dramatic situation only is required. At this point it may be well to define again the phrase “dramatic situation,” since there is no question more confusing to aspiring writers than “What is dramatic and what is undramatic?” We know that drama itself is the true interpretation of human emotions. Therefore, a dramatic situation necessarily must be the crisis of a predicament in which human emotions are evolved—a predicament in which the chief character undergoes an emotional struggle incident to making a weighty decision, or to overcoming a definite obstacle.

Coming back to the matter of rules: Every manuscript should contain not more than 300 words, typewritten, on one side of 8½ by 11 inch paper, and double-spaced. Unavailable ‘scripts will not be returned, although every idea or situation submitted will still remain the property of the author. No doubt, every person who has undertaken the profession of writing—whether fiction or plays—has in store, tucked away in some obscure pigeon-hole, what he or she considers an unusual situation which he or she believes may, some time in the remote future, find an “airing” in a story. Indeed, one may have dozens of such situations, to which another and another is added; yet, they all remain in the dark. Now is an opportune time to bring to light one of these neglected ones and to submit it in this unique contest. It may be the means also of introducing yourself as a promising writer who too long has been pigeon-holed because you have been too modest to come forward with your own ideas.

This contest is quite novel in that it allows “mere ideas” to compete. It is true that editors do not recommend for purchase suggestions only. They are seeking stories technically constructed and containing unusual plot value. However, if the mind is capable of evolving a situation potential in dramatic value, that same mind is also capable—with proper technical training—of evolving a meritorious photodrama; and it is to terret out such creative minds that this situation contest is being conducted.

The Contest Editor is now busily reviewing and segregating the mass of manuscripts on hand, with a view to publishing a list of the best ones in the September issue of Photodramatist, preliminary to the final selection of prize winners by the judges.

The Contest closes October 31st. The December number will announce the names of the winners.
The Mysteries of Double Exposure

How the Cameraman Literally Makes People 'Talk to Themselves' in Screen Drama

By Georges Benoit, A. S. C.

The secret of all double exposure photography—beyond the employment of trick devices and methods of operation—can be expressed in just one word—exactitude. Eternal vigilance is the price of success in this line of activity, as in any other strictly technical sphere. The fundamental caution in this type of photograph—which has grown so increasingly popular within our art-industry of late—is to make sure that the camera is absolutely stable. Even the veriest novice can appreciate the importance of having his camera securely fixed, from the universal experience with hand cameras; how much more important it is, therefore, where you are photographing a moving object or group of objects! And when you are figuring on exposing your negative again—and in one case within my own experience, I exposed the same strip of negative forty-nine times—the deviation of a hundredth of an inch is fatal. It would mean the waste of perhaps a full week of labor.

To ensure absolute stability, therefore, I use the fence around the camera and the cleats for the feet of the tripod as do most other cinematographers. I have another device, which I believe is eminently more satisfactory than the iron tripod employed by several good men in our line—that is too heavy and cumbersome. My own instrument is a small jack, like an automobile jack used for raising a car. This I place on the tripod top plate and thus I am enabled to hold the camera in an absolutely vise-like grip.

In the use of a travelling negative, where one strip of film is employed as a running mask to block out certain portions of the second exposed strip, make sure that you have fixed your frame on the film exactly as you want it on the aperture plate, so that your synchronization will be correct. Of course, in the "vision" type of double exposure—i.e., where you are photographing a man, for example, and also showing a scene that is in his mind—the cinematographer must always keep his count, making careful notations of the count on which the vision enters on to the film and where the dissolve commences and finishes.

There is a unique "vision" employed in "The Masquerader," in the scene where Guy Bates Post, the star, as Chilcote, sees in his mind his comrades advance upon him from the rear, angrily pointing the finger of scorn at him for the way in which he has failed them at the crucial hour in the history of his political party. We employed a rather different device for this scene. We utilized a special kind of mirror placed in front of the camera, with the actors in the vision working behind the camera so that they were revealed in the mirror. Many careful rehearsals were needed not only for the timing of the action on the part of Mr. Post in the "straight" shot, so to speak, but also to get correctly the angles of the pointing fingers and of the faces of the crowd of accusers that appear in the vision. These had to be pointed accurately so that they all led in lines toward the head of Post.

In this picture Post plays two roles—John Chilcote and John Loder—and these two characters appear together in many scenes. One stands out in my mind especially: Chilcote comes to Loder's apartment to make him a certain proposition. Loder opens the door for Chilcote, they talk at the door...
for a moment, then Loder points to a chair and Chilcote crosses absolutely in front of him to get to that chair. Here is a genuine innovation. It is accomplished by a device never before employed. Other scenes between Chilcote and Loder—both of whom are played by Mr. Post—show the two conversing together handing various objects to each other, exchanging clothes, and meeting in various other physical encounters.

Of course, in double exposure photography of an actor playing two roles, as in this case, practically all of the work is done with a special mat or mats, for the aperture plate of the camera, cutting off part of the opening to screen the part where one of the characters is seen while you are photographing the other character. Naturally, counting is essential in this connection, too, so that one character—for example—will speak in reply to the other only after the first has concluded his speech, and so on. The action, the talking, etcetera, must fit in all the way through the double-exposed scene.

In making mats, I have given up the metal ones used by most cinematographers. These involve a trip to the metal shop and take a long time to make; also, once made, they are very hard to alter. I use black celluloid, which is much cheaper, much easier to handle, and which I can make myself in about a half hour instead of needing the two or three days notice most cameramen require for the metal mats.

One of the special attachments on my Debric camera—like every experienced cinematographer, I have placed on my camera a number of special attachments that are not standard equipment—regulates the turns of the crank, by a system of gears, so that instead of taking the usual eight pictures with each turn of the crank, I can take only four or one. This is a great aid in double exposure work, where I often use the four-pictures-to-a-turn attachment for slower exposure on a light background. Thus I secure a fuller photographic value; if I used the regulation eight-to-a-turn ratio, too much light would have already been introduced in the film during its first exposure.

Another attachment that I find very helpful in general, and especially in double exposure work, is that which permits the film to be reversed merely by turning the crank the wrong way; the old fashioned method necessitates a trip to the dark room when you must rewind your film for the second take.

Still another great advantage of my type of camera is that I can see the entire action through the film while I am actually shooting; this is, of course, invaluable in double exposure photography. Once my camera has its magazine loaded with four hundred feet of raw stock, I need not touch it again until the magazine is exhausted. At all times, I can see exactly the lines of action and maintain the proper focus without opening the camera for inserting a ground glass.

And while I am "boosting" the model I use—for I feel it is legitimate for an artisan to praise his tools honestly—I want to mention the fact that I have never had to use X-back film to avoid static, with its resulting increased cost in retaking scenes that have been spoiled by this cinematographic plague. I use straight negative always and I attribute the absence of any annoyance by static to the fact that the lesser friction of the Debric removes any loophole for trouble of this nature.

To return to "The Masquerader"—one of the scenes shows Loder coming back to his lodgings in the London fog, traversing a long street and finally entering the doorway of his home. The scene was too short—although its importance required its presence in the film—and was a long shot, in addition, so that it would have been too expensive to build the big set which it would have required by the old fashioned methods. We got around this difficulty by photographing a painting of the scene, which was two by three feet in size, and then employed a series of black hangings, taking up the entire length of one of the biggest stages at the United Studios, to show Post—as Loder—walking down the street seen in the painting and entering his house.

This method is quite well known, but not employed as often as it should be, because of the conservative reluctance of many people to use anything new. Of course, this scheme can be employed only for long shots, followed by the erection of fractional sets for the necessary close-up shots of the characters in the scene. It involves, too, a thorough acquaintance with the method that can be the result only of a long study and much experimentation on the part of the cinematographer who attempts it. Then, too, there is a lot of work which he must do alone both in preparation, in shooting the painting, in working out the proportions for his black backings used on the second shot, and in the development of the double-exposed scene which he must watch in person. But, where this method is feasible, it is a great saving—tremendous, in fact.

All of the methods here narrated—and several more which I cannot, naturally, divulge—have been employed by me in photographing "The Masquerader." Some of them are more or less well known, others are comparative innovations and still others are absolutely startlingly revolutionary. These latter are due mostly to producer Tully, assisted by Messrs. Young and Buckland. But all of them are feasible and all of them are artistic! In every case, they heighten the dramatic effect of the picture's narrative and the beauty of its scenes.

Therein lies, perhaps, their greatest advantage, for their obviousness does not obtrude itself upon the beholder to the detriment of the story; after all, that is the main thing, and we cinematographers must perforce be content with a passing word of credit, when we deserve it, for "the play's the thing."
ON location!" is a familiar expression around a motion picture studio. When a company is on location it is operating at some site away from the studio, perhaps only around the corner at a building entrance, perhaps at the veranda of some palatial home in the suburbs or the gardens of some country estate, or again perhaps on the desert or in the mountains hundreds of miles away. But a company does not simply pack up and start for a location without any preparation. The way must be paved for it. The location must be searched out and found and arrangements made for its use, in case it is private property.

Thus, one of the big tasks in the production of a picture is to find and when necessary, obtain permission to use, such exteriors as will exactly fit the technical and dramatic requirements of the story.

To expedite this phase of the work, relieve the director of the burden of searching out these backgrounds and to build up a system of records by means of which these sites or structures may be easily located again, once they have been found and used, the majority of the larger studios have made a special provision for a department for this purpose, appointing what is known as a "location director" to handle all of this work.

The location director must possess several very important qualifications in order to be able efficiently to execute this part of the work of film production. In the first place, he must know the country within a radius of several hundred miles around the district where the studio is located and be thoroughly acquainted with the various natural geographical conditions so that he may know in which direction to travel in order to search for any desired location or setting. His job is one that cannot be held by an amateur as it is only by experience that he can build up such a fund of knowledge. Good location directors are very scarce because it is only those who have grown up with the job from its very institution who have so acquainted themselves with the exterior field as to be in a position to efficiently handle such a post.

**The Perfect Picture**

is one wherein a real story is told by real actors, capably directed, with proper atmospheric environment. Although the latter, of course, is not the most important quality entering into film production, it is, nevertheless, highly important. In the accompanying article, Mr. Riddle presents, in an interesting manner, the method whereby proper locations are secured for the big productions. There will be another installment of this fascinating series in the September issue of Photodramatist.

HE must be a man of keen observation and good memory, because one of the secrets of his efficiency is his ability to keep ahead of the game, as it were, by observing and taking note, during his travels, of sites which might perhaps be valuable as locations at some future time and later, when such sites are needed, to be able to find them quickly by reference to his records.

He must be a man of tact and diplomacy in order that he might overcome in many cases, the objections which will be raised by owners or landlords of private properties against the use by motion picture companies of such properties. Since the beginning of the motion picture industry, there have been many independent companies which have been formed perhaps for the production of only one picture. In many cases the directors of these companies, having no future reputation to consider, have been negligent in their care of location property and have left it in a damaged condition after finishing their scenes. This has been resented by property owners generally, many of whom have judged the majority by the few and have flatly refused to allow any other motion picture companies to operate on their premises on subsequent occasions, despite the offers of the latter to pay liberally and to leave the property in the same condition in which it was found.

It has been the task of location directors of large companies to overcome this prejudice on the part of property owners and to obtain the permission to use the sites. In doing this he must sometimes work in a round-about way, gaining the permission either through other influences or by convincing the property owner of the reputation of the company which is behind him, for good, clean business. In this, his personality is an important point, and when the company goes to film its scenes, he goes along to personally watch and see that his promises are kept by the company. The good location director considers his standing with property owners his most valuable asset and never breaks faith. Locations are absolutely essential to motion picture work and by their use millions of dollars are saved annually.
which would otherwise have to be expended in the construction of elaborate exterior settings, many of which would be used perhaps for only a few scenes.

The location director also encounters a very difficult problem in his search for natural geographical locations. When the scenario is finished, he takes a copy of the script and makes a list of the locations which he sees will be needed and their specifications as laid out in the story. He then sets about finding these locations. Sometimes he must get in his car and travel hundreds of miles for a desert or ocean or mountain scene. He might find hundreds of such scenes, each of which might be just a bit off-color. He must continue his search until he finds a site which exactly fits or one which, by the aid of technical alterations, can be made suitable. There is no alternative but to find it and he must keep up the search until he does find it. He always works with the assumption that the very thing he needs exists and can be found. And the good location director always finds it. Nor does he have weeks and months in which to search. He must very often find the site within a specified time, which is often limited to a few days. Otherwise, production will be held up.

According to Fred Harris, location director for Paramount Pictures produced at the Lasky studio, and a man of seven years experience in his profession, the policy of that studio has been a valuable aid to charity within the last few years. Many of the beautiful homes, gardens and estates which the location director seeks to rent as settings for scenes in Paramount Pictures, are owned by wealthy people who would not for a moment be persuaded by a money consideration to allow their property to be used.

Philanthropy, however, is one of the hobbies of most wealthy people and when they are told that the rental derived from the use of the property is to be turned directly over to some charity, they are generally more willing to concede to the request of the location director. Thousands and thousands of dollars have been turned over to charity during the past few years through this medium. One instance is of a local millionaire who always turns the rental obtained from motion picture companies for the use of his yacht in film scenes, over to the Sisters’ Hospital in Los Angeles. One of the Paramount companies used the Boyle Heights, (Los Angeles) Orphan’s home at one time and although the sisters demanded no rental, the company presented them with a check for five hundred dollars to be added to the Orphans’ fund.

Mr. Harris has saved his company thousands of dollars by finding suitable locations when otherwise settings would have had to be built. On one occasion the company assumed that it would be impossible to find a home that would exactly suit their needs, because of the peculiar requirements of the story and were on the point of going ahead and beginning the construction of an exterior which it was planned would cost about eight thousand dollars. Mr. Harris, however, insisted upon making a search and was told to go ahead. He found, after some effort, an exterior which was exactly what was wanted. Permission was gained to use this for one hundred dollars. This is only one instance out of many in which the location director has saved the company large sums of money.

In about four months, Mr. Harris has found and obtained permission to use sixty-eight major locations. This does not include hundreds of smaller backgrounds which were either already on file or were obtained without any difficulty. In San Francisco, recently, he obtained permission from the government to take a shot from Fort Scott, also to film scenes aboard the quarantine boat. During his experience he has travelled on an average of fifteen thousand miles per year looking for location sites. He declares that the hardest locations to find are those which must match up with some background in which action has already been filmed in or outside of the studio. They must have certain specifications which must exactly match with this previous scene.

Mr. Harris’ system of filing is pictorial, containing pictures of every location which has ever been filmed, and many which have never been filmed, with information on the back of each picture as to where the site is located, when it was filmed, how much it can be rented for, etc. There is a key index to this file, entitled, “Index to the Location Photograph File.” The main heads of this index are Automobiles, Big Buildings, Desert Scenes, Homes and Estates, Homes—ordinary and poor, Hotels and Apartments, Mountain Scenery, Rural Scenery, Railroad, Small Towns, Water Scenes. Under each one of these principal heads are from ten to fifteen subheads, each numbered with a number corresponding to that on the envelope file containing the pictures. By means of this file anyone can easily locate the picture and find all necessary information about the site.

Location directors are unanimous in their belief that Southern California is perhaps the most ideal spot in the world, for motion picture locations and sites, because natural scenery typical of almost any part of the world can be found there.
Correct English in the Photoplay

By Hazel W. Spencer

WHILE sentence-structure, punctuation, proper paragrapheing, are of the first importance in any literary work, we have hitherto believed this to be a fact relative to the novel, the short-story, the drama, only, and by no means to the photoplay. Time has proved such a theory to be totally unsound.

While many photoplays, embodied almost every known grammatical error, have found their way to the screen, it is nevertheless a fact that an editor's first impulse is to cast such material aside. If he wades through it at all, it is because of some big, outstanding idea which catches his eye at the outset, or because of recommendation upon the part of some colleague who has already read the play. Now sentence-structure is an art in itself, and there is as much difference between properly and improperly constructed sentences as there is between a well-fitting and an ill-fitting suit of clothes.

FIRST of all, a properly constructed sentence is never vague. It goes to its point with simplicity and precision. When finished it leaves you without confusion or question; you know exactly what it was intended to convey. This saves both wear and tear, and time, and is a matter of particularly vital importance if you are writing photoplays.

Among the quaint and garish novelists of an earlier day diffuse and complicated sentences, requiring frequently a second and a third reading, were much in vogue. But such sentences, however melodious, have little place in modern literature, no place at all in writing that concerns the screen. This does not mean that sentences to be well constructed must be brief; it means that they must be simple and straightforward and absolutely clear. A sentence which leaves you in doubt as to its author's meaning, no matter who that author may be, has not been constructed properly. There are times in the lives of all of us when we sit down to write with no clear idea of what we are going to say, and if we do say anything it is likely to be vague.

Are You Worried over some point of English construction? Oft-times, even the simplest question may prove annoying to the sincere writer. Realizing this, Photodramatist offers a special service to its readers, covering the use of correct English. Submit your problems to us. They will be placed in the hands of Mrs. Spencer, and a solution thereof published in the following issue of Photodramatist.

SUCH sentences are as easy to write as any others, and they are of immense assistance in achieving the effect you desire. Handled by an artist they are the sentences that catch the discerning eye of an editor and attract him to your script at the outset.

Let me illustrate:

1. In all dramatic writing, whether for the stage or for the screen, the object of our deepest concern is the presentation of the climax.

2. We do not accomplish this by leaps and bounds, but by steady, toilsome climbing.

3. Dramatists, like mountaineers, must keep their eyes ever on the heights.

Transposed, these sentences would still be grammatically correct, but note the accompanying loss of power:

1. The presentation of the climax is the object of our deepest concern in all dramatic writing, whether for the stage or for the screen.

2. By steady, toilsome climbing we accomplish this, not by leaps and bounds.

3. On the heights, dramatists, like mountaineers, must ever keep their eyes.

THIS is a subject of tremendous interest to one who will give it careful thought. And thought it certainly requires. It is no more a matter of haphazard arrangement than the ascent of the Matterhorn is a matter of a few careless steps. Study it, oh you would-be playwrights and budding authors; you will find your style developing a grace and clarity you dared not believe possible.

There is another subject of very vital concern to all writers, namely punctuation. I heard a very charming woman say not

(Continued on page 37)
I

Taking over the Photodramatist's motion picture review department, I realize that I am assuming a rather formidable responsibility.

The readers of this magazine are, for the most part, experts in film technique. They understand the principles of movie construction, and when they regard a picture, it is with the calculating eye of the connoisseur. In which respect, they have a decided edge on me.

Therefore, it is as well that I confess, here and now, that I am extremely ignorant of the inner workings of the motion picture industry. I haven't the faintest idea why the script of a screen story is called "continuity," and I have only recently learned that a "Lap Dissolve" is not a fade-out of the heroine sitting in the hero's lap.

These defects on my part must be distinctly understood before I start the actual work of criticism, and Photodramatist readers must weigh my opinions accordingly. I judge a picture solely as it appears on the screen. If it appeals to me, I say so; if it gives me a headache, I say so. And to anyone who challenges my verdict, I can only repeat the time honored excuse—"I know what I like."

In each issue of this department, I shall review the photoplays that I have seen during the previous month. Some of these will doubtless be old, due to the difference of date releases in various parts of the country, but I shall endeavor to keep the department as nearly up to date as possible.

"Salome"

Nazimova has had some bad moments in the movies. There was a time when she became involved in a series of acrobatic comedies (one of which was produced for the sole purpose of ridiculing a rival star) and it seemed to many that another great artist had gone astray. But Nazimova came back into her own with "A Doll's House"; and she has followed that with Salome, which is unquestionably the finest thing she has ever done—on the screen or on the stage, either.

Indeed, Salome is such a remarkable picture, in every way, that one is forced to the inevitable conclusion that it is foredoomed to failure as a box office attraction. However I have a rather definite idea that this consideration will not weigh heavily with Nazimova. She set out to create a work of art, and she has succeeded. Her backers that he merely acted as Nazimova's megaphone. Every character in the play reflects Nazimova's emotions.

Salome possesses one particularly unusual quality—its action (which is continuous) is limited to two sets or, rather one large set divided into two portions. This would seem to indicate that there is a lack of variety to the picture, but variety is achieved by startling manipulation of lighting effects.

"The Wall Flower"

That most eminent of all the eminent authors in the Goldwyn corral, Major Rupert Hughes, has consistently identified himself as a champion of the downtrodden. In his recent pictures, he has lent a helping hand to a street sweeper, a neglected mother, a riveter and a harassed young wife. Now he turns his charitable attention to that suprenently pitiful object—a homely girl.

In "The Wall Flower," he paints his heroine's misfortunes with a white wash brush, dipped in India ink. She is not only plain—she is unspeakably dumb. Her mother maltreats her, her boy friends scoff at her—and she finally decides to end it all by jumping in front of a speeding automobile. Both of her legs are broken, and she is taken to the home of an aristocratic young lady to recuperate. Then the miracle, which is an essential part of every Rupert Hughes production, comes to pass, and the wall flower emerges from her bed of pain—a radiant dazzling woman of the world.

It is strange that a writer of Major Hughes' attainments and intelligence should always try to outmovie the movies when composing for the screen.

"Sonny"

Richard Barthelmess and Henry King produced, in "Tol'able David," a photoplay of such exceptional merit that they set a standard for
themselves which has been extremely difficult to live up to. Every critic, in considering their subsequent efforts, has been compelled to say "This is not as good as ‘Tol-able David.’" Which is a trifle unfair. It is like the attitude of the fan out in the left field bleachers who roasts Babe Ruth every time he fails to hit a home-run.

Discarding all thought of “Tol-able David” then, I can truthfully say that “Sonny,” the latest Bar- thelmess-King opus, is a splendid picture. To carry on the Russian analogy, it is at least a two base hit.

The story is based on a play by George V. Hobart which—if you will accept the testimony of one who suffered through an act and a half of it—was simply terrible. But Henry King, in making his adapta- tion, took Mr. Hobart’s basic idea, and wisely discarded the rest. This, ordinarily is a practice which should be frowned upon. Authors have a right to expect respectful treat- ment from film producers. How- ever George V. Hobart has no cause to complain about the mutilation of his brain child. From an artifi- cial piece of theatrical clap-trap, it has been converted into a convincing drama.

Richard Barthelmess gives the best performance of his commendable career in the difficult dual role of two doughboys. His delineation of the contrasted characters is truly remarkable.

“Nanook of the North”

The word “masterpiece” has been so brutally maltreated in the film industry that it now is used as a label for any movie whose producers have spend a large amount of money advertising. Nevertheless, I can not help describing “Nanook of the North” as a masterpiece—and I sincerely trust that there will be some readers of this magazine who will accept the term at its real valua- tion.

“Nanook of the North” should appeal to everyone who has ever been fascinated by the pictures in the National Geographic Magazine while waiting in the ante-room of his dentist’s office. It should also appeal to everyone who believes in the vast potentialities of the silent drama—as entertainment, as an ed- ucational medium and as an art.

It is a depiction of Eskimo life, acted by an Eskimo family, with the Arctic wastes as a background. There are no paper blizzards, no canvas ice-bergs, no hokum. It is all vitally real. What is more, it is tremendously dramatic.

Robert J. Flaherty, a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society, produced “Nanook of the North,” and the excellence of the picture is almost entirely due to his intelli- gence, his enthusiasm for his sub- ject and his fine sense of dramatic values.

“Nero”

Fault has been found with many historical spectacles (and I confess that I have been one, of the fault finders, because they were made in Hollywood, rather than in the loc- Unprejudiced Reviews

do motion picture productions are rare indeed. Readers of Photo- dramatist, however, may depend upon the judgment of Robert E. Sherwood. His unbiased, cleverly written opinions upon the cur- rent releases are an accurate guide to the best, or worst, in film drama. Read them monthly, and keep informed regarding the world of the silver screen.

calities that they are supposed to represent.

Mr. William Fox evidently took these criticisms to heart, and con- sequently, when making the pro- duction of “Nero,” sent his company to Italy to get the correct local color in his scenes. The result is not al- together satisfactory. “Nero” is a colossal spectacle, with many pic- tures of unquestionable beauty, but it is very far from being an exciting drama. In fact, if you must have the bitter truth, it is unexpressedly dull.

This is partly due to lack of con- tinuity in the story, which is sacri- ficed frequently to pictorial effect; and partly to the low quality of the acting. The case is composed almost entirely of French and Italian artists (at least, they are de- scribed as “artists” in the Fox ad- vertisements), and they are all in- clined to over-do the big moments—a tendency, by the way, which seems to be common to most all of the Latin actors and actresses on the screen.

“Sherlock Holmes”

As in the case of “Nero” many of the scenes of “Sherlock Holmes” were photographed abroad. But, unlike ‘Nero,” the results are highly successful. American actors were used, and they demonstrate a natural ease in playing before the camera which is in marked contrast to the amateurish awkwardness of the European performers in the Fox spectacle. Moreover, “Sherlock Holmes” was assembled in this country, and it is a well construct- ed whole.

Many persons will criticise the picture because it fails to conform to their conception of Conan Doyle’s famous sleuth. Sherlock Holmes has come to be regarded al- most as a figure of mythology—a veritable deity, endowed with pow- ers that are far beyond the range of any mere mortals. Conse- quently, any attempt to impersonate him is regarded with a certain amount of resentment. I must admit that John Barrymore does not quite represent my own idea of Holmes, but he is so extremely good that I, for one, am ready to let my previous prejudices slide. Give the young man a chance, say I.

Albert Parker directed the pic- ture, and he has handled it in a thoroughly workmanlike manner. He faced the difficult task of set- ting forth Holmes’ deductive gen- ius by means of pictorial tricks, but he has managed to accomplish it without undue use of long winded sub-titles. He missed one scene, it is true—that being the gas cham- ber episode which was effectively in- troduced in William Gillette’s play. Otherwise, however, the production is unusually smooth.

“The Storm”

In “The Storm,” we find the oldest situation known to the History of Hokum. A strong, silent man of the open, with a deep reverence for pure American womanhood, with a lily signed to the effete East, is battling for the love of a sweet, innocent girl. The trio is trapped in a log cabin by a blizzard, and forced to stay there all winter. Then, when Spring Comes, and the sap begins to stir, along comes a forest fire and adds to the general fun. This con- fagration, by the way, provides a most effective thrill, even though one is inclined to doubt the possi-
bility of a forest fire at that moist season of the year.

It will be seen from this brief outline of the plot that "The Storm" is of the stuff from which mammoth hits are made. And I am quite sure that it will do much to relieve the low blood pressure which has so long prevailed in box offices throughout the country. But there are still a few deluded souls who do not consider that a picture should be judged in terms of box office value, and for the benefit of any of these who may chance to peruse these lines, I am compelled to confess that, in my estimation, "The Storm" is distinctly mediocre matter.

"My Wild Irish Rose"

In "My Wild Irish Rose," we find a serile relic of those dramatic dark ages when thunderous applause could be gained by the spectacle of a saucy Irish colleen sticking out her tongue at a pompous English red-coat.

The story of "My Wild Irish Rose" is incoherent; the costumes are utterly absurd; and the acting is execrable. From which it may be gathered that the picture is not one that can be conscientiously recommended to the discerning. And it emphatically is not.

Pauline Starke, always a capable and sympathetic performer, is relegated to a minor part—the burden of the action falling on a cast that is notably incompetent.

"The Prisoner of Zenda"

Rex Ingram had a remarkable story to work with in "The Prisoner of Zenda," and he has made the most of his opportunities. He has succeeded in producing a melodramatic thriller, without sacrificing those qualities of pictorial artistry which have come to be associated with his name.

"The Prisoner of Zenda," as a movie, is faithful to Anthony Hope's novel, which is as it should be; for I do not see how any scenario writer could have improved on the original. There was enough vivid action in it, enough colorful romance, to satisfy the most voracious movie fan.

Mr. Ingram has assembled a fine cast for the picture; Lewis Stone, as Rassendyl, Alice Terry, as the Queen, Barbara La Marr as Antoinette De Mauban, and, above all, Ramon Samaniegos, as the most engaging of villians, Rupert of Hentzau. Mr. Samaniegos (whose name, I have heard, has lately been changed to "Novarro") is undoubtedly the most promising young gentleman who has appeared on the screen in many moons.

"Briefly Speaking"

"One Clear Call." A somewhat artificial drama of soul's regeneration, worked out in a moderately convincing style. The scenes are well photographed and beautifully lighted, but suffer from inept composition. Henry B. Walthall heads the cast, and contributes a performance of considerable power.

"Trouble." Once more does the diminutive Jackie Coogan demonstrate his amazing talent for pantomime and dramatic expression. A second rate story, but worth while because of its star.

"The Stroke of Midnight." A sordid drama on a spiritualistic theme, splendidly acted by a Swedish cast, but much too long.

"Yellow Men and Gold." Gouverneur Morris' melodrama of vivid adventure, with Richard Dix and Helene Chadwick bearing the brunt of the action.

"Silver Wings." Another Fox epic of mother love, not quite as interesting as "Over the Hill." (And that is faint praise).

"Grandma's Boy." Harold Lloyd's longest comedy and, incidentally, his best. This is a picture which no one can afford to miss.

"Missing Husbands." A French production, based on Pierre Benoit's "L'Atlantide." It is a weird idea, developed in crude fashion.

"The Beauty Shop." Raymond Hitchcock and several other Broadway celebrities give a demonstration of the fact that they don't know anything about the movies.

"The Top of New York." A sentimental little story about a shop girl, acted with sympathetic skill by May McAvoy, and generally pleasing.

"Lady Godiva." The well known lady of Coventry, played by a highly unattractive Scandinavian actress, goes through her famous ride before the camera. She must have been a big disappointment to Peeping Tom.

"The Crossroads of New York." A Max Sennett comedy-melodrama, with more than its share of laughs and thrills.

"Our Leading Citizen." Thomas Meighan in a delightful story by George Ade.

"Golden Dreams." Not worth the celluloid it's printed on.

"Watch Your Step." Two promising young performers, Cullen Landis and Patsy Ruth Miller, are given a chance to shine in this pleasant comedy of small town life.

"South of Swea." Mary Miles Minter is the "wife in name only" of a despicable copra dealer on an island of the South Seas. The story has its exciting moments, most of which are contributed by the capable Walter Lang.

"Retribution." An Italian picture about the Borgias. It has been so thoroughly emasculated in process of revision for sensitive American audiences that it has lost any merits it may have originally possessed.

"Over the Border." Penrhyn Stanlaws is the director, and Betty Compson and Tom Moore the stars, of a frozen north melodrama that is only spasmodically interesting.

"The Five Dollar Baby." A story of the New York Ghetto, with a great many false noses and trick beards. Viola Dana, as the adopted child of a kindly pawn-broker, is almost too cute for words.
Writing the Short Story

By Carl Clausen

II.—THE VALUE OF UNITY

A GOOD story should be so constructed that denouement is fed to the reader gradually as the story progresses, so that when the climax is reached there is nothing left to explain, climax and final denouement occurring simultaneously.

Whether the climax be a spiritual or physical one makes no difference.

Again taking "The Perfect Crime" Saturday Evening Post, September 25, 1920, as an example, I had in mind a bank robbery story. The idea was first suggested by the incident of "testing" a man's honesty by money trans, as outlined in my preceding article. It was a good strong motive and only a new, original way of doing it was necessary to start me on the story.

The idea of hiding the bonds on the premises of the bank, and by claiming a loss of memory, as to their whereabouts, came to me in a flash the very first day and I knew I had a corker of a yarn, if I observed the rules of the game.

Wally Griggs, the underpaid bank messenger, was born out of the first situation—the honesty test—and he fitted in, beautifully, with the idea of hiding the money. Having been a bank messenger for years he knew how futile it would be to attempt to get away with a large amount of cash. He was bonded, heavily. If the bank failed to get him, the surety company would in the end. So he conceived the idea of hiding the package of bonds, claiming loss of memory, as to its whereabouts. He knew that he'd be arrested for theft and given the third degree. That was part of his scheme—the vital part. The brutal treatment he received at the hands of the officers, gave him his basis for his damage suit for twenty-five thousand dollars against the city.

This amount collected, he "permitted" his memory to return, led the officers to the old filing case where he had put the bonds while he "went to dinner" and with one stroke confused the officers and cleared himself of all guilt.

This was the climax and denouement of the story. With this clear in my mind I began to write. I pre-
pared the reader for the denouement bit by bit as the story progressed, withholding the final punch to the last paragraph. The result was that climax and final denouement fairly fell over each other to arrive at that last paragraph, simultaneously.

So much for the unity of action.

After the climax had been definitely worked out came the setting, and the "mood" of the story. By the setting I mean the surroundings, in which the action takes place. The climax and the leading character or characters well established in your mind, this setting will grow naturally and logically with practice. It is much easier to establish a setting for something which you know has taken place, than to cast about for a climax to fit a setting. To this latter method your climax will have the appearance of having been superimposed upon your setting as an after thought. But with your climax well outlined, your setting will grow from your pen in harmony with what is to follow. With this climax in mind you will automatically select surroundings fitting your story.

YOUR setting will establish a distinct "mood," the mood that is to dominate your story. This may seem rather intangible to you, but when you follow this method you'll see what I mean. The mood of your story is evolved out of the conception of it as a whole, not by any one specific thing. It is suggested partly by the action, partly by the characters and partly by their surroundings. Important as the mood is, you need not worry about it until you have attended to the basic situation, the climax and the characters. It will grow out of them with practice, laborious at first, perhaps, but as your pen becomes defter, with perfect ease.

In giving your reader the setting, avoid long opening paragraphs of description. Follow the advice of Horace. Jump into the action at once, or give to your reader the keynote of your story in the opening paragraph. Interweave your setting as the story progresses, with simple direct strokes of your pen. Don't pause in the midst of a bit of action for a couple of long paragraphs of description. Your story will lose its grip if you do. Shoot in your description in quick, bold strokes where it is needed to explain a speech of one of your characters or an incident. In other words, use only such description as is necessary to further the movements or to heighten the interest of your story.

Don't be trite in your descriptions. Everybody knows what a dawn looks like, and unless you have some new original angle on it, you want to drive home some fact, just simply state that it was dawn. Description is only necessary to establish your settings or to create the mood of your story or to explain a speech of one of your characters. And when you do use it, use as few words as it is good fortune to be able to express yourself in. That is the keynote of good writing—learning what not to write, as one canny philosopher so aptly put it.

I am taking the three Greek unities of Time, Place and Action reversed in their order according to, as they appear to me, importance. Action and place are more important than the time element. The old Greeks held that the perfect story should take place in one setting, by one character and that the action should consume no more time than it took to read the story.

There are good reasons for this theory. A story following these rules would not need much of a plot—indeed it couldn't sustain much of a plot—because its very momentum would constitute action.

But in the time element we now have considerable laxity. A story which takes you thirty minutes to read sometimes takes you through half a lifetime and from one setting to another, and still stands up as a single impression story. This because the writer has learned the tricks of his business, perfect transition, the keeping of his theme, mood and character well in hand, at all moments.

Nevertheless, the time element is very important. The story whose action takes place in a few minutes, hours or days, is that much better. The speed of the development of the plot will in itself help to hold the reader's interest.

I REMEMBER a five thousand word story by Frank Gowey Jones published in Collier's four or five years ago, if I remember right, where the action consumed just five minutes by the clock. He had gone the Greek unities one better. There was no plot in the story to speak of, but the very speed of events held your interest to the last paragraph.

Of course it is manifestly impossible to model all your stories on this plan, but observing it in general is good business. Every time you move your action forward or backward by days, weeks or years—you set in motion the machinery of readjustment in the reader's mind. Before your next development "gets" him, he must acclimate himself, so to speak, to the new season, and your story loses its grip, at least temporarily.

You will say that very few of the stories published in the magazines observe these three unities of Action, Place and Time, and you are right. But they are published in spite of it—not because of it. A story that observes these rules will never find itself rubbing elbows with a rejection slip unless it is unpleasantly gruesome, tragic, or Lewd.

And here we come to another phase in the selection of the plot material. I am going to deal with it in a subsequent chapter. Editors have been much abused for rejecting stories with tragic endings. There has been a great deal of fine rhetoric spilled and breath wasted by editors and writers alike, on this subject.

THE story whose sole object is an impression of dire, drab tragedy, may be a work of art, but it certainly is not the thing for the tired brain of the worker to relax upon when he seeks repose from the problems of the day in the pages of his or her favorite magazine. On the other hand, to reject the story merely because its physical aspects are tragic, is absurd. It may contain a message of optimism far more profound than the poiltiest Pollyanna type of stories.

"Broken Blossoms" by Thomas Burke published in

(Continued on page 56)
Picture Values in Fiction

Stories That Live Convey Vivid Mental Impressions

By Anna Blake Mezquida

The other night, coming home in the street car, my attention was arrested by the ad of the Pacific Advertising Company. It began: "Your face is familiar, but I can't remember your name." This common confession is but another proof that pictures are remembered long after words are forgotten." This, of course, referred to the "pictured" products in street car advertising. But it would be as vitally applied to short stories and scenarios. That one statement, "pictures are remembered long after words are forgotten," should be engraved above the desk of every writer.

Take the story that depends for its interest merely upon clever or witty dialogue, scintillating conversation, or elaborate descriptive matter. It may afford a moment's pleasant reading. But it is forgotten in another moment. Its appeal is a surface appeal. The story that strikes deep in the memory, the story that will live, is the one that has the greatest picture value.

By this I do not mean necessarily "pictorial" value. Although a story may have that also. For example, Curwood's stories. They have great "pictorial" value. Scenic value, in other words. They are laid in the ice stretches and great forests of the North amid snow drifts and blizzards and rough trading outposts. You see dog sleds and fur-clad trappers and the picturesque Northwest Mounted Police. These things add to a story. "Atmosphere" always does. But it does not make a story.

Curwood's stories have not merely "pictorial" value; they have "picture" value. And that is an entirely different thing. For instance: his "Nomads of the North."

You remember the hero, a refugee from the law, hiding with his girl-wife in the lonely log cabin in the forest, accompanied by the "nomads"—the dog and bear he has raised from puppyhood and cubhood. Can you ever forget the picture of the bear, clawing and breaking his way into the locked cabin at the girl's desperate call, and charging with atavistic fury upon the man who has come in her husband's absence to attack her? Or the picture of the kindly Irish sergeant of the Northwest Mounted Police fighting death through that awful forest fire to save the baby of this girl he hopelessly loves and of the man he has come to arrest?

Tremendously effective on the screen. But equally effective on the written page because of the picture—the human picture conjured up in your mind by these acts of self-sacrifice and love. I might say the "heart" picture.

As a child I found it terribly hard to remember historical dates. I managed to learn them parrot fashion, but I forgot them once examination day was over. I have never forgotten the great historical facts that made mental images across the screen of my mind.

The works of few fiction writers have proved as adaptable to the screen as have those of Anna Blake Mezquida. Not only have a number of her short stories, including the Belasco production, "Dancing Feet," been produced, but also several of her originals. Her first photoplay, "The Charm Trader," won a $1,000 award in the J. Parker Read, Jr., contest. More recently, she received a second prize of the same amount in the Chicago Daily News contest.

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Some of you may have seen the Ben Greet players, that famous band of English actors who play Shakespeare in the old-fashioned way without the aid of scenery. So vividly do they portray the written word that the audience does not miss the scenic setting. It is pictured in their imagination. That is how a master writer does with his audience.

Go back to some of the great novels: Dickens' (Continued on page 36)
BROADLY speaking, there are two classes of magazines; those which put the emphasis on quality of work and those which buy largely for big names—which doesn't always insure excellence.

Tradition still largely governs the policy of the older "highbrow" publications; in the case of others, that I won't mention by name, the editing is done quite as emphatically from the business manager's office as from the editorial chair. In such cases the editor is a sort of hired man, very much in the predicated of "little Sally Waters" who could hang her clothes on a hickory limb but couldn't go near the water.

Two of the most satisfactory magazines to deal with are in widely different fields: The Atlantic Monthly and The Saturday Evening Post. The editor of each is the Captain of his Ship and takes dictation from no one. Each man knows what he wants and if you don't like what he likes, well, you don't have to purchase his periodical! Each puts the stamp of his personality on his publication and each plays "the long game" with the consequent cumulative effect of a sustained and consistent policy.

Another reason for their signal success is that they are what I would call "receptive" editors as differentiated from the ever-cautious "critical" editors. Your receptive editor—the man of imagination and open-mindedness—looks first for the reasons why he should buy your story; the other type looks first for its faults, his vision darkened by the "don'ts" imposed upon him by the watchful circulation department and often by his own cowardly fears of a mistake.

The editor who isn't afraid to make mistakes is apt to make a good magazine, but it takes courage to face the frowns of a board of directors who, oddly enough, are more stirred by the penned vituperations of one old crank than by the silent approval of a vast audience.

I think it was Ellery Sedgwick of the Atlantic Monthly who once said that he could change the editorial policy of almost any magazine by instigating twelve of his friends in different parts of the country to write letters condemning the present policy.

But even more potent is the dictum of the advertiser. If he does not approve of the table of contents he will likely withdraw his valuable patronage. Then the editor is called up on the "carpet" by the president of the company and unless his ideals and convictions are stronger than his desire to hold his job the editor becomes merely the slave of his masters instead of a true servant of Art.

This much it seems necessary to tell you in order that you might comprehend somewhat of the editor's difficulties.

Now—why was your last story rejected? Few even of established writers are judges of their own work, and the average beginner is merely bewildered by a rejection and remains unenlightened. He has received either a printed slip or a typed letter that usually is either general in its statement or disingenuous in its phrasing; for it is not policy always to inform the author of the real reason for rejection. The story may violate some office "don'ts" which the busy editor lacks the time to explain. (And these "don'ts" are so numerous, and also so amusing at times that they suggest an article in themselves.)

It is safe to say that not over one in two hundred of the voluntary contributions to a given magazine is accepted. And in the case of the Popular Magazine, according to the editor, they have room for only one in every thousand. And the reasons for declination are more varied than the outsider dreams of.

To the editor—and I speak from fifteen years of editorial experience—manuscripts fall into three classes: the vast majority which, at a glance, he knows he doesn't want; the very few that he must have and a larger number that are debatable, and whose fate sometimes hangs on a thread. And the writers themselves he naturally classifies as follows: Those who write well but have nothing to say; those who tell a good story crudely, and those few rare spirits whose work has substance as well as style.

If you fall in the first class there is not much hope for you. If you are in the second class there is every hope, especially if you will remember to aim high—because the highbrow magazines, paying less than the big name magazines, can only meet competition by developing new talent. And they will take greater pains to iron out the crudities, if your story has the stuff in it.

I remember one memorable day in the old Century offices when I turned down a two-thous-
THAT motion pictures have come to be recognized as a potent factor in our national life by the leaders in club work is patent to all in the fact that at the business meeting held by the newly-elected Executive Board and Directorate of the National Federation of Women’s Clubs at Chautauqua, New York, on the evening of June 30th, a national chairman, with state chairmen working under her as divisional head, was elected to deal with the motion picture question. Formerly the subject had been handled merely as a committee matter.

The “keynote” of this great biennial gathering of the most active and intelligent women of the world is said to have been “Women as a Working Power,” but one member of the Executive Board voiced her private opinion that it might better have been “Motion Pictures as a Working Power” because of the interest manifested in the subject and the consideration and discussion given to it.

There were radical differences in the views of the various delegates and officers of the different State Federations. One common note was struck however. All agreed that motion pictures must be lifted from the general level to the highest standard that has found expression through the screen. How to do this formed the crux of the question agitating the collective thought. Individuals differed as to methods. Some women favored state censorship, others a federal commission, while others pinned their faith to the integrity and power of Mr. Will H. Hays in his non-enviable post of President of the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America, Inc.

ASKED to discuss state censorship as it functions in her own state, Mrs. R. R. Bittman, president of the Kansas State Federation of Women’s Clubs, said, “The people constituting our censor board are exceedingly fair. I have found no difficulty in cooperating with them. But I thoroughly realize that endorsing a personnel is not endorsing the principle of state censorship of films by political appointees. At any time the personnel may change. It is a problem.”

One state president advocated state censorship as opposed to federal supervision of films on the ground that she objected to such centralization of power, apparently overlooking the fact that state censorship would represent the same evil in a fractional degree while presenting other difficulties in multiplied number.

Several State Presidents were facing having either to endorse or to combat state censorship in the early Fall, and these individuals awaited eagerly Mr. Hays’ declaration of principles.

The Chairman of Motion Pictures, Mrs. Woodallen Chapman, had prepared an afternoon program presenting the following speakers: Mr. W. W. Hodkinson, President Hodkinson Corporation, Mr. J. O’Toole, representing the Exhibitors, and Mrs. Eli S. Hosmer, member of the Commission on Motion Pictures, New York State. Mr. Hays was simply down as "guest of honor" as he was scheduled to speak in the evening on, “Upbuilding the Nation’s Life Through Motion Pictures.” But after the speakers had finished their addresses and the chair allowed a discussion from the floor it was only Mr. Hays whom the delegates desired to question.
TAKEN by surprise as he was, and evidently very weary, Mr. Hays nevertheless showed his generalship during the bombardment that followed. He went on record as declaring that ministers of any creed should not properly be the subject of ridicule on the screen, that many evils to be corrected do exist, that he had had to make a fight to keep the latest Arbuckle films from being released and that he realizes the great responsibilities that he has assumed.

Hostesses have been known to check up the silver after their guests depart. At functions where valuable articles are on display only to invited guests detectives are placed on guard. Mr. Hays may be forgiven if he felt that these biennial delegates were regarding their "guest of honor" somewhat dubiously, but he explained where he could explain. He was quick to defend and frankly admitted the culpability of the producers in every instance where he felt them to have been culpable while pleading for the cooperation of the clubwomen. And he made friends for himself and his organization.

In his evening speech Mr. Hays declared that unless the thinking women of this country do cooperate in no uncertain way in the campaign for re-construction, re-organizing and stabilizing the art of the screen, his cause is lost. A "clean-up" campaign is merely superficial. Certain standards must be definitely fixed as a permanent base on which to build the future art and industry of the screen. The Convention applauded him wildly.

This was a marked contrast to the way Mrs. Hosmer's platitudinous advice was received. One astute lady remarked, apropos of Mrs. Hosmer's outline of "How Women Can Help the Censors," "why, she put up to us to do what the censors themselves are supposed to do. They draw good salaries to see that nothing unfit is allowed to reach the public. We are supposed to be able to dismiss the whole vexing question from our minds and to let Mary and Jack, junior, go freely to cinema palaces knowing that the censors have seen to it that only clean films will be shown!"

In short, the women seemed to feel that Mr. Hays has a right to solicit their cooperation while a political appointee, having taken the job to cut undesirable things from the films, must have felt qualified to do the work when she accepted the appointment and so needs only to attend to it and show results. One New York woman freely admitted that some of the decisions of the New York censors had puzzled her!

On June 29th an informal conference on motion pictures was held in the beautiful Hall of Philosophy. Miss Marion H. Brazier, author, pioneer newspaper woman, founder of many clubs and president of the Film Club of Boston, declared that certain of the clubwomen would certainly defeat the censorship measure in Massachusetts this Fall when it is up on referendum. Referring to the allegation that ministers are made the subject of ridicule Miss Brazier cited "The Little Minister" as one instance where a minister was the hero of the play. Someone else mentioned "The Sky Pilot."

Mrs. Locker of Washington, D. C., put it squarely up to the women that when a good film is produced they should throw all their influence toward making it a profitable venture for the producer. She recited the sad case of the late Benjamin Chapin who died broken-hearted after having lost all his money in the production of "Abraham Lincoln."

"Today we would welcome this film," said Mrs. Locker, "But it can not even be shown now at a profit because of the exorbitant taxes that would be placed upon it by various state censor boards."

MR. ROUCK, of Connecticut, spoke against political state censor boards, and one woman writer told some of the facts she had learned while preparing an article on the subject. "I approached the matter with an open mind," she said, "but before I finished my research I was absolutely opposed to political state censor boards. Far from having any standard among the states, the individual boards do not even agree among themselves."

Before leaving Chautauqua, Mr. Hays gave your correspondent a brief message for young writers, "We all want pictures that shall be entertaining without being evil, pictures which shall be educational without being dull. We are what we are as a nation because we are an essentially clean-minded people. Vice is not attractive and should not be made to appear so."

A resolution was prepared and read before the convention to the effect that The General Federation of Women's Clubs declared its intention to cooperate with every movement tending toward better films. This did not quite please some of the women who were doubtful of Mr. Hays' ability to swing his organization in line and at the second reading of the resolution, when many of the delegates had checked out, an amendment was offered requesting Mr. Hays to do certain definite things. A heated debate ensued, and a standing vote was called for. The amendment passed by one solitary vote majority, 159 in favor of as opposed 158 against. As worded, it does not really affect the body of the resolution however, and so this great body of federated clubwomen has gone on record as pledged to cooperate with Mr. Hays as long as he is working for better film conditions.

This message will not be complete without a word about Chautauqua Institution itself, for it is the greatest message in the world to any one who desires to study, to achieve, and who is (Continued on page 42)
Costuming the Photoplay

By George Landy

UNDoubtedly, one of the most important features in a costume picture, after the story and acting, is the matter of correct costumes. Ordinarily, it is, of course, a truism that the best costumes are those which are the least obtrusive; but this applies only indirectly in the costume photoplay. For, the clothes of another day and another clime are bound to obtrude themselves upon the eye of the audience; when, therefore, they are essential to the story, they must be selected with unusual care, accurate knowledge and a sense of values.

For example, when "Omar, the Tentmaker," was to be adapted to the screen, much deliberation ensued on the part of the star, the producer, the director and the art director. Fortunately, the producer himself had spent several months in Persia before he wrote the play; so he was intimately familiar with the scenes and costumes.

However, for the practical execution of the Persian atmosphere, Francois Nazare Aga was retained as technical expert, because of his personal knowledge of the Persian locale and his practical experience along this line.

"Clothes, not costumes: there is the secret of successful wardrobe for a picture," he explains, exemplifying his remarks by pointing out the apparel worn by the various principals in the cast of this coming production. "All Oriental costumes are not the same, any more than all Occidental costumes—especially they are not the heterogeneous collection of junk we usually see on the screen or the stage. For the first time in theatredom, 'Omar, the Tentmaker' will reveal a softness in fabrics, styles, colorings and lines, which will not clash with the necessary richness.

Among the better classes, the typical woman's costume of the Persia of Omar's day consisted of a very low cut tunic of rich silk extending half-way to the knees and transparent pantaloons which ended above the kid shoe, so as to show the ankle. Jewelry, profuse yet in good taste, make-up and scents, completed the toilette. Woman is only a luxury to the Oriental, and her garments are designed to heighten her attractiveness. On the street, of course, she always wore a veil to cover all but her eyes. The great task here has been to combine reality with the necessity of passing the
censors—and I am sure this has been accomplished in both phases.

"The typical man's costume, such as is worn by Omar and most of the other principals in the picture, consisted of a silk tunic of rich tone and texture, extending half-way below the knees and very open at the chest, trimmed with rich embroideries and with jewelled sleeve-links at the wrists. Tight trousers, of a contrasting silk, covered the long-pointed shoes, somewhat like spats. On the street he wore a silk turban—with a large jewel in it, if he were of the nobility—and a very thin silk overcoat. His shirt was of the famous creamy Persian silk made in Resht and still famous throughout the Orient.

"The poor wore a long shirt of a burlap-like material, extending below the knees, over trousers of the same goods—and shoes when they could be afforded.

"The big problem, as in all costume pictures, was to design and execute such costumes as would be correct and beautiful, yet would not distract the actors during their performance nor disturb the attention of the audience. The producer secured authentic materials from the Court tailors of Persia and had them forwarded to the studios where they are making this production. Here a force of seamstresses has been manufacturing garments for the principals and, also for the players of bits and 'atmosphere.'"

Not only has the production of "Omar, the Tentmaker" required extreme care in the matter of costumes but in many other pictures of the past, perhaps as great accuracy was exercised. In "The Three Musketeers" one of the largest items of expense was occasioned by duplicating French costumes of the seventeenth century. D'Artagnan, Cadinal Richelieu, the three musketeers and the other leading male characters were individually fitted in elaborate costumes including custom-made high-topped boots of real leather, which cost about forty dollars per pair. Likewise, the gowns of the Queen and her ladies in waiting were faithfully designed according to data supplied by a special research department. Picture-goers will remember, also, Norma Talmadge in the lovely hoop-skirted gowns in "Smilin' Through," and the exotic dress of the elite of Paris in "Orphans of the Storm."

It is true that in the average American audience, perhaps only one person in several hundred are able to acknowledge erroneous technicalities in scenes of foreign localities or of "period" plays. They, as a rule, are not extremely well traveled or well read. But, this one person who prides himself on being a personified encyclopedia or on his knowledge gained by living in foreign lands, may contribute this knowledge to his undiscerning fellow theatre-goers through the "Why-do-they-do-it" columns of the "fan" magazines; or he may, during the projection of the picture, whisper disparagingly to his neighbors on either side. Furthermore, American-made pictures are distributed to almost every point of the globe, and we would not dare "put over" obvious flaws on these audiences. Should a picture laid in India be exhibited before an Indian audience, both Hindus and the probable English spectators would ridicule the scenes not coincident with the true facts. It would be as great an outrage for them to see incorrect head-dress on the head of a character representing a Hindu of certain social standing as it would be for us to see an American society matron, in a foreign made production, arrive at a ball in a sun-bonnet. The people certainly would walk out of the theatre—if they did not hiss and hoot and perhaps "rotten-egg" the theatre.

Likewise, we do not want to be considered thoroughly ignorant by foreign audiences and necessarily must resort to every possible means to insure the illusion of reality.

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Hope

By Elizabeth Jones Browning

No night, so chill and drear
But with it comes the morn;
No sorrow, pain nor fear
But from it hope is born.

Life's yesterday is past,
Its disappointments gone;
Tomorrow's joys will last
Increasing on and on.

Thus led, we wend our way
Through sorrow, toil and pain,
With hope to guide each day
Till life begins again.
“Good Pictures”—and Mr. Hays

ONE way for the public to help us make good pictures is very easy—and that is, to support good pictures.7

We quote the foregoing statement as the salient point in the address recently delivered by Mr. Hays, dictator of the allied motion picture interests, upon his arrival in Southern California.

Mr. Hays is undoubtedly right. Only one thing can save the motion picture industry from complete disintegration—and that is public support. In theatrical parlance, such support is known as "box office receipts," the money paid by patrons of the various picture houses for the pleasure of viewing the current releases.

During the year 1921 these box office receipts were $43,000,000 less than those of the preceding twelve months. It is evident, in the face of these statistics, that the public is not supporting the pictures—that interest in the Eighth Art has dropped away to an alarming extent.

And yet, we submit to Mr. Hays the fact that really good pictures in the past have been given the heartiest support—that worthy films, such as "The Miracle Man," for instance, broke all box-office records and made hundreds of thousands of dollars for their sponsors.

It appears to us, then, that there is but one answer to the problem; the public has not changed, but the quality of current film productions has. With one or two exceptions, no photoplay worthy of the name has been produced within several months. To be true, standards in some respects have been much higher. Photography, settings, costuming and direction have, without doubt, made long strides. But these qualities will not satisfy the demand for legitimate entertainment. Valuable as they are, they are merely the drapery with which producers may bedeck the play itself; and, just as the jaded hag, no matter what finery adorns her decrepit body, fails to attract the men whom she sets out to ensnare, so does the photoplay that depends merely upon lavish externals fall short in its appeal to the discriminating public.

There is more in any art than external appeal. There must be soul—there must be spirituality—there must be movement—life itself! And all the directors, designers and money magnets in the world cannot give to an insincere product these vital attributes.

We feel that Mr. Hays, being a student of human nature—a big man in every sense of the word—realizes these facts. Certainly, he has given them careful thought during the few months in which he has occupied the throne of moviedom. But he is also a cautious man— disinclined to take snap action—and we are prone to believe that he has withheld judgment on many phases of the industry he represents until such time that he could have opportunity to study them at close range.

That time has come. Mr. Hays is in Hollywood. During the few days since his arrival, he has been dined and feted by every luminary in the film firmament. We realize that those closest to him are the very ones who have brought about the present condition of the films; that they will be the first to raise a "smoke screen" to cover their own shortcomings—to throw blame where blame does not exist, and to trumpet their own virtues. But Mr. Hays, as a former member of the cabinet, as erstwhile Postmaster General, has heard the blare of many trumpets, has pierced the veil of many smoke screens. He has an uncanny ability to make correct diagnoses—especially where the public is concerned—and to prescribe remedies for the evils he may unearth. That he will fall short, in his new capacity, is beyond comprehension.

It is with extreme complacency, therefore, that Photodramatist awaits the diagnosis that Mr. Hays will make of the ailing film industry—and the remedies that he will prescribe thereto.

We are certain that he will sense, before he has been in screenland many days, the spirit of antagonism against new talent that exists therein—that he will discover the conspiracy, on the part of entrenched writers, to keep the younger generation of creative artists beyond the pale of recognition. And knowing that without better stories—without really "big" photoplays—the coming year will find the popularity, and financial standing, of the motion pictures at even a lower level than reached in 1921, he will assuredly take action to alter existing conditions.

The "closed shop" has no place in creative art. It means decadence, stagnation. No one can know this better than a man of Mr. Hays' acumen. And the moment he discovers what many of us already know—that a virtual "closed shop" exists at present in the motion picture world, this new Hercules of the fifth industry is going to cleanse the Augean Stables that he has been invited so cordially to inspect.

It is then that we shall have "good pictures." And it is then that Mr. Hays' appeal for public support will meet with hearty response on the part of the great American people.

Mr. Johnson Speaks

"A NY attempt to force the stiff old forms of the novel and the play into a celluloid packet is wrong," Julian Johnson, scenario editor of Famous Players-Lasky Corporation, stated recently in an address before students at Columbia University.

This is Mr. Johnson's way of saying what many film critics have said before, namely, that novels and plays do not make as successful screen plays as stories written especially for the pictures—and Mr.
Johnson ought to know, since he is not only prominent in the motion picture industry, and a purchaser of scenarios, but also a veteran writer and former magazine editor.

Mr. Johnson added: "You cannot turn one man's play or another man's novel directly into screen material by putting the words into so many scenes, tied together with so many titles. I am going to be bold enough to say that 'adaptation' for the screen, as we understand the word adaptation, is quite impossible. Because, in adapting a novel to the stage, let us say, you are still dealing in words and backgrounds. The author has told you what the characters said, and he has told you what surrounded them when they said it. The stage adapter takes the scenes accordingly and takes the author's words, or builds more words, according to the dramatic possibilities of the dialogue. But when you bring this novel to the screen, what happens? You are going back on all dialogue, all backgrounds. You are going back to the novelist's original inspiration, his theme—that's all. You are going to tell the same story—his story—in an entirely new way. You are going to show it, rather than tell it at all, in a series of pictures. You are no longer adapting, for you are using a new medium."

The first thing that a successful scenario writer must learn is that he must show—as Mr. Johnson says—a series of pictures. He cannot merely tie together with subtitles a series of incidents. The trained scenario writer understands that the appeal of a motion picture production is the individual appeal of each and every scene within the picture.

It is true that in the early days of the motion picture industry it was the habit of producers to imitate stage productions. Accordingly, their pictures were mechanical and not at all inspiring. However, with the growth of the cinema art, they have found that by filming stories especially written for the screen, they are not only saving the cost of the purchase price of novels or stage plays, but they also are assuring themselves of more "life" and originality in their productions than were they to spend a wealth of time and thought in "rehashing" the screenable and non-screenable deluge of material to be found in the pieces of work so often chosen for adaptation.

Wilting Laurel Wreaths

Of late we note tendency on the part of certain established writers, and organizations composed of writers, to frown upon beginners and to discourage those who undertake the study of creative art.

We suspect very strongly that the main reason for this attitude is the insecurity of the laurel crowns which these writers wear and which they seem, naively, to have mistaken for halos.

If there is any profession in the world, today, that needs an infusion of new blood, it is the motion picture profession. A review of the photoplay offerings of the last two years will ascertain this beyond any question of doubt.

The time-honored and cob-webbed "triumph," clothed in great swelling words of vanity, to the effect that art cannot be learned or taught, has more than outlived its "uselessness."

We know now that given a certain native talent, the beginner who is willing to study hard and conscientiously may absorb the technique of an art in one fourth of the time necessary should he rely upon his own instincts. There are certain rules and methods in art that must be mastered. And it is more economical to learn these from established precedent than to establish a precedent for oneself by mistakes and floundering.

In all ages the greatest masters themselves have been students of other masters. We need only point to the ateliers of Paris for verification of this. And so it is with literature and dramatic art.

Youth with its super-abundance of vitality, the ease with which it absorbs and adapts itself, is the hope of any profession. The great unselfish minds of the world know and realize this. Hence the art schools of Paris, the willingness—nay, the delight of the real master to impart the technique of his beloved art to some promising youngster. Where would de Maupassant have been without his patient, exacting instructor? And again, our own O. Henry, without his de Maupassant? Did not Jack London repeatedly acknowledge that he owed a large measure of his success to those who imparted to him the fundamentals of his art?

The value of the "school of hard knocks" as an educational institution has been greatly over-estimated. It has nipped in the bud more promising genius than it ever produced, by sapping the vitality of its students. A man or a woman can stand just so much—genius a little more than others—but there is a limit.

The profession of photoplay writing is as yet in its infancy. On every hand there is evidence of this: poor pictures; the frantic rush of producers to beat each other to a famous author; the lurid "sex appeal" production to attract an audience; money squandered recklessly on expensive sets. In fact, everything except a story.

Nevertheless, during the past few years and out of the hopeless jumble of it all, a certain set of principles of dramatic construction has been evolved by the pioneers, through their mistakes. To deny beginners the opportunity of mastering these principles through study, rather than by undirected floundering, is grossly unfair.

If there is one human emotion which we think utterly desplicable, it is professional jealousy. The truly great are not professionally jealous. They consider it a privilege to assist a youth of promise, and if he, with their help and guidance, wins a place for himself in the sun, their pride in him is greater than in any brain-child of their own.

There have been expressions on the part of professionals, to the effect that young photodramatists are wasting their time by studying. These expressions savor strongly of something very different from honest opinion. We think there is a little green Ethiopian in the woodpile. Newcomers have a way of wading in and snatching laurel crowns from the bulging brows of the augus, and to measure the deprived ones for the very halo they may have thought they were wearing.

The greatest assets of any profession are its young men and women. Give them a chance, Mr. Professional. If you don't, they'll take it anyhow, and you may lose your laurel wreaths entirely.
Stories Needed

SINCERE friends of the screen will be among the first to admit that the quality of motion pictures offered to the public during the past year has been, as a certain wag has remarked, “one or two bad ones and the rest worse.”

Photodramatist is loathe to endorse this viewpoint—however true it may be—for we realize that the profession has of late come in for more adverse criticism than it justly deserves. But honest confession is good for the soul, and it is useless to sidestep the facts.

Our readers no doubt will remember the cartoons, in the good old days, of Turkey as the sick man of Europe, all bandaged up and court-plastered. That’s the sad picture of the motion picture industry at present. Only there don’t seem to be enough bandages and court-plaster to go around.

A number of reasons have been advanced for the indisposition. Anything from the earthquake in Mesopotamia to the contents of the Hollywood ice-boxes. Most of these reasons appear to be actuated by prejudice, some by just plain, garden variety ignorance.

The morality—or lack of it—of certain actors and actresses, the greed of the producers, each has in turn been blamed for the downward trend of recent film productions.

But let us be fair. One doesn’t condemn the medical profession, for instance, because a few of its members have been caught selling narcotics. Nor does one condemn banking because a bank employee walks off with a chunk of loot, now and then. As to the greed of producers—well, we think greed is pretty evenly distributed all along the line. We could mention a few instances, offhand, that would make the faults of the motion picture magnates in this respect appear mild by comparison.

Besides, what has an actor’s or actress’s morals got to do with the quality of the picture he or she stars in? The world is full—always has been full—of brilliant men and women, making history in their particular fields, whose morals would not stand the spotlight.

What we are after, and what we are entitled to, after paying our money, is good pictures. If we can have actors who are models of virtue as well, so much the better. But I think most of us would prefer a good picture with a Don Juan star than a poor one with a principal cast whose only vice is parking chewing gum on the back of the director’s chair, between close-ups.

Good pictures, however, are not produced from the leading lady’s scrap-book—although a visit to some of our theatres would almost make one think so. Good pictures are made from good stories, and that is precisely where the shoe pinches. This does not mean stories by famous authors. A few of these authors have, and are, at this moment turning out first class screenable script. But a great majority of the famous have been famous only in one respect—their total failure to produce good motion picture vehicles.

The day of the star is drawing to a close. The day of the famous author is going, to draw to a close very soon, except for the few above mentioned, who have been canny enough to realize that writing books and magazine stories is one thing and screen stories quite another; and who have been willing to learn to adapt their genius to this new art.

In the future we must look to writers of special training who regard screen writing as a distinct and worthwhile art, and not merely as a side line. Such writers are at present confronted with the discouraging fact that their stories are rejected and that stories not nearly so good, but which have been published in a magazine, are bought up eagerly because the name Plottington Penpusher Jones, famous author, appears on the title page.

What’s the answer? Can’t the producers tell a good story until they see it in print? If they can’t, they would better learn how. As Lincoln remarked, “You can fool some of the people all the time, but you can’t fool all of the people all of the time.”

‘Nuf said, gentlemen! Give us good stories and you won’t have to make embarrassing explanations at your next stockholders’ meeting.

His is All Tasks

By Thelma Phlegar

His is all tasks, who moves upon that screen
Of lifeless white, the histories of the heart!
Sculptor, physician, architect and king—
His pen the working tool of every art.

Sculptor, because the face beneath his hands
Wears as he wills its mask of smiles or pain—
And he can change the countenance of man
To joy, and hate, and sorrow or pain again.

Physician, as he metes his little cures
Of nagging ills that crowd a sunless day.
When, ’neath the magic of his troubadours
The little cares and shadows fade away.

And king, when others move beneath his will
And, that the world might understand and see
Quiescent, pliant, their true selves are still
Beneath the garments of his imagery.

His is all tasks, as far as man may move
The human heart to hope and pain and love!
A NOOTHER production of "Oliver Twist" will make its bow to the public this fall. Jackie Coogan portrayed the role of the Dicken's waif, and it will undoubtedly be proclaimed his greatest contribution to the screen. A lot of money has been spent on it—somewhere in the vicinity of two hundred thousand dollars—and he is assisted by an excellent cast of well known screen actors. It is doubtful if the Cooganized version will eclipse the production made by James Young a few years ago for the Famous-Players Lasky organization, with Marie Doro in the role of the good little bad boy. It was a cameo picture; one that undoubtedly remains stamped indelibly on the memory of those who saw it. Those who have been privileged to see the Coogan version, declare it is a wonderful production, directorially, and that Frank Lloyd genius is at its best in this work.

However, we doubt very much that a producer would purchase such a story as "Oliver Twist" from a photodramatist. There are many people who will argue that it is a great book. Dickens wrote long and crowded novels, and his inconsistencies were overlooked by the reader, owing to the mass of material in his stories. "Oliver Twist" is filled with unexplained action. It is not a good story, technically, and I venture to say that if a screen author wrote the same story, giving it another name, it would not be accepted by any producer in the industry. I understand that Director Lloyd has been conscious of these inconsistencies and has endeavored to straighten them out. Probably the critics and the public will note the changes and perhaps censure him for taking such liberties with such a well known work. But, "Oliver Twist" is not a good screen story and in order to make it presentable it had to be retouched. The story is basically wrong. A screen author would never permit his crooks to act as stupidly and clumsily as the gang worked in "Oliver Twist." Dickens had them deliberately plan to make a crook of a youth who was not far from the swaddling-clothes age. The crooks were men who boasted of long years of crime and of their success in having always evaded the police. And yet, these supposedly clever criminals proceed to educate a tiny youth in the art of stealing, apparently not realizing that the moment they start to do so they are headed straight for the noose! The producer would never tolerate such a glaring inconsistency in an "original" story, and the modern screen author would never write it. Clever crooks do not work in such crude fashion. They would work their revenge through agents and would keep themselves in the background, so that when the boy was arrested—which he most certainly would be in a very limited time—he could not "squeal" on the gang; because he probably would never meet the real gang that has plotted his downfall. Then too, "Oliver Twist" was never properly and consistently identified to the crooks. There is no evidence to show that a picture or photograph existed of "Oliver Twist," and yet, when one of the crooks sees a boy being chased by a crowd, he immediately decides that the boy is the one he is looking for. Dickens absolutely depended on coincidence here, and "Oliver Twist's" meeting with the gang was handled in a most amateurish fashion, which would meet with severe criticism by the producer were a screen author to put the same situation in a photoplay.

But "Oliver Twist" is typical of Dickens. The majority of his books are filled with equally glaring inconsistencies. He depended on the long arm of coincidence to reach his objective; a failing which the moving picture does not tolerate. Screen authors are careful to avoid such errors as this, and the aspiring photodramatist is told to give a logical reason for his action and work out his plot consistently. Dickens never did that, and I doubt very much if he would make a good screen author, were he alive to-day.

THERE is nothing so dead as the "program picture." It is dead because people are sick of going to see films just to see flickers on the screen. The "factory process" of picture making, the appeal to the supposed average intelligence, is what will continue to retard the progress of pictures just as long as it is pursued.

Therefore, in the future the screen is going to demand bigger stories from screen authors, and, if the producers cannot get them they are going to rely upon the old classics for material. For some time there has been a tremendous shouting about the bigness of forthcoming productions. It has been justified by certain circumstances and has been borne out by certain actualities, mainly: the much-heralded and much-praised spectacle, "Nero," also the million dollar production of "Robin Hood," which is now in the making, such super-specials as "Omar, the Tentmaker," "Blood and Sand," "The Prisoner of Zenda," "The Christian," "Ben Hur" and "Oliver Twist," all of which will make their bow to the public in the early Fall. In all parts of the compass, romance and costume seems to dominate and fill the scene with picturesqueness. Added to this there is a new flurry. We are now beginning to hear glowing prophecies about the magnitude of the production of "Ben Hur" which will undoubtedly be directed by the great Griffith—the elaborateness of the natural detail for "The Christian" and the novelty of two or three expeditions to the South Seas. In fact, everywhere one feels in these plans and projects the continuance of the struggle for bigger and better pictures. That is splendid, and I believe we can be safe in predicting that the producers are going to do their best work from now on, and the creative ability of those who are writing for the screen is going to be taxed to the utmost. Henceforth, screen writers have got to
have big plots and their stories must be colorful and picturesque. In the future, pictures are either going to be great successes or great failures, and there is going to be little room for the ordinary, the so-called routine picture.

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THE one fault at present is too many mere adaptations—too many inconsequential borrowings from sister arts. Mediocre stage successes and books have been used too consistently for the good of picture making. Real successes, and worthwhile themes are not transcribed with a proper feeling for changed conditions. What you can tell in literature you cannot always relate on the screen; the colossal failure of the big authors was sufficient proof of this statement. Out of all the literary talent that has come to the screen in the last few years, there have really been only a few shining successes. The author that most readily comes to my mind is Rupert Hughes. He is a prominent example, and the reason he has won where others have failed, is because he has broken away from the traditions of his previous experience. Then too, he has a dogged persistency for sticking to any new task he undertakes. I understand that only twice has he balked in his desire to see things through, and he can be excused in both of these cases, for one was when he became a student of the trombone and the other when he took up the study of the Polish language. The neighbors were not in sympathy with his musical aspirations and the government was not in sympathy with his going to Warsaw to find out a lot about a language which is fast becoming extinct.

* * * *

THE best story that Katherine MacDonald has had in two years is "The Infidel," if we are to believe the critics. It was an original story written by Charles A. Logue who knows his screen. This seems to be the usual criticism when a good screen author writes a story. I haven't seen the picture, but I know the story, as written by Logue, and it was one of the best yarns I've read in a long time.

* * * *

MONTAGUE GLASS has been engaged to write the subtitles for Anzia Yezierska's "Hungry Hearts." The creator of "Potash and Perlmutter" ought to be at home in transcribing epigrammatic thought to the screen.

* * * *

FLORINE WALZ—in private life, Mrs. Earle Williams—is becoming quite a screen author. She has written two or three of his latest stories, and is now busy writing another. With a fortune which goes considerably beyond the million mark, Florine Walz is undoubtedly the richest photodramatist in the world.

APPOINTMENT of a "story committee" for the purpose of obtaining the best vehicles available for its stars and producers, is the innovation announced by Associated First National Pictures. The committee consists of J. D. Williams, Richard A. Rowland, C. L. Yearsley, E. J. Hudson and Bob Dexter. We sincerely hope that this will bring about a change in that company's policies for after recalling some of the pictures the organization has released in the last year or so, we fail to understand why they have continued to frown on those who know their screen and to smile on adaptations of books and plays—some of which have met with the failure they richly deserved. They insisted that Carter De Haven and Flora Parker produce nothing but "Broadway successes" with the result that they practically "killed" both of them. Charles Ray never can hope to have the popularity he enjoyed when Julian Josephson was writing his originals, such as "The Egg-Crate Wallop" and "Homer Comes Home." And yet, First National, in announcing this new committee, says: "It will not, however, solicit original material, but will devote the energies to judging the merits of published books, magazine stories and successful stage plays."

* * * *

THE individual who can tell us why producers insist on doing adaptations of absolutely impossible plays and books will be entitled to a lot more than "the little brown hat." Now comes the news that Charles Ray is going to do a picturization of "A Tailor-made Man," and that it will be his first production of the program of United Artists. If there was ever anything that is lacking in screen material in my opinion, it is this play. Innumerable continuity writers have wrestled with this play during the past year and all have had to throw up their hands in a sign of truce after battling weeks with the script. One continuity writer—and one of the best in the business, too—fought with the thing for eight months, and for fear that something would snap in his brain, retired from the task in much disorder. And yet, somehow, somewhere, still persists it will make a good screen story. Here is another excellent example of what often happens when a producer rushes deliriously to purchase the screen rights to a popular play, and blindfolds himself to its impossibilities as a screen production. How many residents of Wichita or Boise know, or care anything about "A Tailor-made Man?" But, perhaps, they'll have good cause to remember it, after they've seen the screen version.

* * * *

THAT the screen has practically no limitation when it comes to the extent to which a producer will go, is something every screen writer should take into consideration when writing a story. For example: Norma Talmadge recently completed Honore Balzac's story of the Napoleonic period, "The Duchesse de Langeais," which will be released under the title of "The Eternal Flame." The largest interior set—a massive and magnificent ballroom—ever constructed for a motion picture, was built for this production. It was set up in the largest building of its kind in the world, Stage 6, at United Studios, in Hollywood. The lighting required for this scene was sufficient to illuminate a town of 18,000 persons; electrical equipment to the value of $260,000 was used, and, when the scene was in action with gorgeously gowned "extras," one hundred and twenty electricians were required to handle the sunlight arcs, side-arcs, banks, spots, baby-spots and domes. A very good picture could have been made for what this set and its operation cost producer Joseph M. Schenck for just one day. I could even tell you of three good program pictures that have been made for what "The Duchesse de Langeais'" ballroom cost.
ONE of the biggest "Do-not's" to the amateur writer is: Do not attempt to write a true story. To this you will rise and shout, "But you tell us to write true to life!" Yes, but that is different, and the reason follows:

A story of life, which differs from the usual human experience, must depend largely upon coincidence for its value. And coincidence is one of the worst and most frequent offenses in plot construction. Characters, through coincidence, make the most impossible discoveries, receive the dying grandfather's will at the proper moment, or "die off" just when it is convenient in the story to have them out of the way. The motion picture audience likes to see a picture in which the situations are the effect of intelligent effort upon the part of the hero or heroine, and not upon mere "happen-so's."

Another reason for the undesirability of the story which is supposed to be true, is that it is often the actual experience of the writer. Naturally, one's own experiences are apt to have an exaggerated value to one's self, and many times events which appear to have great dramatic value to the person whom they concern may be of little interest to others.

THE most successful pictures are those in which comedic and tragic elements are commingled— in which the tears follow the laugh and the laugh follows the tears. Really to touch the hearts of your audience you must go from pathos to humor. To use the old familiar example of D. W. Griffith's "Way Down East," the scenes alternated from the heart-ringling predicaments of poor little Lillian to the ultracomical maneuvers of the tongue-wagging Village Gossip and her "hick" lover. In fact, Griffith almost resorted to "Keystoning" in the scene where an egg from an overhanging hen's nest falls into the face of the rube rival. However, this bit was really comical and served to relieve the wrought-up emotions of the audience.

Ofttimes a scene itself contains both tragedy and comedy, and the spectator is forced to smile through his tears. No doubt in real life you have listened to a friend recite an incident of having slipped on the curb—soiled his best white trousers in the mire of the gutter, lost his last dollar bill in the scramble, thereby missing his train and his supper—but, amid both tears and chuckles you said, "I'm awfully sorry, but I really can't help laughing."

No photoplay may be so dramatic that it may not contain a little comedy. A bit of humor is to a drama as a highlight is to a sombre-hued painting.

SUSPENSE should start as near the beginning of the story as possible. There may be very little suspense while the characters are being brought into relationship, but as soon as the conflict between the "sympathetic" and the "unsympathetic" factions begins, the element of suspense should be introduced.

IN selecting a title for your photoplay, try to express briefly—in two or three words if possible—the basic idea or theme of your story. Endeavor to find a title which tells what your story is about, without giving away the outcome. Such titles as "Love Never Dies" and "Hail the Woman" are exceptionally good illustrations. However, the matter of titles is relatively unimportant, as titles of stories are usually changed before the pictures are released.

IT is permissible to bring about the first meeting of two characters by coincidence. In fact, the one place in the photoplay where the use of coincidence is really justified is in the beginning where the characters are brought into relationship with each other. Meetings of this kind are quite natural and plausible.
STUDIO activity continues on the up-grade, with the various production forces being enlarged and employment increasing even among the ranks of the actors. A few new companies of consequence have come into being; and another healthy sign is the interchange of actors and directors between companies and from one class of work to another.

At the United Studios Richard Walton Tully is filming the spectacular scenes that mark the climax of Guy Baxes Post's second screen vehicle, "Omar, the Tentmaker," on a scale which was impossible in the stage presentation. Supporting Post is an exceptional cast including such favorites as Virginia Brown Faire, Boris Karloff, Nigel de Bruliere, Douglas Gerrard, Rose Dione, Patzv Ruth Miller, Maureen "(Lefty") Flynn, Evelyn Selbie, Edward M. Kimball, John Griibner, Will Jim Hatton, and a number of other screen celebrities. Dorothy Phillips is playing the stellar role in an Elinor Glyn story at present, entitled "The World's a Stage," the first picture to be made by Principal Productions, a new organization headed by Sol Lesser and Mike Rosenberg. Miss Phillips is being directed by Colin Campbell and her supporting cast includes Bruce McRae and Kenneth Harlan. Constance Talmadge is finishing "East Is West," while her sister Norma is busy on Robert Hichins' story, "The Voice from the Minaret," in which she is being directed by Frank Lloyd and supported by Eugene O'Brien. Jackie Coogan has just started on "Fiddle And I," an original tale by his father, which is being directed by E. Mason Hopper, the cast including Anna Townsend, Bert Woodruff and Arthur Edmund Carew.

On the Goldwyn Lot

THE Goldwyn lot is in a state of wholesome bustle that presages considerable further activity here. Marshall Neilan has transferred his organization to the Culver City plant, and has just commenced filming "The Stranger's Banquet," by Don Byrne, in which Claire Windsor will be featured. Allen Holubar is in his last fortnight on "Broken Chains" in which Colleen Moore and Malcolm MacGregor play the leading roles. Incidentally, by the time Holubar finishes editing "Broken Chains," Dorothy Philp

Accurate News

of motion picture activities is difficult to obtain, on the part of those living away from the studios. Realizing this fact, and knowing the importance of keeping in touch with the producers, actors and directors, Photodramatist pays especial attention to this department. Exaggerations, press agent notices and biased information can find no place in these columns. Read "With the Producers" each month, and keep informed regarding the profession in which you are so vitally interested.

Lasky Activities

THE very busy Lasky Studios are also entering the competition to send companies to distant scenes. George Melford will leave very shortly for another south sea atoll, to film Robert Louis Stevenson's "Ebb Tide," with James Kirkwood, Lila Lee and Raymond Hatton. Charles Maigre has left for Wyoming to film "The Cowboy and the Lady" from Clyde Fitch's play, which will feature Tom Moore and Mary Miles Minter. Thomas Meighan starts "The Man Who Saw Tomorrow" by Perley Poore Sheehan with Jackie Logan and Noah Beery supporting. Gloria Swanson is at work on "The Impossible Mrs. Believ," under Sam Wood's direction. Bebe Daniels is making "Singed Wings," under Pembyn Stanlaws with Anna Q. Nilsson leading the support and Rudolph Valentino will have commenced "The Young Rajah" with Wanda Hawley (directed by Phillip Rosen) by the time this appears in print. Much is expected of "The Old Homestead" which is being directed by James Cruze and which has an exceptionally fine cast headed by Theodore Roberts, George Fawcett, Harrison Ford and Fritz Ridgway (she, by the way, has been absent from the silver sheet for many moons and will be welcomed back.)

New Stahl Picture

THE Mayer Studios are busy with John M. Stahl's production of "The Dangerous Age" with a cast including Edith Roberts, Lewis Stone, and Ruth Clifford; Katherine MacDonald is working here also on "MONEY, MONEY, MONEY" under Tom Forman's direction.
Laurence Trimball and Jane Murfin are making their second film starring Strongheart, the marvelous canine hero of "The Silent Call." The present production is entitled "Brawn of the North" and the only woman in the cast is Irene Rich. At the Sennett Studios present activity is confined to two-reel comic subjects. Kathryn McGuire, who has been away from this lot for over a year working in various dramatic productions, has returned to play opposite Ben Turpin in a travesty on "The Sheik." under the direction of F. Richard Jones, who has completed his editorial work on "Suzanna." Roy del Ruth continues turning out his two reeers with Billy Bevan and Mildred June, while his brother, Hampton del Ruth, has also returned to the Sennett fold.

Blanche Sweet Back

ACTIVITY at Metro shows healthy signs of improvement in the filming of "Quincy Adams Sawyer," for which Clarence Badger is directing Blanche Sweet (whose recent marriage to Marshall Neilan and return to pictures after many years' absence, makes this fact doubly interesting). Barbara La Marr and John Bowers. Viola Dana is starting on "June Madness," an original story by Crosby George, directed by Harry Beaumont.

At Universal City

UNIVERSAL City, the only studio beside Lasky's which seems to disregard all rumors of depression and continues on its merry way, is all agog over Von Stroheim's "The Merry-Go-Round" and his cast, which remains a mystery except for the person of Mary Philbin. Lon Chaney, the inimitable, is working under Lambert Hillyer on "Bitter Sweet," with Virginia Valli opposite, while Herbert Rawlinson is making "Confidence" with Harriet Hammond under Harry Pollard. Gladys Walton and Frank Mayo, two of the Laemmle standbys, are respectively filming "The Girl Who Ran Wild" (a re-issue of "M'liss") under Rupert Julian's direction, and "Wolf's Law" with Stuart Paton behind the megaphone.

GEORGE LANDY.

TWO BROTHERS

WONDROUS are the ways of the censor. On one set in a certain studio a director, famed for the subtlety and delicacy of his stories, films a scene in which the comic character of the play helps himself three cigars in the home of his brother-in-law. This scene is duly expurgated by the censor as inciting to theft.

In the same studio on a neighboring set, a brother of the same director is spending ten thousand dollars a day to film a Roman orgy. No censor's scissors will delete this spectacle. It represents a "vision" out of history.

Moral: Life today is vicious, history is not. If you want to put a kick in your picture, make believe it does not exist in life as it is lived today.

This is one of those "straight from Hollywood" editorials which may answer the very question you have always asked yourself:

DO I KNOW Screen "Morals"?

Writers are canny readers. They read to learn. The best writers are the best readers. When they read of motion pictures, writers read the magazine that is—

"Made Where the Movies are Made"

Editor, Screenland,
Hollywood, California.

Dear Sirs: I read your editorial "Two Brothers," in the August Photodramatist. Please send me for the enclosed one dollar, the next seven issues of your magazine. Address them to

Name: ____________________________________________
Address: __________________________________________
City: ______________________________________________
State: ______________________________________________
The Cry For Quality

One of the real problems of picture making is what to do with the poor stuff. Manufacture is so expensive that no producer can stand up under the loss of his failures and they all make a heavy percentage of pictures that are inferior. The producer-distributor, in view of this condition, sells his poor stuff by loading it on to his good pictures. If he scraped it and sold only his good stuff he would speedily go out of business.

This condition calls for a remedy, because the trouble with our business today is that we are boring the public. Good picture customers are being turned into non-patrons because they are just plain tired of the inferior goods. The good pictures have educated the public taste. They have come to demand a quality which it is hard to supply in sufficient amounts. This demand must be fairly met if the business is to continue to appeal to the masses of the people.

The problem belongs exclusively to the producer and distributor as the source of picture supply. We have hopes that some way will be found to improve mass production. Possibly the method is a two or three picture a year schedule for a director in order to give him time to get a real story and give it careful and capable attention. Amusement cannot be machine made and last for long. There must be creative brains and sufficient time. Masterpieces never have been turned out over night or just dashed off.

We believe there is no more important problem confronting our business.—Arthur James, in The Moving Picture World.

Temperament

William Hays' job as movie director should be greatly facilitated and the moving picture industry established on a much higher plane as a result of the school one of the largest picture producers is planning to open. The purpose of the school is to provide a "perpetual reservoir of talent," but its activities are to be rather in the direction of strangling temperament than in that of training artists.

Certain industries in the country—it is typical of the industries that provide amusement—have politely apologized for their failure to enforce discipline in their organizations by constant reference to the temperamental dispositions of their "stars." A great opera singer, ball player or actor has been a law unto himself. Any statement that he may have made, any breach of conduct for which he may be responsible has been atoned on the ground of temperament.

The picture industry now finds that temperament is a lame sort of excuse. It is also an expensive frame of mind for actors and ball players to get into. It accordingly decides to strangle it. Discipline and good conduct are to count for more; temperament for much less.

It is a fine idea. The moving picture industry is too big to play up to the idiosyncrasies of the film stars. It is moreover an industry in which steady and uninterrupted production is just as essential to profitable operation and success as is steel or cotton goods manufacture. Judge Landis might well take a leaf from the book of the movie industry. There are a few baseball stars who are hurting the game and depriving their employers of profits that belong to them because they are undisciplined and temperamental. They deserve no special dispensation because they are stars. The sooner the Babe Ruths realize that they are salaried entertainers rather than privileged super-men the better it will be for the Babe Ruths.—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

The School and the Theatre

The address made by Mr. Hays before the National Education Association at Boston marks a forward step in the history of the industry. It signifies that a large group of producers, for the first time, stand ready to provide educational films of an authoritative nature for the schools and colleges of the land. This is an undertaking of great magnitude, no less in scope if not greater than the theatrical field itself.

At the very outset of this program, Mr. Hays makes it very clear that the exhibitor's rights are to be fully protected. The school and the church and the welfare organization are not to be set up as his competitors. The non-theatrical must not clash with the theatrical. The Hays organization, recognizing that the time has come for the motion picture to take its proper place in the educational scheme, grasps the opportunity. But a reading of Mr. Hays' speech will convince anybody that the proposal is to make pictures for class-room use only, and not to attempt for a moment to drive the exhibitor out of business by creating a huge competition against him.

With this declaration firmly established—and it is only another proof of Mr. Hays' remarkable hold on the problems of the industry—let us turn to other vital considerations of the meaning of the Boston speech.

In the first place; it was delivered before the great national organization of the teachers of America, whose influence in their own communities is wielded at the very source of thought and opinion. In dealing with the mind of child and youth, theirs is the power more than any other except perhaps the family and the motion picture itself, which determines thought and action in later life. Such an influence, brought into daily contact with the motion picture through school-room use, cannot fail to create a sympathetic attitude toward the screen and the makers of pictures—in short, toward the industry itself.

It is little less than a stroke of genius to seek the alliance of the teacher with the industry; to bring him into line in solution of the problem of the industry's relation to the public; and to convince him that he should cooperate because the industry deserves the fullest cooperation.

The enthusiastic greeting which Mr. Hays received at Boston from five thousand teachers assembled from all parts of the country shows that the appeal for cooperation was well founded, that it won just as did his appeals to the fifty civic organizations and the General Federation of Women's Clubs.

(Continued on page 36)
THE executive committee of Metro Pictures announces that program pictures are a thing of the past as regards their distributing policies for the coming season. They will, in the future, distribute individual features on their own merits and not in series. Production will be increased immediately. Already work has begun on "All the Brothers were Valiant" and "Country Love." These pictures will be followed by the productions of "East of Suez" by E. Lloyd Sheldon; "The Girl in the Gilded Cage" by Marion Fairfax and "A Temporary Marriage" by Cardell Hale.

Congressman Injured

Congressman N. W. Howard of Alabama, author and star of the forthcoming Cosmopolitan Film Company's production of "The Bishop of Ozark" and other members of the company, narrowly escaped death when a stone quarry on which they were working caved in. However, none was injured beyond slight bruises.

Adapts Clyde Fitch Story

Mary Miles Minter has begun work on "The Cowboy and the Lady," adapted by Julian Josephson from the late Clyde Fitch's story. Tom Moore will play opposite Miss Minter.

To Direct North Woods Special

Reginald Barker, one of the greatest directors of big outdoor productions, is working on "Timber," penned by J. G. Hawks.

New Script for Gloria

Again will picture-goers see the exquisitely gownéd Gloria Swanson in "The Impossible Mrs. Beller," Sam Wood's production for Paramount Pictures of an original story by David Lisle, which Percy Heath adapted to the screen.

"Dusty's" Next Picture

Dustin Farnum has started work at Hollywood on a new picture under the direction of Bernard Durning. It is a story by Edward J. Le Saint, entitled "Oath-Bound."

Team-Work

J. G. Hawks and Bess Meredyth adapted "The Dangerous Age" to the screen.

First Schulberg Special

Work has begun on "Rich Men's Wives," the first of the B. P. Schulberg Specials to be released by the newly formed Al Lichtman Corporation. Louis Gasnier will direct the all-star cast consisting of House Peters, Claire Windsor, Gaston Glass, Rosemary Theby, Myrtle Stedman, Charles Clary, William Austin and Martha Mattox. Lois Zellner wrote the continuity.

Home Again!

Clara Beranger, special scenarist for William de Mille, has arrived at the West Coast studios of Paramount from New York for a brief but busy period of work in collaboration with the producer. Mrs. Beranger will aid Mr. de Mille in editing "Nice People," which was recently completed. Mrs. Beranger is beginning work on an original story to be called "Notoriety."

Hail the Woman Director!

"Love's Coming of Age" is unique among picture productions in that it is a picture version of a story from the pen of Miss Carroll, to be produced by a company which she organized, financed and is now managing. Helen Jerome Eddy will be featured.

Pattulo Short-Story Filmed

The title of Marshall Neilan's newest First National release known heretofore as "Her Man" and based on George Pattulo's story in the Saturday Evening Post, has been changed to "Minnie." The story has as its locale a small country town, with all the drama, pathos and humor of its characters portrayed in typical Neilan style.

Novel Plot in Sheehan Story

"The Man Who Saw Tomorrow," an original story by Perley Poore Sheehan and Frank Condon, will afford a remarkably powerful vehicle for Thomas Meighan, Paramount star, and work has just begun under the direction of Alfred Green. The story is said to have one of the most novel plots that has been evolved for some time, as well as being rich in human interest and romance.

Prize Photoplay Progressing

Allen Holubar and the Goldwyn company filming "Broken Chains," the $10,000 prize story by Winifred Kimball, is on location at Huntington Lake, California. Malcolm McGregor, Colleen Moore and Ernest Torrence have the leading roles.

Fictionist's First Original

Agnes Ayres, the Paramount star, is featured in "The Ordeal," W. Somerset Maugham's first original screen story. Mr. Maugham is one of the leading playwrights and is the author of that great stage success, "The Circle."

Wagner Serial Epic of Screen Life

Rob Wagner, who at the present time is a member of the Famous Players-Lasky scenario staff and the Palmer Photoplay Corporation's Advisory Council, has written a serial entitled "The Girl of the Films," publication of which began in the July issue of Red Book. Among the hearty endorsements for this new novel is one from Charles Chaplin, who says, "It is the epic of pictures." Saturday Evening Post readers no doubt are familiar with the series of articles concerning motion picture studios and the making of photoplays, written by Rob Wagner for that magazine.

Fairbanks Adopts Novel Plan

When Douglas Fairbank's "The Three Musketeers" was released, an old version produced several years ago was shown simultaneously at various small theatres which took advantage

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Hail the Screen
By Eola Chapman

I CAME home from viewing C. Gardner Sullivan's "Hail the Woman," with an increased respect for the power of the screen.

There, we frequently find Life's vital issues expressed as in no other possible manner.

The church-goer, through a sense of duty, sits out a seeming lecture with the one personality behind it. He sees the same principle on the screen in receptive mood. The author's ideals combined with aggregate personalities, director's skill, and photographic beauty, instead of a rebake, become a beautiful, beneficial memory.

What a privilege to have any part in an influence with such a world wide reach.

The Unthinking Ninety Percent
By Kenneth R. Holcomb

The article regarding censorship in this department of the June Photodramatist is quite to the point.

I once saw the picture in a movie house of a certain censor of the feminine persuasion who had imperiously pronounced the American people to be ninety percent incapable of thinking for themselves.

How did she know?

Religious fanatics concern themselves much over the movies. Yet they don't attend them. They'll tell you the pictures are sensational and immoral. Those who preach most loudly against the photo-play see the least of it. They curse what they have not seen. How can they? What is their reason? It is this: The photo-play is a source of entertainment for the masses. Ergo, let it be accursed? Simple, is it not?

These same purists abhor art in most of its forms. The beauty in nude statuary is to them a salacious exhibit. They would garb the Venus de Milo in sackcloth and lay the art galleries in ashes.

But these ranters are, in their turn, prey for other wolves more raving.

This latter kind is sleek and silent. He cloaks rabidity with the demeanor affable. He is suave; for he seeks a job. His specialty is agitation. And he is well paid for his efforts. Approaching the ranter he shows him that his reforms may be legislated into being if only he may be permitted to boost the thing properly. He will conduct organized educational (?) propaganda and systematic lobbying. So the ranter gets others of his ilk; they form a Society for the Prevention of Holes in Cheese or whatever the object of their aversion may be. And the "booster" with a fat salary to enthrone him goes to work. And one fine morning the Unthinking Ninety Percent awake to find themselves dominated, their liberties curtailed and the national life emasculated by the Unspeakable Ten Percent.

The Fathers of this Nation founded this government in the faith that the majority of the people can think for and therefore govern themselves. And that principle has ever been guarded and preserved most jealously. Comes now a "reforming" and a purist clique avowedly opposed to this principle. Seeking to convert all they would enslave all. Behold them! Too petty to be dignified by the name of traitor, yet too officious to be disregarded. The Unspeakable Ten Percent!

What do you think of them, Unthinking Ninety?

Titles
By Phyllis Chapman

THE other evening, a group of us went in search of amusement. We went to one theater after another and turned away because the titles of the pictures offered couldn't arouse our interest. It is quite possible we passed by some very good pictures. There seems to be such a lack of originality in titles. Some one gets a good title and the photo-play is successful. Immediately the sign-boards blossom out in an array of similar titles. During the last six months there seems to have been a positive epidemic of "wife-woman-mother" titles, and such touching things as "Should a Husband Know." The immediate and inelegant comment on a new one of that brand is "Mush!" There are only a few stars who can draw an audience to any kind of a picture.

It is a thing to consider seriously, this choosing a title for your story. People will decide to see a picture because its name suggests something that catches their interest. Or else decide not to see it because the name does not appeal to them. It is no longer safe to count on the star's name as a drawing card. The public is getting very critical.

Your title produces a definite psychological effect on your audience that may seriously handicap the picture or start it well on the way to success. Suppose some people go into a theater to be amused, and a title is flashed on the screen. They are disappointed and sorry they came. They sigh and growl something about it being the same old stuff. They are hardly in the frame of mind to really appreciate the story or get the most out of it. Likewise, if the story does not agree with the title they are apt to be bewildered at least and even annoyed if it hasn't turned out to be as good a story as they expected from the title.

Stories will generally choose their own names if you give them a chance. It is rather cruel to smoother its inclinations and bestow on your brain child a name that doesn't fit for no better reason than that someone else's was successful under the same sort of title. Besides, just think how many others are going to get the same bright idea!
The Man From Home

Comment: Pictorially, this picture cannot be excelled. The backgrounds are wonderful. They take you into the Old World and have been gloriously photographed. Against these great settings is an interesting story, which does not strike any dramatic highlights, except in the murder sequence, which has been very well handled. Some of the comedy situations are excellent, particularly that in which Pike tows the King's car to the fashionable hotel. It is an essentially clean and amusing picture.

Synopsis: Genevieve Granger-Simpson is bored with life in Kokomo, where she has been brought up. When she comes into her father's fortune, she leaves for Europe, accompanied by her brother Horace. Daniel Forbes Pike, her guardian, has long been in love with her, and she is attracted to him; but she does not encourage him to propose before she leaves. In Italy, Genevieve meets Prince Kinsillo, his father and his sister Sabina, who are the last of an impoverished noble family. Genevieve becomes engaged to the Prince, whose father discusses the settlement with Horace. The latter writes to Pike. Although Pike has just been elected State Senator, he hastens to Italy. Here he finds out that the ancestral castle of the Kinsillos is a monastery, and that the pearls, which Princess Sabina sold to Genevieve, are imitations. The Prince has an affair with the wife of Pietro, a fisherman. The Prince is getting tired of her, but visits her for the last time in her cabin. After she stabs him, he strangles her to death. Pietro finds her dead. In the morning he is arrested, but escapes from the gendarmes and begs Pike to help him. Pike, in the meantime, has become friendly with a kine who us visiting Italy incognito. Pietro is hidden in the king's suite. However, the old Prince and Sabina have seen this. They tell Pike he must sign the settlement or they will denounce him to the police. Genevieve is horrified to hear the haggling, and when the Prince says they will take less on account of the fake pearls, her eyes are opened. The old Prince calls the police and Pietro is found. As the police arrest him, the king explains that Prince Kinsillo is the real murderer. Therefore, Pietro is released and the Prince arrested. Genevieve fears that she has lost Pike, but his love is enduring. Horace, who had cast his eyes on Princess Sabina, hastens to "make up" with his home sweetheart. The Man from Home brings his bride back to Kokomo.

—By Laura Jansen.

"A Fool There Was"

Comment: This is in several ways an unusual picture. In the first place, there is an unhappy ending; in the second place, the leading character, Schuyler, is entirely unsympathetic; and finally, one of the most dramatic scenes in the story is carried by Schuyler alone. Although it is a wonderful scene, its value is a little spoiled by the title writer, since when Tom comes in and finds the man sodden with drink, his answers to Tom are carefully and coherently worded. Little comment can be made on the acting, except in praise. The story as a whole is well handled. However, a flaw in the direction is seen in the child's eating. Children of wealth do not eat like wolves. The settings are very good, although a bit sombre, according to modern ideals. The photography is excellent.

Synopsis: John Schuyler, head of a great financial house, is utterly disgusted with young Parmelee on account of his affair with "The Vampire." Schuyler decides to go to Russia on business. He is seen off at the docks by his wife, her sister Nell and Nell's fiancé, Tom Morton. Also, on the ship, is "The Vampire." Parmelee rushes to the ship to see the woman, and because she has tired of him, he shoots himself. "The Vampire" decides upon Schuyler as her next victim. Obdurate at first, Schuyler capitulates, and when he reaches London he is completely under her spell. He forgets his mission to Russia and follows her. On his return to New York he is compelled to live in a separate residence on account of the scandal. He is dropped from his business interests and he takes to drink. "The Vampire" has followed him, but Tom tries to turn him from his folly. Lower and lower he sinks. His wife comes and offers to take him back. Schuyler promises to return home, but "The Vampire" again visits him. He realizes that to break the spell he must kill her. At the head of the stairs he is trying to choke her, when, in the flight, he falls to the bottom, crushing his skull on the marble floor.

—By R. McCashill.

Domestic Relations

Comment: A story designed to show that a man cannot set one standard for others and have a totally different one for himself. A simple story, showing first one and then the other of the twin lines of action, both of which are handled in a hackneyed way. The lead, Katherine MacDonald, is made too much of a victim, and has no chance of initiative work until the climactic sequence is reached. Miss MacDonald does everything possible with the role of Mrs. Benton, as does Miss LeMar with the part of Mrs. Martin, but the action is nearly all written into the men's parts. William Carleton is excellent as Benton, and both Frank Leigh and George Fisher do good work as Joe Martin and Le Sainte, respectively.

Synopsis: Judge Benton puts his career ahead of his beautiful wife. She loves him devotedly, but finds the home atmosphere depressing. At the other end of the scale lives Joe Martin, a bricklayer, whose pretty wife also
loves him but finds him too tired to take her out. Joe's friend, Sandy, is attracted to Mrs. Martin and persuades her to visit the movies with him. On their return Sandy makes unwelcome love to Mrs. Martin, but he forces his kisses on her and—the husband enters. Sandy is thrown out. Then the husband returns and attacks the wife. The police enter and arrest him. While Joe awaits trial, Mrs. Benton goes to a dance and meets Le Sainte, an artist. Judge Benton commissions Le Sainte to paint his wife's portrait, and he falls in love with Mrs. Benton. Judge Benton sentences Joe to jail for a year, the heaviest sentence the law will allow. Le Sainte makes love to Mrs. Benton against her wishes—the judge enters. He refuses explanations and turns his wife out. She goes to the poor quarter of the city and becomes a friend to Mrs. Martin. The doctor falls in love with her. Benton loses his position on account of the way he has treated her. He asks her to return. She refuses, thinking he is doing it for his career's sake. Joe Benton is released and his first act is to get a gun and start for the judge's house. Mrs. Martin rushes to the woman who has befriended her, and Mrs. Benton drives to Benton's in time to prevent the killing. Joe Martin is taken, and Benton vows he will get ten years. Mrs. Benton intervenes and tells her husband that Joe's conduct was not as bad as his own. She makes her husband understand. Joe goes back to his wife and Benton begs for forgiveness.

—By R. McCaskill.

Nanook of the North

Comment: A picture without a love story? Impossible. It could not entertain; it is not being done. Yet, such a picture is meeting with great success. Photographed six hundred miles from the nearest post of civilization, it must have entailed much difficulty and hardship to make, but the producer should feel proud of the results. It is an educational picture without the preaching that so often accompanies such offerings. It shows life, stark, naked life, the struggle for existence in the trackless ice fields.

The Eskimos, always smiling, cheerful, may well be an example to those who complain amidst the luxuries and comfort of civilization. On the whole, a very satisfying picture that leaves a lasting thought of thankfulness for all that we get out of life in our own little corner.

Synopsis: Nanook is the chief of an Eskimo tribe of about three hundred souls. He spends most of his time trapping and fishing, hunting food which is more than scarce. His wife and children follow him about the trackless wastes and help in the trapping, killing and eating. This later part is rather repulsive, but has its proper place in this picture of real life. Nanook is always a willing worker; his wife ever-smiling. Once a year Nanook goes to the nearest white settlement to dispose of his fur—wonderful pelts of white fox. There are good, humorous touches; for instance, when the child, having feasted on hard tack and lard, suffers from indigestion, she is given castor oil—and apparently likes it. Another scene that brings laughs is when the puppy is put inside the bag with the four months' old baby. The dogs are beautiful; and they get their share of sympathy, particularly when they are shown sleeping in the "drifter," which leaves them snowed under in the morning. The photography is superb.

—By Laura Jansen.

Monte Cristo

Comment: To film what is considered the greatest melodrama ever written is a big undertaking, and all credit must be given the Fox Film Company for the production. Owing to the colossal amount of material in Dumas' novel, a great deal necessarily had to be eliminated, but the part omitted is not missed. Dantes' broken romance, his betrayal, his imprisonment and escape find their sequel in the relentless pursuit and defeat of his enemies. The theme of the story, revenge, would hardly be a popular one today, but the subtlety of Dantes' methods makes it wonderfully gripping. The characterization and acting are very good. The photography and settings are all they should be, although we did see Tyrolean chairs in the Mar- silles Inn, and wondered at the interior of the good ship Pharaoh which seemed more theatrical than real.

Synopsis: Edmund Dantes is betrayed on a false charge by his two "friends." He is taken before the Procurateur du Roi, accused of plotting to aid Napoleon's escape from Elba. Taken from the wedding feast before the ceremony, an incriminating letter is found on him. The magistrate has Dantes thrown into a dungeon for life. Another prisoner is attempting to tunnel his way out, and Dantes, hearing, also starts a tunnel. They meet. Realizing escape is impossible, the two become friends. The other prisoner dies, leaving Dantes the secret of a hidden treasure. The dead man is sewn in a sack preparatory to being tossed into the sea, but Dantes changes places with him and when thrown into the water, escapes from the sack and swims to land. After many adventures he returns to Marseilles, where he learns that the men who have betrayed him now hold high positions in Paris. Dantes has secured the treasure; and, relying on the change which twenty years have made in him, passes unrecognized as the Count of Monte Cristo. One by one, he engineers the downfall of his enemies. His former betrothed, who has married one of them, realizes the suffering she has caused, and with her grown son returns to Mars- silles. Dantes follows her, and they resume the old love story.

—By R. McCaskill.

Fascination

Comment: As far as backgrounds and photography are concerned, this picture is excellent. The colored subtitles are pictorially effective and some of the shots are a joy to the eye. The story is rather far-fetched and unconvincing in spots. Some faults in direction are apparent, too. For example, Carrita wears his little characteristic pigtail in some scenes, but has forgotten it in others, whereas it is distinctive of his fame as a toreador. Dolores wears some very wonderful frocks suddenly, and one wonders how

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WRITING THE SHORT STORY

(Continued from page 16)

story form under the name of "The Chink and the Child" is a fine example of a spiritual optimism conveyed to the reader via scenes of the direst ghastliest tragedy, and a drab and sordid setting.

After reading this story and wallowing through the "depths of iniquity" one impression alone remains—the incomparable beauty of the love of this yellow man for the little white girl. It is an indictment of our literature to contemplate that this story would never have been accepted by an American editor. But on the other hand few tragic stories have the qualities of the "Chink and the Child," and the stand of editors against the unnecessarily tragic and sordid is perfectly reasonable and valid.

The gruesome story—I mean the story which depends upon ghastly crime or ghastly horror for interest—belongs in the dime thriller, the Penny Orrible, as the English call it, unless they are done by such masters as Ambrose Bierce or Algernon Blackwood. But being that in all probability you are neither a Bierce nor a Blackwood, you'd better avoid them. Their market, even when exceptionally well done, is very limited.

As to the lewd story—there is absolutely no excuse for it. Art is the expression of beauty. If you have no beauty in your soul to write about, you'll confer a boon on humanity by remaining silent.

PICTURE VALUES IN FICTION

(Continued from page 17)

"Tale of Two Cities." You may forget Dickens' words, but you cannot forget the pictures he has drawn with words: Old Doctor Manette, his mind a blank from long imprisonment, sitting at a cobbler's bench making shoes! Or Sydney Carton mounting the steps of the Guillotine, while the knitting women of the French Revolution quietly number their stitches as the heads fall. Or Victor Hugo's "Les Miserables" with its countless vivid pictures of Jean Valjean, the brutalized, embittered convict, changed through the unselfish love of the old bishop into that wonderful man who is one of the greatest characters of all fiction.

Or turning to that popular present day novel by Hutchinson, "If Winter Comes," That great climactic-picture in the story: Mark Sabre in the courtroom, innocent of the terrible charge against him, bewildered, baited by the vicious humpbacked lawyer, saying over and over helplessly, "But look here—I look here!" Condemning himself by his pitiful confusion. The author has painted a picture on your brain; an indelible picture that even Time will find it hard to erase.

If, as a writer, you cannot so use words as to conjure up a picture in the reader's mind, then you have failed as a pen-artist. Your words are so much waste material. They may be pretty words, cleverly strung together, but they get nowhere. They are just "words."

A young writer friend of mine recently had a story rejected by a magazine editor with this comment: "You handle words prettily, but your picture is not clear-cut." She was in the last depths of discouragement because she had, as she told me, worked so hard over her "choice" of words. As soon as I read the story I appreciated the editor's criticism. The author had used some fine phrasing, some clever descriptive matter, some original twists of expression. But she had repeated herself over and over in different terms. She confused the reader by her lavishness of words. The picture she wished to convey was blurred. As the editor said, it was not "clear-cut."

A SCENARIO was returned with this comment: "Your first scenes have pictorial value, but you do not get into the action of the story soon enough." In this case the criticism meant that there were some pretty scenic effects, moonlight in the garden and that sort of thing, but no dramatic action that was to make the real picture of the story.

In the course of instruction on scenario writing there is a chapter devoted to visualization. There you have it in a nutshell. You must, in your own mind's eye, visualize your characters as you place them upon Life's stage, whether you are writing for the screen or the magazines. See them act. Picture them in their soul struggles and victories. And you must so use words as to convey that picture to your reader's mind.

You must draw a clean-cut picture. A human picture that will touch the heart. Then you will have the story that will grip. The story that will live.

THE SCHOOL AND THE THEATRE

(Continued from page 31)

It is a landmark in the mobilization of public opinion in the industry's behalf; and it gains added significance in the fact that the address was made in the State which will be the first in the Union to vote on the question of political censorship.

There is another consideration in which the exhibitor directly and the whole industry only less directly is vitally interested. The use of the motion picture in the school, on the basis outlined above, cannot fail to create a vast amount of good-will toward the picture in the theatre. It is a fact recognized by all branches of the industry that the maximum of motion picture patrons has never been reached. A great body of people in this country either do not go to the picture theatre or they go at long and irregular intervals.

Teaching the child by way of the motion picture will mean, in our belief, creating a vast army of new patrons for the theatre, because it will establish the picture not only in the child's mind but advance it greatly in the favor of the adult community.

Get public opinion on your side and your battle is won. And there is no reason why it should not be on the side of the industry. Further than that, it is being won over, by one stroke after another, through the leadership of Mr. Hayes, on a basis of sincerity and right that are as appealing to the public as his contagious enthusiasm.—W. L. Boyanton in Exhibitors Trade Review.
CORRECT ENGLISH IN THE PHOTOPLAY

(Continued from page 11)

long ago that she never bothered to punctuate her letters, that was simply assuming that the person you were writing to did not know anything! Punctuation was all very well for little children, learning to read, but for intelligent adults it was absurd! Her letters, many of which I have read, or tried to read, would puzzle the well known Philadelphia lawyer; there is neither head nor tail to any of them. She would be given short shrift in an editorial san- cturn; probably not considered at all, though her work might be of the cleverest.

For even the most dramatic and carefully worded sentences lose their force if incorrectly or insufficiently punctuated. Many users of perfectly good English are so inaccurate in this regard that their writing becomes little more than a hodge-podge of words. Not merely do they leave out punctuation where it is necessary, but, which is equally reprehensible, they put it in where it has no place, utterly confusing the sense in either case. One’s own intuitive feeling for pause. I might almost say one’s sense of rhythm, is one’s best guide in this matter. Where you would naturally pause yourself you wish an editor to pause likewise; then indicate your wish by the simple expedient of using a comma or semi-colon.

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Q. I am puzzled by the requirement of comedy relief in serious drama. When the force of situation depends upon dramatic emphasis, why should the audience's attention be diverted to laughter? J. K. J.

A. Two reasons: the principle of contrast, to begin with. All picture effects, when analyzed, point to this principle. Another reason—the effect of unrelieved seriousness is to depress the audience. Sadness is not receptive to any inspiring thought and therefore power of theme is lost.

Q. It means to me there is too much insistence upon conflict and suspense in the photoplay. Is it not true that thus narrowing the interest lessens the appeal of the picture as compared with a great novel wherein many aspects of life are given full portrayal? G. T. H.

A. One important difference may be mentioned as between reading a novel and witnessing a play. You may lay down a novel, and at some time later pick it up to resume reading where you left off. But you cannot "lay down" a motion picture. Much of the charm in novel reading is in the intervals of reflection. In a theatre, however, such reflection would mean the passage of vital scenes unnoticed. Cumulative suspense is essential in a photoplay in order to hold the spectator to the task of unrelaxed concentration.

Q. Just what is meant by "reflecting environment"? Is it proper in writing a photoplay to put in as characters real people just as one has actually known them? A. R. L.

A. Most great characters in drama are composites made up of little bits of insight which the writer has had into different lives. It is seldom that any one person in real life is "actually known." Something vital in a person's nature may furnish the germinative idea and of course the memory serves in assembling various traits that have come under observation. But the real task of characterization is creative; it is not merely copying from life.

Q. I have a story in which the hero makes a sacrifice in the climax. I have been told that this sacrifice is a real one and a big one, and yet the hero is not likable or appealing. This criticism seems to me contradictory. If the climax gives the effect of noble self-sacrifice on the part of the hero—how can that hero be other than likable? M. M.

A. It is very difficult to answer this question authoritatively without reading the story. The trouble probably lies in the attitude of the hero himself toward his sacrifice. Is he conscious of the big thing he does? If he is—if he performs his heroic act knowing that he is a martyr and expecting to be lauded for his deed—then he loses our sympathy.

Q. I have a story plotted in which I have two men of entirely different natures, either one of whom I can make the hero. The central line of conflict in the story lies between these two men. Would it be desirable to keep the sympathies of the audience divided until the last moment, when one of the two men suddenly proves his superiority? O. J.

A. Decidedly not. You must enlist the sympathies of the audience strongly in favor of one of the two men. The other must be disliked, or at least doubted. If you divide the sympathies of the audience, you will "scatter" the interest and make it impossible to arouse suspense.

Q. In the continuity of a story, I find that whole pages of interpretive action that do not occur in the detailed synopsis. I find it necessary to put in a great deal of such action in order to avoid ambiguity, when I am writing my synopsis. Should I do this, or should I leave it to the continuity writer? P. P. V.

A. After you have once decided upon the effect you wish to produce, do not leave out anything that is necessary to make your meaning clear. Forget the continuity writer. It is your story. Tell it the way you want it told.

Q. My experiences have been limited and the people whom I know seem to me commonplace. Must I limit myself to these ordinary characters when I am much more interested in stories dealing with millionaires, soldiers of fortune and picturesque types of the underworld? D. M. C.

A. It requires a considerable amount of genius and a great deal of skill to successfully create characters from your imagination. A beginner is foolish to attempt this and should endeavor to discover the picturesque and extraordinary qualities which make the people of everyday life interesting to the discerning observer.

Q. I have very little time for my writing. If I suggest the possibilities of my story can I expect the director, the continuity writer and the actors to develop it? L. L. M.

A. If you go to a bakery to buy a cake do not expect to be given so much flour, sugar and baking-powder. The producer who considers your story wants the finished product. It is the author's business to see that he gets it.

Q. What are the qualities which contribute to the pictorial beauty of a photoplay? O. D. J.

A. The scenes in a photoplay should conform to the standards of pictorial composition which is based upon the principles of balance, rhythm and harmony. It is obviously more difficult to achieve these in a motion picture, but they should be considered, first by the author and later by the directors.

Q. I have in mind the writing of a story dealing with the popular superstition that the world is coming to an end at a certain time. Is this something that would attract attention? M. J.

A. We hardly think so. The public is looking for entertainment: a story of this kind would only cause a certain class of people additional worry. If it is handled in an out and out comedy, such might get by, but we think that a more "up to the minute" theme would be better.
WHY STORIES ARE REJECTED
(Continued from page 18)

and-word sketch by John Galsworthy, one of our greatest novelists—because it was a thing of dull excellence—and accepted a seven-thousand-word story by a then unknown writer that violated every “don’t” of our shop: it was too long; it had a tragic ending and there was no love interest; it was a sordid picture of middle class English life, yet it was a story you couldn’t put down until you had finished it, and it was one of the most discussed stories of the year. It was called “The Friends” and the author is Stacy Aumonier.

But I might never have seen the story except for the very intelligent head reader who brought it to me. You see, a very small proportion of the material submitted ever reaches the editor’s desk. It is the luck of the game that many a story, turned down by cut-and-dried readers, would have been taken like a shot had it reached the editor’s eyes.

As encouragement to the beginner, I might cite the case of George Randolph Chester. His first two Wallingford stories, submitted to the Saturday Evening Post, were adversely reported on by all of the six readers and each reader gave a different reason. On six different counts Chester had violated the office rules. But rules were only invented to govern mediocrity, as every live editor knows; and the six different reports piqued Lorimer’s curiosity. As a result Wallingford and Chester became famous. In all, Chester wrote and sold one hundred and six Wallingford stories.

It is seldom that a personal interview with the editor saves your story from rejection. He prefers to form his own conclusion without your naturally prejudiced aid. He is especially irritated if you tell him that your contribution is founded on fact, as though that made it a good story.

Reporting the facts and interpreting them are two different matters. What makes a work of fiction convincing is not an array of the actual facts of life, but the illusion of reality that your skill as a story-teller achieves through consistent characterization. Your story will not be rejected merely because it is crude in the telling. I remember re-writing every page of an eighty-thousand word novel that has since sold over one hundred thousand copies. It was “Tillie; a Mannenon Maid,” by Helen R. Martin. It was her first novel; it was crude in style and often clumsy in treatment, but the material was so fresh, the characters so alive and the story so human it was well worth the editorial labor spent upon it.

As a beginner you are enthusiastically concerned with enlarging your vocabulary and with the perfection of colorful phrasing; but always keep in mind that in building fiction the essential thing is having something worth while to say and saying it!—saying it with force and sincerity. A fine style is a quality of slow growth. Your creative faculties are keenest when you are young and that is when you will do your biggest stories.

In later years comes the compensation of a matured style which will lend distinction and interest to less vivid material. This is the literary history of Kipling and a host of others. Children born of people well over forty are apt to be anaemic and frail. This is also largely true of their brain children.

You will not avoid the discouraging little printed slip just by learning rules and avoiding “don’ts.” The gift of narration is acquired by absorption as well as by precept. However, a course in story writing, taught by men who know, even though it cannot graft upon the beginner the gift of narration, will at least enable him to “hew to the line” and avoid the numerous mistakes in technique that would otherwise be his.

Imagination is hardly more than a child’s intense curiosity and speculation about life—it’s genesis in the child’s make-believe—modified and trained through the years of schooling, and, let me add, through the suffering that gives you a sympathy.

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PHOTOPLAYS OF THE MONTH

(Continued from page 35)

they came into her possession. On the whole, it is a gorgeous production, with a very fanciful and improbable story.

Synopsis: Dolores de Lisa, only daughter of an American mother and a Spanish father, is always dancing around New York, much to the annoyance of her fiancé, Ralph Kellog. When he reproaches her, she returns his ring. Dolores and her aunt, the Marquis de Lisa, go to Spain. There Dolores meets Carrita, famous toreador, son of Parola, notorious cabaret dancer, once the flame of Eduardo de Lisa. Dolores attends the bull fight. Meanwhile, de Lisa, Carlos, his son, and Ralph have arrived, unknown to Dolores, and go in search of Dolores. In the meantime, at the bull ring Dolores meets an old roue, the Count de Morera, who introduces Carrita to her. That night de Morera gives a party for Carrita. Dolores is the great attraction of the party. Carrita is fascinated. Thisangers Parola, who is considered his favorite, since it is not surmised that she is his mother. After Dolores has given an effective dance with Carrita, they all go to Parola's cabaret. There an apache makes love to Dolores against her wishes. Seeking refuge from the storm, Eduardo enters Parola's cafe. She recognizes him, and, hoping to blackmail him, tells him that Carrita is his son. When he refuses to believe her, she tells Carrita to kill Eduardo. Dolores overhears, but is prevented from warning her father. The apache follows her, and after a fight with him, she escapes. When Parola tries to prevent her flight, the apache kills her. With her dying breath she confesses to her mother, but, after all, dancing isn't all there is in life.

—By Laura Jansen.
GOSSIP, STREET

(Continued from page 32)
of the publicity being given the new production. But Mr. Fairbanks has designed a novel way to prevent such encroachment upon his picturization of "Robin Hood"—he has incorporated his own name within the title, which reads, "Douglas Fairbanks in Robin Hood."

Mrs. Rupert Hughes Assists Husband

Mr. and Mrs. Rupert Hughes collaborated in writing a photodrama for Goldwyn entitled, "Gimme." Mr. Hughes is now directing the production on the Goldwyn "lot."

WHY YOUR STORIES ARE REJECTED

(Continued from page 39)
thetic understanding of the other fellow's troubles.

Creative imagination, then, is the first factor in fiction writing. To observe keenly and to motivate what you see, is the second. The third important factor is what we call charm; it is the personality behind the pen.

How will all of this explain why your last story was rejected? As I have not read your story I can be no more explicit than this:

Read three successful stories in as many current magazines, analyze them in the light of what I have been telling you to discover what makes them worth reading. Then compare them point by point with your own. If you have done this with an open mind you will likely realize why your story did not get over. If you still believe your story deserves publication then keep on sending it out. Many a story has found its niche after thirty or forty rejections.

Finally, be honest with yourself and be prepared to discount the flattery of fond relatives and kindly friends.

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Influence of Films Discussed by National Federation of Women's Clubs

(Continued from page 20)

ABLE to do so only by studying at home. The Chautauqua Reading Circles have now been in existence for forty-eight years. They are the result of the visit of Lewis Miller who, with Bishop Vincent, founded Chautauqua. Individuals who have done their home reading and study conscientiously are allowed to take an examination. If they pass it satisfactorily a degree is bestowed upon them. Alumni Hall is one of the several beautiful educational buildings in this most delightful place where those who study the Chautauqua courses may come during the summer to hear lectures and take short courses. The various University extension courses are modeled after the Chautauqua plan which furnishes a concrete proof that if one really desires to master any subject by home study and will equip himself with the proper books he can surely attain good results. We all know that we get out of any course of study just in proportion to the effort we put forth.

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By Malcolm Stuart Taylor

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And, speeding o'er the ocean, reached the strand
Of "La Belle France;" from "Gay Paree" was whirled
Where Monte Carlo's wheel of chance is twirled;
Next, down Rome's Apian Way, past ruins grand,
To where the mute Sphinx guards the desert sand;
Then viewed Vesuvius' hot lava hurled;
Next in Bombay I saw the curse of Caste,
In Tokio caught the Geisha's flirting glance,
In Honolulu watched the natives dance,
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September

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AND THE REMEDY
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What this way is, and why it is that translations of stories by famous foreign writers—even though adjudged masterpieces by the critics—fail to appeal in this country, forms the basis of a fascinating article by Mr. Neidig, which will appear in the October issue of Photodramatist.

Another feature in the coming number of the utmost importance to writers—especially students—will be an article by Frederick J. Jackson, widely known author of stories and photoplays. In this article Mr. Jackson will discuss the genesis of story ideas, explaining how, in his mind, the idea for a tale originates, and how, when once originated, he pursues that idea until a complete story is evolved. To do this, he will use as concrete examples, some of his own stories which previously have been published in such universalzely read all-fiction magazines as "Adventure" and "Popular."

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AND OTHER DEPARTMENTS
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P. F. COLLiER & SON COMPANY, Publishers of Good Books Since 1875
Magic Lanterns

By Sheldon Krag Johnson

We are no other than a moving row
Of Magic Shadow-shapes that come and go.
Round with the Sun Illumin's Lantern held
In midnight by the Master of the Show.

So sang the Englishman borrowing his inspiration from the Persian.
The world of the external and the inner world of faith are inter geared and revolve together.
Omar drew his analogy from cylindrical lanterns then in common use. The cylinders were pivoted. When the light was lit, the ascending current of warm air caused the cylinders, painted with various figures, to slowly turn,—faint whispers of pictures—that-move that were to be.

Had either Fitzgerald or his master spoken today he might have said:
We are no other than a Moving Show
Of Magic Lanterns casting Shadows to and fro,
Upon the Screen of Matter, held
Neutral alike. to friend and foe.

Thus does Eternal Truth find pale reflection in the half unfolded consciousness of mankind. Yesterday we were but "Magic Shadow-shapes." Today, the World Rose has unfurled another petal. The motion picture has come into being, and, by analogy again, we are no longer the Shadows, but the Lanterns that cast the shadows,—magic indeed.

Man, in his outer aspect is like the exhibition side of the motion picture. His ensemble of thoughts, his personality or character, is the print that he runs through the projection machine of his body. These thoughts of himself, this unfolding story, passes between the white light of his inner Being and the lenses of his image-forming power. And always indispensable is the screen, that neutral thing without which there could be no picture, yet which possesses no power of its own to change the nature of the story.

But Man is no automaton. He is more than the projection machine. He is both the producing studio and the theater of exhibition. By his power of initiative and discrimination he builds the picture in the continuity of his thought. However, loath he may still be to admit it, to him belongs the high responsibility of choosing the negative from which to make his positive print.

Yet having chosen well, his is still the privilege of clear presentation. As the arc light flickers and dies down when the points become separated and the flow of the mysterious current is broken, so with man as he breaks his conscious contact with the God within so does his power of self-projection fail and grow dim. He can distort his images with clouded thoughts; he can ignore the screen and cast his images upon the non-reflecting void.

If he is immature he projects his story prematurely, giving nothing more than daily rushes, incomplete, out of sequence, filled with repetition of retakes, good and bad. But with maturity he assembles his story with loving patience, cutting, titling and tinting his print until, at last, he has a thing of beauty and unbroken flow.

This, with satisfaction to himself and joy to his fellows, he projects into the manifest where all may share it with him. If he has chosen well his theme, and has been a conscientious craftsman; if he has entered upon his daily work with love in his heart and ears attuned to the whisper of the Spirit, then he may be thankful indeed, for his is the power to spread a feast of joyous inspiration for all who may chance to sit before his screen; his is the delight of giving from the inexhaustible treasure house of the Infinite and his joy is perpetual with that giving.

No wonder the motion picture is of universal appeal. It is the highest attenuation of the automatic; the most perfect mimicry in the mechanical of that Living Essence which is Man.
Novelty of ‘Situation’ Contest Appeals

Number of Entrants in Photodramatist’s Test of Creative Ability Far Greater than Anticipated

According to interest thus far manifested, Photodramatist’s novel Situation Contest, as announced in the July issue, has had greater appeal to the students of dramatic construction than originally was anticipated by the editors. This appeal, no doubt, is due to the element of novelty itself, since the competition—unlike the usual scenario contest—does not lie between complete stories, but rather between ideas for stories, because the “situation” requested is in reality an idea so original, logical and dramatic as to form the basis of a creditable photodrama.

Perhaps, also, the brevity of the manuscripts required has enticed participation. Some, however, have questioned the possibility of properly presenting a situation in so few as three hundred words. We have explained individually that any dramatic situation, alone, can be told in about two hundred words, the remainder being sufficient to establish an atmospheric setting. It is unnecessary, of course, to offer a solution, although the predicament should be one capable of being solved. As an example of the wrong type, there follows one which was promptly placed in the “impossible” file:

“A young man is rowing on the river with his mother and sweetheart. The boat capsizes. The two women are about to drown. Naturally, he loves them both. Whom shall he save?”

The average student knows that there is only one course of action—to let one die and save the other! Someone might argue, “Well, have a fisherman come along and save the other.” But this is not a solution; it is merely a coincidence extraneous to the problem in question.

A number of contributions lack in originality and logic. Also, one or two have been found to be plain plagiarisms. It should be realized that “borrowing” the work of another is not only violating a law of ethics, but is provocative of law suits.

Although the rules of the contest have forbidden complete stories, several have been forced upon us, notwithstanding—mere narrations of events, none of which might be termed a situation of any kind. It is evident, therefore, that there are still those who do not know that a dramatic situation is a logical, natural and apparently inevitable relationship of affairs, at a given time, wherein the leading character is forced into an emotional conflict from which he must extricate himself.

The question has arisen, “Will those winning prizes be given an opportunity to write a story for production?” To answer this question we explain that the prize-winning situations naturally will be those around which a strong dramatic plot might be woven. Therefore, should the author found a photoplay upon such an idea and submit it to a studio, the fact that it had won a prize in this contest would gain for it serious consideration by the scenario editors.

When we refer in our first paragraph to the “basis” of a story, we do not necessarily mean the opening situation. A fine situation may occur at the beginning, the middle, the end—or anywhere else—and the rest of the story constructed either forward or backward from this point.

It was previously announced that each month the best situations would be printed in Photodramatist. However, on account of the large number from which to choose, the Contest Editor has decided to postpone publication to a later date, at which time he will select three out of the best twenty-five. This does not signify that these three will remain at the head of the list; for any manuscript received up to the final hour will be accorded the same consideration as those already at hand.

Rules of the Contest

Anyone may participate. Contest closes at midnight, October 31st. Manuscripts arriving later cannot be considered. Winners will be announced in December issue.

Dramatic values, not literary merit, will be the basis for judging. Strong, original situations are desired—not skeleton outlines of entire stories. All manuscripts must be typewritten, double-spaced, on 8½ x 11 in. paper. Place your name and address in upper left-hand corner. Exact number of words in right-hand corner.

Three prizes will be awarded the winners, as follows:

First ...................$75.00
Second ..................50.00
Third ....................25.00

In the event of a tie, the full amount of the prize will be awarded to each of the tying contestants.

All literary and dramatic rights in submitted material will remain the property of the contestants. No manuscripts will be returned. Keep a copy of your work.

The judges will be:

PAUL BERN, Scenario Editor, Goldwyn Pictures Corporation.
FRANCES HARMER, Literary Advisor to William C. deMille.
JACK STRUMWASSER, Scenario Editor, Fox Film Corporation.

The ‘Independent’ Film Studio
How It Functions—What It Means to the Motion Picture Art
By George Landy

Contrary to popular belief, most producers do not own, or even lease entire studios for the filming of their pictures. Although it is true that ten or fifteen companies do maintain their own plants, a great majority of the films are turned out at independent studios. Of these the United Studios is the largest and most important, not only on the West Coast, but throughout the world. There is no doubt that the independent studio is the hopeful spot in the motion picture industry. The plants owned by individual companies are too apt to be overlaid by the conservative financial and sales departments so that the film they turn out tends to remain in the self-same rut of mediocrity and repetition of theme and treatment, the two great faults that have been the besetting sins of the films for several years.

Some time ago students of the photodrama realized the stultification into which we were so rapidly drifting; today even the public understands it and in this appreciation lies the chief explanation of the diminished attendance at motion picture theatres. The independent producer who expends all his time, energy, thought and money on one picture at a time is the hope of the films, not only as an art but also as an industry, since the screen is one sphere of activity in which art and industry are indissolubly connected.

The independent studio makes possible the existence of the independent producer—hence its incontrovertible claim to being the hope for betterment in the films. The United Studios, being representative of this type of studio, therefore merits an exposition of its history, organization and policies so that we may better understand its workings and thus realize how it serves the independent producer and through him the independent writer, director and actor—and ultimately the theatre-goer.

Four years ago there was a vineyard covering twenty-eight square blocks fronting on Melrose avenue in Los Angeles. An independent producer named Robert Brunton first had the vision of the possibilities of service to others like himself in the organization of a studio founded on the theory that a number of producers working cooperatively on a central overhead scheme could have at their call greater resources than any one of them could assemble alone. Furthermore, he could have these greater resources more economically than if he played a lone hand. Accordingly the Brunton Studio was erected on the site of the vineyard with a capacity for twenty production units working at the same time. It is a matter of history that about a year ago the control of this plant was transferred to the United Studios, Inc., of which M. C. Levee is president.

How does such a plant as the United Studio function?
A producer assembles his funds and selects the story he wants to film. Sometimes that is all with which he starts. At a conference with President Levee and other officials of the studio the scenario is carefully dissected for a study of the materials, labor, etc., etc., which it will require. The various department heads make up their estimates, these are added together and the total represents the net rental which is charged to the producer for the studio's cooperation in his picture.
T HROUGH its casting department, the studio helps the producer secure his talent and sometimes a director as well. Then there is a technical department which constructs his sets as indicated by the needs of the story. These sets may be anything from a corner of a small room to the interior of the House of Parliament, which was built for "The Masquerader," or the royal ball room used in "The Eternal Flame." The Property Department has on hand or can secure in time for the scenes in which they are required all conceivable properties ranging from period knick-knacks and whatnots to the furnishings of a palace. Of course, both of these service groups are aided by the mill department, a staff of carpenters, furniture makers, upholsterers, painters, plumbers and other artisans.

Locations play a prominent part in many pictures—under this head we include all exterior scenes either in the studio grounds or outside of them. There is a location manager at the United Studios who has charge of all the exteriors acreage which contains typical structures and settlements of practically every country on the face of the globe—a Mexican village, an Italian village, a New England Street, Southern Street, Western Street, Railway stations, freight houses, a tenement street in New York and one in London, a settlement in India, ancient temple ruins, an old English castle, a French chateau, New York City brownstone houses, little farm houses, log cabins, Alaskan settlements, Inca ruins and a tank for marine shots, either in miniature or full size. These are approximately half of the location scenes on the United lot.

I T is also the function of the location manager to have access to inhabited and uninhabited spots of every description within easy reach of Los Angeles. If a producer needs a wide expanse of snow-covered territory, the location manager tells him the nearest place to find this scene; if the story requires subterranean caves the location manager knows where they are; if the story calls for a gushing mountain torrent or untrod forests, the location manager can put his finger on them and can arrange for their use. Of the other hand, if there are scenes in banks, railroad stations, theatres, dwelling houses, etc., etc., these, too, fall under his jurisdiction—and it is important not only that the location manager know where these diversified places are, but also how to get permission to use them.

Lighting has come to play more and more of an important part in film production, not only because it makes the producer independent of the weather but also for the artistic values obtainable through this medium. The electrical department at the United Studios owns over three hundred thousand dollars worth of equipment. Its use by the producer and the furnishing to him of expert electricians is part of the studio service.

A TRANSPORTATION department, principally used for taking companies on location away from the studio, a cafeteria to permit the actors to eat on the grounds and thus save them the embarrassment and time of going any distance for their meals during working hours, a public stenographer to assist in the copying of scripts and other similar service, a barber—these are some of the departments that exist for the producers' convenience. Dressing rooms for the stars and all the players, offices for the various members of the production staffs, cutting rooms and film vaults, projection rooms in which the cast and director may see the daily rushes of their work, a studio photographer and still department—these are further instances of a studio service.

The United Studios plant represents an investment of approximately two million dollars. Its working force, exclusive of actors, aggregates from eight hundred to a thousand people. Sometimes a single company will employ seven or eight hundred extras on the same day; the record number of actors that ever worked at the United Studio occurred on September 19th, 1921, when over two thousand extra people were employed in various units, the casts of which aggregated about three hundred additional players.

Of course, many of the producers who are filming large scale productions find it advisable to have their own department heads to collaborate with the studio personnel in the line of wardrobe, technical construction, lighting and so on, cooperatively directing the workers in each department. The average scale production can rely totally on the studio forces.

I N fact, it is probable that arrangements will soon be made whereby the studio will even in securing the production funds in whole or in part for men who have established themselves as good business risks. If this plan is consummated all that the producer will have to bring to the United Studios is an idea and a reputation.

Some of the more important organizations which are housed at the United Studios at the present time

(Continued on Page 42)
From Pen to Silversheet

By Melvin M. Riddle

X—SCREEN PORTRAYAL

There are two kinds of screen portrayal. These might best be designated as straight personality and character interpretation. An illustration of the first class is the star who always plays roles exactly suited to his or her own individual personality. The actor or actress in this case simply acts naturally, as he or she would act if placed in the situations contained in the story, injecting into his or her portrayal, the full measure of individual expression and personality.

The second class is the screen artist who assumes a type of characterization entirely foreign to his own natural personality and who maintains that character throughout the entire picture, living, as it were, as a separate identity and never once allowing his own natural self to penetrate the mask of this other being with which he has clothed himself.

It can easily be seen how the latter type of histrionic performance is by far the most difficult of the two. In the one case, the actor expresses only himself, in a made-to-fit or cut-to-measure role. In the latter instance, he steps into the shoes of another and entirely different being.

It is thus not an exaggeration to say that the actor who interprets another character really lives two different lives while engaged in a part. And it is surprising, if the truth be known, just how much of his time and attention a good actor devotes to living the life of the imaginary person whom he brings into existence on the silversheet. A noted actor was once heard to remark: "I spend so much time living and thinking in character that I have to pause at intervals and take a little while to resume an acquaintance with myself."

The problem of just how the actor so adapts himself to another being, passing completely out of the confines of his own personality, is probably the one that is most difficult to understand and thus most interesting to the person who sits in the audience and views a picture on the screen. On one occasion, he sees his favorite actor playing a particular role possessing a number of typical characteristics. On another occasion, he sees the same actor in a characterization so entirely different from the former that it is as if two different persons with characteristics entirely foreign to each other, had played the two roles. And so on in every picture in which that certain actor may appear.

Regarding the secret of how this is done, Conrad Nagel, only a year or two ago, an Eastern legitimate favorite and now one of the most capable screen artists, who has played difficult roles in several Paramount successes, recently gave a very thorough and scientific analysis. Among other things, Mr. Nagel said:

Character interpretation is fundamentally a mental process. It is not, primarily, a question of how an actor moves about the camera—his mechanical or physical manifestations or expressions. That is of course a necessary consideration, but it is secondary. He must first get himself completely absorbed into the character, the attributes, the qualities, temperament and disposition of the subject he is portraying. This is a mental process. The physical part of the job naturally follows after the actor has the character completely in mind.

"A good deal of light can be thrown on an explanation of this kind by a comparison of stage and screen acting. In legitimate work, an actor perfects his role more or less mechanically. On the stage his work is largely creative. On the stage he has a great deal of time to work out his interpretation. He rehearses his lines, his elocution and his expressions. I might say, he draws a blue print of the characterization, figuratively speaking, and when he comes to play, he can take out that blue print and follow it, line for line. After playing the role night after night for a month he knows it by heart—not only the lines, but every move and every expression. Finally, it becomes a cut-and-dried affair. He can take it off or put it on at will. When he leaves the theater he can forget all about it until the next show. I have played a stage role as long as two years. While playing that part it was impossible for me to feel the same every night. There were times when I felt badly, but..."
other times when I was cross, others when I was happy. But the moment I stepped into that role I was utterly oblivious to my personal feelings. I started into a mechanical procedure that had been ground in thoroughly. It was possible to get that technique and those mechanics so set that I could give a technical performance no matter how I felt. At one time I played for a week with a broken ankle. But no one in the audience could have noticed that anything was wrong.

FOR a motion picture, however, the actor who portrays a distinct character must throw a great deal of thought into that characterization, not only while on the set, but at all times—in his dressing room, outside the studio, at his home. He does not form a habit, as he does after continual rehearsals of a stage part. He must be creative every moment he works. Every scene is different and he does not work in sequence. He must possess spontaneity and to do that he must keep his mind full of the character. If his mind wanders away from that imaginary being he will make a false move and allow a wrong interpretation to slip in. When I first hear the nature of the character I am to play for a screen role, I begin to absorb the characteristics of that subject and continue to do so until it is a very part of me.

"Suppose I start to work on the studio set. I am playing an unusual character. The director explains a bit of action—tells me, for example, to enter the door, and a letter on the table, pick it up and read it. There are a million different ways of doing this. Which is the right way? The way the character in question would do it. And how would he do it? The only way to determine that is to have that character so well in mind that unconsciously I would do it just as he would. When I played the character of John Shand in William de Mille’s production of ‘What Every Woman Knows,’ everything that I did as John Shand, I did, not as I personally would do it, but as John himself would do it. I didn't have to stop and think out that procedure. I had the right mental foundation—the rest came naturally.

"THERE was one day, during the filming of ‘What Every Woman Knows,’ when for a few moments I allowed my mind to wander from the character of John Shand. I played a scene and a false note slipped in. John Shand was not conceited, but he was a very egotistical young man. But his very egotism was directly responsible for his success. Had he been conceited, he would not have been successful, but his egotism—his absolute unerring confidence in himself, swept him on to victory. I had to be very careful at all times to make a distinction between these two qualities. An expression of the one was fatal—the other expressed, was his principal characteristic. On this particular day I was not thinking very much about the character. The scene was the one in which John Shand walked into the room in which a delegation of women were waiting to see him. I walked in with a little strut and swing of the shoulders that conveyed a wrong expression. Conceit was written all over such an entrance and conceit was absolutely foreign to the character of John Shand. I wasn’t thinking what I was doing. I had let my mind slip out of tune with the character. The scene didn’t look bad in the projection room and I didn’t realize the mistake until the picture was all assembled and I saw the contrast of his attitude in this one scene with his characteristics in all the other scenes. It was a discordant note in the characterization of John Shand. This will perhaps illustrate how carefully the actor must keep his mind trained at all times on the character which he is enacting.

"IT is because of the creative nature of his daily work that the screen actor must be mentally on the job at all times. He must feel tip top every day he works. If he isn’t feeling good, or if his mind is in any wise occupied with other things or distracted from the central idea, he can’t do his work right. I couldn’t very successfully play any screen role with a broken ankle, as I once did on the stage, because my mind would be continually distracted from this creative work."

"
The West That Was

By Eugene Manlove Rhodes

When a reasonable man says "it is," what he really means is "it seems to me."

It seems to me that no great credit is due the American people because they know so little of the unmatched story of their own country. Kit Carson is as notable a figure as Leif Ericson, and his work stayed put. The Retreat of the Ten Thousand Greeks was child’s play compared to the Doniphan Expedition—but we are shy of Xenophons. How many Americans know the facts of that high-hearted venturing? or of Kearney’s Road to Empire? Who remembers that Kit Carson was the grandson of Daniel Boone—that so brief a span as three lives went to the changing of a world? Why is not Sam Houston a name as stirring as Francis Drake? What do you know of the Natchez Trace—a road once as famous as the Santa Fe Trail?

We have kept some faint knowledge of Daniel Boone and Davy Crockett, a blurred memory of the Alamo, a glimpse of Lewis and Clark; we are dimly aware of Fremont; the rest is silence.

The destiny of England has been upon the sea; her best have been proud to tell the story of her ships. The history of America is the story of the Pioneer, the greatest building of recorded time—"as has been said before, on no better authority."

How many books have been well-written on the taking of this half-world? Too few.

There was a time when York State was the West—then the Ohio Valley, Michigan, Missouri, Iowa, Wisconsin. Much has been written of these states—little of their settlement.

"King Noanett" is a splendid story of west-winning when the Connecticut river was the west—of Deerfield, Springfield. Proceeding, we find "In the Valley," "The Hoosier Schoolmaster," "Huckleberry Finn"—the one American classic; Parkman’s Histories; a few admirable stories of Mary Hallock Foote and Constance Fenimore Woolson; later, Stewart Edward White’s stories of the lumberjacks; Webster and Merwin’s “Calumet K”—which was the beginning of the era of “business” stories, much despised by those who hate workers and work; an era all unremarked by the High Lord Critics of the day.

But the South? Virginia has been sung, Kentucky has her James Lane Allen; Mary Johnston has written of John Sevier and his friends in early Tennessee. But the settlement of the smiling lands between the long straight rivers falling into the Gulf? Louisiana? Texas? You who read this—honestly, do you know the history of your country? Have you heard of the State of Franklin? The Cherokee Republic? The State of Van Zandt? Do you know that when Mississippi seceded from the Union, one county seceded from Mississippi, set up an independent government, and made it stick?

The answer is no. Half of us have huddled along the eastern coast, ankle deep in the Atlantic, our backs to the west, peering across at Europe. Most of the other half have lived and died facing east, eyes on New York and Boston.

The Mississippi, the Missouri—Hamlin Garland, William Allen White, Willa Sibert Cather—three notable and faithful artists, marking the Star of Empire on its westward course, making true chronicle of the cost, in blood and sweat and tears. Iowa, Kansas, Nebraska, California—these were in the making before the Civil War. We are come now to "the West"—from the Buffalo country to the crest of the Sierra Nevadas—the country settled since 1865. How have our writers dealt with the deeds of our fathers?

They have done well. We find many truthful and spirited books, not a few of them works of art. Wister’s "The Virginian" and "Members of the Family," the unforgettable "Red Saunders" stories
by Henry Wallace Phillips; Emerson Hough’s "Heart’s Desire," "The Story of the Cowboy," and his "Covered Wagon" of this year; the New Mexican stories of Charles F. Lummis, and his historical studies; Stewart Edward White’s "Arizona Nights"; Knibbs, with "Overland Red"; Andy Adams, whose "Log of a Cowboy," with a style as simple as Caesar’s, gives an accurate and vivid account of the early days, when cattle were driven up the Long Trail to market. Frank Spearman’s stories of the railroaders—"Held for Orders," and "The Nerve of Today" were about the best short stories ever written in America. B. M. Bower and William McLeod Raine, Kennett Harris, Lighton with "Billy Fortune," Watson with "Happy Hawkins"—all fascinating, humorous, authentic; Peter B. Kyne, whose best is as good as any best; younger writers, Bechdoldt, Edwin L. Sabin, Jackson Gregory, Dane Coolidge, Hal Evarts, worthyly upholding a great tradition.

SOME of O. Henry’s tales have captured the very essence of the Western spirit—notably "Jimmy Hayes and Muriel!"—which shows forth precisely what thing it was which the West contributed to "the American Idea"—now so much despised by the Euramericans. Rupert Hughes and Henry Wallace Phillips collaborated to make one of the best western stories ever written, "Across the Great Divide."

Roosevelt wrote of that country; he voiced the code of the West when he said, "Don’t flinch—don’t foul—hit the line hard." The genius of Agnes C. Laut, more, perhaps, than any other, has grasped the epic spirit of our national story. And the Indian stories of James Willard Schultz, to my mind, are the best literature produced by any living American. Had Ulysses with his own hand set down the story of Troy Town and his later voyagings, the tale had read like these authentic records of the Blackfeet and their neighbors. The style is simple, direct, forceful, beautiful. One thinks of Bunyan, or the Book of Ruth.

It may be observed that no mention is made of Leatherstocking. My lawyer has forbidden it. Again, I read Zane Grey’s "Rainbow Trail" and "Riders of the Purple Sage" with much pleasure. By advice of counsel, I am saying nothing of his later books, especially "To the Last Man"—concerning which nothing shall induce me to make any comment. I will say this, however, counsel or no counsel, that in "The U. P. Trail" Mr. Grey fooled one of the finest opportunities ever missed by any American writer.

California, aside from the gray corner south of Tehachapi and east of the San Bernardino Range, is not of the West, and never has been. California is chap sui generis. Therefore, Bret Harte, Frank Norris, "H. H.," Mary Austin, Marah Ellis Ryan, Harry Leon Wilson and their likes are not in this roster. The West ends where rain runs directly into the western sea.

With all these truth-saying books, and with others as good, wouldn’t you think Americans might be expected to have a fair mental picture of early Western days? They haven’t. To the average American, the West is connected with but one idea.

It is the home of the "Bad Man."

THERE idea persists that a frontiersman lived with one foot on a brass rail and one hand on a still smoking gun; and that he earned his frugal livelihood by assassination. It is a mistake. What he did was to work. Homicide was never more than a diversion with him. His mind was on his work. He made twelve states and collaborated on three others.

From such books as those mentioned above, the public had a chance to believe that the frontiersmen—cowboys, freighters, miners, railroadmen, surveyors, farmers, store-keepers, what-not—were men of many lacks and much undissembled evil-doing—and of many wild and unmentionable virtues. Also that they had one characteristic in common—an individuality which verged upon personal identity; an individuality which often amounted to perversity. They did not copy each other, or anyone else. Yet the public has accepted one stereotyped and purely imaginary character as a true picture of all Westerners.

Here are effects; let us inquire into causes. I find:

(1) Buffalo Bill’s Wild West shows.
(2) Other Wild West Shows.
(3) "Wolfville Days"—amusing and picturesque; meant for a joke, a cartoon, a grotesque caricature; accepted as accurate and informing.
(4) The unceasing flood of lurid "Western" novels and stories—written, not at secondhand, but from imitation of a copy of an imitation of some writer who got his dope from what someone had said of someone else had written on doubtful information from a man of poor memory and few scruples. The Westerner of popular fiction is as false to the fact as the stage Englishman.

THESE writers show sombrero and gun, "chaps" and spurs—but they have not a guess about the man who wears them. They do not get even these superficial matters right. The slicker was to wear in the rain; it was taken off during prolonged dry spells; they could understand that, since they wore oiledskins themselves, on their native coasts. But the chaps? It never penetrated to their darkened minds that chaps were worn as a protection against thorns—cactus, mesquite, tung-nail, cat-claw, cedar branches,—and that in a clear open country, in town or in an aeroplane, the cowboy took them off!

Chaparrelos weighed about seven pounds; they were mercifully hot (in hot countries). We were glad to take them off. And our horses were glad to have us take them off. They carried two hundred pounds, man and saddle; an extra seven pounds was a grievance which caused many estrangements.

(5) The "movies." I hate to say this, for I have many good and sorely-tried friends in the moving-picture business. But, with a few distinguished exceptions, the moving-picture cowboy can be best described in the inspired words of the poet: "Now, there’s no such thing as the Ginko Tree, And there never was—though there ought to be: And it’s also true, though most absurd, That there’s no such thing as a Wallaby Bird."
(6) There are also Western books written with splendid artistry by people with all the mental ma-
THERE has been a bad summer for the movie fans. They have been forced to suffer much. The oppressive heat has been augmented by a flock of depressing films, and definite relief is not yet in sight.

Never, in all my fifty years of continuous movie-going (remember, a man is as old as he feels) have I seen so few good photoplays in a given period of time—or so many flagrantly bad ones. Night after night I have passed through the Louis Quinnze lobby, the Au Quatrieme foyer and the neo-Selznick mezzanine, and I have nourished the vain hope that I was about to see something worth while. I expected that I should be able to go home and shift the key on my typewriter from the ridiculous to the sublime. And, night after night, I have been disappointed. Though I have swept the field with all the meticulous care of an experienced reaper, the balm crop in Gilead seems to have given out.

Last year there was a marked improvement in the quality of the films, and it seemed that the silent drama had turned the corner and was at last on the highroad to artistic success. But this promise has not been fulfilled.

The causes of the lamentable condition are difficult to assign. But one fact is self-evident: the producers are not trying. They seem to be disgusted and discouraged with the turn of affairs—the general business slump, the ugly menace of censorship, and the acknowledged failure of worthy efforts in the past year.

The prevailing attitude seems to be, "What's the use?"

One of the pictures that I have reviewed this month is ruined by the fear of censors. Another story, potentially good, is completely spoiled because it is played by a three star cast, making it necessary for the whole plot to be revised so that one of the celebrities can be dragged in at the finish, long after he has outlived his usefulness. Still another is blighted at the climax because it was deemed advisable to reform a whole mob of shady characters—although the audience's interest is concentrated on only one.

I say all this at the start so that I may cover myself in the reviews that follow. There is nothing so tedious as persistent knocking—

The Producers are not trying," states Mr. Sherwood, in his review of the latest releases. "Never have I seen so few good photoplays—nor so many flagrantly bad ones." Possibly you do not agree with this noted critic. Perhaps you believe some of the motion pictures he condemns to be of high standard. However, you cannot help but admire his frank statement of conditions as he sees them; and you are bound to enjoy the humorous manner in which he offers his opinion. Mr. Sherwood's reviews are a permanent feature of Photodramatist. Read them each month and keep "up to date."

THE Eternal Flame"

The best photoplay of the month is Norma Talmadge's production of Balzac's novel, "La Duchesse de Langeais," which was first re-titled "Infatuation," and finally issued as "The Eternal Flame."

It is a costume drama of France in the period which followed the Empire, and from a purely pictorial point of view it compares favorably with the best of the German pictures. The director, Frank Lloyd, has faithfully reproduced the frivolous spirit of the times, but has done so by insinuation rather than by obviously labored diagrams, so that the dramatic interest is never sacrificed to the purely atmospheric effect.

The story, which was adapted by Frances Marion, concerns itself with the beautiful Duchess of Langeais. Her husband is one of those highly immoral men who expect the greatest degree of virtue from their wives, and she is consequently driven to desperate measures. She becomes the leading coquette of the French court and plays incessantly with fire. Of course, she is eventually burned. They always are.

Miss Marion has not taken undue liberties with Balzac's theme, and has constructed the story along sound and logical lines, so that the interest is cumulative. But, at the start of the picture, she has made the mistake of inserting a vast number of epigrams which sound more like the Smart Set than like Balzac. Every time a character opens his mouth, you know that he is going to say, "How true it is that a woman always, etc." or "I have found that there are two kinds of husbands,—those who, etc."

Luckily, Miss Marion exhausted the world's supply of wise cracks before the picture had progressed very far; and after the first few reels, the characters begin to talk like human beings.

"God's Country and the Law"

HERE we have the old faithful features: The Great Clean Hills, The Sweet Little Growing Things, The Stately Sentinels Of The Forest, The Strong Silent
Men Of The Open, The Fair Little Flowers Of The Great North Woods—and the All Pervading Presence of Hokum.

The title speaks for itself. It gives away the whole plot. And what is more, it tells you in unmistakable terms that the story has emanated from the great-open-spaced brain of James Oliver Curwood.

Mr. Curwood recently caused a considerable stir by suing some independent producers, who had acquired two of his stories and then maimed them beyond all recognition. He carried his point, and backers of "I Am the Law" were effectively squelched. I am glad he did it. If other authors had stood up for their rights as vociferously and as forcefully as has Mr. Curwood, a great many bad movies would have been nipped in the bud.

But Mr. Curwood can go much farther. He should get out an injunction against himself, and prevent himself from continuing to compose such utter drivel as he has been guilty of in the past.

"The Dictator"

WALTER Woods and James Cruze were responsible for "One Glorious Day" which, in the opinion of many, deserved to be ranked among the greatest motion pictures of all time. Unfortunately, "One Glorious Day" was not a financial success. Movie fans just simply didn't get it—if we can trust the exhibitor's reports (and we usually have to). In New York and San Francisco this thoroughly delightful fantasy went over well, but everywhere else—and even in Los Angeles, which ought to know better—it fell flat.

This is disappointing. Messrs. Woods and Cruze are two gentlemen who deserve to be encouraged. Like Emerson and Loos, they are trying to introduce the gentle art of kidding to the screen, and—heaven knows!—it is needed there.

In "The Dictator," they have succeeded in combining many of the satiric qualities of "One Glorious Day" with elements of melodramatic action which should make for greater popular appeal. And if they can succeed in hitting the Grand Old General Public between the eyes more power to 'em.

Those who saw William Collier in the stage version of Richard Harding Davis' story, "The Dictator," will remember it as a hilarious farce; and those who see Wallace Reid in the photoplay will learn that that is exactly what it is. Although the plot is cluttered up with revolutions, battles, deep-villainy and indomitable heroism, the comic values are never lost. It is funny all the way through.

I do not often offer suggestions, but I can not help wishing that Walter Woods and James Cruze would make a movie of Harry Leon Wilson's "Ruggles of Red Gap," with Raymond Hatton in the leading role.

"A Fool There Was"

THE word "vamp," which has occupied such a prominent place in the American vocabulary, dates back to the William Fox production of "A Fool There Was," which was made in 1914, or thereabouts, and in which Theda Bara appeared as the rag, the bone and the hank of hair. It was a sensational picture, and it inaugurated a veritable orgy of home-wrecking on the screen.

However, the vamp is out of date now. Together with the "stage-door Johnnie" and the occasional drinker," she has been classified as old stuff. Mr. Fox, recently, has tried to revive interest in his nefarious activities by presenting a revised edition of "A Fool There Was," but it is an unsuccessful experiment. Men are no longer lured to their doom by rolling eyes and floating hips. Instead, they're now falling for the well known baby stare.

"A Fool There Was" was a good story to begin with, and as played by Miss Bara it carried a considerable punch, but it is wonderfully weak in its present form. It relies on certain situations which are not permitted to exist in this censorious age, and therefore, all of its raison d'être is removed when these situations are toned down to conform to the laws of Pennsylvania and Pasadena.

"Borderland"

IT is in the setting forth of spiritualistic themes that the screen demonstrates its greatest advantage over the speaking stage. Ghosts have been introduced in all sorts of plays, from "Hamlet" down, but they are never particularly convincing. There is an air of solidity about them which is apt to ruin the requisite supernatural effect, particularly when they stumble into the painted scenery, as the wrath of Bangou did in a production of "Macbeth" in New York last year.

The camera, however, can do great things with ghosts. It can dissolve them in and out of a scene, and it can make them transparent—which is a great help.

However, the camera isn't everything. In fact, it is practically worthless unless it has something interesting to record. And in "Borderland" it hasn't. The photography and all the technical details are perfect, but the rush of work connected with the preparation of the photoplay, someone forgot to supply it with an adequate story. Consequently, most of the cameraman's commendable effort is wasted.

Agnes Ayres is the star, and she is called upon to play two roles—one a modern young wife, who is tired of her husband and "eager to get away from it all"—and the other, a bride of fifty years ago who did that very thing and suffered the terrible consequences. The spirit of the latter moves through a weird, formless realm that is known as "Borderland," and when she looks down to earth and sees what her descendant is doing, she attempts to warn her of the punishment that will certainly come to those who misbehave.

There is so much that is good in "Borderland," that one is inclined to wonder why they couldn't have devoted a little more attention to the story. However, one has wondered that before; and one will probably continue to do so until the arrival of the Millennium.

"Fools First"

IN the first part of "Fools First," Marshall Neilan has contrived one of the most vitally dramatic situations that I have ever seen in any theatre. The leader of a gang of crooks learns that one of his followers, a boy who has not yet been permitted to enter the profession of crime, has been murdered by a member of a rival gang. The boy's body is brought in, and then word comes that the police have learned of the murder and that a pair of detectives are on the way up.

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Writing the Short Story

By Carl Clausen

III—CHARACTERIZATION

In a preceding chapter I said that the first important thing to me is the selection of the incident upon which to hang the tale. The next important thing is the characters. I find by analyzing my work that I use only two methods. Either I fit characters to my plot, or, having established certain characters, which the editors and the public seem to like, invent plots to fit these.

And so, as I review my past performances, I note that I have half a dozen leading characters for as many different types of stories. These characters might call my stock in trade. To me they have become living human beings, and, judging by editorial favor, they are so, at least to a certain extent. One is a detective, one a young sea captain of the picturesque type, another a "desert rat" prospector, etc.

When I get an idea for a story, I make a simple test to see if the idea will fit any of these. If so, the story is as good as sold, because the editors and my readers know and like these characters. If the idea does not fit any of them, I go ahead and invent a new set of people for it.

I make it an invariable rule never to try to force an uncongenial plot upon characters already established. Another rule of mine is never to write more than two or three stories of the same type during a given period. To keep up a standard of freshness and originality I find it necessary to alternate my subjects—a crime story this week, a sea story next, followed by perhaps a desert story or a simple love story.

But to return to my subject, I find that in my own life I think of humanity in the terms of types rather than as individuals. I am not conscious of having at any time deliberately gone to work to study individuals for use in my stories. I find that evolving my characters from my own imagination is the better method for me. They then seem to be truly my own. This is no doubt due to the fact that I, thus unconsciously, endow them with some of my own personality, or at least with the qualities I would like to possess.

The idea of creating characters from superficial observation—and all observation must be more or less superficial since one cannot divine motives—and stand aloof as a superior being, an author, to watch them go through their paces, does not appeal to me.

Please do not misunderstand me. I do not mean that you should obtrude your own personality upon the reader. Keeping yourself, as the writer, excluded from your story is both necessity and good taste. But by creating your characters from your own brain, rather than by caricature, you will achieve the result of being there without appearing to be.

And, so it pleases me to think that my characters are a part of myself. Not only my heroes and heroines, but my villains as well. Having, as a normal human being, within myself villainous impulses as well as good and noble ones, it is no harder for me to put myself into my villains than into my heroes or heroines, and to enjoy their reprehensible capers to the fullest.

The stories in the magazines of today fall very easily into two divisions—the stories where the action is skillfully developed via, and, as the inevitable result of, the characters; and the other type, stuffed full of action which is carried about upon the shoulders of mere names. A comparative value of these two types is too easily discernable for comment.

The writers of the latter type defend themselves with the old saw accredited to Aristotle, to the effect that "Plot is the first principle and that character holds a second place." What Aristotle meant was that the plot was the first thing which gave him the idea for the story, and that he secondly went ahead to invent characters to fit the plot.

As I pointed out in a former chapter, do not at-
tempt to make your characters "true to life." It can't be done. They will only be so in relation to your specific reader's experience with life. A genuinely inspiring or contemptible character is always a little better or a little worse than they are like Turner's sunsets. The famous painter was showing one of his canvases to a lady.

"But, Mr. Turner," the lady said, "I never saw such a sunset."

"Ah! Dear lady," the painter replied, "but don't you wish you could?"

This epigram of Turner's carries a profound truth. It drives home in one sentence the difference between art and realism, the inspirational versus the realistic. Please do not think that I decry realism—in its place. In Robinson Crusoe, Defoe reached journalistic realism to the highest degree of excellence, but its place is emphatically not in the short story.

In analyzing my methods I find that I work in scenes. By that I mean the following: I visualize each step of the story, scene by scene as I get to it. If, for instance, my hero and my villain are seated at a table discussing some phase which has a vital bearing on my plot—and no conversation should occur which hasn't to establish the mood or the setting of the story—then I try to visualize both men clearly. Their attitude toward each other. Their mannerisms. The way they sit in their chairs, and the way in which their personalities react to each other's conversation. The furniture of the room, reflecting the personality of the one who is the owner of it, or if neither is, reflecting the setting of the story.

I, so to speak, endow myself with a dual personality, temporarily shifting my viewpoint, alternately, from one to the other as my conversation passes back and forth. I imagine myself in the shoes of first one, then the other, and try to keep strictly with that character for that precise moment. As the conversation progresses to the point I wish to emphasize in the story, I try to inject as much individuality into the two men as I can without slowing up the action. I find that in conversation I have a valuable character developer, as well as a means to keep the story moving forward. Further when I select the phrasing of my conversation I do not go to life for inspiration.

Conversation in the short story should be in a measure like the brilliant repartee of a salon, for the very good reason that, like repartee, the function of the short story is to entertain. By this I do not mean merely light ephemeral entertainment. A somber story, beautifully written, enthralles the senses. A humorous story well done evokes your laughter, another type, again, will simply leave you with a glow of pleasure or a sense of deep satisfaction. Yet all of these have entertained you. The proof is, your tears, your laughter or your satisfaction.

This visualization of scenes and characters gives the effect of realism to yourself as you write. It is not in any sense true realism. It is realism heightened and enhanced by your own individual experience with life; your personality, your particular way of reacting to the problems which confront your characters, and which, by putting yourself in their shoes, you have made your own problem

lens. It spurs your creative faculty to the highest pitch. You are forced to draw upon yourself for inspiration. Finally, it is the surest test of originality.

There is perhaps a danger of individualizing your characters too much. Dickens has been accused of caricaturing rather than characterizing, and Stevenson in "The Sire de Maletroit's Door" gives us, in one place, three hundred words of direct description of his leading character's physical appearance. It is better to avoid directness of such length. O. Henry achieved often better results in less than fifty words—due perhaps to the fact that he dealt, strictly speaking, with types rather than with individuals.

As I mentally recall the short story characters of the old masters, one of the first to come to my mind is John O'Khurst of Bret Harte's "The Outcasts of Poker Flat." Read this story and note how skilfully the author weaves the personality of his picturesque hero into the threads of the story. Very little direct physical description here, and such as there is is quite conventional, as we have learned to know the Western gambler of the Californian gold days. Yet, I have a very clear picture of John O'Khurst, the individual, in my mind. His physical aspects are typical, but type ceases and individuality is born when the author confronts him with his problem.

For the benefit of those Americans who think that a study of foreign literature is necessary to learn what is fine and noble, I want to point out this story. Nothing finer has been done anywhere, abroad. Many stories as fine, but none better.

Once you get the knack of developing character, you will begin, really, to enjoy writing. The drudgery of plot building will be relieved by the knowledge that you are doing it for a purpose—giving your characters a chance to show of what stuff they are made. You will find it necessary to marshal all the originality you possess. It will act as a spur to your invention, and when your story is finished, and you read it as a whole, you will find that it is a living, breathing entity—not merely a few episodes strung together by coincidences.

It is perhaps well here to touch upon a subject, of which all writers are more or less painfully aware. I mean the writing of pot-boilers. There are certain magazines which demand stories with action only. Character drawing is frowned upon by these, we are told. The editors themselves have been known to send out printed circulars to contributors, reading something like the following: "We don't care for a rap for 'fine' writing or characterization—not a rap. What we want is action—with a capital A—and suspense."

I say to myself when I read such circulars. I ship Ed, in reply, a story of action and suspense, plus honest characterization and he grabs it and asks for more.

Yes, he wants action and suspense—and no doubt about it—but if the story has characterization as well, he'll have forgotten half the action before the signature on his check is dry. What he meant was: If he couldn't get a combination of the three, he'd take the two first named without the third, and consider himself lucky. But give him the combin-

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Mediocre Pictures—the Remedy
Authors to be ‘Starred’ in New Plan of Film Production
By Jeanne Stevens

Out of the 20,000 screen fans who recently replied to Photoplay Magazine’s question, "What is the matter with the movies?" the answer of more than two-thirds was, "cheap and tawdry stories." Fortunately the day when mere curiosity will entice the public into the theatre is past, stunts are passe, hokum is dead. Only one person can save the situation—the author.

And how is he to do it? By following not his nose—but his artistic conscience. By presenting on the screen, as other artists do with words or with the brush, a truthful view of life. Of course, he cannot understand it all or do it all. But let him only interpret life as he knows it, as he has lived it actually or sympathetically. That is his responsibility. Motion picture audiences will see to it that he gets his reward.

And because the Palmer Photoplay Corporation has always believed that "the screen play’s the thing," because it has spent four inspiring years searching for and training people of creative imagination, because it believes in these people—and in the presence of many others going their way, obscurely but observationally, in unknown walks of life—it now takes a stand on their behalf. In addition to continuing to train properly-qualified persons in screen technique and to supply story material to those producers who have the vision to purchase screen stories on their merits, this organization will now start to make pictures itself. Beginning September 1st, it will enter the production field on terms that open wide to the public the closely-guarded gates to screenland. It will produce and release for exhibition in the theaters, the best photoplays of new creative genius and fresh imagination. This will be talent which the Palmer Photoplay Corporation has discovered and trained during the four years in which it has been the world’s largest and most authoritative school of photoplay technique. It will share the profits of each production with the author, on a basis which raises the screen writer to the same dignified level of professional compensation as the stage dramatist or the novelist.

For what sort of Picture is it searching now? For one essentially human, vital, possessing both imaginative and psychological reality, and organic—that is made of living protoplasm rather than of dead matter. The test Mr. Edward J. O’Brien makes of the short story, barring the difference in technique, might be used here. Recently he said, "I have sought to select from the stories published in American magazines those which have rendered life imaginatively in organic substance and artistic form. Substance is something achieved by the artist in every act of creation, rather than something already present, and accordingly a fact or group of facts in a story only attain substantial embodiment when the artist’s power of compelling imaginative persuasion transforms them into a living truth. The first test of a short story, therefore, in any qualitative analysis is to report upon how vitally compelling the writer makes his selected facts or incidents. This test may be conveniently called the test of substance.

"But a second test," he continues, "is necessary if the story is to take rank above other stories. The true artist will seek to shape this living substance into the most beautiful and satisfying form, by skilful selection and arrangement of his materials, and by the most direct and appealing presentation of it in portrayal and character."
In other words, the first screen story chosen by the Palmer Photoplay Corporation must “pick at the nerves of life.” Besides being a presentation, it must also be an interpretation and a criticism. An audience leaving the theatre at which it is being shown will not only leave in an elevated frame of mind, it will not only have been enabled to escape from its suppressed desires and been healed thereby, but it will also carry away the feeling that the play has opened up to it a whole vista of life. Perhaps it is the story of one family in one town. Behind that family the audience must feel countless other families in numberless other towns, whose lives it understands through this family’s life, the truth of whose experience is here made manifest.

It must also contain the element of novelty, something that will distinguish it from its predecessors from the production point of view. This is a difficult requirement, when there is “nothing new under the sun”, but it is one that goes a long way toward “making” a picture, as witness “The Silent Call.” A slightly different point of view, unusual power of observation, peculiar tenderness of heart, the sympathy that lets one live others’ lives vicariously, an especially rich or varied background, a talent for selection—these are among the traits that give an author the peculiar quirk or twist that makes for novelty. It is probably more reasonable to expect novelty in treatment, however, than in plot, as there are only thirty-six fundamental situations; and these have been used in various guises and combinations time without number. Possibly the Palmer Photoplay Corporation will not find what it is seeking in a finished photoplay. Perhaps it may uncover only the bare idea it wants. But in any case, the author will be reimbursed in direct ration to his contribution. Not less than $1,000 will be paid for a complete scenario, as well as royalties from profits during the life of the picture.

Where will this picture be found? It is hard to say. Of the Palmer students whose pictures have been produced recently or who have carried away the prizes in recent motion picture contests, one was a Montana housewife, another a Chicago society woman, and a third an inmate of the Arizona state penitentiary. Perhaps typical of the environment of the majority however, is that of Miss Winifred Kimball, whose scenario, “Broken Chains” is now in process of production at the Goldwyn Studios. Miss Kimball won the $10,000 first prize in the Chicago Daily News-Goldwyn contest. And where do you suppose she lives? In a small town named Apalachicola, Florida.

Any thought in connection with screen writers reminds me of Mme. Curie and radium. Granted, one possesses pitch-blende or any other ore which contains this mysterious and very powerful element, one takes ten tons of it, adds three tons of hydrochloric acid, five tons of carbonate of soda, one ton of sulphuric acid at least ten tons of coal, stirs it all up and puts it in an electric furnace and after a month during which it is crushed, dissolved, precipitated and filtered and then redissolved, precipitated and refiltered over and over again, gets a tenth of a gram of radium! Likewise with creative imagination. Just as it takes between 100 and 400 tons of ore to make a thimbleful of radium, it requires the combing of thousands would-be screen writers to isolate a few who possess the “divine fire,” the radiant energy of talent. In this year, between January and July 1, 4301 of the people who applied to the Palmer Photoplay Corporation for the psychological test which serves as their entrance examination, were rejected. Out of every 100 applicants, only 12 are invited to enroll and only three out of 12—in other words, three out of the 100—pass with distinction. The others never learned they take the course on their own responsibility and are warned that the way will be hard. But creative imagination once discovered and trained is like radium, which, besides being the strongest force in the world, is the most priceless. A thimbleful of radium will raise a battleship of 28,000 tons 100 feet in the air. But it is more powerful than creative imagination, which can remake the world “nearer to the heart’s desire”?

This element of creative imagination is what pictures need. It—plus youth. Mr. Frank Lloyd recently took issue with Mr. Hays on his contention that what is wrong with pictures is their youth. God grant they never lose their youth, their divine hopes and fears and aspirations and struggles. But let the screen writers not be content with the mawkish and the unreal. Let them shun as they would the devil, the false, the temporal and the accidental. Let them be satisfied only with the true. And there will arise a screen literature capable of healing old wounds, covering old scars and leading man into the realm of dreams from which he returns ennobled. Something of this spirit is abroad in literature, in art and in the drama. Hasten the day when it will pervade the screen.

“We shall enter motion picture production with due caution and a full realization of the difficulties that beset the new producer,” declared Roy L. Manker, vice president of the Palmer Photoplay Corporation, when asked to outline the corporation’s plans. “For two years we have been considering the advisability of taking such a step, but have not felt that we were ready until now,” he continued.

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The Conspiracy of Incompetence
A Plea for the Creative Mind in Photoplay Direction

By Douglas Z. Doty

A BRIDEGROOM was discovered on the eve of his marriage in a state of great perturbation.

“What’s the matter?” asked a friend. “Have you lost the ring?”

“No,” said the bridegroom, “I’ve lost my enthusiasm.”

Since coming to Hollywood I have lost some of my early enthusiasm for the motion picture world. It is like the tower of Babel—with many men speaking many tongues—everybody talking and nobody listening. I am not a linguist—I am not even vociferous in English, so, modestly, I admit that I have added very little to the general confusion.

But, as one who has been active in book publishing and magazine editing for fifteen years, I am inclined towards certain invidious comparisons—an outside point of view on the inside of pictures.

When a man has been selected as editor of a reputable magazine he is usually allowed to edit. The owners may fix the policy and set certain limitations; but outside of this his selection of material is final.

WHERE the editor also controls the policy, as in the case of Lorimer of the Saturday Evening Post and Ellery Sedgwick of The Atlantic, you will find the best magazine of its class and—important fact!—the most successful financially.

In most of the studios that I know anything about, the scenario editor’s office is hardly more than a clearing-house, and the final selection of material is usually made in conference by producer, director and star, together with a mysterious voice that comes over the wire from the office some three thousand miles away. This voice also has ears which in turn have been listening to the myriad voices of exhibitors, who vociferate what they think the public wants—when all the public wants is to be entertained.

The fatal weakness of the conference system is that no six people ever agree on anything but mediocrity; and mediocrity is exactly what is wrong with most of the pictures today—and largely the reason why there has been a falling off of $43,000,000 in receipts the past year.

It is true that the production of a picture is a much more complex problem than the getting-out of a

Most Directors
are mere mechanics, well-grounded in the technique of making motion pictures, possibly, but utterly lacking in creative ability, or ability to transfer to celluloid the real “soul” of a story. Mr. Doty, who, aside from serving for many years as editor of Century and Cosmopolitan magazines, also has been connected with the scenario staffs of several studios, offers in the accompanying article some views upon this subject well worth thoughtful consideration.

IT is significant that women are more and more displacing men in the field. Why? Because the really creative directors are inclined themselves to plot the stories they have accepted and then trust to the woman’s keenener insight for illuminating detail to round out the continuity. This suggests that pictures more and more are to be built by writing directors—and indeed it is the only solution for the future. I do not mean to indicate that these men will themselves originate the story, but that they shall themselves be capable of molding the material into effective picture form in close collaboration with the continuity writer. If the director is not himself a creative artist, how in the name of Art can you expect him to perpetuate the dramatic and story value of the script offered? A bare half dozen such directors have already arrived, but where are the others to come from?

(Continued on page 33)
Why Is a Laugh?
Humor in the Photoplay Depends Upon Spontaneity

By Edith Kennedy

Humor, that elusive element! How often the poor script writer sweating blood trying to inject it into the script, and how often it happens that the harder he works to pump it in, the less there seems to be for the spectator to get out. How often it happens that his pet joke, his "sure fire hit" falls flat, and for no really good reason. It's a cruel world and sometimes it seems hardly worth while going on.

Of course he knew he himself hadn't laughed when he had put it in—he had been in no mood for laughing—but he had the thing analyzed to the quick, knew all the technique and all the tricks of the trade, and he knew he had a right to expect a laugh, and when it didn't come he wanted to grab the audience by the throat and shout "Laugh, darn you! Can't you see that's funny?"

And no amount of discussion or argument ever will give a perfectly satisfactory answer to the problem.

Humor is such a subtle, ephemeral thing—here today and gone tomorrow! No, gone sometimes in an instant, at a breath, an unwise title, even an ill-chosen word in a title—Pff! the thing is no longer funny.

The constant re-reading of a title in the projection room will gradually wring the juice out of it. The writer himself begins to wonder how he could ever have thought it funny. There is a source of danger. Remember, the audience reads it but once.

Sometimes, through an exaggerated title, or a slightly over-acted scene, the audience suddenly gets a glimpse of the wheels going round, and once they are on to the fact that you are trying to be humorous; that at this point you have decided a comedy element should be introduced, and that you are working for a laugh,—its all over. The zip and zest are gone.

It's not a new thought that the humor must grow out of the situation—be spontaneous. Every good script writer understands that thoroughly. Yet even building carefully on this foundation, success doesn't always follow. Hard to get at the reason. Perhaps the reason is never the same twice.

Why did that "pet joke" of yours "fall flat" when incorporated into your latest photoplay? What is really humorous—and what isn't? By reading Miss Kennedy's article on this important subject, you may glean therefrom the answers to the foregoing, and other questions that may have been bothering you. Nobody in filmland, by the way, is better qualified to write upon the topic of humor than is Edith Kennedy, who has a large number of successful farces and comedy-dramas to her credit.

There are so many flaws and so many good points in every picture, and each picture is the work of so many "artists" that it is very difficult to dissect a production and tell just why an audience went out satisfied or disappointed, as the case may be.

When they fail to laugh at a bit of humor, we do not always know whether it is because the stuff that has gone before has plunged them into irretrievable gloom, or whether the business itself missed fire, or whether the humor was of the sort that drew only a quiet inward chuckle rather than the big loud laugh.

Moreover, these inward chuckles, these unseen signs of quiet appreciation, are not to be despised, even in farce comedies. Often the most financially successful, long-lived pictures are those which called forth only the continuous little grin, the almost imperceptible nod, indicating satisfaction, realization that a responsive chord has been touched; that in fact, you have hit the nail on the head.

In writing farce, you've got to keep your tongue in your cheek, and a little wink in the corner of your eye all the time, or you'll miss a lot of chances for fun. You've got to convey to your audience the underlying thought that, after all, life is a jolly thing; that even our troubles are not as bitter and sombre and lasting as they seem, but, if only we can see them so, often food for laughter, frequently only a phase soon outgrown, outlived or out-laughed.

And don't be discouraged when, after passing in a script that you feel is good, and the manager likes, the editor praises and the director approves—in the course of working it over and polishing it up, enthusiasm begins to wane; the fun seems to go out of the scenes, the point from the subtitles. This frequently continues until not only everyone in the studio but you yourself seize on anything new as better than what you already had.

Far be it from me to say that the first script is always the best. Most scripts can stand a good deal of working over; but when it comes to the comedy portions, don't forget that half the secret of humor is the element of surprise, of freshness, of spontaneity, and that the funniest joke on earth isn't funny after you have re-read it dozens of times apart from the script, viewed it (Continued on page 37)
Silent Workers of the Films
Trained Laboratory Experts, of Whom the Public Rarely Hears, Vital Factors in Perfecting Motion Pictures

By G. Harrison Wiley

Romance is not dead!

There is nothing original in that statement, I will admit. I read it in a magazine story, and you yourself have probably seen it in print many times.

Usually it is followed by a wordy introduction to "Grisette, the elevator girl," or some other purely fictional character, and at once you are immersed in the story of how, while returning home from work on the perfectly proper and supposedly unromantic subway, from a dull and tiring day's work, she is mistaken for the fleeing "heiress," abducted, held captive by the hirelings of the villain and finally "rescued" by the handsome hero.

This, I assure you is not fiction. It is written with the hope that it will be published in the very sincere and entirely truthful pages of Photodramatist. Moreover, I am not possessed of that kind of an inventive mind. And yet I repeat, "Romance is not dead!"

What is romance? Is it not a story of struggle against odds for a prize that seems priceless—that ends in attainment of happiness by the character who has aroused your interest or sympathy? It is quite probable that to make the romance complete, it must have a setting novel and strange to you, a place you have dreamed of, perhaps, but never seen.

So, if the setting of the Romance I am going to tell you about is not strange, if you have been there or worked there or know just how everything is done, you may just as well turn over a few pages to Gossip Street, for the chances are that you will never believe there is Romance in the making of a motion picture.

But there is! Everywhere, throughout the whole history of the cinema, there is Romance galore. From the romance in the story of the man whose achievements seemed complete with the showing of the first flickering filmlets before startled yet skeptical eyes, to the story of a penniless furrier who has come to be a captain of industry through the production and exhibition of photoplays. A Romance of achievement, of success in the face of almost overwhelming difficulties.

A group of inspired and prolific publicity men are keeping constantly before your eyes, romantic stories of the directors and stars; doll-faced little girls who have stepped from a convent garden into the glare of the Kleiglights, of chauffeurs and real estate salesmen who have found fame with a megaphone and leather puttees.

These stories are undoubtedly interesting because of their spectacular nature and appeal to you particularly, perhaps because you may have been a convent girl or a real estate salesman. But there is a great deal of quiet romance connected with the making of a photoplay of which you very rarely hear, a world peopled with laborers and geniuses, founded on the Arts and Sciences and equipped with inventions of marvelous efficiency. This is the world engaged in fashioning the strip of celluloid that bears to the screen the dreams of the author, the vision of the director and the moods of the actors.
If you have not been actively engaged in the production of motion pictures and more or less directly connected with the studio, you most likely have an indefinite impression that some sort of photographic process is necessary before the film can be placed on the shelves of the exchange ready for exhibition. It may then startle you to know that almost half of the work of producing a cinema play lies between the camera and the screen.

In such a bald, apparently statistical statement there seems to be little evidence of Romance. Believe me, though, there is. The Romance of the camera and the laboratory man! Here are two men on whom rests a major share of the responsibility for the success of any cinema offering.

So closely are the camera and the laboratory departments related, that it is difficult to disassociate them. As a matter of fact, in many of the small studios the departments are under one head. Modern business methods demand, however, a specialist in each line; and in an effort to reduce the overhead expense of maintaining a laboratory for a limited amount of work, favor the centralization of laboratory equipment and facilities, preferring to send the exposed film to an outside laboratory for developing, at a fixed footage charge.

The Standard Film Laboratories in Hollywood, for example, is an outgrowth of this demand. In the form of a modern, completely equipped and efficient laboratory, it represents the "happy ending" of the romance of two men, the culmination of years of endeavor for the achievement of an ideal. That ideal was and is: that the shadow picture which reaches you across the screen, should be an accurate and perfect representation of the picture in the writer's and in the director's minds. The two men are Mr. S. M. Tompkins and Mr. John M. Nickolaus. The new modern plant of the Standard Film Laboratories is perhaps the best testimony of the deep study and wide experience in the motion picture industry of these two men, of their actual knowledge of the conditions desirable and necessary for the proper handling of the motion picture film.

May I have the pleasure of letting Mr. Nickolaus speak for himself:

"Way back in the period when movies were yet a novelty thrown on an improvised screen in a vacant store or somebody's barn, the developing and printing of the film was largely a matter of guess-work and luck. That one object might be distinguished from another on the screen and that they moved was cause for congratulation to the camera man.

"I had been a photographer for some years previous to this time, so that it was natural this new toy should attract me. So, I entered the "movies" as a camera man. This was, I will remind you, before any individual or firm had engaged extensively in the manufacture of equipment designed especially for the making of motion pictures. It was therefore, largely up to the camera man to design and actually construct his own equipment as occasion demanded; his camera, means for developing and printing the film, or whatever else he might find necessary or useful, he had to devise from odds and ends at hand."
"IT was not long until I began to realize what the future held for the cinema, and with the realization I was convinced that a haphazard manner of preparing films for exhibition could not continue. I determined then and there to specialize in the laboratory phase of production.

"The producers were also beginning to see the necessity for better laboratory methods and equipment. The mechanical facilities available were yet limited, and some of the machinery used had to be assembled "on the lot." A laboratory capable of handling ten thousand feet of film a week was in those days a rarity.

"Today, the cinema, grown from a toy, has assumed a stellar place among the industries of the world. Every person connected with the industry claims for his own line the major share of responsibility for this growth. But to say that any one element exceeds another in importance is obviously unfair, and in addition would be the basis of a rather heated controversy. Let me ask you, though, would you go to a cinema theatre, no matter how great the story, how popular the star or how accomplished the director, if the photography was poor? If the characters moved across the screen in a haze of rain-like streaks, or if they jerked from place to place in the manner of a mechanical doll; if in the midst of an exceptionally tense emotional scene the face of the heroine were to be obscured by a smudgy shadow? You would not!

"SCIENCE and invention have happily kept pace with the allied Arts of the cinema. The modern camera is a marvelous piece of mechanism, and the projection machine of today stands no less efficient and complete. But it is the film, finally, that makes possible the projection of shadow pictures on the screen, and between the camera and the projection machine, the film must be handled by machinery marvelous, complete and efficient.

"It may be well to explain, simply, for the benefit of some of the readers who are not students of chemistry or science, how the camera, the laboratory and the projection machine function. The photographic process is based on the fact that certain silver salts, or compounds, when exposed to light, undergo a chemical change of structure, and will, when so exposed be acted upon by certain chemicals to form an entirely different compound.

"A FILM consists of a strip of celluloid with a coating or emulsion of the first silver salt. If portions of this coating are exposed and others not exposed, or exposed to a lesser extent, and the whole film is immersed in a developing solution, these portions will be acted upon or oxidized by the chemicals in the solution in direct proportion to the extent of the exposure. The oxidized salt becomes an opaque black substance which is insoluble by either the developing solution or a second chemical solution called the fixing bath. The unoxidized, or unexposed areas are, however, soluble in this bath and are washed away.

"So is formed a negative film, on which the objects which have been light, that is, which have re-
reflected a relatively great amount of light through a camera lens onto the film, are impressed as areas of this opaque black silver salt, while those objects that were black to the eye, or which reflected a relatively small amount of light are represented by areas of uncoated and transparent celluloid.

"In printing, or the preparation of a positive film, (the film which is used for projection or exhibition) much the same process is followed, except that in this case, instead of being reflected from an object through a camera lens, the light is projected through the negative directly on to the emulsion of the second film. The black, opaque portions of the negative serve to bar the light, the transparent allow it to pass freely and act upon the silver salts. Developed, the areas that were dark on the negative are light on the positive, and we return to the same relation of light and dark that was had in the objects photographed.

"Placed in a projection machine, a very strong light is thrown upon the film, and passing through the transparent portions, lights up certain areas on the screen, while the dark objects are represented by the shadows of the darkened places on the film.

"The primary function of the lens in the camera is to reduce the size of the reflected rays of light so that they may be all impressed on a film small enough to be handled conveniently. The standard size of a single motion picture film or "frame" is 3/4 x 1 inches. No matter how large the view or objects photographed, they are all represented on this tiny rectangle of celluloid. Do you realize how microscopic then, the hand of the fair Dotty Dimple, resting on the hero's broad back as they glide through the ball room, will be when the entire ball room and several hundred couples are registered in slightly less than one square inch?

"It is now up to the projection machine to get the picture back to a size that the audience can easily see. The lense of the projecting machine, therefore, reverses the work performed by the camera lense and enlarges the rays of light passed through the film forty, fifty thousand or more times. Any flaw, spot, streak or imperfection present on the film, if only as large as a grain of dust, may therefore become as large or larger than Dotty Dimple's hand or head on the picture screen.

"In the handling of the film, cleanliness, therefore, becomes absolutely essential. Even the air in the rooms in which the films are developed, must be dustless. Our plant, which represents an investment of more than $300,000, was designed with the idea of making conditions and equipment as nearly perfect as possible for a careful and accurate processing of exposed film.

"Every cubic foot of air throughout the plant is washed and purified until it is clean as air can be. Its temperature is raised or lowered to the point found by experience and scientific research to meet the requirement of the mechanical or chemical process carried on in the room into which it will be forced. Its humidity is also regulated, that it may not be too dry or too moist. Approximately 35,000 cubic feet of air is so treated every minute, and so great is the volume of air forced by gigantic turbine into each room, that if all the windows in the room were to be opened while a high wind was blowing outside, not one speck of dust could force its way through the strong draught outward. Every device that makes for cleanliness and the maintenance of constant, calculated factors in the processes of photography has been installed.

"Of course, the human factor enters largely into the development of motion picture film as in its exposure. In the dark room, where the film, wound on to large wooden racks is immersed in the developing solution, the man in charge has a man-sized responsibility, for he must determine as accurately as possible the correct time of immersion. He has for this determination a short length of film for a test. This, he develops with varying periods of immersion, and varying strengths of solution. Absolute accuracy of development is necessary for the negative film, for it may be easily ruined, entailing heavy expense for the producer. It might mean that the entire scene, perhaps the result of a whole day's work with an elaborate set and a crowd of several thousand persons, would have to be retaken.

"Not only must he avoid mistakes that will mean the ruining of the film, but further than this he must often correct faults that occurred in the shooting, or exposure, such as imperfect lighting, color schemes whose values in mono-tone (the relation of color to the black and white of the film) defy calculation. All this in a room almost pitch dark.

"After the immersion in the developing solution, the film once more undergoes a chemical bath to make permanent the chemical properties of the coating that remains.

"It is then washed in water absolutely clean and pure and goes to the drying room, where it is wound on huge slat drums which revolve rapidly and have circulating through and around them great volumes of purified air. In the drying room in particular the humidity and temperature of the air must be closely regulated. Too rapid drying is apt to result in the warping or buckling of the film, or the splitting of the silver coating from the celluloid.

"One print is made of every single foot of film exposed by the camera, and it is from this print that the story is assembled. This print is usually made the same day that the scene is made, or at night after the shooting is finished, and is called the "rush." The director and others immediately interested, view these "rushes" daily. In this way, any mistake or any flaw in the action or photography is discovered at once and the scene may be retaken before the set is destroyed, or if the company is on location, before they return.

"From the positive film selected, the negative is assembled very accurately, so that in each scene every "frame" of negative corresponds with a certain "frame" of positive, and a master negative is secured. This negative is then passed through the printing machine and as many prints made as desired for the exchanges scattered throughout the country. In the work of assembling the negative so that it will match this master positive, the cutters use complete projection machines which are arranged to throw an image on a small screen a few feet in front of them. These machines are also used for a laboratory inspection of the "rushes," every foot being projected and viewed before it leaves the laboratory."
Training the Literary ‘Genius’

By Hazel W. Spencer

I

t is a cherished theory among men of letters that poets, not merely, but all members of the literary fraternity are born, not made. To suppose for a moment that a man or a woman not specifically endowed with the gift of literary expression could acquire it through training savors to them of heresy. They like to believe, as all aristocracies have liked to believe since the world began, that specialized intelligence is the privilege of the few, and if they do not actually frown upon the layman aspiring for literary honors they use every means in their power to discourage him.

Now the Giver of all good gifts who sends His rains alike upon the just and upon the unjust, is not affected by the opinions of classes or coteries and bestows His favors with infinite disregard for aristocratic edict. The only condition accompanying His genrosities seems to be that they shall require hard work in their development.

In other words, genius, as we have heard before, is neither more nor less than a capacity for taking pains and whatever we desire to do we can do it if we will work hard enough. This does not mean that every hod-carrier who rolls up his sleeves and prepares to sweat (now "sweat" is a good English word and entirely befitting a hod-carrier) over grammar and dictionary is bound to turn into a Dickens or a Tarkington, but it does mean that if he wishes to do so he may become a writer of salable and worth while stories. If he puts the same energy into literature which he has hitherto put into the carrying of mortar, his success in the new field will be entirely in proportion to his success in the old.

By the same token, if he is as lazy as hod-carriers have the reputation of being, he will not succeed anywhere.

Success in the field of literature, whether it be the literature of the novel or the drama, the essay, the short-story, or the poem comes to the man or woman who is willing to master detail. The fine points of sentence structure, of punctuation; the literal niceties of grammar; the right word in the right place; all these are of first importance and cannot be neglected. It is a mistake to believe that such things come naturally or intuitively to some people and not to others; they are matters each one of us must discover for himself by dint of patient study. The joy is that they may be so discovered.

We have already spoken of the first of punctuation, sentence structure and the use of pronouns; before going on to the wider subject of fitness let us call attention to the much abused future forms of the verb, to be, namely, will and shall.

There are very concise and definite rules for the use of these forms but in spite of all sign-posts to the contrary many of us persist in taking the wrong road every time we come to them. After all, cold, positive statements in a textbook frequently convey less in the way of tangible information than illustrations taken from personal experience. I am therefore taking the liberty of calling your attention to a letter written to me by the head of the English department of Stanford University when I was still a youngster in the grammar school.

This gentleman, later my major professor, was my father's close personal friend and my own and to him I had long been in the habit of confiding my youthful enthusiasms and difficulties. In one of my letters, written at the age of fourteen, occurred the following sentence, "I will be fifteen on my next birthday."

With characteristic promptitude and helpfulness the professor made answer: "Do you not know that not by taking thought can we add one cubit to our stature? Your being fifteen, or sixteen, or any other age, is not a matter of your will but of circumstances over which you have no control whatever. You should therefore have said not 'I will be fifteen' but 'I shall be fifteen'. It will help you, I think, to remember the sentence I learned in my boyhood concerning the youth who was drowning and declared: 'I will drown and nobody shall help me.' If he were bent upon suicide, well and good, but if not he should have said, 'I shall
drown and nobody will help me.’"

Now we come to the more general and rather more interesting subject which I have already mentioned, namely, fitness. By this I mean fitness of subject matter, the “Thou shalt” and “Thou shalt not” of literary good taste.

Oddly enough, it is just here that the novitiate seems prone to stumble. Hamlet’s cry: “Tis an unweeded garden and grows to seed! Things rank and gross in nature possess it merely” is all too applicable to the output of a large number of our young writers.

They seem to think that holding the mirror up to nature means wallowing in the mire; that freshness and novelty are only to be attained by defiling themselves with pitch. Yet nothing is farther from the truth. The good, the true and the beautiful are still, and always will be the material from which great literature is built. Tragedy, mean- ness, filth may cloud the background of the picture, but neither art nor life will tolerate their holding central place.

This is why good taste is so essential. Without it the man or woman seeking literary distinction is like a ship without a rudder; in an open sea, and with favoring breezes it may go safely for awhile but sooner or later shipwreck is inevitable.

Good taste is unfortunately not intuitive with most of us, but it may be cultivated. Indeed it presupposes and precisely demands education and training. Not necessarily education and training in an accredited institution but certainly along very definite and positive lines. Once in our possession it is an almost infallible guide to what is finest in literature, art, manners, and may be trusted to keep us from making serious mistakes even if it does not line our paths with conquest.

Good taste cannot be developed by morbid and continual perusal of the sensational daily press, and the student who looks to murder trials and lurid tales of hold-ups and kidnapping for his material will offend a much larger audience than that composed of our motion-picture censors. True, he may appeal to a limited class, but fortunately for the future of our magazines and playhouses it is a class we do not need to take into account.

Good taste permits the inclusion in our stories and photoplays of everything delightful, uplifting, richly humorous or pathetic, but it does not permit vulgarity, horror, or unrelieved tragedy.

**IN and OUT of the DICTIONARY**

A column of authoritative solutions to problems concerning the use of English, submitted by readers of Photodramatist.

"R. W. S., California." Can you give me the rules governing the use of the past participle of "get?"

**Answer: We suppose you mean whether one uses "got" or "gotten." It appears to be largely a matter of taste. Webster gives the preference unreservedly to "got" and pronounces "gotten" obsolete. (The latter, by the way, does not mean that a word is obsolete but that it is becoming so.) Late dictionaries give "gotten" first place but allow "gotten" as second choice. "Gotten" seems to be an Americanism. In England laugh at us for using it and themselves prefer the sturdy and uncompromising "got."

"M. K., Portland." Are "which" and "that" interchangeable?

**Answer: Not always. "That" has a much wider latitude than "which." The rules for their use are very clearly stated in all good dictionaries and grammars, but the master of style is guided in his choice by something it is very difficult to define. The distinction will become clear to you through practice.

"E. J. T., San Francisco." Are the so-called split infinitives ever permissible?

**Answer: Their use is not sanctioned by the best authorities.

"E. B., Ravenswood." There seems to be a question about the preposition following the word "different."

*Will you please explain?"

**Answer: Scholars prefer the use of the preposition "from." You differ from, not to. The act of differing implies separation; a going away from; a turning from the opinion with which you do not agree. Emphatically, you do not differ than. Than is not a preposition at all but a conjunction and follows the comparative degree of adjectives or adverbs.

"L. H., Texas." Do you say, "a number are" or "a number is?"

**Answer: "Number are" are very clear on this subject. "Number" seems to imply the plural, regardless of the article preceding it.

"O. L. S., Minnesota." Does "none" take the singular or the plural? And how about "everybody?"

**Answer: If you will separate these words into their component parts, no-one, and everybody, I think you will have no difficulty.

If you are inclined to question this statement I refer you to the plays and stories which have won the admiration of the world. If any of these seem to you to have been an exception to the general laws of good taste, to have achieved success in spite of rather than because of the canons herein set forth, you may be sure that somewhere in its author’s career he has written a truly beautiful and noble thing which the public is still remembering and judging him by.

The public as a whole is essentially clean-minded and optimistic and your big appeal will always be made through beauty and wholesome entertainment. It is as important for you to remember this as it is for you to know how to spell.

There is another question to be considered in our choice of subject-matter, and that is, is it something with which we ourselves are thoroughly familiar? However absurd it may seem to suppose that a man would attempt to delineate character of a type which he has never met, or to describe localities he has never seen, this is exactly what the raw recruit in literary ranks is apparently helpless to avoid.

Now I do not mean that in order to write accurately and entertainingly about China or the African desert, or about beggars and potentates, one is obliged to be a resident of the former or hand-in-glove with the latter. Not at all. But what one has not discovered from personal experience one must have learned very carefully from books. I know a woman who writes capital stories of adventure merely from listening to the detailed accounts of her husband’s explorations. She herself is unable to accompany him, but he gives her an accurate report of all that he has seen and she turns it into a delightful story.

If you have a leaning toward courts and kings and intrigues but have been inconsequently left by fate to work out your salvation upon a Missouri farm you need not then despair of giving your story or photoplay the proper romantic setting. In nine cases out of ten you will find it right there in Missouri, but if you don’t then set yourself to master the history and management of the courts that fascinate you;
Recognition for Writers

TRULY significant events in the advancement of any art are generally disregarded by contemporary critics. Indeed, it is axiomatic that artists are seldom recognized until after their death; and that those who have contributed most toward the betterment of existing conditions in any profession have been ignored.

Photodramatist believes this to be an evil that should be eradicated. Artists should be recognized and rewarded while alive and able to enjoy the fruits of their labors. And sincere patrons of the arts should be accorded full credit for their efforts in behalf of aspirants for artistic honors.

For this reason, the recent announcement by the Palmer Photoplay Corporation—pioneer institution in the instruction and advancement of photoplay writers—that it has entered the field of film production appears worthy of especial mention. Ordinarily, the entrance of a new company into the film world would merit little attention; for the large majority of such concerns have been organized and promoted purely for financial gain, and their attitude toward the writer has been anything but encouraging. The Palmer Corporation, however, with a background of real service to writers, brings to the picture producing world new ideals, new principles, and new hopes for those who seek to place the Eighth Art upon a higher level than it has heretofore occupied.

Devoted as it is to the cause of the writer, Photodramatist hails with enthusiasm the plan of this new producing organization to give especial recognition and financial reward to those who evolve the stories upon which their productions will be founded. Directors, stars, magnates and others have been entirely too much in the foreground; and the authors—whose creative minds have been responsible for nine-tenths of the big successes—have been kept far too long in obscurity.

The recent Palmer announcement allows for no doubt as to the sincerity of that organization—especially as pertains to the writer. "We will produce nothing but original photoplays, written directly for the screen," state the sponsors of the new plan; "and for these photoplays we will pay a cash price of $1,000, plus a royalty on all profits the finished production may show."

Nothing could be more fair to the writer. The vicious plan of purchasing outright, for a comparatively small sum, a play upon which the producers may realize profits running into the hundreds of thousands of dollars—and for which the author is lucky to receive even ordinary screen credit—is thus done away with. Under the Palmer plan, the creator of the story will share, with those who finance the production, all the profits his photoplay may accumulate; and, in addition, will be given the artistic recognition to which he is entitled.

The importance of this new method of production to the world at large can hardly be over-estimated. The public, of course, will heartily welcome it; for the people—as evidenced by a falling off of $43,000,000 in attendance receipts during the past year—are weary of adaptations of books and plays and of machine-made, staff-written pictures. They want real stories—stories with soul, with theme, reflecting life itself—and undoubtedly, by offering adequate reward to the writers, the Palmer Corporation will be able to secure, and to give to the public, the type of films that it desires.

Nothing, we believe, will do more to advance the Eighth Art. Automatically, it lifts the screen author from the obscure position into which he has been forced by the present unjust system and brings him before the world as the true genius of the silent drama.

After all, whether it be on the speaking stage or the silver screen, "the play's the thing," and it is only fitting that the one in whose brain the play originates should share in all profits, tangible and intangible, accruing therefrom.

Gratitude

ONE of the most popular songs during the recent World War was a stirring ballad entitled, "Don't Bite the Hand That's Feeding You." As a musical composition little can be said for it; but in times of stress, the sentiment, not the technique, of a song or other work of art, is what finds echo in the hearts of the people. And the ballad in question sold by the millions of copies. The reason was that it had for its theme a vital factor in national life—loyalty.

Probably no other trait of human character has such universal indorsement. There are countries and races today in which disloyalty—or ingratitude—is ranked as a crime greater than homicide. The Arabs and Chinese, for instance, kill without compunction anyone who has "broken bread" with, or received favors at the hand of, a fellow man and afterward has done anything whatsoever to injure him.

All of which is explanatory of the reason why the editor of Photodramatist holds in utter contempt those members of the literary world, who, having fraternized with the members of the film colony—having received remuneration running into huge figures for work rendered the men who are trying to advance the Eighth Art—accept further financial emolument from enemies of motion pictures for attacking them.
We can understand the mental processes of one who, rebuffed at every point of entry to the picture world, returns to his native habitat and bitterly assails those who, he thinks, have no appreciation of talent. (And, incidentally, we hold no brief for the ability of many of the producers to recognize genius.) But the writer who has been welcomed into the ranks of film workers—who has been paid well for such labor as he may have rendered—is indeed a traitor and an ingrate, should he, upon leaving, accept further pay from other sources to “expose” (as some like to call it) the ones who have extended to him the hand of fellowship—especially when said hand has held, at stated intervals, a substantial pay check.

An excellent example of such ingratitude is to be found in a recent issue of a widely circulated “fan” magazine, in which the writer—formerly the high salaried editor of a nationally known writers’ publication—goes to some lengths to tell the public that the study of scenario writing does not pay, that only those who have “arrived” can succeed, and that producers frown upon original scenarios written by students of the screen. He does not explain, of course, how one may “arrive” without “starting.” Neither does he tell exactly how he became an “authority.” Presumably this former editor mistook the family announcement, “A son, weight—pounds, arrived on Wednesday, the fifteenth,” for public notice of his “arrival” as a writer and an authority upon all things pertaining to motion pictures. It is beyond belief, after reading his article, that he was ever a tyro or was forced to study the rudiments of the art of which he now claims to be a master and which, he now states, no one can learn.

The concensus of opinion, however, judging from the many letters received by Photodramatist since the appearance of the article in question, seems to be that this young “authority” is suffering from a severe case of pique—having failed to survive the rigid tests of the Eighth Art—and is now determined, while he is spending the money gained from the films, to add to his financial capital by “turning upon” his erstwhile friends and employers.

What’s in a Name?

THE New York Society for the Suppression of Vice!

Very euphonious, yet very enigmatic! Nevertheless, by slightly stretching our imaginations, we come to surmise that it is one of many cynical, censorial bodies—with duties as vague as their names. We wonder (our imaginations will not reach this far) just what they mean by, “suppress” and “vice.” In the Dark Ages “suppress” meant anything from a cat-o-nine-tails to the guillotine; and even in our Puritan days “vice” might have meant speaking above a whisper on Sunday and “suppress,” burning at the stake.

Upon closer investigation, however, we find that this organization, among other things, passes upon the merits and demerits of literature. Let us—in this case the imagination need not be very flexible—contemplate what these people would have done with some of the world’s greatest classics, had they not, fortunately, been published before the age of “vice suppressors.” The Bible, for instance, with its utter frankness on vital matters of human existence, certainly would not have met with approval. Homer’s “Iliad and Odyssey” would not have won a favorable “aye.” The “Arabian Nights” undoubtedly would have been banned after the first “night.” The plays of Aeschylus, Euripides, Shakespeare? Shakespeare would have been condemned upon first appearance of “Midsummer Night’s Dream”—or most any other of his famous plays. The novels of Fielding and Smollett, “Don Quixote,” “Gulliver’s Travels,” Scott’s “Ivanhoe”? The idea of such lawlessness and animalism as is portrayed in “Ivanhoe!” How encouraging to crime, those long-bladed swords! “The Pickwick Papers” would have been instantly “queered” on account of the bedroom incident at Ipswich. It is even possible that they might have censored “Adam Bede,” “The Scarlet Letter,” “Huckleberry Finn” and Washington Irving’s “History of New York.”

At any rate, there is little cause for worry. We still would have “Pollyanna,” “Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm” and Grimm’s Fairy Tales—although we are somewhat doubtful regarding the latter.

New Headquarters

PHOTODRAMATIST has always endeavored to give to its readers a thorough survey of studio activities. Recently we inaugurated a special department, “With the Producers,” for this purpose, realizing that this information is eagerly sought by those who live far from production centers. In this new department it was our intention not only to contribute information concerning motion picture production in general, but also to furnish accurate news pertaining to those in the writing profession.

Owing to the distance of our former editorial offices from the studio “lots,” it has not always been the easiest matter to obtain last-minute news before sending the magazine to press. However, since enlarging Photodramatist, the circulation has so greatly increased, that we have found it necessary to seek more spacious editorial headquarters, and accordingly have recognized the propriety of locating nearer to the heart of production.

Thus we find ourselves established at 6411 Hollywood Boulevard, Hollywood, within stone’s throw of the largest motion picture studios in the world, and in daily contact with producers, directors, scenarists, and all those who are actively engaged in the making of motion pictures. This proximity to the “movie melting-pot” we especially appreciate, because it enables us to meet the biggest persons of the industry; to rub elbows with them; to lunch and chat with them, and to receive their ideas as to the wants and demands of the producers. This knowledge we wish to transmit to you. And when you read “With the Producers,” “Gossip Street,” or any other of our departments, you will know that you are not reading stale press notices nor mere street gossip, but first-hand information from the center of motion picture production.
THE wave of activity reported in the last two issues of the Photodramatist seems to have quieted down somewhat but it is a normal hull this time. The fact is that a great percentage of productions are now being edited and titled, and it will be only a short interval before the cameras start grinding again all over Los Angeles and Hollywood. After the terrific slump, in which the film industry found itself, it will naturally take some time before production can be so co-ordinated that it will be more steadily continuous instead of "wavy."

At United Studios

THE production units whose pictures are released through Associated First National, are largely in a state described above. Guy Bates Post has just finished his work on "Omar the Tentmaker" for Richard Walton Tully. The producer and the director, James Young, are busily engaged on the cutting of this film of which much is expected. Norma Talmadge's "The Voice from the Minaret" is all completed; Director Frank Lloyd is cutting the picture and will be assisted by Frances Marion in its titling. "East is West," Constance Talmadge's picturization of the stage success, is all ready for release and is, in fact, en route to New York at this writing, in the personal custody of Producer Joseph M. Schenck. Scandal Note—Mrs Margaret Talmadge and her two talented daughters are accompanying Mr. Schenck; the quarrel will visit Europe. (Norma Talmadge, in private life is Mrs Scheck.)

New Neilan Picture

MARSHALL NEILAN is finishing cutting "Minnie" and is starting actual production on "The Stranger's Banquet" by Donn Byrne with an all star cast. Katherine MacDonald is making "The Lonely Road," under the direction of Victor Shertzinger with a supporting cast including Kathleen Kirkham, Orville Caldwell, and Eugenie Besserer. Mack Sennett continues his activities to make the world brighter. Director F. Richard Jones is filming "The Shriek," a burlesque on the exotic screen success, with Ben Turpin in the title role. Kathryn McGuire has returned for this one comedy after a year of dramatic roles.

Quiet at Goldwyn's

At the Goldwyn Studios Maurice Tourneur is busy cutting "The Christian" and Allen Holubar is finishing his detail work on "Broken Chains," in which Colleen Moore is featured.

Lasky Units Busy

At th Lasky Studios things are humming right merrily. Director Charles Maigne has returned from Wyoming with Mary Miles Minter and Tom Moore, the featured players of "The Cowboy and the Lady" by Clyde Fitch. George Melford has also returned to the studio from his location on "Ebb Tide." In fact, locations seem to be "the thing" in Paramount Pictures just now. Thomas Meighan and his director, Alfred Green have been away filming "The Man Who Saw Tomorrow" by Perley Poore Sheehan and Frank Condon; the supporting company is headed by Leatrice Joy. Rodolph Valentino has finished "The Young Rajah," under the direction of Phillip Rosen, and has just commenced "The Spanish Cavalier," adapted by June Mathis from "Don Caesar de Bazan." Allan Dwan will direct, and Nita Naldi will play the female lead. George Fitzmaurice is directing "Kick In." with Betty Compson, Bert Lytell, May McAvoy, George Hughes and Bobby Agnew—a fine cast. Penrhyn Stanlaws is inserting his customary artistic touches in "Singed Wings," featuring Bebe Daniels and Conrad Nagel, and written by Katherine Newlin Durt. Other new productions of which nothing has yet been decided except the date of their commencement, include Wallace Reid in "Thirty Days," under James Cruze's direction, Agnes Ayers in "A Daughter of Luxury," with Paul Powell directing, and Gloria Swanson in "His American Wife," a Sam Wood production. Much is also expected of "Notoriety," William DeMille's next picture from an original story by Clara Beranger, in which the featured players will be Bebe Daniels and Lewis Stone, the latest recruit to the Paramount Stock Company.

At Metro, Laurette Taylor is still casting about for her lead in "Peg O' My Heart," which King Vidor will direct from the script by May O'Hara. Viola Dana is commencing on "Miss Emmy Lou," an original by Bernard McConville with Harry Beaumont directing again. Irving Willat will film "All the Brothers Are Willing," by Ben Ames Williams, for which Julian Josephson has prepared the scenario in which Billy Dove will play the lead.

"R-C" Speeds Up

ROBERTSON-COLE is now making more pictures in a month than it used to make in six. Ray Carroll, who has written many successful scenarios, now bears the proud title of the only girl producer in filmland. Her star is Helen Jerome Eddy and her first picture is "Love's Coming of Age," which William Seiter is directing, and in which Harrison Ford plays the male lead. Jane Novak will shortly complete "Thelma" by Marie Correlli, for Chester Bennett. Her supporting cast includes Vernon Steele, June Elvidge, Phillipe de Lacy, Peaches Jackson, and Barbara Teman, who returned to the

(Continued on page 90)
"When fairly educated or traveled people go to see the productions vauntingly advertised, they are amazed and disgusted with the gross ignorance shown by the directors and the principals," says Bessie Agnes Dwyer in a recent issue of the Los Angeles Times.

"For instance: In "The Call of the North," no less a person than Jack Holt appears as lacking in either ordinary information or ordinary sense. Everyone knows that when the Hudson Bay Company and its rivals, operated in the frozen North, that Durham tobacco had not been manufactured. The trappers and factors smoked and chewed plug—when they could get it. But this young lady: very much infatuated with a Gillette shave, a jersey and tight breeches—in which he would have promptly frozen to death or been frost-bitten, in the regions portrayed, sits casually on tables and fallen trees and rolls his own from a Durham tobacco bag.

"The young lady in the case, flits about in the icy moonlight, in a costume calculated to give her a congestion of both lungs inside of twenty minutes. The rifles used are Martinis. The latest type of self-cocking pistols are freely displayed. The whole thing is ridiculous, impossible and a perfect travesty on fact—and easily ascertainable facts."

I did not see "The Call of the North." But, I spent several months up in the Northland last year and the Hudson Bay Company was doing considerable business at that time, and I met plenty of Durham tobacco. I do not know whether "The Call of the North" is a story of the present day, but I do know that American army officers wore the regulation uniform in Siberia. Miss Dwyer puts the blame on the director, but I am inclined to place it on the shoulders of the author, or the continuity writer. Undoubtedly the director followed the details in the script, and the errors pointed out are due to the author's unfamiliarity with the country treated in the story. I believe this is an excellent lesson for the screen writer. It is dangerous to write about anything with which we are not familiar. If I were a producer, I would be careful about accepting stories written by unknown authors, unless I received some assurance that the writer knew his subject. I think the safest plan is to put a note on the first page of the manuscript stating: "The author will vouch for the accuracy of the details in the story as he is absolutely familiar with his subject, the country and the customs of the people described in the plot."

Producers are not able to get anything these days without paying for it. Of course, there has been in the past, when the industry was in a more delirious state—a state which accompanies youth—a little thieving by some of them. But, representative producers have found that it is much cheaper to buy ideas than it is to steal them. There are times when some of us are led to believe that portions of our stories have been taken without the usual negotiations which precede a purchase. Some of us have written stories and submitted them to certain producers and later have seen pictures which seemed to bear a very close resemblance to our creation. But experience will teach us to be cautious about accusing others. A writer may submit a script, and, at the very time it is submitted, the producer may have a similar story on his desk, written by a trained writer. He buys the story written by the professional screen writer and later the amateur sees the picture on the screen and vows that the producer has stolen his yarn. The producer is probably innocent. The quicker we learn that ideas travel in circles the slower we will be in accusing others of stealing that which we believe is entirely original just because we wrote it. An idea comes to you today to write a story around a certain subject. You may postpone it until tomorrow or the day after, or perhaps next week. That very same idea probably came to other writers at the same moment that it called on you. One of them is perhaps very ambitious and as soon as the idea comes, this writer sits right down at the typewriter and starts to work. That writer knows that the idea is not original with him; that ideas travel in circles. So, he is going to be the first one to submit that particular type of story. He does. His story is read and accepted. A few days later you may come along with your story. But, you have arrived too late, for the other story is already in course of production. You get the story back and later you see the picture and declare that the producer has stolen your ideas and you proceed to tell everyone within the sound of your voice that the picture they have just witnessed was "cribbed" from your yarn. About a year ago I submitted a story to a producer and it was returned to me. A few weeks later I went to see a picture and was somewhat surprised to see identically the same story flashed before me on the screen. Had my experience been more limited I would have immediately decided that my story had been appropriated. But, being somewhat familiar with the long journey a story takes before it arrives in the theatre, it didn't take me long to realize that my story could not have been produced in such a short time. In addition to this, I knew the author of the story I had just seen and realized that he was most honorable. There was no suspicion on my
part. I was to blame, for I had not started to work soon enough. I resolved right then, that in the future I would lose no time in starting to work, when I received an idea. Do not deceive yourself into believing that you are the sole possessor of an idea. Let me repeat, ideas travel in circles. Undoubtedly a half a dozen writers are, at this very moment, writing identically the same story. Take this into consideration before you accuse a producer of stealing your ideas.

Writers seem to be getting the impression that they can sell an idea, or a brief plot more easily than a complete story, and that trained continuity experts will put the "foliage" on. Maybe this is true in some cases. But no matter how odd or unusual your "germ" might be, let me assure you that if you know what you are doing and can submit a story that has proper amplification of your own ideas, you will stand a much better chance of receiving recognition, and incidentally a larger check for your efforts. Don't expect too much from the continuity writer or director. They are not walking encyclopedias. They don't know everything. They generally manage to secure any information they need, but many of them do not take overly much trouble to give close study to the subjects treated in the stories they are picturizing.

If you are writing a story around a detective, or newspaper reporter, for example, what do you know of the workings of the police or journalism? If you are writing a society drama, where have you ever had the opportunity of observing the socially elect?

I cannot recall ever having seen a reporter on either the stage or screen who looked or acted anything like a real news-gatherer, except for a chap who played a reporter in John Mason's stage production of "The Witching Hour." The screen detective or police inspector, who generally lives in a mansion on a small salary, is another example of what the guardians of the peace never do. Society dramas continually offend us with incessant displays of bad etiquette. Maybe you will say the director is responsible for this condition of affairs. But, what did you, the writer, give him in your story? He would be a genius indeed had he entered the ranks of the directors after a career as a policeman, judge, journalist, globe-trotter and society man, and a few other things. "The director can get any 'atmosphere' he wants," you may reason with yourself. But, if you study the screen and observe the effects that are continually confronting you, you will soon convince yourself that first hand information or suggestion from the writer who prepared the story would have helped a great deal.

Emory Johnson, one of the newest of the producers, recently completed a picture called, "In The Name of The Law," which was written around a San Francisco policeman and his family. Johnson had in mind the fact that the screen has practically never given us a real, honest-to-goodness "cop." So, he set about making sure that his hero would be so true to life that New York's 12,000 policemen and those of every other city and town in the country would find hearty appreciation of the arrival, at last, of "one of the finest" on the screen. Ralph Lewis' characterization of the policeman shows care and study. But, how much more "human" would his portrayal have been had Lewis tucked away the familiar cigar or two in the metal rack in his helmet, and had also used it to store his memorandum. Lewis got his "dope" on the life of the policeman by studying them for a while. If you are writing a police story you should do the same thing.

To show you the extent to which some producers will go to assure perfection of detail, let me inform you that when pictures are made with an Indian locale, experts are hired to see that turbans are properly wound, the loin cords properly draped, and that the details of environment, architecture and customs are properly presented. Yet, the same producer is likely to turn around and make a story centered in a large city with flagrant errors of social conduct, law enforcement, court scenes, and so forth. He makes sure that when an Indian picture reaches India the natives will enjoy its accuracy of detail. But, he seems to forget the millions of theatrogers in his own country.

When Ruyard Kipling gave consent for the filming of his "Without Benefit of Clergy," which is laid in Lahore, India, the producers engaged Dr. Horace H. M. Maddock, long a resident of India, to supervise the Indian atmosphere of the picture. Then Ruth Roland got him for a serial and Norma Talmadge for "The Voice From The Minaret."

When Richard Walton Tully started producing "Omar, The Tentmaker," the scenes of which are laid in Persia, he engaged a Persian gentleman to assist in the details.

But, when directors make newspaper and police stories do they hire reporters or policemen as consultants? Not that I have heard of. Once I wandered on a set that was supposed to represent a newspaper office in a large city, I could see that the director knew nothing about such places. Apparently the writer had given him no aid. The floor was clean, galley proofs were on files on the copy desk, the office boys were "Little Lord Fauntloyes" with sweet faces and angelic smiles. No one was smoking. The set and its people were a joke to me. The director was a good fellow and readily invited me to help him, but when I pointed out that set, made it over again, changed around his players, roughed up those sweet office boys and gave him what the very editors who first criticize his picture would recognize as a real editorial room.

If you are writing on a certain subject, try to find out all you can about it. Study it from all angles and give detail in your story. It's much better to write about things with which you are familiar. But, if you are not thoroughly familiar with your subject don't write about it, unless you study it carefully.

The public doesn't go to see scenery, or interiors, or a lot of nice clothes. It doesn't go to see any particular star. It goes to see a story—a story that entertains with pretty romance, plenty of suspense and real climax. A good story uplifts the star, but the star cannot uphold a poor story. Today, the story either makes or breaks the star. And, the majority of them are looking for photoplays written by photodramatists. They are through with beautifully photographed corpses: in other words, magazine stories.
A LLEN Holubar and Paul Bern, Goldwyn scenario editor, are editing the big production of “Broken Chains,” the $10,000 prize story by Winifred Kimball, on which photography was recently finished. The cast includes Colleen Moore, Claire Windsor, Malcolm McGregor and Ernest Torrence.

Forman Directing Chaney

Lon Chaney’s next starring vehicle, the first of a series of Tom Forman’s productions, “Ching, Chin, Chinaman,” written by Wilbur Daniel Steele. Hope Loreen prepared the screen adaptation.

In Collaboration

Henry M. Tichenor, former editor of a St. Louis magazine, is collaborating with Milford W. Howard on a new story, “The Sage of Wilderness Ridge.”

W. Original Western

“Ridin’ Wild,” an original Western story by Roy Myers, will be Hoot Gibson’s next vehicle as soon as “The Lone Hand” is finished.

Death of Emma Bell Clifton

Emma Bell Clifton, pioneer scenario writer, passed away a few days ago at her home in Hollywood. She is survived by her husband, Wallace Clifton, himself a well known writer for the screen, and a daughter who is the wife of Marcello Bucci, of the Metropolitan Opera Company.

Engaged by de Haven’s

Beatrice Van is busily occupied writing farce comedies for Mr. and Mrs. Carter de Haven.

W. New Script

Carol Warren is writing the continuity for “The Three Cornered Kingdom.”

“Thirty Days” Allotted Wallie

“Thirty Days,” a farcial story typical of Wallace Reid’s comedy, will be his star’s next vehicle, to be begun during the present month under the direction of James Cruze. Clayton Hamilton and A. E. Thomas collaborated in writing the scenario.

“Original” for Owen Moore

Victor Heerman is preparing another original story for Owen Moore, at the United Studios.

In Jamaica

John Russell and Harvey Thew have just told a story of the South Seas to Rex Ingram, who has gone to Jamaica to produce it.

Film “Pride of Palomar”

William Sistrom, production manager for Cosmopolitan Productions, and Frank Borzage, director, have recently arrived from New York to arrange production details for Peter B. Kyne’s “Pride of Palomar” for which Grant Carpenter has completed the continuity.

Scarborough Completes Scenario

George Scarborough has written a scenario entitled “West of Chicago” now being produced at the Fox studios in Hollywood.

Melford Produces Sea Story

George Melford is busy producing “Ebb Tide,” a story of the sea, for Paramount Pictures. Lorna Moon and Waldemar Young adapted the classic. The company has returned to the Goldwyn studios from a trip off the coast of Southern California. Among the final scenes taken on this “location” was one wherein a large sailing vessel was actually destroyed by flames.

Novelty in Valentino Picture

The big “reincarnation party” in Rudolph Valentino’s next picture, “The Young Rajah,” is considered to be a novel episode in this story by Ames Mitchell, which June Mathis adapted. Almost every conceivable character is present at the costume dance. The story itself is romantic, dramatic and colorful.

Concerning Dustin

Dustin Farnum’s first picture for William Fox for the coming season will be “Oathbound,” written by Edward Le Saint and directed by Bernard J. Durning.

Grey Writes Turpin Comedy

John Grey wrote the story of “Home-made Movies,” Ben Turpin’s latest comedy which burlesques motion pictures in the making.

Miss Bergere Writes Pathé Scenario

Ouida Bergere wrote the scenario of the “Hillcrest Mystery,” the new Pathé Playlet starring Irene Castle.

Clara Beranger’s “Notoriety”

“Notoriety,” William de Mille’s Paramount production, in which Bebe Daniels and Lewis Stone will be featured, is to be begun in September. This is an original story by Clara Beranger, who offers Miss Daniels probably the strongest role of her career.

Special Art in “Singled Wings”

Penrhyn Stanlaws is planning many artistic features for his new production “Singled Wings,” which was written by Katherine Newlin Burt and adapted by A. E. Bingham and Ewart Adamson.

Inappropriate

“A Kiss in the Dark” did not seem to “fit” Tom Mix; therefore it was changed to “Blood Will Tell,” which seems less mild for the daring Tom. Marion Brooks and Edward Sedgwick wrote the story. Mr. Sedgwick also directing.

Fifty Years Hence

Director Fred Colwell has arrived from New York and is busily writing the story for his forthcoming production entitled “1972.”

First West Coast Production

“Under Oath,” a story by Eddie Montagne, Selznick staff writer, which is scheduled for early Fall release, is the first picture made by Elaine Hammerstein in California.

Third Logue Story

Charles Logue, who wrote, “The Infidel” for Katherine MacDonald, has written a third story for Miss MacDonald entitled “The Lonely Road,” also to be produced by Preferred Pictures. Lois Zehlner prepared the continuity.

“Continuity By”

Olga Pritzau is writing the
continuity for "The Beautiful and the Damned," a story by F. Scott Fitzgerald, which E. Mason Hopper is directing for Warner Brothers.

**This Way Out**

Violet Clark wrote the continuity for Carey Wilson's "This Way Out."

**Collaborate on New Story**

Townsend Martin, who plays the role of Holcomb Berry, the quarrelsomely belligerent "The Cradle Buster," has collaborated with Frank Tuttle in writing a new story for Glenn Hunter, entitled "The Lap of Luxury."

Goldwyn Unit Visits South Seas

R. A. Walsh, Goldwyn director, sailed from San Francisco a few days ago for the South Sea Islands, where "Captain Blackbird," a romantic melodrama by Carey Wilson, will be filmed.

**Willet Finishes Sea Drama**

The final scenes of "On the High Seas," Irvin V. Willat's production, have been completed. The picture, which is an adaptation by E. Magnus Ingleton of Edward Sheldon's first photoplay effort, is ready for cutting and titling.

**Hulbert and Edith Make "Country Love"**

Actual filming of "Country Love," which is from the pen of Hulbert Footner, and adapted for the screen by Edith Kennedy, has begun at the Metro studios in Hollywood.

**Authors Lose Friend**

George Edwardes Hall, one of the veterans in the profession of writing for motion pictures, passed away at his home in Hollywood a few days ago. Mr. Hall had a host of friends in the profession who were grieved to hear of his death. He was the author of many photoplays, especially in the day when writers were plying the way to a technique in a new medium of expression, and he will go down in the history of the photodrama as one of the progressive pioneers.

**Kyne in New Role**

Peter B. Kyne has been engaged by the Goldwyn company to write the subtitles for his own story, "Brothers Under Their Skin," recently filmed, and is now engaged in that task at the Culver City studio. Mr. Kyne has been selling his stories to the producers for years, yet has never taken part in their actual translation to the screen until now; but he states he "gets a kick" out of it.

**Miss Fairfax With Metro**

Marion Fairfax has been engaged to write especially for Billie Dove, the beautiful nineteen-year-old New York girl who is making her debut as a Metro star in a story titled, "The Girl in the Gilded Cage."

**Coogan Productions Secures Anthony**

Walter Anthony, musical critic, dramatic writer and press representative has been added to the staff of the Jackie Coogan Productions. Mr. Anthony will devote his time to the scenario department and will act in a general advisory capacity for the Coogan pictures.

**Scenarist Returns**

Julia Crawford Ivers, well known scenario writer, has returned to the Lasky studio after a trip to Honolulu and a rest of several months duration.

Harry Carey has just finished his production, "Good Men and True," from the pen of Eugene Manlove Rhodes, and will have a little time between productions to enjoy his recently acquired beach home.

**New Corporation Announces Policy**

Closing a deal which has been pending for several weeks, final papers were recently signed whereby Principal Pictures Corporation, a producing and distributing organization, with home offices in Los Angeles, comes into existence. Officers of the concern, which expects to transact an annual business of $3,000,000, are Sol Lesser, president; Irving Lesser, vice president and Eastern manager, and Mike Rosenberg, secretary, treasurer, and Western manager. This newly formed corporation will operate independently and will make twelve feature pictures a year.

**Metro Stories Under Way**

Among those who now are working on stories for future Metro productions or have just completed adaptations are, J. G. Hawks, Marion Fairfax, Bernard McConville, Mary O'Hara, Lloyd E. Sheldon, Edith Kennedy and Rex Taylor.

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**THE CONSPIRACY OF INCOMPETENCE**

(Continued from page 10)

The answer I believe is obvious; the studios will have to make creative writers into directors instead of depending on non-creative directors to do it. When a script is retold with a mediocre story—which is the only kind they have intelligence enough to handle. One or two big men in the field are already converted to this view, but they point out the hazard of trying out a new man on even one production, involving as it does such an outlay of money.

But there is a comparatively simple solution to this problem: let the continuity writer sit in on production, acting as first or second assistant. If he has any potential ability as a director it will appear in the course of two or three pictures; and the added cost to the production that this would entail would largely be equalized in the time and money saved by having the writer always on the job, instantly ready to meet the changes that so often occur during the shooting.

In this way you will greatly enhance the practical knowledge and resourcefulness of the writer—and if one out of three evolves into a director you will have taken the most important step possible in the perpetuation of pictures as a national institution.

The mediocre director would naturally fight this plan; he will see it in his own elimination in the near future. But it has got to be the survival of the fittest if the motion-picture is itself to survive.

There is nothing new about the plan except that it has not yet crystallized into a policy. I know one well known continuity writer who was recently called in to rewrite another fellow's script after the picture was started, and this happened on two successive pictures! The first writer made a bad guess as to what the non-creative director vaguely felt he wanted; the second man, continuously at the director's elbow, was quick to interpret. This plan as an emergency measure is expensive; as a fixed policy it will make for economy and efficiency. And as I stated before, indirectly you will be training the creative director of the future.

(Continued on page 34)
There Is An Army of Volunteer Scenario Writers

What have they done to Justify their Employment?

This question is put by Patrick Tarsney in "Secrets of the Stars," a series of authentic, entertaining articles appearing in

SCREENLAND

Would we have better pictures if the men and women who wrote them were of a higher order of intelligence? Who are they? Where did they come from? How did they get in?

Leroy Scott was assistant editor of the Woman's Home Companion before he took to writing crook stories for the screen.

C. Gardner Sullivan sold his first scenario for $25 and now is paid a salary of $2,000 a week. He is still under forty.

Rupert Hughes got his wealth of Irish material while an officer in the Sixty-Ninth, New York's crack Irish American regiment.

June Mathis went on the stage when she was a child and became a leading woman before she tried her hand at scenario writing.

Arthur F. Statter was assistant secretary of the United States Treasury during Roosevelt's administration.

Waldemar Young was first a sporting editor, then a dramatic critic, then an actor in vaudeville.

Clayton Hamilton was an instructor at Columbia University and an author of several books relating to the drama.

Jean Havex wrote the song: "Everybody Works but Father," created a great deal of stage material and is now a "gag man."

H. H. Van Loan found himself in charge of the first motion picture department to appear in a New York daily newspaper.

"Secrets of the Stars" is an encyclopedia of authors, directors, producers, players. It is the most complete information on the careers of picture celebrities ever published. Begin reading them now in

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Please send me the next six issues of SCREENLAND containing every installment of "Secrets of the Stars," for One Dollar, enclosed herein.

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(The regular subscription price is $2.50 a year, 12 issues)
The First Killing

"Pedro vanished from the face of the earth. We gave up the chase for him. One day Chicken, a kid of eighteen, came back from the hills.

"Get your horse," he said.

'I know where Pedro is. Presidio County on the Rio Grande.'

"We left that night with four horses and fifty dollars. We rode six hundred miles... Pedro came galloping up and into the corrals from the opposite side. He didn't see me. Like a flash I spurred in between the horses. They went wild and broke from the corral. Pedro turned, recognized me and shouted to the men..."

"Through the Shadows with O. Henry"
By Al Jennings

Here, in Al Jennings' own words, is one of the thrilling incidents in that true, unbelievably fascinating story. As Life so well expresses it—"This book is a corker. It reeks with train robbery, horrible prison cruelty, pathos, sentiment—about everything there is in human nature, and then some. It is true. Naturally Al Jennings has made the most of his theme. Thomas Osborne, who ought to know, says that his account of prison horrors is even more 'genuine' than the reality. "And there is O. Henry—gutless of crime, and locked up in jail, as if by a stern taskmaster who said, 'Now, will you write?' And some of us wonder, if after all, it matters how much an individual—a finely sensitive soul—is made to suffer, if the final outcome is to be stories such as O. Henry wrote. It makes us feel more than ever that individuals, in the long run, do not count."

274 Complete Stories

Out of the trials and struggles of his own life, O. Henry wrote these stories of the people. He was one of the dispossessed—and he knew their problems. He picked out with deft, yet gentle hand, the little hidden things we all strive to conceal, held them up to the light of day, let the sun shine on them, and then tucked them back again—warmed and heartened, or cleansed and sterilized.

You love his stories because you see yourself in them—your real hidden self which no one else ever sees. Other men write so that you read and suddenly nod your head and say—'That is so. This man writes of people such as I know.' But O. Henry writes, and you read, and with sudden laughter you—'This is me!'

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Review of Reviews Co., 30 Irving Place, N. Y.
THE WEST THAT WAS

(Continued from page 12)

chinery for finding and telling the truth—or some part of it—but which, so far as Westerners are involved, are written in a vacuum. In dealing with the West they have resolutely ignored history, birth, training, codes, traditions, habits, and aims.

SUCH books grieve the Old Timer more than the trashy novel; he feels that these people might have done a better job. As samples, take Honore Willis's "Still Jim," a masterpiece save for its blindness as to all meaning of the West—and "The Great Divide" by the late William Vaughn Moody. Here is a good place to state that the one thing the Western man did more than any other one thing was not playing poker for a girl.

Next in popularity, perhaps, was not branding any lady with a hot iron—either a running iron or a stamp brand. There were few women in the Old West, and the men valued them highly; gambling for women, branding women—such recreations would have been frowned upon. The fact is that the Westerner set women upon a pedestal and rather insisted on keeping them there; often to the serious annoyance of the ladies themselves.

(7) Another factor contributes indirectly towards maintaining the invincible ignorance of the majority in this matter of the Old West. Since a certain date in November, 1918—which date will be supplied on receipt of a stamped and self-addressed envelope—the literary affairs of America have been taken over and guided by "a little group of Syria's thinkers"—Mencken's and supermenckens. They announce themselves as The Young Intellectuals.

This group has decreed that a good American story must be about a Hungarian with adenoids; that the American novel shall deal with the cheerful inward life of a psychopathic case, and shall have a complex in lieu of a plot; and that no book should be recommended to their readers which did not employ one of three methods. These methods were:

1. Brilliance with indecency
2. Dullness with indecency
3. Dullness without indecency

"We're"—not "are," "Vandemark's Folly" and "The Covered Wagon" are turning public attention into more wholesome channels. "You can't fool all of them, all of the time."

DURING the brief and night-mareish hegemony of the Young Intellectuals, they explicitly declared war upon (1) The Puritan, and (2) The Pioneer. Their hatred for America was due—aside from Germany and the liquor business—to what they sneered at as our "Pioneer Culture." Therefore, in their instructions to Women's Clubs, they used one or the other of two set forms for disposal of any Western book:

1. "Another Western Novel."
2. "I never read Western novels."

Western novels were "romantic," you see. A "Romancer" is a man who loves something; a "realist" is a man who hates something. The Young Intellectuals hated everything American.

Boys and girls, it is no secret that most of you are writing "Western" stories. I could give you a bit of valuable advice, but I won't. Punch gave the same advice about matrimony, you remember—but the custom has not been discontinued. Or, I might urge upon you rather to write about the West that is—dry farming, the building of dams and ditches and roads—a time as interesting as was ever the Old West. But you wouldn't do it. That is not the way the so-called Human Race behaves. Your grandchildren will record the stirring events of today, at second-hand—and will get them all muddled and twisted, of course.

SINCE you will indubitably write stories of the West that Was, let me at least conjure you to pick your sources with care; and let me urge upon you that to chronicle that magnificent epic is a task worthy of your best effort; of any best.

To that end I would have everyone who would write about the West, everyone who loves the West, to read a recent book by Philip Ashton Rollins: "The Cowboy;" with the subtitle:

"His Characteristics, His Equipment, and His Part in the Development of the West."

Other books have done justice to the qualities of the cowboy; this is the first to show forth his importance as "an affirmative, constructive factor in the social and political development of the United States."

It is my hope, on a later day, to tell you some particulars about the cowboy and other frontiersmen—sheepherders excepted; how they were made of watch springs and whale-bar and barbed wire; how broad brim and high heel, chaps and spurs, double-cinch or center-fire, the tie-fast men or the "dally," habit and word and deed—had each a logical and compelling reason. Until then, I shall close with one warning. The cowboy was not other than yourself, except by his hard training. As has been said before, and as I shall say again. "cowboys are just like humans, only bow-legged."

Evolution

By J. Alfred Jacobson

Like some vague and flick'ring dream,
Against the distant skyline seen,
A hazy mist arising
Like some vague and flick'ring dream,
No form nor sense comprising.

Now a vast mirage there forms
From out the dull confusion
And dimly-outlined objects rise
To mingle with illusion.

Now human figures I discern.
I see a little clearer.
My eager heart leaps wild with joy.
The vision's coming nearer!

It is a glimpse of mortal life,
Some wondrous dream unfolding,
Some glorious bit of human strife
That I am now beholding.

I seize my pen to give to men
What I have seen this day.
That all may share my joys and tears,
I write a photoplay.
TRAINING THE LITERARY GENIUS

(Continued from page 26)

read everything you can find on the subject; study them in the large and in detail until their rulers have become personal friends—or enemies—and you are as familiar with the very stones of their palaces as you are with your own roof-tree.

PERSONALLY, I believe that we invariably write whatever most interests us. If we are naturally fond of pomp and pageantry we do wrong to force ourselves to uninspiring contemplation of the monotonous and humdrum. Similarly, if we are lovers of the simple life, we shall never be at our best when writing of the brilliant and colorful existence known as "High Society."

If you are romantic, write love-stories, not stories of mystery and the underworld. If you love adventure write thrilling tales of land and sea and "hair-breadth escapes mid the imminent, deadly breach." If you have a mind for analysis create fascinating characters like Sherlock Holmes.

We might continue along this line indefinitely, but time and space forbid. What I wish you to remember chiefly is to write in good taste, accurately of the things you love.

WHY IS A LAUGH?

(Continued from page 20)

from every angle, analyzed it, criticised it, shifted it, taken it out and put it back, changed the scene, changed the wording, and altogether overtrained it to such a degree that you no longer have confidence in it.

Remember that the audience sees it but once and that in connection with the picture as a whole, and therefore gets it in its proper perspective and relation to the story.

Finally and in conclusion, brothers and sisters, no point has been more vehemently emphasized during the last twelve months than the necessity for clean pictures, clean humor. The producers encourage it, the exhibitors demand it—the censors insist upon it! Yet how often, even now, a suggestive or a downright vulgar bit is introduced in order to get a “sure fire laugh.”

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TERRY RAMSAYE

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Q. Is a Radio Story one that will get by? It is a very popular contrivance at present and I thought it might be considered as an advanced idea? G. W.

A. The Radio is an invention that picks up sound waves and transforms them into audible conversation, etc. It must be heard to be appreciated. The screen is the "silent drama," and the stories must be so written that they can be reproduced upon the screen in action, therefore we cannot advise a story such as you suggest unless it is just an incident surrounded by sufficiently dramatic action to "put it over."

Q. Is the slapstick comedy being revived? I have ideas galore for this type of production and am anxious to utilize them. J. F. D.

A. There is always a certain demand for this class of screen production, but unfortunately there is not much demand for a story for slapstick pictures. The studios producing this class of material have their own staff writers and the stories are "evolved on the lot"; by this we mean that the story is started through a "gag," joke or incident, then another is thought up to fit into it. We do not think it worth your while to put your time upon this class of story.

Q. I am contemplating a story directed against the growing divorce evil. Would there be a demand for such a picture? L. McC.

A. It entirely depends on how it is done. A propaganda picture is all right provided that the propaganda is insidious in its telling and not thrust out in facts. The public will accept a lesson only if that lesson is veiled. There is another thing about a picture of this type—a good many have already been seen and unless you can create something very strong and at the same time novel in its treatment, it would not be likely to prove very attractive.

Q. I have been told that illegitimacy will not now be tolerated in pictures, is this true? V. E. H.

A. The reply is yes and no. There are a great number of local censorship boards, quite apart from the National one, and many of these will not allow illegitimacy to pass. Naturally this cuts down the producers market if he shows the picture and this he cannot afford unless the story is so strong that he is sure of immense runs where the picture may be exhibited. The inexperienced writer is better advised if he keeps away from these doubtful subjects.

Q. Why is coincidence objected to in the construction of a screen play? I sent a story to be criticised by an expert in New York and among other things, he said: "There are too many coincidences." I do not understand this as coincidence frequently happens in real life. B. W.

A. The critic was perfectly right; coincidences spoil a story. One reason is that they are usually dragged in just at the very moment that they can be turned to aid some big happening. In real life a coincidental meeting rarely happens at such an opportune moment and nothing springs from it. When used in dramatic work, chance happenings always appear highly improbable and they are also weak as they achieve things that should have been brought about by someone's initiative. Coincidence brings more adverse criticism from the spectators than any other screen failing.

Q. Should a screen story be written with the sole aim of entertainment in view? G. N.

A. The province of the screen play is to entertain. But if you start with the idea of making it entertaining, you will have to put yourself in the place of the spectator and consider the sort of material to build with in order to capture and hold his interest. And then you are going to discover that to hold his interest unflaggingly, you will have to deal with fundamental human emotions, with inspiring themes, and sympathetic characters. So to have the "sole aim of entertainment" is not a trivial one by any means.

Q. Is it obligatory to have a theme to carry when writing a photoplay? V. S.

A. Every good photodrama has a theme. It may be light and subtle, but it is there, giving significance to the plot action. The word "theme" is sometimes misunderstood to mean a sermon or preaching. Such a theme is to be avoided. The sort to use as the basic idea of your story is a thought or problem of universal interest and appeal.

Q. Could you tell me how to get suspense in my stories? I have worked so hard on my plots, but somehow they are flat and uninteresting. A studio reader told me there was no suspense in my situations. B. F.

A. We can only advise that you bring your characters together in dramatic situations and create conflict and generate such issues that anxiety and expectation would be evoked. If you have conflict in your story, it is probably not sharp and strong enough and is too easily settled. You achieve suspense by having the solution of each dilemma hanging in the air as long as possible. Perhaps you have brought each situation to a crisis and settled the issue, instead of keeping it in doubt. There should be an augmentation of doubt, anxiety and expectancy until the final climax is reached.

Q. I would like to use the "supernatural" to motivate much of the action in my story. Would you advise me to do this? E. T.

A. Such a theme is very intangible. Remember that you must translate your story into terms of direct action. What the characters think and feel must be expressed in what they do. Such a difficult subject requires masterly workmanship. I feel that it is beyond the depth of the student writer.

Q. I wish to have two characters in my story interchanged when they are babies. Would you advise me to use such an incident? F. H. T.

A. This incident would not be particularly attractive because it has been used a great deal in drama. Such material is largely coincidental, and for this reason your plot would be weakened technically.
IN THE REVIEWING STAND

(Continued from page 13)

There is no way for them to hide the body before the cops come, so the gang leader arranges a card table at which a poker game is apparently in progress. The dead boy is placed at the table, as though he were actually playing. One of the gang props him up, while another crouches behind him, using his arm to hold the cards and throw the chips out.

The detectives come to the door, and see the boy, whom they believed had been murdered, apparently alive and playing poker. So their suspicion is disarmed and they go away, leaving the gang to work out its revenge in its own way.

After this, the story relapses into a rather obvious regeneration theme—enlivened only by occasional flashes of Neilan’s genuine brilliance. But this one episode—which is one of the most difficult ever attempted by any director—is superb, and is sufficient in itself to place “Fools First” in the category of exceptional pictures.

Others

“In the Name of the Law.”—The story of a policeman and his family. The stately munition of the law takes his job too seriously, and is finally involved in grave difficulties when his son is arrested on a false charge. There are a few original ideas in the plot, but the treatment is poor, and the picture as a whole is dull.

“The Dust Flower.”—Cinderella steps forth from the hearth once more and wins the proud prince. The thing has been done so often that it ought to be good by now—but, somehow or other, it isn’t.

“Bruce Wilderness Tales.”—These are a series of two-reel scenes, into which little stories have been woven. They are so extremely good that they serve as shining examples of dramatic simplicity and economy.

“While Satan Sleeps.”—The old situation, which Ralph Conners worked in “The Sky Pilot,” is here developed in a new way. It is hokum, but it is effective.

“The Man Unconquerable.”—The glamour of the South Seas is insufficient to make this story more than passably interesting.

“If You Believe It—It’s So.”—A New York crook hears the call of the open spaces, and as soon as he sees an apple tree in full bloom, he renews—and becomes a great moral force in the community. If you believe it—it’s so. But only if you happen to believe it.

“Cops.”—A Buster Keaton comedy in which the entire police force is set by its own ears. Worth waiting for.

“Always the Woman.”—Reincarnation carried to absurd lengths. There is so little continuity to the plot that no one is able to follow its involved ramifications—and very few people have the energy to try.

“Forget-Me-Not.”—A tearful little story about two orphans, one of whom is crippled. They are separated, and finally rejoined after many stormy trials.

“Mysteries of India.”—Another nightmare produced by the Tennant genius who gave us “Mistress of the World.” It is a lot better than that notable conglomeration of bunk, but that is saying practically nothing.

“Hurricane’s Gal.”—Rip-roaring action on land, on sea and in the air. Foolish in spots, and horribly overdrawn all the way through, but thrilling enough to keep any one on edge.

“The Kick-Back.”—Western cow-boy plot No. 4-A—rather worse than usual.

“The Bonded Woman.”—Good up to a certain point. Then the story has to be messed up to provide one of the stars with an opportunity to crash in on the final fade-out.

“The Country Flapper.”—Smart-Aleck subtitles and unfunny slapstick.

“Human Hearts.”—The Old Hokum Bucket comes up once more from the well, and its contents are just as sweet and just as insipid as ever.

“Her Gilded Cage.”—Gloria Swanson gives Jesse L. Lasky an excuse to spend a great deal of money. The idea is that every dollar that Mr. Lasky puts into the picture must come back to him within six months, bringing along a few friends, as well.

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Are you? Or worse still, are you employed and dissatisfied because you are unable to make the advancement you think you should? Do you know it's your own fault?

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WITH THE PRODUCERS

(Continued from page 29)

screen in "The Masquerader" with Guy Bates Post. Ethel Clayton is making the "Three-Cornered Kingdom" by Duvenet Bebell under direction of Wesley Ruggles. Harry Carey is busy on Elizabeth De Jean's original story, "If a Woman Will," under the direction of Val Powell. Mr. and Mrs. Carter De Haven are working on "Keeping 'em Home" by Beatrice Van under Mal St. Clair, and Emory Johnson is finishing his own production "The Discard" with Johnny Walker, Ralph Lewis, and Virginia Boardman. Walker will shortly commence work on his own star productions; his first is "Captain Fly-by Night" by Johnston McCulley. Eve Unsell has written the script and William K. Howard will direct.

Universal City Notes

At Universal City Von Stroheim is slowly but surely completing his preparations for "The Merry-Go-Round." In addition to Mary Philbin, the cast will include Wallace Beery, Norman Keery, and Cesare Gravina. Herbert Rawlinson's next is "Another Man's Shoes," written by the studio scenario department and to be directed by Jack Conway. Gladys Walton is working on an unnamed story under King Baggot, while Hoot Gibson is filming "Laramie Lad" under Reeves Eason. The chapter productions continue apace: Reginald Denny is commencing his second series of six "Leather Pushers" by H. C. Witwer, with Elinor Field as his leading woman. "The Perils of Yukon," an ambitious serial, with William Desmond and Laura La Plante, is concluded.

New Barry Pictures

The Warner Brothers' ambitious plans have already resulted in two Wesley Barry Productions: "From Rags to Riches" and "Little Heroes of the Street," both directed by Harry Rapf and the vanguard of a hord of old-time melodramas that will soon be seen on the screen. F. Scott Fitzgerald's story "The Beautiful and the Damned," will have Marie Prevost and Kenneth Harlan in the leading

(Continued on page 41)
WITH THE PRODUCERS

(Continued from page 40)
roles. Norris' "Brass" is the next Warner Brothers' Production.

SELZNICK Plans Specials

SELZNICK is concentrating on special productions and is now filming "One Week Of Love" by Edward J. Montagne under the direction of George Archamhaut. Elaine Hammerstein and Conway Tearle are the featured players, with Hallam Cooley leading the support.

Another all star production is "Blind Justice", Edward Slobom's first independent picture which he is filming at the Fine Arts Studio with Milton Sills in the lead, while another interesting independent picture is "The Power of Love" which Nat Deverich has just finished with Barbara Bedford, Noah Beery and Elliot W. Sparling. This, it is claimed, is the first film turned out by a stereoscopic method and consequently the experiment is eagerly awaited.

IN summary—three healthy features stand out in a careful survey of the month's production activities. First is the increasing care given to all productions at the present time. Second, is the high quality of the casts in almost every picture; an all-star film is the usual thing today. Third, and perhaps most helpful of all, is the willingness of producers, directors and writers to experiment and leave the beaten path of successful mediocrity. Only some of these experiments, of course, will succeed; but in their attempting them lies the great hope of finer artistry in our films.

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THE INDEPENDENT FILM STUDIO

(Continued from page 8)

include Richard Walton Tully Company, starring Guy Bates Post, the Schenck Productions, starring Norma and Constance Talmadge, Allen Holubar Productions, starring Dorothy Phillips, Jackie Coogan Productions, Principal Pictures Corporation, Nazimova Productions, Selznick Pictures, Ruth Roland Company, and Hamilton-White Comedies. A roster of other companies and stars that have been domiciled at the United Studio in the past includes practically every worthwhile organization on the West Coast except the few which started at their own studios.

UNITED Studios owes its success to leadership in the two factors that spell the most modern reasons for progress in business and art. In the first sphere the recognized keynote of leadership and practicability is cooperation. In offering all of its combined resources to the individual producer this leading independent studio fulfills its function along business lines.

A popular art can prosper only if it has efficient organization; hence by virtue of its efficiency and industrial healthiness United Studios serves the motion picture, the most popular of all the arts. More than that, however, by this vast service to the independent producer, who is the most hopeful figure in the screen world, the United Studio serves the film art preeminently.

CHARACTERIZATION IN WRITING THE SHORT STORY

(Continued from page 16)

Creation and he'll come pretty near giving you another—the one to his safe.

CAREFUL characterization has more than mere pecuniary rewards. It is very gratifying to see, for instance, after working hard and conscientiously upon a certain story, a half column review of it in some paper, to realize that someone has appreciated your sincere efforts toward artistic perfection; to know that you are taken seriously, as an idealist; to have men and women wish to meet you because you have attained a tiny degree of excellence above the multitude; to know that from the seed you sowed in travail, a bloom is unfolding.

Yes, character drawing is worth while.

To Whom the Power Is Given

By Ida M. Thomas

He who sings a song, may cheer
Just the few hearts of those who hear;

He who writes a book, may feed
Just the few minds of those who read;

But he who's writing photoplays,
The hearts and minds of millions sways.
As Essential as the Fundamental Idea

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“He’s dead!” repeated the voice of the medium.
“A bullet just above the e. r. y. She has the revolver. She needn’t cry so. He was cruel to her—a beast!”

And then—

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Review of Reviews Co., 30 Irving Place

New York
PHOTODRAMATIST
THE MAGAZINE FOR WRITERS

October

CREATIVE ART vs. 'KATY-DIDS'
Douglas Z. Doty

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Wyonah Johnson

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Carl Clausen

IN THE REVIEWING STAND
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"IRIDESCENT BUBBLES, WITH NO MEAT IN THE SHELL—HOPELESSLY DEVOID OF STORY"

THAT'S what is the matter with pictures," says Frank L. Packard, author of "The Miracle Man" (the most successful and the most vividly remembered of all motion pictures) in his brilliant and inspiring article entitled "The Story," which will appear in the next issue of Photodramatist.

In this article Mr. Packard declares that "the greatest potential force for good or evil that exists in this generation—is the motion picture," and he tells you why.

In the same issue will appear an article by Douglas Doty entitled "The Unpublished Author" which is a plea for the cultural value of learning to write, irrespective of whether the writer is ever successful commercially or not. Says Mr. Doty, "The weakness of our educational system is that though it teaches our youth how to make a living, it does little to teach them how to live."

No writer, whether professional or aspirant, can afford to miss the November Photodramatist.
Which of these two men has learned the secret of 15 minutes a day?

The secret is contained in the free book offered below. Until you have read it you have no idea how much 15 minutes a day can mean in growth and success. Send for your copy now.

HERE are two men, equally good looking, equally well-dressed. You see such men in every social gathering. One of them can talk of nothing beyond the mere day's news. The other brings to every subject a wealth of side-light and illustration that makes him listened to eagerly.

He talks like a man who has traveled widely, though his only travels are a business man's trips. He knows something of history and biography, of the work of great scientists, and the writings of philosophers, poets, and dramatists.

Yet he is busy, as all men are, in the affairs of every day. How has he found time to acquire so rich a mental background? When there is such a multitude of books to read, how can any man be well-read?

The answer to this man's success—and to the success of thousands of men and women like him—is contained in a free book that you may have for the asking. In it is told the story of Dr. Eliot's great discovery, which, as one man expressed it, "does for reading what the invention of the telegraph did for communication." From his lifetime of reading, study, and teaching, forty years of it as president of Harvard University, Dr. Eliot tells just what few books he chose for the most famous library in the world; why he chose them, and how he has arranged them with notes and reading courses so that any man can get from them the essentials of a liberal education in even fifteen minutes a day.

The booklet gives the plan, scope, and the purpose of Dr. Eliot's Five-Foot Shelf of Books

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"For me," wrote one man who had sent in the coupon, "your little free book meant a big step forward, and it showed me besides the way to a vast new world of pleasure."

Every reader of Photodramatist is invited to have a copy of this handsome and entertaining little book. It is free, will be sent by mail, and involves no obligation of any sort. Merely clip the coupon and mail it today.

Send for this FREE booklet that gives Dr. Eliot's own plan of reading

P. F. COLLIER & SON COMPANY, Publishers of Good Books Since 1875
Action

By Sheldon Krag Johnson

There is one word that contains the beginning and the ending of motion pictures. It is the keynote of the story in the conceiving; it is the light that guides the continuity, it is in the mouth of the director at the start of each scene. That word is Action.

The essence of a good picture is an Ongoingness. It contains no point of dead stoppage. Even the last fade out is but a pause which carries its punch because it suggests a satisfying ongoingness for the characters from there on.

This is a fundamental reason why the motion picture is of universal appeal. For Activity is a primary characteristic of Consciousness. From the rapid vibrations within the atom to the cosmic rhythm of the spheres; from the restricted consciousness whose only degree is awareness to the all embracing Mind that knows and knows that it knows, activity is an inherent quality.

Flow, rather than pause, is the essence of Life. Pause itself is only redeemed from death by the degree to which it suggests flow to follow. As a matter of fact, pause in any other sense than as a take-off for flow is but a wax flower of the intellect. A full stop is dead sea fruit. It is an artificial thing, born of a dead premise, unreal in its essence and sterile of procreative power.

The ending of a story can be no other than a point of further and satisfying ongoing. Were it a stoppage in any final sense of the word there would have to be a wiping out of the characters and the location,—the very stuff of the story. This would be completely unsatisfactory and no audience would tolerate it.

Tragedy is the nearest approach to this. It is a sort of skidding stop. The Greeks claimed that tragedy conveyed a beneficial purging but inasmuch as tragedy is untrue to life as a whole, all that it can purge from is from itself. It is like taking an emetic to be rid of an emetic.

There is a universal distaste for stories with tragic endings. Among certain of the Elect there is much rebellion to this fact on the ground that happy endings do not reflect life. But it may be that the common pulse beats closer to the drumming of real life than that of these dwellers in the arid regions of the intellectual.

All things must be judged in their positive aspect. Even the most cynical must concede that Life, on the whole, is a Going Concern. The utmost the pessimist can set up is that by reason of special instances of failure, of obliteration even, it is therefore indicated that the whole will fail too.

These gentlemen of the negative have sacrificed to this idol from time immemorial. To the man in the street there is something ironical in the fact that these prophets of oblivion are never justified by development; that in spite of the invocation of Complete Arrest, Life has continued, even providing a perpetuation of these very Apostles of Death. It is interesting that consciousness, in order to postulate unconsciousness, must always remain conscious! In this way the Negative, or Non-consciousness or Death is seen to be, necessarily, a supposition.

Let us then face the East and pay homage to the ever-rising Sun. Let us enter into the Spirit of the Ongoingness which is the Spirit of Life itself. Let us rejoice in the motion picture, that most fitting symbol of our own aliveness, with its unwinding red and its endless panorama of beautiful vistas, heroic deeds and unceasing activity.
Thousands Compete in ‘Situation’ Contest
Thirty-one Days Remain in which to Submit Manuscripts in Test of Creative Ability

It is an age-old law of physics that a ball rolling down an inclined plane gathers greater momentum and moves more rapidly as it approaches the base of the plane.

This simple fact has been brought to the mind of the writer of this page—who happens, also, to be the Contest Editor conducting Photodramatist’s Situation Contest—and he wonders if this rule does not apply psychologically as well as physically; since, as the contest approaches its closing date, the volume of manuscripts has rapidly increased, until, with about thirty days left, the editor finds himself literally in a “dramatic situation”—that of reading and passing judgment upon the inflowing contributions and at the same time treating them all impartially, preparatory to submitting them to the three judges for final selection.

In order to give fair criticism the editor has been obliged to adopt four classifications: First, those which violate the rules because they either are hand-written or because they exceed the 300 word limit—or both. These, of course, are promptly discarded. The second classification consists of manuscripts which contain no definite situation but which, instead are story synopses or bits of narrative. This class is almost as offensive as the first. Third, those which are situations, truly enough, but lack originality, plausibility or dramatic poignancy. And, fourth, unmistakable dramatic situations indicating that their authors possess dramatic instinct as well as a thorough knowledge of dramatic construction and technique. The latter, needless to say, are receiving most careful consideration, since it is from among them that the prize winners will be chosen.

Following appears two out of the best fifty so far submitted. This does not indicate that this fifty will remain in the lead, nor that these two will remain the best of the fifty; for, as announced previously, the merit of every incoming contribution is thoughtfully weighed against that of any previously judged.

The contest closes on October 31st. There still remain thirty-one days in which to mail to us your manuscript. Each contestant may contribute as many different situations as he may wish, and this privilege is extended to those who have already contributed.

The “ball” has not yet stopped rolling, and we trust it will roll even faster on the last lap of the race.

The two situations, selected as representative of the best fifty so far read, follow:

Juliette C. Gibson, Brooklyn, N.Y.: June Warren, jilted three years before by the one man she has ever loved, marries Robert Gordon, whom she respects but does not love. She has told him of her past. On the wedding night, June and her husband go to the theater; she has prepared for him. They enter the living-room, June is nearly blinded by the flash of a revolver. Robert snaps at the lights, and discovers a burglar lurking. A struggle ensues, in which Robert finally overcomes the intruder. He motions to June, who stands nearby half paralyzed with fear, to “cover” the prisoner with the revolver that has fallen on the floor, while he calls the police. At the same time, he forces the prisoner into a chair, binds him, and tears off the man’s mask. As he does so, June, who is about to pick up the revolver, gives a gasp and steps back in amazement. The burglar is her erstwhile sweetheart—a man she had loved. Dumbly, the burglar searches her face for a sign of pity, silently pleading for her assistance. Meanwhile, the husband has situations. He picks up the revolver himself and orders June to go to the telephone, in the corner, and call the police. It is a tense moment. Both men are watching the young woman—one depending upon an old love to gain his freedom, the other depending upon his sense of duty and of respect to accomplish what he deems to be justice. Just what will June do?

Gerald C. Beardsley, Elgin, Ill.: Tom Ensign, who, unknown to his friends, is to be secretly married on the next day, entertains his bachelor chums in a final farewell party. Ensign has one weakness—drink. He has promised the girl, who is to join him in the city, New York, the next forenoon, that he will never drink again. The present is present, however, have no such scruples, and the party proceeds merrily. Desiring to keep his oath, but not wishing to tell the real reason, Tom informs his friends that he is leaving on the two a.m. train for Jacksonville, Illinois, on an important secret errand, and must remain strictly sober. They accept his false explanation on its face value. However, in a toast, Tom decides to take one more drink. It proves to be the start of another of his typical carousels. He becomes hopelessly intoxicated with in two hours. His friends are deeply concerned, and, watching in their efforts to keep him sober, decide that they must prove their friendship by seeing to it that he catches the train for Florida. Accordingly, they take him and his belongings to the station, buy a ticket and bundle him into a berth. The next day Tom awakens with a headache—in Jacksonville, Florida! It is well—ten minutes of the time at which he is supposed to meet the girl he is to marry—in New York.

Rules for the Contest
Anyone may participate. Contest closes at midnight, October 31st. Manuscripts arriving later cannot be considered. Winners will be announced in December issue.

Dramatic values, not literary merit, will be the basis for judging. Strong, original, situations are desired—not skeleton outlines of entire stories.

All manuscripts must be typewritten, double-spaced, on 8½x11 in. paper. Place your name and address in upper left-hand corner. Exact number of words in right-hand corner.

Three prizes will be awarded the winners, as follows:
First: $75.00
Second: $50.00
Third: $25.00

In the event of a tie, the full amount of the prize will be awarded to each of the tying contestants.

All literary and dramatic rights in submitted material will remain the property of the contestants. No manuscripts will be returned. Keep a copy of your work.

The judges will be:
PAUL BERN, Scenario Editor, Goldwyn Pictures Corporation.
FRANCES HARMER, Literary Advisor to William C. de Mille.
JACK STRUMWASSER, Scenario Editor, Fox Film Corporation.
Address all manuscripts to:
Genius in Makeup
How the Actor Interprets Your Photoplay Characters
By George Landy

After all, the court of last resort for the scenario writer is the actor who creates the personality for the screen. Of course the story must be accepted by the producer, it must pass through the editorial department, it must be transcribed into a continuity and often it must go through a process of alteration at the hands of the director. But in the final analysis it is the actor himself who is responsible for the visualization of the characters as you outline them in your story.

Having seen his remarkable dual characterization in "The Masquerader" and having also had the privilege of witnessing a preview of his second picture, "Omar, the Tentmaker,"—both of which were produced by Richard Walton Tully—I felt that he could be of service to the readers of Photodramatist in explaining how the performer embodies a personality for a story. "Omar, the Tentmaker" was vividly impressed upon me, so I asked Mr. Post to take this character as an example and explain his process of making up for it.

If all the roles which I have played in my long career on the stage, I easily class "Omar" as the most difficult characterization because of the man's complex nature. Here is a personality of which there is a hazy impression in the minds of every one of the legion of readers of the Fitzgerald translation of Rubaiyat. Practically no one has ever felt it necessary to make a clear picture for himself of the author of these immortal verses—of course, various illustrations of the Rubaiyat such as those made by Dulac and Vedder have been impressions rather than portraits. Yet as in the case of every novel or book which is transposed to the stage or the screen, there is always instant objection from the readers to the particular characterization which they witness. It never quite fits in with their own idea of the particular personality, although the actor invariably makes an exhaustive study of this personality and uses his every art to portray it in the flesh.

"Omar Khayyam was not merely the wine-bibber he is popularly conceived to have been. The City of Naishpur in which he dwelt was the golden spot of the Persian civilization in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, where it was at its height. Learned scholars and scientists abounded in this city and among these Omar was a leader. In fact, the present recollection of Omar Khayyam today—a recollection which is based on the writings of his contemporaries—reveals him as a high minded idealist, a profound philosopher, an accomplished astronomer and an advanced mathematician. His poetry was merely an avocation; as has been the case with many other historical personages, his lesser activity is the one which has survived through the ages. Even in his poetry we find many philosophical utterances based on his scientific studies. Fitzgerald has translated only about four hundred of the eleven hundred quatrains which Omar Khayyam wrote.

These were the more poetic verses and of course these are the ones that are familiar to the reading public everywhere. There exists a literal translation in the French known as the St. Nicholas Version which has been re-translated and of which there is a copy in the Bodleian Museum in Oxford, England. Before he wrote the play, "Omar, the Tentmaker," in which I appeared for
four years on the stage and which we have just made into a picture, Richard Walton Tully not only studied this literal translation but also spent several months in Persia and delved into various original sources so that he became imbued with the spirit and civilization of the times in which Omar lived and worked. This information was used in the Tully play and in the picture and all of this data was given to me by my friend and producer, so that I could study it and also become imbued with the fundamental background for this characterization. Religious lore, historical data, legendary stories—all helped me to evolve a convincing portrayal of this individual.

"The matter of costume was of course a comparatively simple one to determine. As a youth Omar wore the clothes affected by the young students of his day, and contemporary writers describe these in detail just as our fiction writers have described the appearance of the college student in our own day. Later Omar lost much of his position and became an humble tentmaker—this poorer costume was also easy to duplicate.

When it came to making up for these characters there was much more difficulty. Omar, as I said before, was a highly complex personality. Even as a youth his studiousness vied with his romantic impulses. Later when he had become more philosophical and perhaps somewhat cynical, his hedonism battled with his idealism, his pessimism with his faith. He understood the mob, he sympathized with it, he tried to advance its thoughts, and suffered the fate of all men who come before their times. Of his one great love Omar was robbed by the Shah of Shahs; yet always he had the faith in the return of his boyhood sweetheart.

"Students of character—and every writer of scenarios must be in this class—realize that there are certain physiognomic differentiations which reveal particular traits. In portraying Omar as a middle-aged man I did what every great artist must do; I made a list of this man's traits as they were revealed by his speeches in the play and by his actions, and also of those which he had to possess understanding the background which he owned. So, for example, he was a man of perspicacity; the wise man has two slight protuberances in the forehead directly over the eyes; these are the bumps of knowledge which every phrenologist knows and which middle-aged legends of learned magicians and alchemists mutated into tiny devil-like horns. A high forehead also denotes wisdom. Everybody knows that wrinkles around the corners of the eyes reveal a merry disposition; a drooping mouth proves cynicism, just as a square jaw proves determination.

All these characteristics had to be in the picture of Omar. This man was bearded—as was every Persian of any rank or standing—in his beard had to be the coal black of power, yet it had to be softened by the greyishness of sympathy. It is for this reason, to take the beard as an illustration, that I made the beard coal black and softened the color of the hair around the temples and cheeks. There was an aggressiveness about Omar which is revealed by the way he stood up against his contemporaries in behalf of a mathematically sound calendar—of which incidentally he was the inventor—this trait you will find in the picture of Omar revealed by the out-thrust of his beard and chin. Yet at the same time he had to have a softness in his eyes which his sufferings had put there; and this was accomplished by a certain shading.

"These are just a few of the details which confront the actor in making up a certain character, and it is for this reason that every photodramatist should give as much color as possible to his picture of the leading characters of his story. Thus he aids the actor to personify the particular individual he is portraying; and the more he aids the actor the better is the characterization.

A GOOD character actor is a joy forever, and I know that many exist in the picture colony as well as on the stage, but naturally I am more familiar with those who have worked in my pictures. Rose Dione, a charming middle-aged French woman, played the role of the Shah's mother in "Omar, the Tentmaker." Cruel, domineering, crafty and merciless—every one of these characterizations and all that goes with them you will find in her character portrait which accompanies this story. Boris Karloff, a cultured gentleman with all the continental polish, played two roles in the same play, which revealed his artistry. He was the Imam Mowaffak, a learned teacher of the Holy Writ, under whom Omar studied; also he played a mad mullah, a fanatic priest with all the intolerance of his kind. Two more contrasting pictures can hardly be found than these two portrayals.

"Raymond Hatton is another leader of character portrayal. His personifications are really memorable. Slight of build and quiet of nature, Hatton

(Continued on Page 92)
From Pen to Silversheet

By Melvin M. Riddle

XI—CINEMATOGRAPHY

EIGHTEEN thousand dollars for a single motion picture camera!

This astounding figure, representing the amount of money which has been invested in one of the machines through which the narrow strip of film runs, to be exposed with a light and shadow impression of the scene which is staged before it, will perhaps illustrate, more conclusively than it could be otherwise stated, the important part which this mighty work plays in the big complex art of film production.

Upon the camera and the skill of the man who operates it, hinges all the other branches of this many sided work, because if the camera fails to record the action and expressions of the players and the beauty of the settings and backgrounds, the work of all those who have put their energy and genius into such vital processes will have been in vain. The camera is the agency by which the works of all these various contributing factors are materialized; the wonder machine which condenses them all into one little strip of film, which, at the completion of the picture, is all that the producers have to show for all the time, genius, money and gray matter that has been expended in the production of the photoplay.

Is it any wonder, then, that the camera has been developed from its first crude state, to the present elaborate, perfect mechanical device which it is and that such men as Alvin Wyckoff, director of photography at the Lasky studio in Hollywood, where Paramount Pictures are produced and head cameraman for Cecil B. de Mille productions, have seen fit to invest snug fortunes in this little machine, equipping it with all the various lenses, devices and improvements which the modern age has made possible?

Neither is it any wonder that Mr. Wyckoff has, as perhaps have many other directors of photography in motion picture studios, instituted a very thorough and rigid course of training for the men who operate these machines. Mr. Wyckoff has maintained a veritable school for these men—some thirty of whom have gone out from under his tutelage, expert cameramen—starting them at the bottom of the ladder and training them in the fundamentals of photography, the chemical phases and the many incidental processes which are akin and subsidiary to the actual photography of the picture, and taking them up step by step until they have reached the ultimate goal—the positions of head cameramen.

In the first place,” he explained, when interviewed upon the subject, “I always select from the applicants for this work, men who have studied chemistry in college or high school. This knowledge is necessary to their first work in the laboratory in the developing and printing of films, color work, timing, etc. The applicant is first employed in the studio laboratory until he learns this chemical phase of photography. He is then assigned to a first cameraman as assistant. His duties as such are to give the machine perfect, constant care, cleaning and overhauling in whenever necessary and to be of every possible assistance to his superior cameraman. In this way he gains a thorough practical knowledge of the mechanical side of the work. After two or three years of this work he is generally in a position to be promoted to the post of second cameraman, whose work, under the supervision of the first cameraman, is largely of a mechanical nature, the first cameraman attending personally to the lightings, effects, etc., and assuming all responsibility for the second cameraman’s work. After he has served in this capacity for about two years, if he be qualified for this line of work, he fills the first vacancy on the staff of head cameramen. It will be seen from this that about five years continuous study and practice in the various phases of photography constitute the course of training through which the cameraman must pass before he is entrusted with the important responsibility of acting as head cameraman for a producing unit.”

MR. WYCKOFF explains that cinematography is not simply a mechanical trade which almost anyone so inclined, can master. “The cameraman must be every whit an artist,” he continues. “He must have individuality and certain character-
istic ideas of expression, the same as the director and the actor. He must develop his own art and avail himself of his own talents. No two cameramen use entirely the same methods or shoot a scene in exactly the same way. To photograph a motion picture is not simply a matter of focusing a camera and turning the crank. A cameraman who is perfect in his mechanical work and who demonstrates no ideas or initiative of his own, will never be a great success. Upon him rests the burden of proper lightings of the players and settings and the average director also depends upon his cameraman a great deal for aid in the composition or artistic arrangement of the photographic scene."

A knowledge of the camera and the artistic phase of photography in motion pictures, involves a study of the photographic values of colors, as many rich color schemes are used in settings and costumes for the players. Black, red, dark blue, purple, yellow, all photograph very dark, most of them black. Pink, light blue, light yellow, lavender and other lighter shades all register white or very light grey. Greys and sepias are known as neutral shades and photograph grey. It has often been a puzzle to the layman, perhaps, why the many rich color combinations are used in gowns, costumes and set decoration, if they are only to register on the screen as whites, greys and blacks. Mr. Wyckoff explains this by entering into the psychological phase of the camera artist's work.

Costumes and settings," he explains, "are made up in colors, principally for the inspiration they afford the cameraman, directors and play-
ers. It is impossible to enter into the spirit of a scene unless one keenly feels the atmosphere which that scene is supposed to represent. An actor on an empty stage cannot give nearly the performance that he can render when the same stage is realistically set with the investiture and atmosphere of the scene in question. In the same way, the motion picture actor can do much better emotional work when music is provided him by some artist on the sidelines. It reaches his soul and his emotions respond. Color values serve much the same purpose. They inspire not only the director and actors but also the cameraman, and he can often hit upon certain lighting effects which the cold, unromantic blacks, whites and greys would not have suggested. Can you possibly imagine a little girl dressed for a party, feeling and reflecting the holiday spirit for a motion picture scene if dressed in a party dress of sombre grey or other black color with the same degree of enthusiasm as she would express the same scene if dressed in a pretty frock of pink or lavender or baby blue?"

Illustrating further the importance of complete camera equipment and photographic facilities, the Lasky studio owns and operates twenty-six cameras exclusive of the one already mentioned. These average an investment of from three to four thousand dollars each. There are also several still cameras, a portrait machine and a few kodaks and graflexes.

The studio maintains a staff of forty cameramen, comprised of nine first cameramen, eight second cameramen, twelve assistants and a few still photographers and special operators.

---

Synopsis of "My Life"

By Sophie E. Redford

Said the despondent little wife
To the scenario dealer,
"Please take the story of my life,
'Twill make a big 5-reeler!"

Next came her husband, and said he—
With cheek to beat Mephisto—
"The story of my life would be
The best since Monte Cristo!"

And then their daughter—seventeen—
A sweet and winsome maiden,
The story of her life would screen,
With storm and passion laden!

The servants, butler, maid and cook,
Bespoke the movie traffic
To see how their own lives would look
Told, Cinematographic!

Which proves that in the silent art
Such is the screen afflatus
It touches every human heart,
Regardless of our status!
The Literature of America
How and Why it Differs from that of Other Countries

By William J. Neidig

We in America are much like other people; we read our own magazines, attend our own plays, see our own pictures. Like other people we are fond of stories, like them insist that they shall be told to us in our own way.

"Of course!" you will say. "And why not?"

At first thought, nothing could be simpler. Why not, indeed? But if you are a writer of stories, as well as a reader of them, the thing is not as simple as it sounds. In our own way, to be sure—but what way is that? What constitutes an American short story, say, as distinguished from a French or a Russian one? Is there really a difference? Is the difference fundamental? In what does it consist?

The answer is not to be found in this article, nor in any, but in the literatures themselves. The only way to see is to see. One does not learn to write by first learning how. He learns by writing. A writer's lessons are to be found in his waste basket—to the end of his life they are to be found there. He learns also by reading; his lessons are to be found upon his book-shelves, to the end of his life. The advice of the trained writer always is, find out for yourself. My own advice cannot be different.

Nevertheless a hint may be given, a question or two answered, that will prove helpful. A writer's point of view is not that of a purposeless reader. Writers may be assumed to be students of their art; serious writers, serious students. A writer necessarily has to put himself in the place of his characters, now this one, now that; after a few years he becomes able to do this with ease and sureness. Likewise when he reads he learns to put himself in the other writer's place in much the same way.

"What did this man try to do?" he instinctively asks himself.

The answer is sometimes obvious, sometimes obscure, but always it must be found. Every piece of good writing must have a purpose, and every part of it a purpose.

"What was this man's problem?" is his next instinctive question.

The answer here must depend for its value upon the experience of him who makes it. The easiest reading, that in which problems do not appear at all, is usually the hardest writing. "Easy writing makes damned hard reading." Sheridan said. The statement is not true, but it contains truth, as does its converse. Hard writing does not necessarily result in easy reading, but if the writer does not solve his problems he will either be hard to read or seem shallow, and if he does solve them he will have to solve them through hard work.

"His problem being such and such, how did he solve it?" will be asked next.

Here again the answer can only be made from experience. I am of course speaking of actual writers' problems, not of the very different things,
most of which to a writer are not problems at all, usually spoken of in text-books upon short story technique. The goldsmith finds a flaw in his ingot; he hammers and works upon it until it is no longer a flaw but an added beauty. How is the mere connoisseur, who judges from the perfected result alone, in which neither problem nor solution any longer appears, to say that such and such went into the workmanship at this point? He cannot. Neither can he say that such and such flawless smoothness was pounded out of such and such intractable inconsistencies and crudenesses, when weighing the perfected piece of writing. The writer can say it. He cannot say it to others, for he cannot prove that it was. But to himself he can say it. He knows. He has done the same himself.

THE last question he asks will also be asked instinctively: whatever the answer, he will ask it, even as George Bernard Shaw asked it when reading Shakespeare, although if he is wise he will ask it and say nothing, so as not to be misunderstood. Every work of art, however great, has this question asked about it by brother artists.

"The problem being such and such, could it have been solved better?"

To begin with our first question, let us ask it of some writer, American or not, who is well enough known to serve as an example. A man commonly held up in text-books on short story writing is Maupassant—let us ask it of him.

What was Maupassant trying to do?

We can deduce an answer by looking at his stories. The first and most obvious fact about most of them is that they are only about one-third the length of the modern American story handling the same kind of theme. Other facts are also apparent. In treatment they are not so detailed as the American story. Maupassant's characters are less closely motivated, exhibit less individuality, stand more sharply for their type. Greater emphasis is laid by him upon the story idea. The American story may be built around an idea, but its author subordinates it, much as Stevenson liked to do, until the story is not centered upon it but centered in the action that carries it. Greater emphasis is laid by Maupassant also upon style. Unlike Balzac, he does not translate well. In the French he is able to secure effects of almost poetic intensity through the use of phrase and word; these are lost utterly in translation.

As good an example as any is found in the story usually known in English as "The False Gems." Lantin, an humble clerk (any clerk), meets a beautiful and virtuous but very poor young woman, not so much as named, and marries her. She is described as the "perfect type of the virtuous woman" every man dreams of; her "simple beauty" had the charm of "Angelical modesty"; the "imperceptible smile" which hovered about her lips reflected "a pure and lovely soul." She made him unspeakably happy. Her only weakness was a fondness for buying paste jewels. One evening she happened to catch cold and a little later died. In the course of time he found himself pinched for money, and in the hope of raising a few francs took one of his wife's sham necklaces to a jeweler, where he learned that it was not paste at all, but worth a great sum of money, as were her other jewels also. He sold them, and six months later married a very virtuous woman with a violent temper, who caused him much sorrow.

That is the story. Why did the woman act thus? We are not told. Maupassant was not interested in her motives, nor in any one's, but only in his idea. The tale adds nothing to our understanding of life; yet it might have added greatly to it, written (say) by Rudyard Kipling.

Or suppose we ask our question of some of the Russians—perhaps Chekhov. "Rich as Russia has become in the short story," says Seltzer, "Anton Chekhov still stands out as the supreme master, one of the greatest short story writers of the world." We can ask him.

What was Chekhov trying to do technically when he wrote "Rothschild's Fiddle?"

THE story centers upon a coffin-maker named Yakov Ivanov, who owned an aged wife. His wife grew ill; and when he learned she could not live he measured her for her coffin, constructing it in her presence. She died, and he managed to get her buried cheaply, reflecting the while on his losses. A few days later Yakov himself was taken ill. Upon learning that he could not live he bequeathed his fiddle to a poor Jew named Rothschild. And now everyone in the town asks: Where did Rothschild get such an excellent fiddle?

Not much story there, in the American sense, the reader will say. The character of Yakov of course is what interested Chekhov. It would have interested Bret Harte just as much, and in addition to the mere picture of it, Bret Harte, or any other later American writer, would have presented the action arising from that character's conflict with himself or others. In the American sense the story stops before it begins. As it was not intended for Americans, but Russians, its treatment is right as it stands. The distinction nevertheless can be made.

Or when he wrote "The Kiss" what was he trying to do?

This even more clearly, from the American standpoint, is not a story but a truncation. A staff-captain named Riabovich, round-shouldered, spectacled and timid—he was of the Russian Artillery!—found himself a wall-flower at a dance after tea. Escaping with others to the billiard room, he grew even more bored there, and started back to the ball-room. He lost his way, opened wrong doors, entered a dark room, and suddenly found himself kissed by mistake. One of the ladies had imagined he was someone else.

The effect upon his thoughts and habits during the months that followed constitutes most of the story. In any country save Russia that fire must have had results; but Chekhov stops short the instant he smokes smoke. No one quarrels with him for that; he had a right to stop if his readers preferred to end their stories themselves.

The point is, that American audiences will not tolerate a play that ends with Act I. The American writer is obliged to follow cause with effect. In a way I am sorry that such is the case; for the first (Continued on Page 42)
"Blood and Sand"

THE screen version of Ibanez' novel, "Blood and Sand," demonstrates one fact very clearly:

It is possible for a film production, as such, to be too good.

This statement sounds a trifle anomalous. It is like saying that a lily may be too white, or that a bottle of quanto triple-sce may be too old. But a close examination of the photoplay in question will reveal the essential truth of the strange remark. For Blood and Sand is so close to technical perfection as a motion picture that it makes its appeal solely to the optical sense—and goes no deeper.

Fred Niblo, the director, evidently set out to make a thoroughly Spanish picture, reeking with atmosphere; and he has succeeded admirably in the attempt. The rattle of the castanets, the twang of guitars, and the frenzied cheers of the blood-thirsty mobs at the plaza del toros are almost audible on the screen. Every episode is embellished with a wealth of colorful detail.

But, in the midst of all this careful effort, Mr. Niblo forgot one important thing—the fact that he was supposed to be telling a story, and a supremely vigorous story at that.

I have no intention of stepping forth and defending the art of Vicente Blasco Ibanez—as, in the past, I have humbly defended Barry and Merrick and Schnitzler against the onslaughts of Cecil B. De Mille. Ibanez, to my mind, is one of the dullest writers of the present day. But the vast maestro of words which floods the pages of all his novels usually carriest with it a tremendously vital theme. This was particularly evident in Blood and Sand, and there is no earthly reason why Mr. Niblo and June Mathis, who adapted the story, could not have grasped this theme and presented it on the screen, far more dramatically than Ibanez did in his book.

Ibanez intended Blood and Sand as a sort of allegory, the treatment being the same as that which he used in "The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse" and "Mare Nostrum." He showed the Spanish matador swaggeringly heroic but morally weak, as a beast, who triumphs over stronger but inferior beasts, for the edification of that most horrible beast of all—the public. Juan Gallardo, in the bull ring, was a glorious figure, bold, dashing, alert and uncannily clever. Out of the ring, however, Juan was a cringing coward, superstitious, jealous and an easy mark for designing women.

As long as Juan remained the masterful matador, the public idolized him and hailed him as a superior being. But when Juan began to carry a little of his true personality into the ring with him, and gave evidence of weakness before the bull, the crowd scorned him. And, finally, when he perished, and his life blood mingled with the sands of the arena, they forgot that he had ever existed, and transferred their worship to a new God.

The universal application of this idea was demonstrated at the Polo Grounds in New York recently, when the fans booed Babe Ruth every time he came to bat.

Mr. Niblo and Miss Mathis have realized a part of this, but not nearly enough. Comparing Blood and Sand with Rex Ingram's interpretation of The Four Horsemen, they have fallen far short.

They have made one other bad mistake, by trying to keep the character of Juan Gallardo censorship-proof. His relations with Dona Sol are represented as being 99 1/2 per cent pure. Although she employs all the stock tricks of the heavy handed movie vamp in attempting to seduce him, he merely hurl:s her to the floor and strides home to his little girl-wife.

This, of course, weakens the story irretrievably. It creates the dangerously erroneous impression that a man can cope with a woman in the same way that he handles a bull.

I

It is almost axiomatic that the least pretentious pictures—or the least pretentious violetts, for that matter—are generally the best. William Fox has produced many gigantic spectacles, which have driven his press agents into orgies of verbose exaggeration, but the odd fact remains that his humblest efforts have proved the most meritorious.

There is the case of Tom Mix, for instance. Mr. Fox never rents regular theatres in which to exhibit Tom Mix films, nor does he employ high salaried publicity men to toil for their promotion. And yet there are many—and this correspondent is included in the group—who would rather see one reel of Tom Mix and his horse than all the reels of Nero, The Queen of Sheba, Cleopatra and Monte Cristo laid end to end with
a super-symphony orchestra as accompaniment.

Just Tony is a very simple story, featuring Mr. Mix’s horse—a noble animal, with more essential drama in his flanks than Betty Blythe ever possessed. One can afford to shoot many critical holes in the structural quality of the plot, but at the same time one can not deny that it is interesting and entertaining and, above all, genuine.

"Monte Cristo"

B EING on the subject of William Fox, and pretentiousness, we come logically to his latest monster, Monte Cristo.

A great many people have read Dumas’ novel, and a great many have seen the stage play which contributed so materially to the reputation and bank-roll of James O’Neill. The members of these two groups will derive a hearty laugh from Monte Cristo as a movie. From start to finish, it is burlesque of the broadest order.

There are others, however, who do not know the story. They will obtain but little enlightenment from an evening with Mr. Fox’s film, for its development is utterly incoherent. The spectator learns, in a vague way, that a young man named Edmond Dantes is arrested while carrying a message from Napoleon to someone or other, and is sent to a prison, the Chateau d’If, on a false charge. There he stays for several years—long enough to grow the falsehood of false beards that has been seen on any screen since Russel Simpson appeared in a melodrama entitled Under The Lash. After he has acquired the trick alfalfa, Dantes starts digging through the floor of his cell, and soon has made a neat papier maché tunnel to the cell of another prisoner, who is an Abbe, or something like that. The Abbe spends the next fourteen years giving Dantes lessons in deportment, after which he dies. Dantes escapes from the chateau, swims to a rock in the Mediterranean, cries “The World is Mine”—and then it is time for the intermission.

Up to this point, everything has been going fairly smoothly. But when the audience returns to its seats, and the picture is resumed, it seems that a great deal has been happening during the intermission that is never explained in the subsequent scenes. The plot apparenently has gone crazy, and no one is able to explain what the various performers are doing—or why.

Mr. Fox’s methods of ballyhoo promotion seem to be extremely effective with the masses, and he can get away with mayhem whenever he cares to spend a little money on advertising. But there is no law compelling anyone but critics to go to see pictures like Monte Cristo, and I trust that readers of this magazine will remain within their constitutional rights and stay at home.

"For The Defense"

INDOOR melodrama has never been worked as effectively in the movies as it is on the stage. The camera seems to need breadth of scope in recording action, and appears cramped when forced to limit itself to the narrow confines of a studio set.

For The Defense, however, is a marked exception to this rather indefinite rule. As a play, it was feeble and ineffectual; as a photoplay, it is vitally dramatic and thrilling.

I regret to say that I don’t remember who is responsible for the continuity in For The Defense, but he or she deserves unlimited credit. It is a thoroughly workmanlike job, built along sound and logical lines, and cumulative in its interest.*

The story is this:—A young opera star, engaged to a district attorney (where have I heard that word before?), falls under the baneful influence of a sinister Hindu swami. Having lost her voice, she believes that it can be restored by hypnotic methods. The swami, of course, is a fake—and the district attorney knows it. But he is unable to influence his temperamentally fickle, who goes right on with the treatment.

The swami finally gets the girl in his power, and is about to have his wicked will of her when — BANG!—a shot rings out, and the curve collapses on the floor. The subsequent events are largely connected with the district attorney’s attempts to ascertain who fired that shot.

This all sounds like obvious stuff and, superficially it is. But For The Defense proves that story de-

*Editor’s Note: The continuity is by Bccoli Marie Diz, from the play by Elmer Rice, and directed by Paul Powell.

pends more upon its dramatic potentialities than upon its originality. After all, is there such a thing as an absolutely original story—or an original song, or an original joke? You can point to “One Glorious Day” and “The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari,” but these are notable exceptions.

For The Defense is interesting because of the technical excellence of its plot construction, its direction and its acting. Or, if you care to cast these purely professional considerations aside, it is damned good melodrama.

"Nice People"

CURRENT American literature consists principally of diatribes against the younger generation from the older generation, and flippant back-talk from the youthful element. Nice People belongs in the former group.

It is in the nature of a big moral lesson, and like most deliberate moral lessons, it falls short of the mark. There is much truth in the statement that the life in New York’s younger set is shallow, artificial and sometimes positively vicious; but even the most self-evident truth is made to appear false when presented in a purely theatrical light.

For this reason, Nice People fails to reach its desired objective. Because it never touches real life in any of its scenes, it does not carry the necessary impression of actuality. The social vice in Nice People is bogus vice; and the same may be said of the homely country virtue which is brought in for purposes of contrast.

William De Mille is undoubtedly a great director, and Clara Beranger a competent continuity writer; but they have both gone far astray on Nice People.

Briefly Stated

Voices of the City. A crude melodrama about a villainous cabaret proprietor, who attempts to seduce an innocent young girl.

The Prince and The Pauper. Mark Twain’s famous novel interpreted by a Teutonic company. This picture was obviously made a long time ago, and is consequently extremely defective in its photography and lighting, but the acting is excellent and the story has been fairly well worked out.

The Bonded Woman. A drama of the bounding sea, with Betty (Continued on Page 34)
Writing the Short Story

By Carl Clausen

IV—Suspense

If for this chapter I again take the "Perfect Crime," Sat. Eve. Post, Sept. 25, 1920, as my subject, it's because this story is best suited to my purpose; suspense being maintained there, absolutely, by the development of the plot—in other words by what "is going to happen next"—instead of by any mystifying element.

I have been told that in my stories dealing with crime I have evolved a new method of handling the "detective" story. I smile to myself at this. Critics often discover qualities in an author's work which he never suspected was there, himself. However true it may be, I was not conscious of casting about for any new method, when I began writing these.

My method, as I now examine it, may be summed up as follows: I lay all my cards upon the table for the reader to see. There is never at any moment the slightest mystery about who committed the crime. The interest hinges entirely upon whether the perpetrator is going to get away with it or not.

Holding suspense by this method, I have been told, is difficult. I have not found it so. I fell naturally into this way of telling and have kept it up ever since, and I find that editors and readers like it, so I am using it whenever I get a good crime lead.

Crime, in itself, does not interest me—the motives and the result of it, only. The workings of the criminal mind has always held a great fascination for me.

I try to make my criminals of the brainy type. The brutal yegg does not appeal to me. My detective, Thain, is an ordinary quick-witted, common-sense individual, not a transcendent paragon of deductive powers.

A word may be said here about crime and its ramifications. Some hold that crime, or the impulse to commit crime, is a disease. In that case we are all more or less afflicted, I think. Crime is merely the breaking of the restraint which is placed by law upon individual action for the protection of the community.

A few thousand years ago, a man murdered his enemy, quite as a matter of course. If he didn't, the enemy would murder him. When he was hungry he helped himself with a fine disregard to ownership. When he wanted a wife he took his neighbor's, if there were no single girls at hand.

We still have the impulses to do these things, and it is no disease. It is a perfectly logical heritage handed down to us from our earliest neolithic ancestors. So if you have a sudden impulse to murder someone don't see a doctor. Take a cold bath.

But to get back to my subject. My procedure in creating suspense, is quite simple.

In the "Perfect Crime" I opened my story with a paragraph or two about a bank messenger's duties, risks and temptations. Next, I introduced such a man, Wally Griggs, the leading character. The reader knew from the title that a crime was to be committed. From my first paragraph he knew that a bank messenger was to commit it. His interest was aroused.

I proceeded at once to make him like Wally Griggs. This was not difficult. I liked the little, drab runt of a man, myself. I became so absorbed in his character that I forgot that I was telling a story. I was living it as Wally Griggs.

The money traps served a triple purpose—to heighten the aroused interest, to establish sympathy, and to plant a motive.

These three elements created suspense at once, so that when Wally's plan began to unfold, the reader was intrigued, immediately.

Was Wally going to get away with it, now became the center of interest. From then on, it was a matter of holding the reader's attention as the plot unfolded. There was no element of mystery in the story. The reader knew everything that occurred. So to hold him it was necessary to feed
him the plot carefully, bit by bit, and by a suggestion, here and there—such as where Wally hides his uniform among the rocks to retrieve it later, and when he deliberately courts arrest by Thain—give the reader a hint of what was coming and thus have him eager, and in a receptive mood, for the next step.

The scene on the pier between Wally and Halliday, the president of the bank, was the crux of the story. Upon Wally's ability to impress his employer with his new identity, beyond a shadow of a doubt, hinged the success of his plan, so I had him test this before he put the plan into execution.

This scene had to be handled with great care and with realistic naturalness, to be convincing. And here I may add, that in the motion picture, this scene over which I had worked so hard to make convincing, was flashed over, briefly, with the result that the logic sequence of the following events was greatly impaired.

How I chuckled with myself when I wrote this scene, in which little, drab Wally Griggs confuses the great financial wizard, Halliday, and later asks him for dinner at his house—and again, the next day in the bank, when Halliday asks Wally to go fishing with him, the following Sunday, for the purpose of meeting James Brown, his "double," and Wally's meek refusal because of religious scruples.

Funny as this was, its humor was not its only value. I had added to the suspense by Halliday's credulity. And the scene itself was charged with suspense for the reader, wondering if Wally was going to get away with the impersonation.

From then on, the reader felt that Wally was going to be successful. The interest again switched back to the physical aspects of his plan; his hiding of the bonds, his submersion into the identity of James Brown, for good, and his arrest.

So far, Wally's plan had gone according to schedule. But his arrest was followed by a brutal "third degree," which he had not counted on. For a bad half hour, his fate hung in the balance.

I decided upon this feature, first to heighten the suspense. But again, a triple effect was secured. In addition to increasing suspense, it aroused the reader's sympathy for Wally still further—also his admiration for the little fellow's doggedness of purpose—and finally at Halliday's arrival, the absolute knowledge in the reader's mind that the "hero" was going to succeed.

The word hero is quoted. You will please note that the story has no hero in the strict sense of the term. According to conventional standards of morality, the leading character was a villain. Extremely careful handling was therefore necessary to make him attractive to the reader, and what was equally important—to the editor.

There was no woman character in the story upon whom the burden of responsibility for the crime could be thrown, by sentiment. In fact the word woman did not occur in a single instance, in the whole fourteen thousand words. I had to rely, entirely, upon Wally's character and actions for justification of the "Crime." He therefore became plot as well as a character.

In the "third degree" scene I reached the high water mark of suspense. From that moment, a swift conclusion of the story was imperative, or the suspense would be carried to the point where the reader would become impatient for the final denouement.

This is an important matter. Be very sure that you do not prolong your suspense, unduly. Suspense can become as wearisome as the lack of it. Be fair to your reader. If you have led him to expect a certain thing, at a certain point, give that thing to him with all the grace you possess—not by verbal trickery.

WALLY'S twenty-five thousand dollar lawsuit against the city, following his brutal "third degree" treatment, accomplished his purpose from a pecuniary standpoint. But one thing still remained. If he were to be permitted to enjoy the fruits of his picaresque enterprise, it was necessary to confound everybody, finally and absolutely. He knew that detectives of Thain's type had a way of sticking to a trail, long after it had grown cold.

Wally's final stunt was the big punch the reader was entitled to. When the hero went back to his former identity of bank-messenger, after retrieving his previously hidden messenger's uniform, and was brought back to the Oil & Grain Commercial Bank by Thain, I had the reader guessing for the last time. And when he lead Thain and Halliday to the filing case, behind which he had hidden the bonds, and told his plausible story, haltingly, I felt that the reader would lean back in his chair and exclaim: "Well, I Swan!" I almost did this myself.

The bonds being returned, intact, and Wally having also "come back," the incident was closed. Thain would no longer trail the mythical James Brown. Halliday got his money back and everybody was happy, except the city which was out twenty-five thousand dollars. This being, as every tax-payer knows, a good deal less than a city council normally smokes up in cigars, during one year, the matter was promptly forgotten.

In justice to Halliday, who was at heart a good fellow, I had him give Wally three month's salary to take the sting out of firng him. This gave a neat little final twist, which the reader was in a position to chuckle over at Halliday's expense.

According to Aristotle a good story has a beginning, a middle and an end. This is clear to all of us. Nevertheless, a common error of the novice is that of mistaking a sketch for a story. A story must have the initial impulse to arrest the reader's attention, the complications to hold it, and the climax to satisfy it.

I try to start the suspense going in the very first paragraph or two. Sometimes by a speech of one of the characters, sometimes by a bit of action or by a scene reflecting the action.

In a recent story of mine, "Time—the Present," Saturday Evening Post, August 1922, I opened the story with a discussion that led to the perpetration of the crime, later committed by one of the men present. In fact, the discussion suggested the crime to him. I laid my cards upon the table, as usual. The crime was perpetrated before the reader's eyes. The suspense was the same as in the "Perfect Crime," that of an elaborate alibi prepared beforehand, and the thing which led to the appre-
PUBLICITY
By
GARRETT GRAHAM
The Kind that Helps
And the Kind that Hurts

PUBLICITY is something like electricity. It can hardly be described or defined. Properly controlled and directed it can be the source of great good—at least to the man at the switch, but let it get out of hand, let it be tampered with by some bungling novice, and it can create more havoc than a high voltage wire fallen across a busy street.

Charlie Chaplin, Mary Pickford, or Douglas Fairbanks would soon be forgotten were they to drop from sight for a year or two. The whole world knows of them now. But let them disappear for a while, and the fickle public will have new idols in their places.

Let Valentino's lustre fade—or his publicity campaign stop for a while—and he too, will stand in the wings while others bask in the glare of the public's spotlight. Even Woodrow Wilson, four years ago the whole world's idol and leader, is now but an obscure invalid in Washington.

There probably has been a great deal more money wasted on publicity than has been wisely spent. There probably has been as much harm done by publicity as there has been good. But dignified publicity, that is consistent and persistent, is a vital factor in the success of a writer or screen artist. It is as important to a player in the film industry as his wardrobe. To a writer it is next in importance to the facility for turning out salable manuscripts.

Few screen authors realize what publicity is worth to them. And of those few, a small percentage realize what form of it will do them the most good and how this may be attained. The astute ones in whom is happily combined the gift of writing and the commercial instinct to capitalize this gift, are getting better prices for their stories and are selling more of them, than fellow writers of equal talent. They know the tremendous effect on the public of constant repetition.

The publicity opportunities for a writer are necessarily limited. When a newspaper can gladden the public eye with an artistic photograph of some pulchritudinous Miss, there is no logical reason why the readers' love of the beautiful should be outraged with a picture of some unshaven, pipe-smoking author, brilliant though he may be. The Police Gazette would undoubtedly welcome with gladsome cry an article by Irvin S. Cobb, but would just as surely die of shame to have his picture on the cover. Of course there are some extremely personable females writing for the screen, but even their pictures are not much in demand for journalistic reproduction.

The kind of publicity that does a screen writer the most good is a succession of short paragraphs of not more than five or six lines, in which attention is called to what the writer has done or is doing. This is most effective in the Los Angeles papers, for the vast majority of manuscripts are purchased in Los Angeles and those who purchase them read the daily press of this city almost exclusively. A paragraph calling attention to the unusual plot of a picture showing at one of the Los Angeles theaters, and giving the author proper
credit for such originality, means more to the author than would an eight-column headline, with an interview and picture of corresponding blatancy on the front page of the London Times. This is no slap at the London Times. It is a mere matter of geography.

There have been those who glibly declared that an author, producing organizations will sometimes help build up his reputation, but this is generally left to the individual—until he is supposed to have that indefinite thing called "box-office value." Then his name will usually be shouted from the house-tops by the producer and distributor.

There have been those who glibly declared that all publicity is good, that the worst of it is better than none. So? Ask Lew Cody or Theda Bara! Both were victims of advertising campaigns, asinine and insulting to the intelligence of those who support the film industry. Both are now gallantly struggling to overcome the evil effects of this boom-range publicity.

The growth of the publicity branch of the film industry is interesting in retrospect. The pioneers knew they mustn't hide their light under the proverbial bushel. They were guilty of no such im- politic course. There sprang up an army of film publicity men recruited from the nation's press. These publicity men, of a genre peculiarly their own, succeeded the press agents of the earlier milk-bath and lost-elephant era. Editors first looked upon them with scorn and distrust, but the publicity men thrived, were fruitful, and increased.

Among the brotherhood were some who knew the public could not be handled with horny, unloved palms and who counseled some moderation in the broadsides of fulsome flattery about everybody and everything cinematic. But they were overruled by those above them. Each was expected to excel in superlatives the blatant bombast emanating from the other studios.

The publicity man would write of doll-faced children being forced on the public as so-called stars, and would surround them with an aura of erudition to arouse the envy of a mature scholar. Literature, art, and history he shamelessly rifled to get colorful background for fictional interviews with them. He would find an imposing pedigree for the most bourgeois. In fact, he just played smash.

There was an era of financial fustian, in which salaries, with a cipher or two carelessly added, were published broadcast. The publicity men wrote of marble palaces in which the film folk lived; described custom-built motor cars costing more than an average man's yearly income; invented idiotic fads by which these exalted of the earth tempted jaded appetites for pleasure.

Of course the public became surfeited with this bumptious buncombe and rebelled. The revolt was first observed at ticket-windows throughout the land. There was the recent business slump. There was also the era of mud-slinging at Hollywood itself, a form of publicity little relished by those who received it.

Now that the situation can be viewed dispassionately, it must be admitted that the industry itself is largely to blame for the undesirable publicity it received. But the recent calamities haven't been nearly so harmful, as far as thinking people are concerned, as the stupid piffle formerly sent out as favorable publicity. Fortunately, both are now virtually things of the past.

The publicity branch of the film industry is composed of former newspaper men who recognize genuine news when they see it and can write it in acceptable form. The days of the lost jewels and the film star missing in the hills are gone. The publicity men are simply reporters "covering" for all the press, the various phases of the industry with which they come in contact.

Each studio has its own publicity department engaged in telling of the activities of that organization. Consequently some of the individuals temporarily engaged do not receive as much mention as they would like, or, perhaps, as they deserve. These free-lance players, directors and writers employ free-lance publicity men to keep their names before the public. Many who have had journalistic training attend to this themselves. It is not vanity that prompts this, but good sound business judgment. Many set aside a definite percentage of their income for personal promotion. Wisely spent, this money brings good returns. But unless the proper media are used and this publicity is of the right sort, the money is wasted.

Most newspapers are glad to print legitimate news of film folk and their accomplishments, because the whole world is interested in motion pictures. Unsolicited news items, if they are to be printed, must be simply, concisely, and truthfully written. Amateur writers who have not yet arrived may test the truth of this in their home towns by sending to the local papers brief announcements of the manuscripts they have completed or sold. However, the publicity from which they will receive real value is that seen by the studio authorities.

The actor, author, politician, merchant, or lawyer, who declares he doesn't need or want publicity—or advertising, which is practically the same—is either trying to fool himself or those to whom he makes such a stupid assertion. The world can't know how good a man is if it doesn't know he exists.
Creative Art and the ‘Katy-Dids’

Cheerful Observations on Sin and Censorship

By Douglas Z. Doty

After listening to the oration of a motion picture magnate for an hour and twenty minutes at a recent banquet, I wandered home to hear the Katy-dids arguing in the eucalyptus trees. They kept it up longer than the orator did—but then they said more.

Katy-did is a progressive. Katy-didn’t is always a conservative.

The afore-mentioned orator performed a heavy task nobly—which was to inspire harmony and avoid controversy. But it is a curious fact that it takes more words to say nothing than to say something.

Listening to the Katy-did family, I realized that their unending conflict has its analogy in all creative work—whether of the magazines or of the motion pictures. The editorial temperament and the business man’s attitude are usually at variance.

The editor has enthusiasm. The publisher is full of caution. The Katy editor cries “Do!” The Katy publisher mutters “Don’t!”

The editor extracts a vicarious thrill from the brain child he fathers. The publisher suffers a chill if it is “different.” Age has much to do with it.

For years a certain “high brow” magazine was edited for an audience of men and women long since dead and most of them buried. And the magazine was almost as dead as the people it catered to. It became a kind of museum of Mid-Victorian relics—something to be gazed at but not to be handled. A few people still subscribed to it because their grandparents always had—a matter of sentiment, of tradition. And a few nouveaux riches placed it on their library tables, not to read, but for atmosphere.

But nevertheless subscriptions fell off rapidly because, contrary to Sir Oliver Lodge, the circulation manager could find no effective method of communicating with the departed, and besides there is no established rate of exchange with the spirit world.

The ‘Katy-Did’ Chorus

According to Mr. Doty, represents the uninspired and reactionary forces in publishing and motion picture production against which really creative minds have to struggle. Some times these “katy-dids” are politically appointed censors, some times a stupid public and some times the producers themselves. “Katy-did” is a progressive, “katy-didn’t” is a conservative and “katy-mustn’t” is a complete reactionary. Since the days of Socrates this struggle between progressive thought and the conservatives and reactionaries has been going on. It is worth noting, however, that the progressives invariably win out—even though at times the struggle seemed hopeless. You will enjoy reading this very “different” article.

The irreverent moderns continued to display a shocking lack of interest in the Civil War and the echoes of Stanley in Africa. The gray-bearded old gentlemen who were tootering to their graves, and dragging the magazine after them, had built up such a barrier of proscriptive “don’ts” about the dear old thing that not even Doug Fairbanks could have hurdled it.

The climax came when they said “Don’t publish Richard Harding Davis’ ‘Gallagher’ because it describes a sordid prize fight!” The interesting fact is that when these same sponsors were young this magazine was considered almost radical. It was criticised for publishing the writings of “that vulgarian Mark Twain!”

Then one day in 1914, just as the magazine was dying of inanition, two young men came into control; and an annual loss of $50,000 was changed into a profit of $36,000. A difference of $86,000 in twelve months—and this by the simple act of changing the slogan from “don’t” to “do”—two words which stand respectively for conservatism and progressiveness.

The most devastating “don’ts” spring from the highly sensitive moral perceptions of the large advertiser, who has become to the harried magazine editor what the censor has become to the producer of pictures. A manufacturer of furnaces may exaggerate grossly the economy of installing his particular product without worrying about the ethics of it; but let Robert W. Chambers suggest that his young heroine is in danger of losing her virtue if the hero does not arrive quickly, and the manufacturer becomes as full of sanctimonious “gas” as one of his over-heated furnaces with the damper opened. And he will hasten to cancel his advertisement.

I remember the ebullient wrath of a large advertiser because a certain writer confessed that his unregenerate heroine took champagne—when she could get it—and actually stated this demoralizing fact in a woman’s magazine. The advertiser by the way was a
manufacturer of grape juice, and perhaps that made his moral sense all the more acute.

Positive virtue is the triumph over temptation, and if you can't picture temptation you can't prove virtue. But there is no use explaining that to the chorus of Katy-dids.

In a certain issue of the Century I opened the magazine with a wonderful story by a then new writer, Phyllis Bottome. It was called, I think, "An Awkward Turn." It had to do with a loyal wife whose almost maternal love for her attractive but erring spouse made her overlook his weakness in an attempt to help him. She finds him dying in the house of another woman and as he dies he mutters a girl's name: it is not that of his present mistress, and the wife pitifully explains to the weeping woman that it is not hers either.

A grim jest, as the man dies; and a pathetic sidelight on the long suffering wife.

T HIS story did not present the glamour of perfumed sin; it revealed scorchingly the evils of licentiousness and its tragic reaction on innocent people. It was as moral a tale as I ever read. But two well-known advertisers complained, and at least twenty old ladies cancelled their subscriptions because the old Century had dared to recognize the existence of illicit love.

The publisher smiled grimly and said: "Don't do it again!"

Katy did—then Katy didn't.

But the climax of absurdity came with this same issue. And even as the publisher laughingly remarked, "Well, there's one department the sensitive advertiser won't pick on—and that's In Lighter Vein," in rushed the advertising manager waving a letter.

Now it happened that in Lighter Vein I had run a humorous sketch about a sleeping-car, descriptive of a fat man's difficulties in reaching an upper berth. The letter was from a certain railroad company, threatening cancellation of the advertising contract because we were holding sleeping-cars up to ridicule!

So you will perceive that a very potent if unofficial board of censors exists for the publisher and the editor, and it is just about as intelligent and reasonable as that which rides the motion picture industry today.

T H E S E censors constitute a new species of the Katy-did family—Katy mustn't! Katy mustn't suffers from a complication of diseases—exalted ego, hardening of the brain-cells and a kind of auto-intoxication. And these in the end will kill her off. But what the censor is doing to pictures is nothing to what the average producer is himself doing to the industry. His is a mathematical mind; for naturally his chief interest is money and there is an endless fascination in figures which represent money. His whole theory of business is based on the obvious fact that two hundred dollars are twice as desirable as one hundred. But his usual mistake is to apply mathematics to creative art.

A child has but two parents and a brain-child should have no more. But your ambitious producer is by now obsessed with the multiplication table, and the birth of a modern picture story reminds one of a royal accouchement in the days of Louis XIV when the unfortunate little prince came into the world surrounded by six physicians, ten ladies-in-waiting, a couple of mid-wives, the master of the bed-chamber, the master of horses, the king's equerry and about thirty odds and ends of palace flunkies. And everybody had a good time except the author of the child's very being who probably would have preferred to finish her creative job with less assistance and much less confusion.

If the royal offspring not unnaturally developed epilepsy or became a drooling imbecile did they blame the noble chorus of palace Katy-dids? No indeed! It was the royal mother who was in disfavor. She had not made good.

T HERE is only one way consistently to make successful pictures: a really creative writer collaborating closely with a really creative director should be subject to no other check than that of a well defined studio policy interpreted by a broad-minded executive. If this does not bring results the fault is not with the plan but with the personnel.

A vital story grows as a plant grows, acted upon by the slow creative forces of a trained imagination. Its various elements cannot, and never will be, supplied effectively by a group of minds untrained in creative work, and these elements merely tacked together with dramatic tricks.

"Business," composition in photography, skill in actual direction—these are the garments the brain child wears, but they should be made to fit, without altering the created values of the story and the characterization—otherwise the illusion of reality is lost and the picture fails.

It is being proved daily that the public will overlook mediocre production if the story interest holds and if the shadow characters which flit across the screen have in them the breath of life.

The story is, and always will be, the thing, let the Katy-dids argue as they will.

Magic

By Marion Carr Schenck

A coin thrust through a grating; then darkness, the purr of fans and Fairyland thrown on a screen. Here are palaces for the poorest, youth for disillusioned age, foreign lands for the stay-at-home, romance for the empty heart: light in little dark lives.

Old friends dance down a moonbeam to hold out welcoming hands. What largess of love they bring to shy and lonely, bitter and sad: laughter and pleasant sigh; warm, slow-brimming tear; flashing revelations of self; warning, encouragement.

Creeds and ideals that appeal even to those who may spurn school or church; strange, secret trysts, vicarious passions, intimacies beyond speech: a magic window opened on Infinity.

And we call this Miracle—Movies!
Titling the Motion Picture

Success of Photoplay Art Largely Dependent Upon Skill of Title Experts

EVERY-ONCE-IN-SO-OFTEN, as Mrs. Ruggles would say, somebody rises and announces a super-picture without titles. Invariably such a picture falls flat and fizzles out, unless a subterfuge is employed, as in the case of "The Ole Swimmin'-Hole," wherein Charlie Ray chalked words on a slate and held it up to view, neatly titling emotions and scenes. The importance of titles to a picture is generally recognized by picture-planners and picture-makers; they cannot be underestimated. The average movie-fan remarks that the titles were good, or they were not so much, after viewing a picture, little realizing the important part said titles have played in the development of the story he has just witnessed.

For, on the legitimate stage, the interest alternates between pantomime—visual pictures, and spoken word, and a scene can be run for thirty minutes, divided between these three appeals, without over-tiring the audience. But if the plot were confined wholly to the pantomime, the visual, it would tire the audience in considerably less time than this.

So, in a picture, cutting from close-up to long shots rests the eye but gives no intellectual stimulus, since the appeal is to the senses, and not to the mind. But the introduction of titles gives an alternation of interest, the visual, and the making one think. It requires little intellect to view pictures, but to translate them requires some mental effort, however unconscious, and the successful picture stimulates this effort so cunningly that the spectator is scarcely aware of it.

ROB WAGNER, expert titler out at Lasky's, confirmed these truths, and added others from his store of experience. Mr. Wagner made his living as an artist before taking up the writing game, and is peculiarly qualified to speak on the importance of titles, both from the standpoint of their actual wording and of their pictorial aspect. He not only plans and words titles for many plays, but also roughly sketches the cards and back-grounds themselves, as well as originating novel effects, before turning them over to the technical department.

As for the importance of titles, he said, no one could possible shoot a story in five reels—almost a novel—and get it over without employing titles carefully planned and worded. There are the titles that plant the atmosphere, interpreting time, and locale. Succinctly worded, they lay up a mental background in fifty well-chosen words, which would take two reels of footage and fatigue to put over. Footage saved is important to the producer, as undoubtedly fatigue is to the audience. So the titles which key the picture—put the audience in the proper attitude to receive the story—are extremely important. For example, a title in fine old romantic English, lettered in keeping, prepares the mind unconsciously for the tale of romantic type to follow, just as titles flippanly worded key, the mind for the coming satire. Indeed, Mr. Wagner admitted with a characteristic twinkle, pictures that have unaccountably failed as dramas have been cleverly re-titled into satirical comedy, over-emphasising the drama by the title, and have been deliciously successful. Slang and so-called jazz carefully chosen serve their part as well.
SOME titles are more explanatory, some assist in the dramatic up-building of the story, some serve to hasten or retard development. Helping the continuity and the spirit is the mission of still other types of titling, and when a tale is somewhat lame and halting, the titles are invaluable for helping it along. Mr. Wagner mentioned a recent story wherein the man's character did not ring true, and the careful and clever use of the titles helped strengthen the story. Title conferences are held day after day in the studios, the terse sentences carefully worded, shortened, changed, for seldom does the author put much time or forethought on the titles submitted in the photoplay. In the case, for instance, of William de Mille's script, said Mr. Wagner, the preliminaries are so thoroughly built that the titles are planned before hand, as an essential part of the story, this director regarding titles as the old Greeks did the chorus, as of highest importance in the production of their plays.

In the saving of footage, for instance, Mr. Wagner adds to clever titles suggestive backgrounds that are as carefully planned as the words. "James was late for dinner," reads the brief wording, and in the marginal corner, a stack of poker-chips instantly conveys a reason which would take valuable footage in explanation, or in the actual filming of the redoubtable James indulging in a game. Farce comedy gives excellent chance for marginal pictures with short titles, "laugh titles," they are called.

IN "Is Matrimony a Failure?" Mr. Wagner used significant symbols, as of ball-and-chain and rolling-pins, symbols of domestic infelicity and discord, along with his terse sentences, using care that the pictures did not compete in focal interest with the lettering. An interesting experiment in "Blood and Sand" was the use of old Spanish proverbs which June Mathis added as postscripts to the titles, in an effect of illumined parchment, exquisitely in keeping with the atmosphere of the picture. The intellectual person reads rapidly ahead, and the proverbs at the ends of the titles were timed to get over to him, the slower person not reading through the postscript, grasping the subtlety, if he did.

There are the flippant titles, such as Katherine Hilliker is noted for, which have revolutionized the appeal of travelogues and educational pictures. There are the amusing titles, the satiric, and, alas, the too verbose titles which are a sad error. Why try to paint over in artistic words the scenery which is to be painted in photography? Terse and to the point should be such titles to travelogues and nature-pictures.

THE over-doing of the decorations and background are confusing, and the artistic title is short and succinct, the color and background so planned so as not to compete in interest with the words themselves.

It goes without saying that the simpler and easier titles are, the surer they are to get over.

A visit to the technical end of a title department is illuminating; it is a much more important de-
partment than the average filmewriter or fan would think. There are the plastique titles, the stone titles such as were used at Goldwyn's for "Theodora" and other historical plays; there are the double exposed titles, and the pastel, the presentation titles, the silhouettes, the flat tones, the animated, and the poster effect. In the Goldwyn studios, the artists were hand-lettering titles on cardboard, achieving an oriental effect for an eastern picture by the use of bamboo letters and decorations. Patient and artistic photographing of moving water on a pastel background was resulting in rarely artistic and effective atmosphere for a feature picture in construction. Rupert Hughes writes his own scintillating titles, and they are as clever and appealing as his stories. Many writers have this head-line knack, while others lack the "punch" entirely.

The knack of title writing is especially apparent in those writers for the screen who formerly have been authors of stage plays. For instance, Bayard Veiller, the well known playwright, when he first attempted a screen play, found himself overfilling his manuscript with titles. This, of course, was second nature with him because he was so given to expressing action by "lines" only. Although they were unusually original and clever titles, a little association with screen experts taught him that a photoplay could not depend alone upon word pictures, but that the necessary action must be supplied intermittently. Within a short time Mr. Veiller's screen plays were becoming popular because of their curt and clever titles which harmonized so well with the action.

U P in the Paramount art department, Loren Taylor acted as guide and mentor, in a most interesting and instructive title-tour. His color-process has been widely successful, and the eighteen people at work in the department showed all the steps of the process, from the lettering and decorating through the development with its myriad steps back and forth into acid baths, out on drying drums, out to the projection room where the titles are run, criticized, corrected, and perfected as carefully as the picture is cut. In the not-so-old days, the title department consisted of two girls who cut out letters, pasted them on a black card, handling them with tweezers, and sponged them over with ink! Now the force of regular artists—like Lon Magargee, the cowboy painter—are trained in poster-work art-calendar ways, illustration, lettering and designing of cards; and they must study atmosphere period-architecture, costume and landscape. All the mysteries of oil, heated on electric stoves to the right temperature, the uses of barium sulphate, gelatine, zinc or tin, the wonders of the color-process are explained to the explorer, and lastly, the six machines which weekly turn out some twenty thousand feet of titles, colored and otherwise.

The ambitious writer of film-plots will do well to recognize and ponder over the importance titles play in the success of the photodrama, and naturally, the more care and thought given to their planning and wording—suggesting style and background wherever possible—the more likely is the spirit of the original story to survive the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune!
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Where Do You Get Your Ideas?
Imagination and Technique Essential in Fiction Writing

By Frederick J. Jackson

This question, or some variation of it undoubtedly has been put many times to all professional writers of fiction. The writer often is rather vague in his answer, for it is seldom that he pays much attention to how, where or when ideas or plot germ come to him. He gets them, somehow or other, and pays little attention, as a rule, to the incidents which suggested them. A plot may seem to develop in his mind out of absolutely nothing, yet if he tries to recall the genesis of a given story he will remember usually, that it had its inception in something seen, something heard, or something read, perhaps in a newspaper. A writer who has sold nearly two hundred short stories may have obtained the ideas from scores of different sources.

To what extent does inspiration figure in writing?

To quote Shelley: "The mind in creation is as a fading coal, which some invisible influence, like an inconsistent wind, wakes to transitory brightness; ... but when composition begins, inspiration is already on the decline."

This furnishes material for considerable thought anent inspiration. I think that my work, like that of most writers comes under the head of "composition." I might go further and say that it could be termed "a manufactured product." To me, the writing of a story consists of but two things, namely, imagination and technique. The first may be a natural gift, but the second emphatically is an asset acquired through work and study. I know of several writers who have all the technique it is possible to acquire through study, but they lack imagination and individuality in "style." At the beginning of my attempts to write I discovered that I had imagination. My natural "style," or best manner of telling a story, was soon discovered, and when I tried to write it any other way the necessary "sureness of touch" was lacking. Technique was acquired gradually. I might have taken many a short cut, and learned a list of "don'ts," by a course in short story writing. What knowledge I have was acquired painfully, by wasting much time and work on mistakes, to have the latter pointed out to me by editors.

It took years of work to learn this fundamental: every story consists of certain set elements, and the placing of these elements together correctly and in different ways is more or less mechanical.

The best answers to the foregoing italicized questions can be given by outlining the genesis of certain stories through a period of ten years. My stories have appeared in twenty-three different magazines. From this list I am not choosing the best publications; I am picking stories which will show best some different ways of getting stories and various sources of ideas which suggested stories.

"THE DEPARTURE OF MR. CASSIDY." Adventure, 1913:

This was my first attempt at a story, written in 1912. In Arizona, a cowboy had told me his experiences in returning to his home in the East. He had run away in his early teens to go "wild-wasting." Upon returning east after fifteen years on the range he found that he no longer fitted into the old home life. It was interesting, very. I thought, because it was fact, that it would necessarily be convincing. I decided to use this material as the last half of a story. Deliberately from imagination I built up the first half, using the idea that a man in possession of a desert water-hole, and capable of retaining possession through his accuracy with a rifle, is holding all the trumps. I created "Slivers" Cassidy who, through force of circumstance, is pursued as an outlaw. He is really guiltless and has the sympathy of the reader. The posse comes up to find him holding the water-hole. He has them at his mercy but on the other hand will be unable to escape except through striking a bargain with the sheriff. The latter and the posse, to save their own faces agree to let Cassidy go free if he will go east and let them return with a report that they have killed him. Humor is the keynote. So much for the first half of the story. The second part was Cassidy's experiences in the east.

I sent the MS to Adventure. The editor returned it with a letter stating that the first half was "pretty good stuff" but that the last half ("fact") "fell to pieces very badly." This was a decided shock to me, for the first part of the story, being purely fiction was not very convincing—to my mind at least. So, largely from desire to see what would happen and without much hope, I threw the last half of the story into the wastebasket and mailed the first part back to the editor of Adventure. I enclosed a letter stating briefly: "You said the first half was 'pretty good stuff!' Here it is."

By return mail came a check and a letter asking for more stories. The check went a long way towards convincing me that I could write fiction.

"SAGEBRUSH CONNORS," Pearson's Magazine, 1914:

My second story, written to submit in the prize contest held by Collier's in 1913. It was built up on an incident some old-timer in (Continued on Page 33)
The Importance of ‘Style’

By Hazel W. Spencer

I have been asked to explain what is meant by style, and why this is not as important in the writing of photoplays as in the writing of short stories.

Style in literature is like style in anything else; it is the thing which characterizes you, sets you apart from a thousand other people; in short, the thing which expresses your own individuality. If you have a distinct style in writing it means that you are original, that you have character, that you will not be lost to sight in the great whirlpool of mediocrity.

But it means something more than originality, for you may be very original and yet not possess style at all. It means, more than anything else, precision and delicacy of touch. The master of style is one who refuses to be content with anything less than perfection. Having written a sentence he rarely allows it to stand, but goes over it critically, changing a word here, a phrase there, substituting, eliminating, until the final arrangement bears almost no relation to its original except that both express the same thought.

So far from this being mere tedious mechanics he finds it the purest of pleasures; indeed, it may become a serious temptation. For a charming style may be developed at the cost of truth; in which case it is of no further value as art.

But fortunately, most great stylists are truth-lovers. There is something in the mere habit of mechanical accuracy that makes for honesty of mental outlook, and the man or woman intent on perfect literary expression is pretty apt to be the possessor of wholesome and right views of life. A polished style puts beauty into the simplest statement. It gives to language a smoothness and fluidity of movement like that of music. So also, words carelessly and cruelly put together may hurt the soul as discord hurst the ear.

Style does not come to the ordinary mortal as the result of a few exercises. It is the price of years of patient and unremitting toil: Toil that is a joy to the toiler, but not see the written words on the screen is no reason why we should not enjoy the scenario itself in printed form. Would the masterworkmanship of Shakespeare have been fully appreciated if we had seen his plays only on the stage and had never read them? Hardly.

If the motion-picture is to be taken seriously the scenario as a piece of literature must go hand-in-hand with the pictures on the screen. And the time is coming when the public, at least that part of it which reads at all, will expect to read the printed story of every worth-while play it sees.

There is delightful reading in a well written photo-play. It captures and holds the interest quite as certainly as a good short-story. The fact that it indulges in no useless or flowery language does not prevent it from possessing style; indeed it encourages style by the very nature of its restrictions. To convey an idea in a few perfectly chosen words is the very mark of style and a much more difficult thing to do than to present it in a confusion of superfluous phrases.

It is a mistake to suppose that the ability to write delightful narrative precludes the possession of a style appropriate to drama. Why should it, indeed? The mind of a trained writer is a facile tool, capable of many uses. It is the training that counts. Many of our clever magazine illustrators are equally at home with the brush or the chisel, their versatility including the whole range of pen-and-ink sketching, painting in oils and water colors, and sculpture. Discipline your powers and they will undertake whatever task you set them. Write well and you can write anything; it is merely a question of time and practice.

If hitherto you have been writing stories the effort now to ex-
press yourself in language appropriate to the screen will double your qualifications and strengthen the style you already possess. Try it. You will find your whole outlook tremendously broadened, your powers of observation increased, your language gathering both force and beauty. Laugh to scorn anyone who tells you that the photoplay requires nothing in the way of polish. It is because we have discovered that it does require exactly that we are at last in a fair way to see the business of the motion picture become an art instead of remaining merely an industry.

But this we must remember in learning to write; we must first learn to read. No amount of practice in the assembling of words will make you an author unless you have first familiarized yourself with the writings of men and women already recognized as artists. The fact that their number is legion need not deter you from making the acquaintance of at least a few of them. Study them. Learn the secret of their charm.

NOT all the masters of style are writers of fiction. Many of them, as for instance, Ruskin, Carlyle, Pater, the writers of the New Testament, have never written fiction in any form. But they are none the less helpful to us on that account. For perfect English is perfect English, no matter what its subject matter, and it is perfect English we are seeking.

But you will find something more than perfect English in the masters; you will find ideas. And ideas must come before all else in writing fiction that will live. The masters will give you great themes and the language in which to couch them. You can ill afford to confine your reading to light and trivial fiction if you yourself would become writers of the sort of stuff to win recognition.

Read the great dramatists; the historians; the novelists of a bygone age. When you know a little of all of them, or all of one of them, come down to the present day. But you need a background of the things that have stood the test of time before you cultivate the acquaintance of things that are current and, maybe, only passing!

IN and OUT of the DICTIONARY

A column of authoritative solutions to problems concerning the use of English, submitted by readers of Photodramatist.

"A. K. O'M., Harvard Blvd., Los Angeles. 1. Is it correct to say: "a story whose plot . . . ?" I have encountered this any number of times, for instance, twice in the July Photodramatist. I understand that "of" is incorrect and consequently incorrect when used in connection with a word of no gender. Am anxious to be set right on this point.

2. Which is the correct punctuation in the following:


"Blood and Sand", starring Rodolph Valentino.

3. In your August article you use the phrase, "Grammatical error". I recall vaguely having been told in school that there is no such thing as a "grammatical error" or "grammatical mistake". Is either cannot be grammatical. I say this is recalled only vaguely, so please set me right on this point also.

Answer: 1. Strictly speaking, the pronoun "whose" is purely personal and if we are inclined to be punctilious we shall not make use of it in relation to things. However, it has been employed by many distinguished writers, and a number of the standard dictionaries agree that it may be used either way.

2. The latter punctuation is the correct one. You are quoting the title of the picture and your comma is not included in the quotation but serves to distinguish it from the rest of the sentence.

3. The expression "grammatical error" is largely sanctioned by usage. I remember hearing the matter discussed by young instructors from various universities and the unique quietus put upon this sentence. "Here is a story whose" to be a personal proper noun and which runs unexpectedly along in what is known as the narrative.

Answer: Your difficulty is in the exact use of the relative "for which". This is a very common mistake of the beginner who, after the manner of youth in general, is apt to be angular rather than graceful. If you want a flowing style you must avoid angles. Avoid the repetition of connective as far as possible and substitute the participle. Thus: Here is a story containing neither conflict nor struggle but running uneventfully along in what is known as the narrative style.

"J. W. G., Portland, Oregon." Are these expressions correct?

"No doubt but that"... "I cannot help but feel, think, etc.".

Answer: Both these expressions are in common use and upheld by a number of well known authorities. Personally, I dislike both very much and consider the conjunction entirely superfluous in each case. "No doubt that..." and "I cannot help feeling" express the same thing, and it is much better practice with which to begin than with which to finish.

"J. A. W., South Fifth Street, Alambra." May "as" and "since" be used interchangeably in such sentences as the following? A further search is unnecessary as it has been proven that he is the criminal.

Answer: When used in the sense of "because" since is preferred to as.

The distinction is very fine but there is one, as you will discover if you study the best literature. Your sentence should read: "Further search is unnecessary since it has been proven that he is the criminal."

"M. J. W., Wisconsin." What dictionary do you recommend?

Answer: Any dictionary is bound to be of some benefit to anyone wishing to learn. The best books on any subject are always the most complete, but upon the essentials they are nearly all agreed, whether late or early. The Century Dictionary and its own comrade, Harper's, is not merely a dictionary but an encyclopedia as well.

"J. A. W., New York City." Please give me the names of several writers whose style you consider most nearly perfect.

Answer: Robert Louis Stevenson; James Branch Cabell; R. D. Blackmore; Victor Hugo; Guy De Maupassant; Edgar Allen Poe.

"A. F. S., Canada." I am studying at night-school in the hope of polishing up my English. Do you advise the study of any foreign language in this connection?

Answer: Heartily. The better you understand any other language the more surely will you appreciate and improve your own. And it is true this is true of those languages with which English is most closely related as for instance the French and Italian, and the ancients Latin and Greek. You will find the study of French fascinating and illuminating. If you have never studied Latin or Greek delve into them in your spare moments and see what a vast new country they will open up for you.
Art and Politics

Said The Lancer in the Los Angeles Times of September 3rd last: “A prominent film director, who was raging mad at the last story put over on him by that mysterious and bugaboo ‘They,’ who figure so unflatteringly in every cussful interlude in filmland, let out a dark secret in his wrath. “The eminent authors, he declared, had not been a fizzle. They had come to the industry with good stories, with fresh, original and workable ideas and, with proper co-operation, they could have put the films on a better and infinitely more interesting level. “But ‘They’ did their damnest to queer any and every original suggestion offered by these brains co-opted from the outside, hence many authors left in utter disgust without making a picture at all, and all those who did make pictures were bitterly dissatisfied. “And who is this dark, mysterious ‘They’ which is proving such an insurmountable barrier between the public and ‘better pictures?’ “In this instance I tried to track the bogey down. But there is a marked reluctance to be specific, to name names and nail individuals, no matter how much cussing is lavished on the iniquitous ‘They.’ “But I rather gathered that the eminent authors were the victims, for the most part, of the staff scenario writers, who, in fear of their jobs, have formed a close corporation, offensive and defensive. The sinners among them are some of those who got into the game when it was young, but whose ideas, such as they were, have long since gone stale, been worked over and over in every conceivable ringing of the changes, but who enjoy a reputation for being ‘experienced.’ And unto whom, therefore, the eminent authors were ‘delivered’ for technical aid and instruction. This ‘aid’ often took the form of opposing every original or subtle idea with the arbitrary assurance that ‘it couldn’t be done,’ that ‘it wouldn’t get over,’ that ‘Now I am experienced in this game and I know what will go and what won’t.’ “No wonder so many of our eminent authors wonder why they came. No wonder pictures are still what they are.”

The above quotation goes to show that this sorry condition of affairs in filmland, and which we have already pointed out in the pages of Photodramatist, is beginning to attract the attention of the outside world. It has hardly reached the point of a conscious consciousness on the part of the entrenched insiders. The scenario departments are not quite on a par with the closed shop. We are inclined to believe that this and other evils of our industry are directly to be laid at the door of the powers that be. It is those at the top of certain studios who, having neither vision, humanity nor education, react disastrously on the ethics of our profession, demoralize the staff and make cowards of us all.

If faithfulness is not appreciated, if good work is rarely recognized, then the employee has nothing to build on, and only his pay check to look forward to. And then we see the paradox of a man who is powerless to help himself but powerful in his opportunities to hurt others — and especially in his opportunities to mar the product of a clever writer’s pen, because he is on the inside. And he knows what would happen to him if a small army of trained and successful fiction writers were ever allowed thoroughly to master the technique of screen writing. His day would be over. So, we see the outside writer a victim of the inside writer who is himself a victim of the boss who in turn is a victim of his own egotism and ignorance. A vicious circle, this, that can only be broken by the advent of more men at the top who possess an artistic conscience as well as business shrewdness and who know why a picture is good, when it is, and whom to thank for making it so! Like “old father William,” a number of producers have been standing on their heads, in a frantic effort to make better pictures. The trouble with this posture is that we are apt to see our little world upside down.

If more men at the top were only big enough to recognize their own limitations, delegate authority to trustworthy experts, and be generous in giving credit where credit is due, these men could still hold the reins, and ride to victory.

The Writing Director

In his article entitled “The Conspiracy of Incompetency,” in the September issue of this magazine, Douglas Doty suggested “that pictures more and more are to be made by writing directors”—and indeed it is the only solution for the future. I do not mean to indicate that these men will themselves originate the story, but that they shall themselves be capable of moulding the material into effective picture form in close collaboration with the continuity writer.”

H. H. Van Loan, one of our best known writers of stories for the screen, in commenting to the editor on the above prophesy declared his belief that we would go a step further—that in the future, the author of the story would himself collaborate with the director and sit in on the set with him, throughout the shooting.

Rex Beach and Rupert Hughes have already established this precedent. Others, equally prominent, have not been so successful. But this is a logical development; and where the writer goes deep enough into the art to learn continuity writing himself, the arrangement is ideal.

Frank Lloyd writes his own continuities, two scenes to a page on a small loose-leaf leather covered book which fits in his pocket, but he is a rara avis. Many directors not only are not capable of writing contin-
unity themselves, but hardly bother to read closely the script provided.

A certain famous director, who, to do him credit, has turned out several splendid pictures not so long ago, went off on location and sought to improve the script. He decided the story was weak in sentimental interest and shot several reeds of added love scenes of passionate intensity between the leading man and the star. Unfortunately he had not carefully read his story beforehand and failed to note that the leading man, in the end, turns out to be the father of the young star.

It isn’t at all a bad idea to have the author around when the director mislays the plot.

### Don’t Blame the Scenarist

A n observing stranger in Hollywood might imagine it a literary center and he might be impressed especially with the character of the men he meets in trolleys, on the streets and lolling in motor cars, avidly devouring books and magazines; and he finds them browsing feverishly among the shelves of the book-shops. They are athletic-looking men, beech-browned and coastless. Not the type that is usually overcome with a lust for literature. As a matter of fact they are of the movies—small-fry producers, and directors,—all searching with child-like eagerness for a new plot or a new character that can be “appropriated,” if it can’t be bought.

And presently, by a process of mental regurgitation, these gentlemen will present their “original” ideas to the office slaves, the scenarists; and each has a similar thought. He will say, “I have a great idea for a story, but I haven’t got time to work it up myself. Listen—the district attorney is in love with a beautiful girl whose father is the head of a bootlegging gang. She doesn’t know this; she thinks her father is an honest man, making his money selling second-hand cars. Get me? The punch scene is where the district attorney, who is after the old man, not knowing he’s the father, comes to call on the girl. Her father is there and hides. But the district attorney sees his hat and gets jealous. He accuses the girl of having a lover. The district attorney goes nuts and searches the house. The girl locks a door and puts the key in her dress. The district attorney threatens to shoot through the door if she won’t open it. She says—you know, quiet and tense—Don’t shoot, Horace, or you’ll be sorry! He shoots—and here’s the surprise kick: this is good!—The old man has made his getaway and when they open the door, the district attorney sees his own father who had sneak ed in to get a quart of synthetic from the old bootlegger. But listen, Al. Don’t kill him—just a bullet or two in his shoulder.”

And as the dazed scenarist dumbly stares, the director casually adds, by way of a parting suggestion, “Molly wants a dance, so work it in a cabaret scene. And when the remorseful district attorney looks down at his wounded old dad, full of booze and bullets, we’ll fade back to a Roman orgy that will give us a chance for a big set.”

And this is why Mr. Sherwood and other eminent critics are sometimes misled when they say, “The director struggled manfully to make the most of a poor story and a worse continuity.”

### Concerning Mr. Packard

I n the “Christian Humanitarian,” published in Cambridge, Massachusetts, there recently appeared an article by Edward H. Packard entitled, “Lost Leaders of the Stage—Real Enemies of the State,” in which he states that “the theatrical nest is fouled all the way through, screen and stage, and the press all over the country is part of it.”

Doubtless, few people have heard of Edward H. Packard—we never have—and will have to accept his own introduction of himself as “an old time scenic artist, who may be credited with knowing his subject, and who is perfectly en rapport with constructive dramatics.” Incidentally, he admits that he is a “scion of the old Puritan stock.” Perhaps this admission will in some manner account for the extreme viewpoint which characterizes his statements—if indeed account may be given for the unfounded and unjust utterings of some few such radicals who undertake to better the world by criticizing anything and everything in it, rather than by offering constructive solutions for its shortcomings.

The subject Mr. Packard has chosen, is, according to his qualifications, more weighty than he is capable of discussing—thrice weighty, since he has combined three very broad subjects in one, namely, stage, press and screen, and has condemned them individually and collectively as representing all the licentiousness, perversion, lewdness, debauchery and crime of the country. “The press,” he states, “outrages decent homes by thrusting on their attention the vilest sex suggestions in theatrical advertising, illustrations and write-ups; they will not allow an employee honestly to write up lewd and brutish plays; they endorse character-destroying plays and movies. The modern stage represents the loosest of the loose class. What has the stage done of late but curse humanity with lust and brutalism woven into its shows?”

Then, after a thorough treatise on the sins of stage and press, he launches his tirade against motion pictures, asserting that screen plays are based on sex perversion and animal courage—95 per cent physical and 5 per cent spiritual. Again does Mr. Packard prove himself lacking in facts: or perhaps he sees fit to overlook such uplifting and spiritual photoplays as “The Miracle Man,” “The Great Redeemer,” “The Old Man,” “Over the Hill,” “Ten Nights in a Bar Room,” “Earthbound,” “Smilin’ Thru,” and “Borderland,” all of which were founded upon thoroughly spiritual themes; while, during the past two years, many many others have been produced, having for their basic plots, maternal and paternal love; brotherly and sisterly love; love of country and of fellow man; American home life; life in the great outdoors—to say nothing of the wholesome, heart-lightening comedies with little or no plots; and the numberless educational reels which in themselves counteract all the possible evil wrought by the so-called “sex” dramas. Space here will not permit tabulation, but Mr. Packard’s apportionment of good and bad themes in our pictures is altogether erroneous. He is either very

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I T would be poetic to say that the present lull in production in West Coast studios is due to the Indian summer. More truthfully, however, the cause lies in the fact that when the industrial end of motion pictures "opened up" early this summer all the producers got busy with a vengeance, and almost simultaneously. Consequently, we find most of them today in the state where they have just completed the actual filming or the cutting of their pictures and are taking them to New York on personally conducted tours to arrange for their distribution programs. This applies not only to the independent producers, of whom a veritable legion sprang up this summer, but also to established organizations with entrenched distribution contracts.

First National Typical

A TYPICAL illustration of the latter situation is found in the First National group on the West Coast, which includes Guy Bates Post, the Talmadges, Dorothy Phillips, Jackie Coogan and other celebrities. All of these stars have finished within the month just past and will not commence working again until some time in November.

The only really active units are those of Preferred Pictures Corporation under the leadership of B. P. Schulberg. "Ching, Ching, Chinaman," Willbur Daniel Steele's story, is being transferred to the screen by Tom Forman, with Lon Chaney, Harrison Ford, Marguerite de la Motte, Walter Long and John Sainpolis in the leading roles. Katherine MacDonald is making "The Scarlet Lily" by Fred Sittenham, under Victor Schertzinger's direction. Although most of their productions are from original stories, Preferred Pictures has just purchased the film rights to "The Flero," last year's New York stage hit; Gansier will direct.

Buster Keaton continues to turn out his marvelous laugh-provokers under the direction of Eddie Cline. His present leading lady is Phyllis Haver—incidentally rumor hath it that the fair Phyllis will soon be a star in her own right and will make feature length pictures under the direction of F. Richard Jones. Speaking of Sennett's, Kathryn McGuire returned to the comedy fold for one picture, playing opposite Ben Turpin in a travesty entitled "The Shrieck."

Lasky Studio Active

Two Lasky companies have gone East. Thomas Meighan will film George Ade's second original screen story, "Back Home and Broke," under the direction of Alfred Green, with Lila Lee playing opposite the star. George Melford will direct Raymond Hatton, Leatrice Joy and Jacqueline Logan in Joseph Hergesheimer's "Java Head."

IT seems a regular feature for a famous star to come to the Metro West Coast studios each month; the latest arrival is Mae Murray, who will film "Coronation" under Bob Leonard's direction. Lauretta Taylor progresses on "Peg o' My Heart"; her cast includes Mahlon Hamilton, Ethel Grey Terry, Russell Simpson and Vera Lewis. S-L Productions has just finished "Quincy Adams Sawyer" with Clarence Badger directing a cast headed by Blanche Sweet and Barbara La Marr. Incidentally, it has been announced that Winifred Dunn is now editorial chief for the Sawyer-Lubin Productions.

Universal Busy

EMILE CHAUTARD is the latest star director to arrive in Universal City. He is directing Colleen Moore and Cullin Landis in an original entitled "Forsaking All Others." Priscilla Dean is also working on an original, "White Tiger" written by her director, Tod Browning; her support includes Matt Moore, Raymond Griffith and Walter Beery. Von Stroheim is now actively producing "The Merry-Go-Round." Herbert Rawlinson is busy on "One Wonderful Night," directed by Stewart Paton with the lead played by Lillian Rich; Gladys Walton's vehicle is "The Run-away Girl" directed by King Baggott with Robert Agnew heading the cast; Frank Mayo is busy on "The Hot-Head" under the direction of Edward Sedgwick.

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A CORRESPONDENT writes to ask me, "what method of procedure must one follow if, in writing a photoplay we find a real strong situation in a book or a magazine article? I don't want to steal someone's stuff; still if I were to write a story and use a part of a story written by another, or write one similar, would it leave me liable?"

Personally, I am opposed to any form of plagiarism. I believe the meanest kind of a thief is he who would bow so low as to steal the fruits of another's brain and present it as his own creation. It is nothing more nor less than grand larceny, and the one who descends to such thievery should receive no more leniency than the midnight visitor who crosses our threshold without an invitation and seeks to rob us of our valuables. We know there is little that is new in the world today. There is nothing new in the plot line. In fact, it is almost impossible to be original. But, the majority of us take our work seriously and the results, as a rule, come from serious inspiration and an effort to construct something worthy of commendation. Every story is a test of our creative ability, our imagination. We may unconsciously, assimilate situations and scenes as a result of extensive reading of the classics, novels, magazines and newspapers, but these will almost certainly be altered and improved by the touch of a craftsman so as to make them almost unrecognizable by the layman. If we believe a thought is original with us, and are convinced beyond all reasonable doubt that this particular thought came to us without any outside aid whatsoever, we are entitled to the praise resulting therefrom. Even though it may bear a resemblance to something written by someone else sometime, somewhere, no one has the right to call it plagiarism. A plagiarist is one who knowingly, and deliberately, appropriates a theme, plot or situation and puts his name to it with the knowledge that it was stolen. The law should provide a severe penalty for such a person. Anyone who would steal the results of another's brain is the most miserable kind of a thief. They use the ability of others as a mask for their own ignorance, and, like all other miscreants, are usually found out. People who have to lean on others for support seldom journey far.

I WANT to thank those readers of this department who are flattering me by sending me their scripts to read. I note that many of them are written in long-hand. Life is too short and the days pass all too quickly for me to read manuscripts submitted in this way. In fact, it is a waste of time to send me scripts. My judgment, or opinion, is not infallible. I have written stories which I believed would hypnotize producers and have them clamoring to offer me huge sums for them. I was disappointed. On the other hand, stories which I believed would meet with disfavor from the critics and the public, have been received with considerable appreciation. Nobody knows better than the writer, whether he has a good story. For the information of those who feel that they would like to have my opinion on their stories, I will admit that I have sworn off reading scripts. I have a perfectly good reason. About two months ago a young aspirant mailed me a weighty manuscript and asked me to give him my honest opinion as to its merits. I have always been eager and anxious to aid anyone who believed they had God-given talents. I was desirous of helping this particular youth and I read his script. I studied it carefully for a couple of days and then wrote a detailed criticism of his story and sent it to him. A few days later I received a very nice reply, wherein he said that he disagreed with my criticism; that I commented on his story in exactly the same manner as he thought I would; that it was much better than some of my stories he had seen, etc., etc., etc., and that, like the majority of those who have made a little progress, I was unwilling to assist a new beginner! I had done my very best to aid this aspiring writer, and had honestly and conscientiously studied his story and made such suggestions as I deemed necessary to improve his work. He had manifested his appreciation in glowing terms. So, I resolved that, henceforth I would not read any more scripts. All of which reminds me that, I have never submitted a story to anyone, other than a prospective purchaser, to learn of its merits. The best way to find out if you have a good story is to submit it to the man you want to sell it to. That is really the only way. He will give you a frank and unbiased opinion. In fact, his is the only opinion that counts.

SOMEONE recently asked me: "What is meant by the 'spectacle' in a story?" The court-room scene in "Madame X" was the "spectacle" in that story. It is the scene which tends to magnify the production and puts in the "wallop." Griffith knows the value of the "spectacle" and nearly all of his pictures have had them. The "spectacle" in "Way Down East" was the big ice scene; in "The Birth of a Nation" it was the ride of the klansmen; in "Orphans of the Storm" it was the big scene at the guillotine; in his "Hearts of the World" it was the battlefield scene. "Blood and Sand" has its "spectacle" in the scenes in the arena. In "Hurricane's Gal" the "spectacle" is the storm at sea, and the smuggling ship pursued at sea and captured by a U.S. destroyer, while in "The Virgin of Stamboul," the scenes showing "Sari" dashing across the desert at the head of the "Black Horse Troop" and the fight in the stronghold at Buskra formed the "spectacle." In "The Storm" the "spectacle" was the big forest fire. It is not necessary to have a "spec-
tacle" in every story. Domestic dramas don't have them. But they are necessary in big, colorful stories and they furnish the "wallop" needed in production of this type. "The Miracle Man" didn't have a "spectacle," but it will live as long as moving pictures survive.

* * * * *

T HE coming season will usher in a boldly num-
ber of so-called "costume" productions. Many peo-
ple are confused by this word "costume" as used in
connection with moving pictures. A costume pro-
duction is a picture of a certain period in the world's
history. Some think that any picture which deals
with life East of Suez is a costume picture. That's
a wrong conclusion. Any story which reveals con-
ditions as they are today, in any part of the world,
is not a costume play. To be a "costume" play it
must deal with a different age. "The Virgin of
Stamboul" was not a "costume" picture. Neither
was "The Shiek," "Ben Hur," "Nero," "Deception,
"Passion," "Omar, the Tentmaker" and "Theodora" are "costume" pictures because they re-
veal the customs of a people who lived in a distant
age. Such pictures have not been particularly pop-
ular in the past. Possibly this was due to the fact
that they usually lacked sufficient plot to interest
the public. Luxurious settings, gorgeous back-
grounds and extravagant wardrobes are not capable
of holding our attention, unless they are accom-
panied by plenty of action and a mighty good plot.
A good "costume" picture will reap a far greater fi-
nancial harvest for its producers than a modern
story. A modern story soon outlives its usefulness.
But a "costume" picture can go on indefinitely be-
cause it can be re-issued time and time again, year
after year. This is because the particular style of
dress worn by the characters never change. "Cost-
ume" stories, nevertheless, are hard to sell, I know.
I've written one or two.

* * * * *

A BOUT the biggest pest I know of is the "ex-
perienced" staff scenario writer whose con-
versation consists of, "it couldn't be done," "it
wouldn't get over" interspersed with "Now I am
experienced in this game and I know what will go
and what won't" and "this story reminds me of,"
or, "it's too much like." We can forgive a lot of
excuses, but the editor who is always whining that
our story is similar to something else she has read
or heard or written herself is the greatest pest of
all. And, just as long as producers permit their
scenario editors to write, instead of devoting all their
time to reading stories, just so long are we going to
be confronted with these joy-killers. Magazine edi-
tors rarely write stories. It seems to me as though
the scenario editor who also writes for the screen,
uses most all of his efforts in making certain that
no "outsider" sells a story to his firm. "Live and
let live" is a pretty good motto.

* * * * *

F AITH is a wonderful thing. With it, you can
do almost anything; without it you can do
nothing. If you believe you can write, you can.
If you have no faith in your own ability, then you
will never accomplish much. This was brought
forcibly to my attention recently. I was strolling
along the beach at Santa Monica, near the canyon
where I live, when I beheld something which shall
remain indelibly stamped on my memory as long as
I live. A youth, who for sixteen years had been
a helpless cripple, was instantly cured by the faith
healing blessings of an utter stranger who chanced
to pass the spot where the invalid youth was re-
clining. In a stern voice, the Christ-like stranger
commanded the boy to rise, and, as I watched, the
youth slowly struggled to his feet, and, steadying
himself a moment, walked down the beach. It was
indeed a miracle. It was sufficient to inspire a
story. But, the same thing had been done in "The
Miracle Man." The stranger deserved much credit.
The boy deserved more. For years he had probably
been an object of sympathy. Instead of helping
him, those about him had undoubtedly pitied him.
Pity never cured anyone. Then came the stranger.
He was stern and unsympathetic. This lad was one
of God's perfect children; therefore, he should walk.
The boy's faith had never been awakened. The
stranger aroused it, the boy believed and he walked.
He is walking today. When I saw him last, he was
riding a bicycle! You will call this a miracle. And
yet, it was a very simple thing. Faith did it. It
will do the same for you. If you believe you can't
write, you can't. For sixteen years, that boy had
believed he couldn't walk. He didn't. If you be-
lieve you have talent, and can write photoplays as
good as any that are being written for the screen
today, you will write them. If there is a doubt in
your mind, you won't. I shall never forget that boy.
It was his birthday, too. What a wonderful gift
God gave him on that day!

* * * * *

T HE photodramatist helps you to see life; the
novelist helps you to understand it. One is
absolutely essential to supplement the other. Fi-
tion, biography, books of travel, give the reader
something much more accurate, if less vivid, than
the movies can give; just as the movies, far more
surely than books, startle us into interest and won-
der. Get the movie habit, but get the reading habit
also.
In Thomas Meighan's remarkable Paramount picture, "The Man Who Saw Tomorrow," will appear scenes at the East Indian Durbar and on an island in the South Seas. The interiors will represent homes of wealth in London and New York. This original story by Perley Poore Sheehan and Frank Condon, adapted by the latter and Will M. Ritchey, covers a wide variety of territory and includes a novel plot wherein the hero is enabled to see his future under two separate series of circumstances. An unusually strong cast appears in the production.

Begin Kyne Story

Jack Holt and his director, Joseph Henabery, have arrived from New York and have begun a Paramount production, "Making a Man," an adaptation by A. S. LeVino of the story by Peter B. Kyne. The story concerns a rich and snobbish man who suddenly finds that his credit is no good and that he is down and out. How he comes back provides much comedy as well as drama. The picture will be completed at the West Coast studios.

Goldwyn Company Returns

Goldwyn's "Passions of the Sea" company have returned from Tahiti, after a two months' absence, where they have been successful in giving to Carey Wilson's original photodrama both the beauty and the contrasting sordidness of the islands of the Pacific.

Stage Comedian Turns Scenario

Bryan Foy, son of the celebrated comedian Eddie Foy, is now a scenario writer for the William Fox Film Corporation. Many of the laughs enjoyed in the Fox Sunshine Comedies are originated by the eldest of the "seven little Foy's."

San Francisco Company Arrives

Belaqso Productions, Inc. of San Francisco have removed their producing unit to Los Angeles and are preparing to start production of Lois Zellner's original story, "Her Price."

Miss Prinzlau Begins Story

Olga Prinzlau, having finished her continuity of F. Scott Fitzgerald's novel, "The Beautiful and Damned," has started work on an original story, also for Warner Brothers, entitled "Little Church Around the Corner."

Film Interiors

Doubleday Productions, starring Lester Cuneo, have returned from a week's location trip and are ready for filming the interiors for "Skyfire," a photoplay by Henry McCarty.

Shirley Mason Vehicle

Rowland V. Lee's next production for Fox will be "A Circus Story," starring Shirley Mason and written by Robert N. Lee, former newspaperman and brother to the director.

To Produce Fairy Tales

Fred Decker is starting a series of two-reel fairy tales based upon his own original ideas.

Neilan Predicts Spectacles

The coming winter season will mark the reappearance of tremendous sets with thousands of actors, according to Marshall Neilan, the prominent motion picture producer, who states, "Unusual pictorial values in a picture greatly enhance its chances for success. The bizarre backgrounds for the festive occasions in my production, "The Stranger's Banquet," the elaborate church wedding with its attendant pictorial beauties, the lavish surroundings amidst which are staged the startling entertainments of Mrs. John Keogh, and many other strikingly picturesque scenes are embodied in this photodrama from Donn Byrne's novel. Fashions in dress on the screen have particular appeal to millions. The startling feminine effects introduced by the gay set in the story, as well as the more refined apparel of the fastidious characters at social affairs, are prominent throughout the entire story. The comedy of the photoplay is far from being neglected. There are various exceptional opportunities for humor. And with the frequent touches of pathos and heart interest, there is nothing more to be looked for in this—my ideal scenario.

Change in Title Announced

Dustin Farnum's next picture, which was originally called "As A Man Thinketh," has been changed to "While Justice Waits," and will be released in the near future. Edward J. Durning directed the picture, which was written by Charles A. and Don A. Short.

Specializes in Makeup

Lon Chaney, one of the most famous character actors the world has ever known, spends two hours every morning applying his makeup for the role of the aged laund- dryman in "Ching, Ching, Chin- man," the Wilbur Daniel Steele prize story which Tom Forman is directing for Preferred Pictures. Mr. Chaney has devised a make-up that visualizes to the greatest detail the picturesque character described by the author. Despite its Oriental title, "Ching, Ching, Chinaman" is a gripping story of the New England shores. The cast has been chosen from among stellar players.

Prize Contest For Title

Thomas H. Ince is offering a prize of $250.00 for the best title suggested for one of the special productions on his fall releasing schedule. "Jim" is the working title of the picture, which relates the love story of an intensely modern woman and a primitive man. The story, an original one by Bradley King, contains such a powerful theme that Mr. Ince thought it necessary to select a title big enough to carry some idea of the story. Notices of the title contest have been sent out to more
WHERE DO YOU GET YOUR IDEAS?

(Continued from Page 24)

Arizona had related to me about an outlaw turning the tables on a crooked sheriff. I stuck to facts as much as possible. The story did not get over, even after submitting it to eight magazines. I was rather disillusioned. By sheer accident my first story had been technically perfect. Now I was up against it. With no training in the story art, with no knowledge of technique, I worked blindly, rewriting the story after each rejection. I discarded more of the facts with each revision and replaced them with action built up by imagination. The story gradually lost all semblance to its original version and evolved into a tale of war between sheep-men and cattle kings. At last it was all fiction with nothing remaining of the first plot but the title.

The editor of Pearson’s made a mistake in asking how much I wanted for the story. I had the nerve to ask a price in three figures and my own price was paid.

“THE STARBOARD LIGHT OF RED,” Pearson’s Magazine, 1915:

By this time I had written and sold perhaps a dozen stories. Poignantly I had become aware that trying to use as much fact as possible meant more work in the long run. I could not make incidents from real life ring true in fiction. The more I used nothing but imagination, the less trouble I had in selling the story. I had grown fearful of using fact for its value in suggesting a plot. The real trouble was that as yet I had no conception of technique. I was still groping in the dark.

In 1906 while enroute to the Hawaiian Islands on a sailing vessel, I overheard the captain and the mate arguing over what was supposed to be the inside story of a certain collision off the coast of California, a tragedy in which one steamer went down and drowned about sixty people. The captain maintained that the whole crew was drunk and that a red light, instead of a green, had been placed on the starboard light screen. The mate argued to the effect that side-lights and light-screens were constructed in a way that rendered impossible the placing of a red light to starboard and having the rays show dead ahead.

The captain proved that aboard his own schooner then and there it was possible to transpose the old-style, antiquated lights with which it was equipped. The mate was convinced.

This incident, to my mind, held great fiction possibilities. Eight years later I determined to use it in a short story. I related the inside story of the collision. It did not get over. Again I had hampered my imagination by using too much fact. I threw away the MS, and started all over again deliberately manufacturing a story that was all fiction with the exception of a red light being placed on the starboard bow of a steamer. The editor of Pearson’s congratulated me upon having written a real epic of the sea, and incidentally made a shrewd guess to the effect that the first version of the story had been not much more than a setting down of facts. This crystallized my opinion in regard to facts: in the future I would not let them do more than suggest a story. In this I was wrong.

“DIAMONDS ADRIFT,” All Around Magazine, 1916:

In undertaking to write this story again I was up against the temptation to use fact. In 1910 I was one of a crew of a schooner anchored at Esquimalt, British Columbia. The mate awoke one morning and was puzzled, even alarmed at first, at discovering a strange cat asleep on his bunk. The night before he had returned aboard in a high state of intoxication. The sailor who had rowed him out to the vessel reported that the mate had carried the cat buttoned beneath his coat.

Five years later I remembered this incident. I used as little of it as possible. Around the cat’s neck I conjured a diamond bracelet. The gems were so large that no one believed them to be genuine. The rest of the story was a matter of mechanics. That day the vessel sailed for Mexico. The cat, gems and all, was given away to a Mexican port official as a present to his daughter. Returning to the original port it is learned that

(Continued on Page 37)
There Is An Army of Volunteer Scenario Writers

What have they done to Justify their Employment?

This question is put by Patrick Tarsney in “Secrets of the Stars,” a series of authentic, entertaining articles appearing in

SCREENLAND

Would we have better pictures if the men and women who wrote them were of a higher order of intelligence? Who are they? Where did they come from? How did they get in?

Leroy Scott was assistant editor of the Woman’s Home Companion before he took to writing crook stories for the screen.

C. Gardner Sullivan sold his first scenario for $25 and now is paid a salary of $2,000 a week. He is still under forty.

Rupert Hughes got his wealth of Irish material while an officer in the Sixty-Ninth, New York’s crack Irish American regiment.

June Mathis went on the stage when she was a child and became a leading woman before she tried her hand at scenario writing.

Arthur F. Statter was assistant secretary of the United States Treasury during Roosevelt’s administration.

Waldemar Young was first a sporting editor, then a dramatic critic, then an actor in vaudeville.

Clayton Hamilton was an instructor at Columbia University and an author of several books relating to the drama.

Jean Havez wrote the song: “Everybody Works but Father,” created a great deal of stage material and is now a “gag man.”

H. H. Van Loan found himself in charge of the first motion picture department to appear in a New York daily newspaper.

“Secrets of the Stars” is an encyclopedia of authors, directors, producers, players. It is the most complete information on the careers of picture celebrities ever published. Begin reading them now in

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He's dead! repeated the voice of the medium. "A bullet just a'ove the ear. Yes, she has the revolver. She needn't cry so. He was cruel to her—a leet!"

And then—

"He's so heavy to lift. Get the lather off his face—Mrs. Rinehart!—the lather!"

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Truly has it been said that she has dipped her pen in magic—truly has it been said that she is the most popular woman in America!

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The latest Sherlock Holmes stories—his greatest, best mystery tales are in these three volumes. Think of it—the best works of two of the highest paid writers that ever lived: 12 volumes of Mary Roberts Rinehart, for just one of which a great magazine paid $30,000—and 3 volumes of Conan Doyle—all yours for just about half what they would cost you in any book store. And you can pay for them, if you like, at the rate of only 25 cents a week.

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IT is the force that solves most of life's problems; that builds great dams, factories and universities; that produces X-rays and radio; that writes masterpieces of literature.

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We teach the writing of photodrama through an eminently successful home-study course; but hundreds of men and women students of all ages are not studying to make this kind of writing a profession.

Doctors, lawyers, educators, architects—men and women in all walks of life—are using this means of sharpening this tool—Creative Imagination, that invaluable power—to apply to other activities in which they are engaged.

The photoplay is the ideal field for proper instruction in this development for it furnishes both the necessary objective for study and a money-making field from which graduates are reaping, and thousands more can reap, rare cash rewards if they so desire.

We Offer $1000 and Royalties

Those who wish to enter this field professionally enjoy a new era of progress and improvement. The Palmer Photoplay Corporation for four years the largest clearing house for the sale of photoplays to producers, now becomes also a producer, and will bring out the better stories for the screen.

Under our new plan we are making better pictures from better stories for which a minimum of $1000 each, together with perpetual royalties from the profits of the picture, will be paid.

In addition one hundred sixty producing companies in Los Angeles alone are searching for better plays, paying from $500 to $2000 for acceptable stories.

Is It You?

But creative imagination is worth developing, if you are endowed, regardless of the use you wish to make of it. It returns immense profit in any line of work, art or profession.

Napoleon, Shakespeare, Edison, Stowe, Marconi, DeForrest—all accomplished their wonders through this tremendous power. You, too, can apply it, if naturally endowed, develop it, feel, use and profit by it, if you will.

Find out if you have this power in you. The Palmer Questionnaire will tell you. Mail the coupon now for this most interesting test—no cost or obligation—that may open to you new fields of endeavor and achievement.

Palmer Photoplay Corporation, Department of Education, Dec. 2210

Palmer Building, Hollywood, Calif.

Please send me the Palmer Questionnaire, which I am to fill out and return to you for your personal and subsequent advice to me without charge.

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All correspondence strictly confidential.

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WHERE DO YOU GET YOUR IDEAS?

(Continued from Page 33)

a reward of $5,000 has been offered for the return of a cat with a diamond bracelet locked on its neck, where it had been placed by the mischievous small son of a wealthy lumberman. Regaining the diamonds, and the incidental romance, made the story.

In 1920, Earle Williams purchased the motion picture rights to "Diamonds Adrift." I wrote the continuity of the photoplay based on this story and in doing so learned that there is a vast difference between "action" on the printed page and the style of action capable of being filmed. If at the time of writing the magazine story I had taken steps to develop a knowledge of film value, I am sure that it would have resulted in a better story both in print and on the screen, for technique is doubly essential in a film story.

"NO OTHER GODS BEFORE ME," Prize-winning story in the Black Cat, 1917.

The genesis of this story was what might be termed "inspiration" although I hesitate to use the word. But I do not know what else to call it. A Theosophist might say that it was a flash of subconscious memory from another incarnation.

I was tired physically and mentally. My eyes were tired, and I closed them. I may have fallen asleep for a moment, but I think not. Plain, distinct, colorful, I visualized a stretch of sparkling blue ocean. A lazy ground swell ran across the sapphire waste. Nowhere but in the tropics have I seen water like that. In the foreground was a whaleboat. In the stern sheets, seated on a wormeaten, ancient treasure chest, a dying man held a gun on a crew of piratical oarsmen, forcing them to row on and on.

I opened my eyes, actually startled at the vivid picture which momentarily had flashed through my brain. It pleased me; it had the makings of a type of story I like to write. The next thought was: Why was he forcing the oarsmen to the limit of their endurance? The mechanics of story writing gave me several answers. Why not make the treasure consist of sacred relics? Give

A VERITABLE SOURCE OF INSPIRATION

Writers for the screen and all those interested in the development of motion picture art will find the current issues of Photoplay Magazine a source-book of information and inspiration. In them are appearing month by month the intimate human interest articles by

TERRY RAMSAYE

on the

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In Mr. Ramsaye's first-hand chronicle you read of the mistakes and triumphs of others. You apply to your own writings the principles that have won success for thousands. You find at last an authoritative and reliable guide-post to the complicated ways of the motion picture and the secrets of its craft.

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Name........................................................................
Address.................................................................
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Q. There is a character in my story who completely fulfills his function in the plot near the beginning of the action. Would it be better to drop this character out of the plot or to have him die? H. F. A.

A. It would be better to have this character simply dropped out of the story rather than "killed off." Very often a character which is really essential in the working out of the story is not carried through the entire course of the action. It would be a clumsy and tiresome circumlocution to bring in such a death.

Q. Would it be permissible for me to use a scene of a man partaking of liquor in his own home? H. F. A.

A. Material dealing with prohibition is ruled out by the censors, and to include such an element in your plot might militate seriously against the sale of the story. Would it not be possible to attain your end by some other method?

Q. I have been told that it harms the creative mind to train itself along critical lines. Do you agree? H. H.

A. There is no reason why the development of the creative faculty should preclude the development of the critical faculty. A great many writers are excellent critics of their own work, as well as the work of others.

Q. Is it a good thing for the screen writer to depend upon published works to suggest material or ideas to him? E. L. C.

A. No, it is far better to cut loose from all preconceived notions of fictional writing and of the spoken drama and to write directly for the screen, keeping in mind the limitations and the possibilities of the screen.

Q. Do you consider it beneficial to gather newspaper items to use for suggestions for plot material? D. E. S.

A. I would advise you to be constantly on the alert for novel plot "germs." Newspaper items furnish a splendid field for the photoplaywright in his search for new ideas.

Q. It seems to me that the type of story one is writing has a good deal to do with the presentation of the material. For example, a romance will have more "color" and "atmosphere" than an adventure story which would be written in a "sketchy" vein. Am I right? A. B. H.

A. It is true, of course, that different stories must be presented in different ways. Always give enough "atmosphere" to make the background for the action vivid and entertaining. Try to make your style concise, but at the same time perfectly clear and readable. I do not feel that the action should ever be sharp or jerky. The story should move clearly and logically from one step to the next until the climax is attained.

Q. Would it be permissible for me to use a prologue based upon a poem by Victor Hugo, for it seems to me his name used in connection with the publicity of my story would be very beneficial? F. H.

A. I want to advise you that it would be better to eliminate the prologue based upon Victor Hugo's poem. To my knowledge, this poem as well as his other works, is covered by a copyright, and no producer could use it without paying a considerable amount.

Q. It seems easier for me to work upon several pieces of writing simultaneously. Do you think this a good method to pursue? R. V. N.

A. It just depends upon the individual. If you can do better work this way, there is no reason why you should not do everything to facilitate your progress. The creative mind is very apt to get into a rut if forced continually into the same channel. Therefore, it is often stimulating to turn from one line of thought to another.

Q. Would you advise me to write comedy? Though I do not find it easy to construct comedy plots, I do not know of any other way to use certain humorous incidents and bits of "business." Could they be incorporated in serious drama? N. R.

A. Contrary to common belief, comedy is much more difficult to write than drama. This is because it is very hard to make an audience laugh. Also, the student gains knowledge of plot technique more surely and more quickly by dealing with subject matter which lends itself to straight drama. In other words, comedy is a specialized field which the novice should enter only after he has gained a considerable facility in manipulating plot values. Remember, though, that in serious drama it is well to include little touches of comedy relief that should come in the lulls between intense crises. Any ideas which occur to you as really humorous may be used in this connection most advantageously.

Q. I have been working at photoplay writing for several months, and have not yet succeeded in bringing my work up to sales standards. Is this unusual? H. L. S.

A. There is no definite time that can be set as the period taken by the novice to reach the selling point. Sometimes a story can be marketed within three weeks. I have also known writers who have not attained success until they have devoted a full year or more to the training.

Q. A critic who read my script tells me that I have made my characters too "passive." Can you suggest any method by which I might avoid this? C. F.

A. Instead of having something happen to your characters, keep them active and let them drive forward events to the climax. Have the desires, ambitions, and purposes of the characters give rise to all of the conflict. In other words, have the characters "struggle" in "working out their own salvation."
STUDENTS of photoplay technique will find unusual interest in the announcement that two nationally-known figures in the literary and motion picture world have been assigned to important posts in the Department of Education of the Palmer Photoplay Corporation. They are Clayton Hamilton, who has become Educational Adviser, and Douglas Doty, who will serve as Associate Editor of the Educational Department of the Palmer institution.

Mr. Hamilton, who was until recently associate editor of the Goldwyn Scenario Department, is a graduate of Columbia University, and was for nineteen years associated with that institution as extension lecturer in English and the drama. A number of America’s leading playwrights have studied dramatic construction under Mr. Hamilton. He is the author of “The Stranger at the Inn,” in which Tyrone Power was starred, and collaborated with A. E. Thomas in the writing of “The Big Idea,” “Thirty Days” and “The Better Understanding,” and other Broadway successes. He was formerly dramatic editor of “Vogue,” “The Bookman,” “Everybody’s Magazine” and “The Forum.” His literary works include “On the Trail of Stevenson,” “The Theory of the Theatre,” “Studies in Stagecraft,” “Problems of the Playwright,” and “Seen on the Stage.” His manual of the Art of Fiction is used in more than two hundred schools and colleges, and his works in general are considered authorities in the theatrical world, dealing with dramatic principles of all ages—the Greek Theatre, the Elizabethan play and the present requirements of the stage.

Mr. Hamilton was selected by the Palmer Photoplay Corporation as Adviser to its department of Education because of his long and successful career as instructor in dramatic construction. His duties with the Palmer Institution will not interfere with his established calling as dramatist, photodramatist and motion picture executive.

Douglas Doty has for years been the avowed friend of the new writer, and enjoys the reputation of having developed probably more literary novices who afterward met with success than any editor in this country.

He was for ten years literary adviser to the Century Company, in editorial charge of its book publications, and for four years served also as Editor of the Century Magazine. He was editor of the Cosmopolitan Magazine for two years, and literary adviser to Harper and Brothers for one year.

Among the new writers whose first works Mr. Doty purchased and published were those of “The Lady of the Decoration,” “Molly Make Believe” and “Daddy Long Legs,” which he issued with the Century “Dollar Series.”

When he took up motion picture work Mr. Doty became fiction editor for Universal and after two years joined the Lasky scenario forces.

You can make money by writing stories, plays, novels, jokes, essays, letters, verse, greeting card sentiments, etc.

It is not easy—but it is being done by many folks, and you can do it.

The Editor Weekly will show you how—tell you what and how to write, and where to sell it.

Jack London once said: “I may not tell one-hundredth part of what The Editor did for me, but I can say that it taught me how to solve the stamp and landlady problems.”

Mary Roberts Rinehart says: “The Editor helped to start me, cheered me when I was down, and led me in the straight path to literary success.”

For 27 years The Editor has been the friendly advisor of aspiring writers.

The Editor gives the following in each weekly issue:

—names of new magazines and their manuscript requirements, and news of photoplays, novels, essays, letter, title, short story, poetry, play and other literary prize competitions.

—news of changes in editorial requirements and other news of the week of interest to authors who have manuscripts to sell.

—articles on the technique of fiction, play and photoplay writing, and on other interesting and helpful aspects of literary work.

—autobiographical letters on the conception, genesis, development, writing and selling of short stories, novels, plays and photoplays of well-known authors.

—notes of brief, practical “experience items,” by authors, telling of the writing and selling of their work, prices received, etc.

—definite information regarding property rights, copyright, contracts for placing plays, etc.

The Editor will bring the atmosphere of literary accomplishment into your workroom, and put your feet squarely in the path to literary success. Today is the day to begin your subscription. The cost for this service is $1.00 a copy—$3.60 a year, every week.

The publishers of The Editor also publish the Black Cat, a twice-monthly magazine of short stories and one-act plays by authors who are trying to avoid the beaten tracks—$0.15 a copy; $2.50 a year, and Yours Truly, a monthly magazine of fascinating letters and articles on letter-writing, $0.15 a copy; $1.50 a year.

THE EDITOR MAGAZINE BOOK HILL, HIGHLAND FALLS, N. Y.
"How I Did It"
—a message to screen writers

About two years ago H. H. Van Loan, the noted photodramatist, with thirty bug screen stories to his credit, was requested by the Los Angeles Evening Express to prepare a series of articles on photoplay writing. Later the series appeared in the San Francisco Bulletin, heralded each day with ribbons of type across the entire front page; and in the Oakland (Cal.) Tribune, The Phoenix (Ariz.) Republican, the San Diego Tribune and other large dailies.

Hundreds of unsolicited letters poured in on Mr. Van Loan, commending him for the wonderful aid he had given to aspiring screen authors. He had told them HOW HE DID IT!

The great value of these articles lay in the fact that they gave the struggling screen author the benefit of Mr. Van Loan's PERSONAL EXPERIENCES in writing and selling photoplays. "They had inspired others who were weakening! Mr. Van Loan has used these articles as the basis for an instructive and helpful volume which he has called:

"How I Did It"

This work is a most admirable one, filled with first-hand information from a leader on the inside, so to speak, to those who are in need of his guidance. Mr. Van Loan, from the abundance of his own knowledge, founded on close observation and invaluable experience, clearly defines every step of his progress from the time he grasped at the first rung of the ladder which he has climbed, to the top, with such signal success.

A DESK COMPANION for Every Writer

It is not intended that anyone should be encouraged to believe that Mr. Van Loan's book will make finished screen writers over-night, or that it is a panacea for all the obstacles the struggling screen author encounters. But it is offered as a decided stimulant, either to the photoplaywright who has already "arrived" or to the embryo screen author who should know what to do or what not to do in the preparation and sale of his stories.

ONE FOR YOU!

"How I Did It" is not a book for the curious. It has been produced in a small edition for the serious writers of screen drama anxious to know how success is attained through writing. Advance reservations for copies must be made before October 20th. $3.50 with the coupon below brings a Deluxe volume of "How I Did It" to you direct from the printer. Send your coupon today. If you are not satisfied we will gladly refund your money if the book is returned within three days.

WHERE DO YOU GET YOUR IDEAS?

(Continued from Page 37)

the gun-man reverence for them—not so much of a religious as of a superstitious nature—with some vague memory of youthful days when religion was forced upon him.

Where did the relics come from? From a mission the men had footed. The man seated on the treasure chest was semi-delirious with fever. He thought he was about to die, and his obsession was to return the sacred objects to the church. The rest of the story was a simple matter of mechanics. It might be mentioned that in trying to sell this story I learned a lesson—to avoid, in writing fiction, any subject matter bearing on religion. Many editors are afraid of it.

"A Tinker of Destiny," Saucy Stories, 1917:

This story began in 1915 at the corner of Kearney and Pacific Streets, in San Francisco. I had gone into the Barbary Coast frankly looking for story material. A patrolman turned the corner and walked east on Pacific Street, the main artery of that hectic region. I followed the officer, watching every move he made, every person he spoke to.

Already I had chosen him as the hero of the story I would write. As yet however, it must be confessed I had not even the slightest idea what the plot of the story would be. I knew I was going to write a Barbary Coast story, after gathering local color and what ever human material I could find at first hand.

I followed the officer into the Thalia, the largest dance hall (I think) on the street. Just within the door of the huge main room he leaned back against the wall. A woman, typical of the region, wearing an extremely short, gaudy, finned gown, her face heavy with paint in what seemed a pathetic attempt to hide her haggardness, came up and spoke to him in guarded tones. Immediately I picked her as my second character.

In writing the story, I had the patrolman walk down Pacific Street and do everything that I had watched him do. He entered the Thalia. The woman came up and spoke to him. I wrote this much fact to start with, then, having two main characters established, my imagination mechanically built up a plot.
WITH THE PRODUCERS

(Continued from Page 29)

Universal's present contribution to the serial field is entitled "Round the World in Eighteen Days;" it features William Desmond and Laura Le Plante—Reeves Eason directing.

Other Studios

ROBERTSON-Cole is also suffering from a hull in production. The only company actively working there is Ethel Clayton's; she is making "The Remittance Woman," an original story by Ashmed Abdullah with Wesley Ruggles at the megaphone.

James Young, whose directorial laurels have been still further enhanced by his work with Guy Bates Post in "The Masquerader" and "Omar, the Tentmaker," for Richard Walton Tully, has announced that he will make a series of specials with Sam Rorke.

Resume

THE production situation is not nearly as doleful as it may appear at first glance. The early summer saw the making of a number of pictures that will undoubtedly be very high class entertainment and will mark a decided step forward in artistry. Now we find the producers cutting their pictures with the utmost care—this is a mighty good sign. And there is still a better sign in the fact that they are selecting their next productions with even greater care than ever before and making excessive preparations and research before rushing into actual shooting. Only by persevering along these lines will they attain the height of excellence for which we are all looking—and praying fervently—GEORGE LANDY.

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hension of the criminal was so utterly simple that anybody could have thought of it—if only they had.

Let me sound a note of warning here. Do not think that you can wait until the eleventh hour to bring in the elements of your denouement. Such a course would be unconvincing and artificial. You must “plant” it carefully early in the story—the earlier, the better—and then distract your reader’s attention by the development of your plot. When he finally arrives at the denouement, he will remember the “plant” and feel satisfied. He will congratulate you upon your cleverness in leading him astray, and in the same breath he will feel that you more than lived up to your bargain, and did not cause him to expect anything which you did not give him.

Let me here emphasize once more that what I’m telling you are merely my methods. My claim for them are that they are the best for me. No more. I evolved them out of my mistakes. Other writers, other methods. But I also want to emphasize that you must choose a definite manner of procedure for yourself. The earlier in the game you do this and become conscious of it, the sooner success will be yours.

In art, the lines are drawn, rigidly. Mediocrity in other fields is not necessarily a tragedy. You may be only a fair salesman and still make a good living. But you cannot be merely a fair writer, and live decently by your pen.

Do not be misled by the “art for art’s sake” argument. There are perhaps a few earnest artists who endorse this. But it is largely the cry of the disappointed ones. I have yet to hear of the first writer, who has refused to take a fair offer of money for his work.

The laborer is worthy his hire. Even if money means nothing to you, economically, a check for a story is at least a vindication of your faith in yourself. Your business is to get into print. The sooner you get there, the sooner you will be able to put over that message which is burning within you. If you have no such message you had better leave writing alone.

THE LITERATURE of AMERICA

(Continued from Page 12)

act is always the easiest to write,—at least until it is followed by a second. The American sensitiveness to cause and effect is such that the writer who should try to stop the train before it reached the station would undoubtedly land on his head.

One of the hardest stories I ever wrote was a college story called “The Snob,” published in the Saturday Evening Post, that found its way to the screen a year or two ago. I am sure I gave eight times the work to the last fifth of this story that I gave to the preceding four-fifths. I think I was never nearer becoming a Russian than I was when doing that last scene. Yet no one would guess from reading it now that it had ever caused any particular trouble. The incident is an allegory that applies to all art. That which is hardest looks easiest when completed.

Perhaps it applies to the Russian short story. I am quite willing to admit that it does.

I DO not wish to leave the subject until I clear up a possible misunderstanding. I have spoken here and there of the American short story. I have meant by the reference not the short story as invented in America, nor yet as written by Americans, but merely that not indistinct type of fiction that Americans have preferred to read. In the past America’s influence upon the short story has not been small. Poe still lives in Joseph Conrad. Bret Harte, who began as a disciple of Dickens, pointed the way, as his own disciple proudly boasts, to Rudyard Kipling, and Kipling to every western writer since his day, directly or indirectly.

The American short story of today is as various as its writers, but it is bound together by the single principle: “For every cause there must be an effect, for every effect a cause.” Stories of causes truncated of their effects at present are not liked by western readers.

CONCERNING MR. PACKARD

(Continued from Page 28)

badly informed or else he gets great pleasure and probably, financial reward, out of his far-fangled disparaging phrases.

Granting that the professions connected with stage, press and screen need some moralizing, it is very easy for the Puritan-minded to stand on soap-boxes and trumpet their transgressions; but who among them have any plans for assisting in the uplifting, or are willing to partake actively? Mr. Packard’s only suggestion is that the actors make themselves leaders of the cause by “making their playing ring true to spiritual values.” How this may be done is a mystery which he does not offer to explain. We know that an actor must portray the role assigned to him; therefore, if the role is not a spiritual one, how then may his playing “ring true to spiritual values?” The fault if there is any, is not with the actors but with those who pay them—the public—although perhaps Mr. Packard does not know that.

GENIUS IN MAKEUP

(Continued from Page 8)

portrays a tough rowdy in “Ebb Tide” that is a gem. George Fawcett’s screen characterizations are inimitable in the twinkle of his eye that dominates his whole portrayal. Lon Chaney is still another artist of fine calibre along this line; the picture he gives of Fagin in “Oliver Twist” will undoubtedly be another film classic. I know that I could continue this list to include many more artists, both men and women, whose work has been the reason for the success of many otherwise mediocre pictures. Each of them I am sure goes through the same process of research and study and tabulation that I have in picturing the character of Omar Khayyam. The more details we get into our fundamental make-up the more we help the photodramatist’s message.”
Every studio door has a bolt on the inside—a bolt that is drawn for the trained. It is controlled by the man or woman at the information desk. Sit in the waiting room with me and watch it work. Here comes a nationally-known director. The bolt is drawn, he disappears inside. A proved scenario writer, some studio electricians, a screen cartoonist, two research workers, a cameraman and a film editor. They and hundreds of others, have the open sesame to that studio door.

But after them come others,—unknown writers, a chauffeur who aspires to be a director, a newspaper man who would like to write titles, a little girl who wants to become a star. The door is closed. The person at the information desk wears a phony-liking air. "Have you an appointment?" she asks. "Who would you like to see?"

Though many of those inside the studios were school teachers, house painters and railroad clerks themselves in their younger days—though if they knew, they would sympathize with you in your screen ambitions—you cannot reach them unless you come with a definite contribution. The screen does need new blood—new thoughts, new dreams, new ideas, new points of view—in short, a new imagination. But the screen cannot accept it "in the rough." It must come prepared for work. "Opportunities in the Motion Picture Industry." 

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THE MAGAZINE FOR WRITERS

November

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Frank L. Packard

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Sheldon Krag Johnson

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Hazel W. Spencer

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His articles on Hollywood life in general and on studio life in particular will appear exclusively in Photodramatist beginning next issue. Naturally, Mr. Khayyam, being a new arrival in this country, is not as yet a master of the English language. Consequently he has written his delicious satire upon the motion picture world and its people in Persian. They have been translated by Douglas Doty, who, we must confess, displays a wider knowledge of human nature than he does of Oriental languages. You will enjoy this series. It will be different—humorous, but at all times philosophical.

Another feature of the coming number will be an article by Eugene Manlove Rhodes. Since the appearance of Mr. Rhodes' recent treatise upon the literature of the old West, the editors have been besieged by requests for another contribution from the pen of this noted writer. We know that you will gain much knowledge and pleasure from his most recent offering. Reserve your copy of the December issue now, since there will be a heavy demand for it.

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Entered as Second Class Matter February 1, 1922, at the postoffice at Los Angeles, Calif., under act of March 3, 1879.
The Standard Film Laboratories welcome the advent of The Palmer Photoplay Corporation into the motion picture production field. We feel that the high ideals and sincere purpose guiding the Palmer organization since its inception will be exemplified in the productions it will give to the screen.

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In less than a hundred and fifty years, less than a century and a half, swift years of mighty progression, our people have expanded from the simple affirmation of their independence, to a towering reality as a giant among the nations of the earth.

In material prosperity we lead, in what our sons and daughters have given to the world we stand equal to any, but in our departure from the basic principle upon which we built all that we have—the principle of liberty under God—we are manifesting an altered front as shocking in its infidelity as it is abject in its abandonment.

Whether the cause is a stupor induced by our rapid acquisition of material wealth, whether our excessive concentration upon problems of transportation, sanitary plumbing and commercial organizing has developed an apathy to fundamentals; whether this country is at its peak and has given all it has to give, or whether some subtle alien and anti-Anglo-Saxon influence is mesmerizing a hundred million people, the fact remains that we are presenting so profound a subversion of our original spiritual power, that in less than twenty-five years we have become a people of cant. Cant in a sense of cannot and cant in the sense of a shallow, mawkish hypocrisy which deceives no one but ourselves.

Not only are we permitting the imposition of "you can't" in matters of health, of speech, of action, but we are fast resigning the sceptre of initiative into the grip of dictators created by the impotence of our own failing hands.

Whatever the cause of this creeping spiritual paralysis, let us awaken and cast it from us. Let the call go from lip to lip for Americans to rise and reassert that spiritual independence which is our immemorial heritage. Let the Canters be swallowed by their own negation. Arrest the trend toward dictatorship while it yet remains unconsolidated and separate in its fields. In the Name of the Word let Liberty again become a living reality in the lives of Americans.
Test of Creative Ability Concluded

Rush Precedes Closing Date of 'Situation' Contest

The "Situation" Contest came to a close at midnight on October 31st. With the approach of the final hour, hundreds of manuscripts were received, many of which bore registry marks or special delivery stamps, indicating the anxiety of new readers to enter the contest before its closing date. Also, in verification of the intense general interest shown, contestants have mailed additional contributions from time to time in order to magnify the possibility of their winning a prize.

To insure the earliest possible criticism of manuscripts received during the last few days, several new members were added to the Reading Staff which was temporarily organized at the beginning of the contest. This staff, under the supervision of the Contest Editor, has succeeded in reviewing all manuscripts, the best of which now are ready to go to the three especially chosen judges, namely, Frances Harmer, Literary Advisor to William C. DeMille; Paul Bern, Scenario Editor for Goldwyn Pictures Corporation; and Jack Strumwasser, Scenario Editor for Fox Film Corporation.

Each of these judges is prominent in the film world as a scenario critic, and Photodramatist's editors feel, therefore, that they could have secured the services of no one better qualified to act as judges in this competition of scenario ideas. These critics seem especially fitted, since each represents a large producing organization maintaining radically different story policies. Consequently, their viewpoints necessarily will follow different angles, and each manuscript will receive not only one person's individual opinion, but also a three-way, unbiased criticism. In case it should be impossible for the judges to agree upon the best offering, the first-prize money will be allotted to each of the tying contestants.

It might be appropriate here, to repeat that the first, second and third prizes are seventy-five, fifty and twenty-five dollars respectively.

To follow a systematic method of criticism, all submitted material was divided into four classifications: First, those which violated the mechanical rules of the contest on account of being hand-written or exceeding the 300-word limit or, both. These, needless to say, were promptly discarded. The second division consisted of manuscripts containing no specific situation, or predicament, but, on the other hand, were brief synopses of entire story plots. The latter were deemed almost as offensive as the first, since it had been explained that skeleton outlines of complete stories were not acceptable. Third, those which were 'situations' truly enough, but which were lacking in originality, plausibility, or in dramatic value. And fourth, real "situations" potent in drama, from which the prize-winners are to be chosen.

We wish to advise our contributors that manuscripts were not judged by their literary merits. Spelling, punctuation and grammatical construction did not enter into consideration. The only basis of criticism was dramatic strength, plus originality. Of course, there are many predicaments in life which present the most intense drama, but which have been used over and over again on the screen— such as foreclosing the mortgage; changing the will; court room scenes; the wild ride to a death bed; and the many hundreds of angles of the "eternal triangle". In fact, many of the "situations" submitted in this contest were sadly time-worn—they have been seen on the screen since the days of cinema art when the entrance of the husband upon the wife and her lover caused theatre patrons to applaud or weep, as the case might be.

The last-named segregation, of course, outnumbered all others—much to the gratification of the Contest Editor—revealing that among the thousands of competitors the great majority understand the elements of dramatic construction and technique, and in many instances natural talent is evidenced. Consequently, the finest "combing" was necessary on the part of the reviewers to decide upon a relatively small number to submit to the judges.

It is only natural that a great many aspirants will feel that their manuscripts were as deserving as the three which will be printed in the December issue of Photodramatist. But we have explained the difficulties confronting the critics, and we feel sure that the contestants will happily abide by the opinions of the experts instrumental in awarding the prizes.

With many manuscripts have been enclosed return envelopes, with the request that said manuscripts be returned to the writers. We shall be unable to comply with this request, and have made announce-

(Continued on Page 35)
The Story—The Precious Corner Stone

Plot Is Potential Reason for Film's Success

By Frank L. Packard

THE editor of Photodramatist has very kindly (or unkindly) asked me to contribute a few words in reference to "The Miracle Man," its story, and the subject of story value in general. In a rash moment, or perhaps due to the exhilaration of a nineteenth hole of golf one afternoon (for I live in that Mecca, the Province of Quebec, where all who have the means and are not total abstainers are now coming in their thousands) I wired him, I would make the attempt.

I like that word "attempt"—I like it the more as I try to visualize now, the task ahead of me. But, "The Miracle Man" in so far as its connection with the moving pictures is concerned, I have a personal reason. It got a whole lot of millions of money—and I didn't. I take pains to mention that fact specifically, in case this article should fall under the eye of any Familiar with the present day Inquisition, that has its prototype of the old days beaten to a frazzle when it comes to nosing out suspected non-communicants—I refer, it is perhaps needless to explain, to the Income Taxationists.

However, apart from this minor matter of millions that somebody else got, I am really glad to have the opportunity of saying a word or two in Photodramatist. And as "The Miracle Man" lends itself as the best example at my command to point the moral of what I would wish to say, I trust, for that reason, I shall be absolved for dragging in my own work by the hair of its head.

I THINK it is pretty generally conceded that the movies today are suffering from what is a rather serious ailment, and one that, unless it is checked in time, will become chronic and perhaps disastrous—certainly disastrous to the influence that Filmland has it in its power to exert toward a world-wide return to normal and sane living, if not actually disastrous to itself in a material way. And this ailment, as I see it, is that in so many cases, and with their numbers alarming and consistently increasing, the pictures are hopelessly devoid of story. They are gorgeous, they are magnificent, they are amazing in splendor, and they are lavish, but there is no meat inside the shell, nothing that lives or lasts. The eye is dazzled for the moment, or a thrill or two runs up the spine in tempo with the hypnotic music—and then it is over for always, so far as the spectator is concerned, and he goes away as empty as the theater he leaves behind him. The pictures are like beautiful bubbles, wonderfully iridescent, the colors playing upon them as they float in the air, and you watch them—and they burst.

I do not care how delightfully or with what wealth of English a book may be written, or how artistically and elaborately and with what expenditure of time and money a film may be produced—and, to boot, you may spend a fortune in advertising them; if you like—the book will never be a best seller in the bookstores, and the film will need no cordon of police to keep the clamoring multitude away from the box office, if back of book and film, the essence, the corner stone on which they are reared, is not the story itself.

NOW if I disclaim at once any credit due to the manner in which it was written, any credit on that ground for its success in the magazine and book world I mean, I think I may fairly be allowed, without detracting one whit from its really splendid stage and film productions, in placing the reason for "The Miracle Man's" success in these separate fields of expression quite elsewhere than in the method and manner in which it was brought to the public's attention. I think it was because of the story itself, as a story. I think that had it been worse written (if that were possible), or worse staged, or worse filmed, it still would have held its appeal. And I say this out of experience, for I have written other stories upon which a great deal more money was spent on the film production than in the case of "The Miracle Man."

Now if this is so, it is rather conclusive evidence, in view of the millions that "The Miracle Man" made for its producers, that what the public really wants, and what the public ranks as the first consideration in a picture, is the story itself; and that, therefore, in a purely material and mercenary sense, a story, as against what I have had the temerity to term as "bubbles," pays in infinite measure, the better of the two. But this is not,
and could never be, the basic reason, or the actuating motive behind the striving of every writer to give generously of the best that is in him if he is genuinely earnest in his work.

I KNOW that even writers must live, and to live we must have money. And that the urge and necessity are sometimes desperately acute. But after all that does not whitewash us from our moral responsibility, which I am coming to in a moment, or excuse us if we are content (so long as the producers will buy it) to produce nothing more substantial than the mere skeleton of an idea on whose bony frame, as from convenient pegs, may be hung a heterogeneous assortment of extraneous odds and ends, no matter how unbecoming to the poor naked thing. (The cabaret scene is really getting played out!) And we cannot deny that we are doing this, and doing it constantly. I referred to our moral responsibility. We writers have a moral responsibility greater at the present time, I believe, than it has ever been before; and those of us who write for the screen, I also believe, have an even greater responsibility than any others of our craft.

The world today, if I may so express it, is hectic. Unrest is everywhere; we are prodigal with our resources, our morals and our lives. The world, in a word, is living beyond its means. The war, if it be the war, has left us a heritage which we seem to conceive is to be summed up in eat, drink and be merry for tomorrow we die: or, worse still, a callous indifference as to where we are drifting; or, even still worse, a savage selfishness, a sort of sauve qui peut. We have only to look around us, only to glance at the front pages of our newspapers. Bolshevism, civil war, radicalism, crime, capital and labor at daggers drawn, and the wrangling of nations, seem to be the only things that exist in the world today.

WHAT have the moving pictures, and what have we as writers got to do with this? A whole lot! The world, let us admit it frankly, is not sane today. But, thank God, it is not incurably insane! And the greatest potential force for good or evil that exists in this generation, I think I may say without verging in the slightest degree upon exaggeration, is the moving pictures. The moving pictures reach a world-wide audience. They speak every language, they address every creed. They reach the high and low, the ignorant and the learned. They leave their stamp upon the homes of every land. And they are the mouth pieces for us who write for them. And I am very much afraid that we can shoulder our share of the blame along with the producers and admit that we are falling into line with the general trend of things, satisfied perhaps that in following this line of least resistance we are giving the public what it wants; and so, rather than attempting to stem the tide of this insanity, we are actually pandering to it.

That is what I mean by our moral responsibility. And that is why I say now that we have a far, far bigger job to do than stringing together a series of incidents in more or less elaborate and striking settings, and calling it a day’s work, and therefrom remain content. To do that is to lie down on our jobs, to turn our backs upon our responsibilities.

The time has come when, as a very eminent writer has recently expressed it, we have got to face reality. And facing reality for us means doing what we can to help this sick old world of ours upon its feet again.

DO the manuscripts we are writing for the motion pictures trend in any way toward this end? Each one of us must answer for himself. What I am driving at is that, though I risk repetition again, there is no greater force existent today than the moving pictures to help swing us back on sanity. And it seems to me, it is about time we writers sat up a little and took notice where we were going, and just how much we are responsible for the course that is being steered.

I do not mean that we should preach in the movies, but we can be genuinely wholesome without preaching. We can be more catholic in our view points, and thus bring together in better understanding, classes that today are separated by great gulls of misunderstanding. And we can see to it that we strive harder than we have perhaps done heretofore to have a story to tell, a real story, a message to deliver that in some little measure, at least, will make for the common weal.

And now at the end I go back to the beginning.

A STORY! What is a story, you ask? Aren’t we always writing stories? What else are we doing? Frankly, I think, and I am as guilty as any one else, we have of late, as I said before, been thinking less of the story than of catering to the nervous, unhealthy tendencies of the time. Producers, directors, authors, we are all to blame. We have thought too much of what would catch the eye, and—let us be blunt and merciless with ourselves, and honest—what would tickle the blasé palate, or, so far as the censors would wink at it, excite the passions with suggestive situations and scanty attire; and we have, oh, so often, forgotten what really counts, what really lasts, what really lives, the appeal to the heart of our fellow men and women. Stones for bread to hungry people!

But the definition you demand!

It would be consummate presumption on my part to set certain boundary limits within which each author’s work must be contained that it might win the Order of Merit, and be entitled to be classified as a story. I know only this, I am sure of only one thing, that if you can touch the human heart and make it throb responsively to your work, if you can bring the tear of sympathy and human kindness, or the smile that goes deeper than the lips, if you have stirred some soul out of apathy into a better and finer sense of its relations with its fellow men, if in only a little way you have smoothed the path for someone weary with life’s journey beyond his strength, then—you have written a story. And that alone in the last analysis is what really matters, from the standpoint of your own success, and from the standpoint of your responsibilities; for, rare and wonderful though the art of the director and the camera man may be, the setting that is wrought by them, like that of the goldsmith, is empty and futile without the precious stone itself—and the story is the precious stone.
From Pen to Silversheet

By Melvin M. Riddle

XII—LIGHTING AND EFFECTS

OLD Sol has been cheated of part of his glory in the modern lighting systems now in use in the large motion picture producing plants. In the early days of the film industry, artificial lights were unheard of and the Sun was the source of all photographic illumination. When rainy weather came along, however, there had to be a suspension of activities. It was also impossible to get anything but flat, plain photography by the use of sunlight. Special effects were out of the question.

As the art became daily more complex, photographic novelties in the form of lighting effects were introduced. It also became possible, with the aid of lights, to defy the Sun—to shoot in rainy or cloudy weather as well as on the brightest days and, at the present time, so practical and so thorough have become the systems of electrical illumination now in vogue that hardly an interior scene is made without the aid of these powerful illuminating agencies.

Perhaps the most popular and practical system of studio lighting is that now in use at the Lasky Studio in Hollywood, the home of Paramount Pictures. This important and comprehensive electrical department is under the supervision of Frederick S. Mills, an electrical illuminating engineer of many years' experience, with a record of many big past achievements in theatrical and general illumination. Claude Harding is his chief electrician, Clyde Ewing is foreman of the electric shop and there is a small army of assistants and operators.

THE studio is equipped with a mammoth electric plant and a complete, elaborate system of wiring for current distribution to points all over the studio stages. The plant includes a big three-unit Westinghouse motor generator, another smaller generator set, a twenty-three hundred volt switchboard, and a new one hundred and ten volt low tension switchboard which will handle both alternating and direct current, distributing this current to any stage wall switch; a complete set of transformers and other electrical units and machinery. About twenty feet apart on each side of each of the four big stages are now special Kranz safety switch pockets. These connect with portable switchboards, which stand on the set and are capable of accommodating a complete set of lights for illuminating purposes.

The studio shop is maintained to keep all lamps repaired, overhauled and in splendid condition, thus avoiding poor lighting and hold-ups to directors, and to execute many new ideas and innovations constantly being introduced. The shop men built the new switchboard above referred to and have constructed many new designs in light equipment.

Portable generator plants, mounted on large trucks, are operated for scenes made at night on exterior location sites away from the studio.

The various kinds of lamps include Kliegl-lights, Spotlights, Sun Arcs and big General Electric Searchlights. The prime, flat illumination of the setting is provided by a number of Kliegl-lights which are diffused with ribbed glass or semi-opaque curtains to break up the sharp beams and spread the light evenly over the area to be illuminated. The spotlights, which are small lights with single carbon arcs and condensers, are used for special effects. Some are placed up on top of the wall of the set and focused on the heads of the principals, causing a sort of invisible halo about their heads and features, which, in the eye of the camera, causes those characters to stand out in bold relief from the background. Many physical defects, fatal before the camera, such as double chins, deep wrinkles, sagging or hollow cheeks or too deeply sunken eye sockets—all of which cast shadows—a re obviated by the beam of the spotlight which drives away the shadows thrown by the Kliegl-light illumination. For this purpose the spot is placed on the floor in front or at one side of the players.

THE Sun Arc, a larger and more powerful light than either the spot or the Kliegl, is used to illuminate large settings, or for special sunlight or moonlight effects through windows or doors. This light must be strong enough, for such effects, to penetrate the prime flat light of the Kliegl-light illumination. The two big General Electric searchlights—the most powerful ever conceived and the only two in existence, are so strong that their beams are generally focused on a reflecting medium which in turn throws the diffused rays down on to the setting.

In most of the light properties used for motion pictures, the carbon arc is employed. The cheerful fire which burns in the grate in a motion picture setting would be dull and cheerless were it not for the baby carbon arcs concealed behind the logs, which illuminate...
the natural flames. The flames themselves would photograph very dark and colorless without the aid of this artificial illumination. A closeup inspection of the big stand lamp in the library or drawing room setting will disclose not an incandescent lamp bulb but a baby carbon arc underneath the shade, and if the glass globe is lifted from the crude oil lamp in the wester's shack on the studio stage, it will be found that a baby carbon arc has replaced the yellow oil flame from the wick, which flame would have no photographic value whatsoever. In the same way, the burglar's flashlight and all other properties are equipped. When the screen actor is seen to light his cigarette in a dark room, giving a very unique lighting effect as the glow of light illuminates his face, it is not the match he has struck but the carbon arc, concealed in his palm and connected by a wire running down his sleeve, which causes the glow.

REGARDING the work of the studio electrician, Mr. Mills said:

"The studio operator, more so, perhaps than any of his brother electrical tradesmen, must be an artist as well as a mechanic. After he has technically mastered his profession, he must then learn the art of illumination—one of the major arts in film production because of its relationship to good photography. "It has perhaps occurred to very few people that a studio electrician must first make a study of the types he is to light before knowing just what kind and how many lights he is to use, and to what degree they are to be regulated. Hardly any two stars require exactly the same quality of lighting. A blonde does not require nearly so intense a beam as a brunette and a lighting 'set-up' which would exactly suit one would be very poor illumination for the other. Lightings are also regulated by the quality of make-up used. A brunette with a dark make-up must have strong light values to bring out her complexion and her hair. A blonde must have a weaker lighting because the strong light would 'burn up' her complexion, or render it very pale and colorless. It will be seen from this that when the electrician has a scene in which a blonde and a brunette work together, he has a problem in illumination which taxes his knowledge of the artistic side of lighting. The lights must be so regulated that they are neither too weak for the one nor too strong for the other. A happy medium must be struck. Another problem often encountered is the actress with fair skin and very black hair. A lighting arrangement strong enough for her hair is too strong for her complexion, and a light properly suited to her complexion is not strong enough to bring out her hair. These problems have to be carefully worked out. The electrician, like the director, the cameraman, the scenario writer and other members of a production staff, must exercise his own individuality in his work, and possess a complete understanding of the artistic as well as the mechanical phase of his profession."

The Age of Authors

By Oliver S. Arata

At what age do most authors write their best works? At what age is the fire of genius at its highest point of keenness and development? Does age or experience make a writer or author famous? We have heard it said that the author, to be at his height of literary development, must be well past fifty years of age. Does history and literature prove such a theory to be correct?

Let us take a list of authors who started their greatest literary works before thirty-five years of age.

Shelley wrote his "Queen Mab" at 18 years of age. This is possibly the only case where an author wrote at 18, a book of any description, that afterward became famous.

Voltaire was only 22 when his first tragedy appeared.

Keats wrote his "Endymion" at 22. And, two leading magazines of his day attacked his "Endymion" with brutality. But Keats was undaunted and published another volume of verses. Keats died at 25 years, and the world lost possibly its best and greatest literary genius. What a thing of beauty is his "Ode to a Nightingale," "On a Grecian Urn," "Hyperion," and "Chapman's Homer." When Keats died the world lost its sweetest singer and bard.

Shelley, whose first name was Percy, wrote when very young. He died when 30. He came of wealthy, influential parents, and had an allowance of $500 a month bestowed upon him when quite young. He was a free-thinker, a democrat, and fought against the autocracy of his times. He had many tragic love affairs, and two marriages, both of which proved unhappy, inasmuch as Shelley was unfaithful. Withal he was a generous, loving soul, and was indeed beautiful, romantic, loving. His "To a Skylark" is a thing of eternal beauty.

Heine published his first songs at the age of 23.

Pliny finished the "German War" at 31.

The "Andromache," by Racine, was written at 28 years.

Poe, the mystic poet of America, wrote his "Raven" at 36 years of age. It was written in a moment of great sorrow and despair. It was a vent for his feelings at the time. "The Raven" made millions of dollars for publishers and Poe did not receive $20 for it.

The career of William Shakespeare, the bard of Avon, began at 24 years.

The first satirical poems of Boileau were written when he was only 24.

Another great author who wrote a fine book at 21 years of age.

(Continued on Page 39)
Cinema Architecture

Unity of Theme and Background Is ‘Frozen Music’ of the Screen

By G. Harrison Wiley

"ARCHITECTURE," it has been remarked, "is frozen music." One cannot study long the history of the great architectural epochs, nor gaze upon the splendid structures that in them have been brought forth, without realizing the aptitude of this description; without sensing, however thick-skinned or blase one may be, something of the sublime and inspiring harmonies that exist in the studied lines, planes, lights and shadows of the truly great architectural works. Harmonies that rather than vibrant, insistent, are immutable, placid; and yet in whose overtones of changing viewpoint, illumination and mood of the beholder, there is a variety as infinite as in the overtones of the human voice. Harmonies that are apparent to, or felt by, many, yet are susceptible of definition and employment only in the degree that the beholder or designer is erudite or inspired.

These harmonies of form and proportion, like the harmonies of music, are not however, in themselves complete, and have alone little significance. Another element is of vital importance, an element that brings to the simplest harmony of notes or forms a deep, compelling, human interest; without which the purest tones, the most refined and balanced forms are aimless; lifeless; the element of theme, "an underlying, unifying basic idea."

In the design of each of those structures that the passing of time has proved to be of lasting worth and beauty, there has been expressed such a theme or idea. Time, place and people have each influenced the development or growth of this idea. It has been in many cases, the expression of a national thought, the record of a race, a delineation of character, mode of life or manner of thought. But always these structures expressed in their forms a well and shapey defined theme, suggested, or rather perhaps induced, in the intended use of the finished work.

Sombre, intricate, heaven aspiring are the lines of a Gothic cathedral, erected to glorify an involved and distant God, by men in whose breasts burned a sublime ascetic passion. Delicate, graceful and richly ornamented, the Taj Mahal was built for a powerful Indian Rajah to receive all that was mortal of his most beloved wife, and stands as the monumental expression of a human affection enduring beyond the grave.

This relation between harmony of architectural design and theme, is a relation of tremendous value to the screen, and may be used as a force of imposing strength in the telling of a picture story. Now, and in the future, the makers of the most successful photodramas are and will be the men who best understand this relation, who are able to use, skillfully, the great gamut of form harmonies, frozen music, in their full power as an accompaniment to the melody of a simple tale.

FORTUNATELY, there are in the industry several such men. Unfortunately there are many whose perception is less fine and to whom the architectural factors, the settings of a picture, are but necessary evils, to be despatched as speedily and cheaply as possible, or, in the other extreme, as gaudily and expensively. An attitude, in either case, you may be certain, that is responsible for the many inconsistencies of background, confusions of thought and vulgarity of effect that find their way to the screen and cause people of discernment and culture to indiet and eternally damn the "movies" as crass, crude, illiterate and even degenerate.

It is my sincere belief that just a moment more of thought given to the settings by both Writer and Director, could and would avoid these inconsistencies and weaknesses, which, while perhaps not singly glaring and obvious, serve en masse to disturb and dis...
rupt an otherwise serene and smoothly flowing tale or thought, loosen and fray an otherwise well-knit fabric.

I have seen recently certain sequences of scenes, in mood and theme delicate, graceful, whimsical and airy, played in a tremendous setting whose sheer mass and weight, overwhelming, awesome, stifled and crushed, lost in its bigness the delightful illusion of the moment.

AGAIN, I have seen other action, sublime, immense in its meaning, encompassing the deepest human passions and strongest emotions, played in a setting whose fragile walls it seemed must burst under the pressure and power of the drama unfolding within them.

Had the Writer, the Director or the designer given to the background, the relation between theme of structure and theme of story, the proper consideration, such a diversion and consequent weakening of impression need not have occurred.

The sequence light and delicate might have been played in a place more fitting, a structure of slender, soft, even exotic lines; the sequence colossal, in a structure whose towering masses, brutal in their crudity, superb in their strength, sublime, awe-inspiring in their tones of light and shadow, accentuated, empowered the significance of the action as the deep vibrant bases of a mighty organ may accent and lend power to the heart-gripping song of its vox humana.

IN commenting on these examples of divided and weakened impression, it is not my intent to deprecate the skilled, thoughtful and purposed use of contrast. Contrast may be used by the Writer or Director of discernment to advantage. Properly directed, superbly acted, a scene of tender, soul thrilling passion, perhaps the clandestine meeting of Romeo and Juliet, may be in strength increased two-fold, played in such a setting as the latter of these two; or may be made more compelling in its appeal, more sublime, tender, more ethereal in mood, against a background crude, brutal and threatening in weight and mass of material.

In the work of the several, whom I have mentioned as fortunate, such a skillful use and blending of values, is at maximum; inconsistency and lack of unity at minimum. Unless one is so constituted mentally that he is content to accredit blind luck, it must be evident that to secure a positive result, a definite and positive method must be followed. Unity in theme of set and theme of story is the result of close co-operation between Director, Writer and Art Director; is a fact that may be in a measure calculated.

The Art Director is the man directly responsible for the achievement of this effect, yet unless he has this co-operation, all his arts and artifices are of naught. Hampered rather than assisted by the Director he can no more be expected to function than could the organist who found that the console, on which were his bass keys, had been locked to him.

To the Director who understands and desires to use this accompaniment of form harmonies, the Art Director is an important and essential individual and artist. To the far greater, I am grieved to say, number of men, he is a mechanic only, to be held in continual disregard, to be bailed, interfered with and made use of as a ready goon on whom all delays, failures and expenses may be blamed.

It is only just to admit, that in many cases the Director has not been far wrong. Too often in the past, the hectic past if I may say it, of motion pictures, the Art Director has been raised from the degree of carpenter foreman, without other training than the use of tools and the driving of men.

He should, and must be, a man of very special education and ability. He must be an artist. He must, in line and light and shadow, see and feel harmony. Like the artist of the brush he must be able to balance mass and detail in subtle proportion, to paint, as the artist paints in pigments, in wood, plaster, paper and metal, pictures that have rhythm and beauty in their composition. He must know the use of arch and post and lintel, of cornice, frieze and panel; the relation between structural need and ornament. And, if he is to interpret ideas and themes in solid, concrete terms, he must have a mental color tray whose pots are filled with the knowledge of bow, in every age, in every land and by every people, themes and ideas have been interpreted in such terms.

TO you, readers of Photodramatist, be you Kings of the Megaphone or Knights and Ladies of the Mighty Pen, I address an appeal and a promise, and am assured that it will be read by “eyes that see”.

Know and appreciate the work of the Art Director— and the Art Director will know and bring untold thousands to appreciate better your own.

Nor is this promise idle. As certainly as a picture may be “made” by finished, clever acting, by keen and masterly direction, it may be strengthened, improved, even in certain instances “put across” by the fitness and excellence of its setting. It would be, of course, absurd to claim that any story essentially unsound, poorly acted and poorly directed could be made to draw big money to the box office by the appeal of its background alone, but it is undeniably true that background may be made to strengthen weaknesses of story, of direction or acting; to weld all the elements of a photoplay into a homogeneous, strong, smooth and pleasing whole.

Just how can you, as a Writer or Director cooperate with the Art Director to this end? Veryhumanly, as one engaged in this phase of production, I am impelled to a prejudiced answer, and would say to the Writer: Write into your stories only the sets

(Continued on Page 41)
There is no task in motion pictures more difficult than the adaptation of a famous novel. This is demonstrated by the lamentable dearth of competent adaptations. The continuity writer who is called upon to transplant a classic from the printed page to the screen is confronted with two important problems: first, he must exercise a certain amount of respect for the author whose work he is handling, so that he may retain the spirit of the original; second, he must manipulate the story so skilfully that it will assume a new identity as a moving picture.

I have seen photoplays which possessed great merit on their own behalf, but which fell far below the parent stories because of unintelligent treatment; and I have seen photoplays which were literal transcriptions of well known novels, but valueless in themselves because the author's written words had not been translated into terms of pictures that move.

An example of the former group was Nazimova's "Camille;" an example of the latter was the Swedish picturization of Dickens' "Our Mutual Friend."

"Camille" had some value as a movie, but as an interpretation of the Dumas story, it was utterly absurd. "Our Mutual Friend" was faithful to Dickens in every respect—so faithful, in fact, that it proved to be a very dull picture.

The adapter, then, must remember that he is teaching an old dog new tricks. To obtain good results, he must treat the aged animal with consideration; but, at the same time, he must not lose sight of the fact that the audience, by whom he is employed, expects him to furnish them with an original kind of entertainment.

Sooner or later, of course, the supply of old dogs will be exhausted, and a new breed will arise which has been learning its tricks since earliest puppyhood. This is the younger generation of the silent drama, and in its hands is the future of the moving picture. The younger generation must throw off the shackles of convention which have bound the movies to the stage play and the printed page. It must make of the movies a separate and distinct art, which combines the virtues and faults of the other arts, but which relies on none of them.

In this connection, I can not refrain from mentioning my nominee:

**Few Persons Can See**

all the pictures that are released each month. Consequently, a careful study of the reviews written for Photodramatist will enable our readers to select the best and to avoid such photoplays as may not be interesting or instructive. Mr. Sherwood is not, of course, infallible; but we believe that few critics possess as keen an insight into the merits and demerits of the silent drama. Read this department each month and keep informed.

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For the two best motion pictures (and I use the term in its most exacting and specialized sense), "They are The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari and One Glorious Day. They both possessed glaring faults, to be sure; they lacked the entertainment value of many other films; and they were financial failures. But they were both real motion pictures—conceived and gotten within the four walls of a movie studio, by men and women whose sole medium of expression is the screen.

Both of these pictures had a rough time of it during their public careers, and both died miserable deaths. But so did Columbus.

"Oliver Twist"

While we are on the subject of adaptations, we can set up *Oliver Twist* as an excellent working model of a good job.

I understand that Frank Lloyd, who directed the picture, was also responsible for most of the continuity; for which he deserves unlimited credit. It was no light task. Dickens has always presented great difficulties to the dramatist, because he paid so little attention to the coherence of his plots. He allowed his characters to ramble about indiscriminately, and drew them together with the most illogical coincidences imaginable. He always managed to cover these difficulties with the cloak of his style, but in a moving picture, where words are impossible, the crudities of plot are apt to stand out.

However, Mr. Lloyd has handled the story with such consummate skill that the spectator's credulity is never strained to the breaking point. He has realized the essential humanity of Dickens' story, and has focused the lens of his camera upon the characters rather than upon the incident.

The result is thoroughly worthy; and although I have always rated about seven cents on the dollar as a predictor, I venture the humble opinion the *Oliver Twist*, as directed by Frank Lloyd, and played by Jackie Coogan, will reach that select category of pictures which have combined financial success with genuine artistic values.

"Manslaughter"

**When**ever the news leaks out that Cecil De Mille is about to foster a film version of another famous story, a few of the more irreverent members of the population begin to wonder just what new form of torture he has conceived for the literary muse.

Mr. De Mille has never yet failed to come through with something original in the way of mutilation. Let that much be said for him. *Fool's Paradise*, which was nominally an adaptation of Leonard Merrick's story, "Laurels and the Lady," might just as well have been
a dramatization of the Congressional Record for all the resemblance it bore to its original. If Schnitzler had not received a fat check for the movie rights to The Affairs of Anatol, he would never have known that his play had been filmed.

In transforming Alice Duer Miller's novel, Manslaughter, into eight thousand feet of celluloid, Mr. De Mille has shown an un-wonted degree of restraint. Except for one riotous excursion into ancient Rome during the days of decadence, he has kept his company within the boundaries of the United States. He has not once crossed the three-mile limit.

Manslaughter is his most intelligent picture; but, I regret to say, it is not by any means his most interesting. It is altogether too long. Mr. De Mille has displayed the prodigality of a Von Stroheim in using up his footage, and nearly every scene is magnified out of proportion.

The social life of the typical millionaire is portrayed with the usual extravagance. It is in this connection that the Roman episodes are introduced. Mr. De Mille uses them to point out that we, too, are riding for a fall—and if our American life today is anywhere near as terrible as it is reflected in De Mille pictures, we are most certainly approaching the ultimate crash.

"Remembrance"

MAJOR RUPERT HUGHES, recently wrote a letter to The Reviewing Stand protesting my review of his picture, The Wall Flower. I used the word "miracle" in describing the sudden metamorphosis of the heroine—from an awkward, homely stick of a girl into a radiantely beautiful woman of the world. I also said that Major Hughes had employed miracles before.

Of course, truth is stranger than fiction, and things happen in everyday life which would appear crazily illogical if described in cold type. However, when these miraculous events are set forth in story form, they must be made reasonable—and this result can only be obtained by expert telling. In Major Hughes' picture, Hold Your Horses, I personally did not believe that an ignorant Irishman could rise from the position of street sweeper to a place of political prominence in so short a time. The late Richard Croker actually did this, but it took him over twenty years to complete his climb. Canavan, the hero of Hold Your Horses, must have done it in four or five years—for neither he nor the girl he married aged the slightest bit during the course of the picture.

Nor did I believe that a family so essentially rotten could have undergone such a radical transformation almost overnight as did the children in The Old Nest. The leopard doesn't change his spots at a word from the director.

I can prove my case (to my own satisfaction, at least) by dragging in Remembrance, the latest Hugh- esian production. There is a picture which follows The Old Nest closely in theme, but which is entirely credible because the author has taken the trouble to make his characters real. He did not do this in The Old Nest. The people in that story were lay figures, plucked bodily from the property rooms of the Fox Studio.

Remembrance is a human story, exaggerated in spots, but forceful because it is fundamentally genuine. The spectator can recognize in it people whom he has actually seen in real life—not people whom he has seen in other movies. Consequently, their conduct—however extraordinary—is not hard to swallow.

Major Hughes wrote and directed Remembrance, and it is easily his best contribution to the screen. He has mastered so many branches of movie production that he will soon be able to claim the film pentathlon trophy, for the all-around athletic championship of Hollywood.

"Rags To Riches"

I ATTENDED a showing of Rags To Riches with high hopes, for I thought that it was going to be another one of those burlesques like Buster Keaton's The Frozen North. It turned out to be a burlesque, right enough—but the same type of unconscious burlesque as Where Is My Wandering Boy Tonight?

In point of fact, Rags to Riches is just plain awful. It represents hokum at its lowest, and that is several degrees lower than the proverbial snake's abdomen. Wesley Barry is in it, which means that there is a great deal of hand-drawn humor about freckles. There is also a misjudged hero, a misjudged heroine and a host of misjudged subtitles.

Rags to Riches will probably be highly profitable. Things like that always are and always have been—ever since Judas earned thirty pieces of silver (net profit) for selling his soul.

"When Knighthood Was In Flower"

THIS has been a season of upsets, the grand old dope, as the sport writers affectionately call it, has been subjected to a round of body blows. The New York Yankees, who ruled 7 to 5 favorites, lost four straight games in the World Series. Carpenter, the young Greek God, was knocked flat by a colored boy from Senegal. And now Marion Davies has appeared in a picture which was enthusiastically acclaimed by critics on non-Hearst newspapers.

When Knighthood Was In Flower is the photoplay in question, and it is a truly marvellous affair. Holding, as I do, no wealth of respect for Miss Davies as a motion picture star, I am forced to confess that this production lifted me out of my seat.

It is, of course, a spectacular costume drama, laid in England during the merry reign of Bluff Prince Hal. It has everything in the way of costumes, scenery and lavish effects that money can buy—and yet, it never loses sight of the fact that all this display is unimportant as compared with dramatic interest. When Knighthood Was In Flower is ponderous in size, but it is not slow moving. In many of its scenes, it fairly races along. And it is extraordinarily beautiful to look upon!

"The Bond Boy"

AFTER the tremendous (and richly deserved) success of Tol'able David, it was only natural that Richard Barthelmess and Henry King should try something of the kind again.

The Bond Boy is an almost exact replica of Tol'able David in all respects save one: It takes the same mountain scenery for its background, it possesses the same type of hero, and the same atmospheric conditions. But it has not the same story. The backbone of Tol'able David was not furnished by Mr. Barthelmess or Mr. King, but by Joseph Hergesheimer. Unfortunately, Mr. Hergesheimer did not write The Bond Boy, for it is utterly lacking in reality.

It is a fine production, directed (Continued on Page 34)
Do’s and Don’t’s of the Short Story

By Carl Clausen

I
n looking through my files one day I discovered several significant facts, which I think will be of help to those who are learning to write salable stories.

A story of mine in which a rattlesnake figured prominently, laid around for over two years before it was finally sold.

“Snakes are abhorrent to most people,” one editor explained, “so we are returning it with regrets.”

Now this story was one of the best I had done to that date. Its theme was a big, fundamental one—the love of a father for his son. The father permits himself to be bitten by the snake to save the boy. I loved that story and I did it as well as I knew how. Nevertheless the good qualities it possessed were far outweighed by the fact that people do not like to read stories about snakes.

Thinking it over, now, I recall very few snake stories in the magazines. “The Cat of the Cane-brake”, by Wilbur Daniel Steele, in the Metropolitan, is one of the notable exceptions—a very notable one, in fact—being one of the best stories of that year. If it had not possessed qualities of the highest excellence it would never have been accepted by any magazine.

So, avoid snake stories.

A
other yarn of mine was rejected repeatedly because one of the leading characters had smallpox. I couldn’t change it because, like the snake story, it hinged upon the cause of the rejection. This story, however, was light and inconsequential, so when it finally “went” for a song, I felt “good riddance”.

One editor told me frankly that the story was entertaining, logical and well told, but because of the distressful disease of one of the leading characters, he could not use it.

Lesson number two. Don’t give your characters diseases that are disgusting.

A friend of mine wrote a very fine story in which a worthless youth commits suicide by shooting himself. The youth’s life was insured for two thousand dollars. The policy did not pay for suicide. To get the money for the youth’s wife who was about to become a mother, and who was also in desperate financial straits, the father pleaded guilty to murdering his own son.

It was a story of splendid sacrifice. Its style was excellent. The character of the father was beautifully drawn. Yet the story was repeatedly rejected, as too grim. It was finally printed as one of thirteen stories in a volume entitled “The Grim Thirteen”.

The
ame of the story is “The Head of His House” and the author Conrad Richter. It would pay you to read this story for its fine characterization and for the sympathetic and masterful treatment of a difficult theme; also as a lesson to avoid grimness, if you wish to sell. In addition to its grimness there was the fact that the leading character was guilty of fraud. This was another score against its salability. Writing good stories is one thing and writing salable stories quite another. A good story is not necessarily an acceptable one, and a very mediocre one may sell because its subject fits the policy of a certain magazine.

I sold a story once in which the leading character has leprosy, and in which his sweetheart stabs him and places her lips to the wound, and drinks a mouthful of his blood, that she might be inoculated by the disease, and condemned to the Molokai with him until death.

There was no doubt about the sublimity of the sacrifice, but it was a little too much for most editors.

“Good Heaven, Clausen,” one editor said, “take that thing out of my office before I get inflected.”

I laughed.

“Outside of the subject matter, what do you think of it?” I asked.

“Oh,” he answered, “the story is a little gem, but I wouldn’t touch it with a pair of tongs.”

Reading this story over now, I chuckle to myself when I realize that it went over in spite of its gruesomeness. Just the same, the editor who bought it, unwittingly did me a lot of harm. I got the idea that any theme well enough handled was acceptable. It took me a long time to unlearn this. In com-
mon with all tyros since time immemorial, I had the deep-rooted idea that drama was synonymous with something gruesome, or at least, unpleasant.

I used to kill my heroes and heroines off with a fine disregard for the feelings of my readers. When I conquered my homicidal tendencies, I began to sell, steadily, instead of sporadically. It gives me a little comfort here when I remember that Hans Christian Anderson, my distinguished compatriot of fairy tale fame, once wrote a play in which the entire dramatis personae died in the last act. There is still hope for me!

Again, consulting my files I find that a certain "murder" story, in which the victim was killed by a falling icicle, was rejected over and over again; I could not understand why. I thought I had discovered a new and original way of "killing" a man without leaving a trace. The thaw did away with the weapon, you see. Clever, wasn't it? Very! Only I found a few months later in discussing this yarn with a friend, that the idea had been used only about a hundred times before.

YEARS ago someone wrote a famous story along these lines, and as a result, there was a perfect deluge of icicle stories for about two years.

Moral: do not use a situation which has made another writer's story famous. Your own may be totally different in treatment and in no way a plagiarism. Just the same, the editors will steer clear of it, rather than run the risk of being accused of fostering plagiarism.

Another story of mine has the very serious fault of lacking unity of setting. I say, has, because this story is still unsold. Horrible confession for a writer, eh! Well, we all have our boneyard. I used to worry about mine, until the late Jack London told me that he had no fewer than a dozen MSS in his.

Half of the action of the story in question is laid out at sea, aboard a wreck, the other half in a flat in San Francisco beside a blazing grate. As a result, it leaves the reader with the impression that he has read two stories riveted together.

When I get time I am going to change it—and sell it.

SEVEN years ago when I was still in swaddling clothes, I wrote a whimsical little tale which I thought very clever and delightful. Two years ago it was sold. When I read it in print, I knew at once why it had been passed up by the editors for five years. It was clever and whimsical, all right. But the trouble with it was that O. Henry had done some two hundred yarns like it—only a lot better, of course—about ten years before.

It gave me a decided shock when I discovered how neatly, though unwittingly, I had imitated old Sidney Porter.

Imitate yourself—that is the only safe, profitable, also honorable, course.

Be sure of your subject, is another lesson I was to learn. A certain mining story had one or two grave technical faults, as a result of which my mail was flooded with letters from practical miners all over the country. Some of the letters were instructive and helpful, written in the spirit of good fellowship, and the writers had my interest genuinely at heart, but a great many of them were anything from sarcastic to abusive.

One "gentleman," a self-styled geologist, even attacked my nationality, which, Heavens knows, I am not responsible for. As an epistle of ill-breeding and bucolic boorishness, his letter was a work of art.

DON'T lay yourself open to such criticisms. It hurts you with the editors. Consult specialists in technical matters. They are willing and glad to help you. They can tell you in five minutes more than you can learn in five hours from a textbook. In addition to this, a specialist consulted, is a friend won. I have never yet been charged for such advice. It was always given cheerfully and proudly.

I find that I have used the double identity idea five times. It is a good one, but be very sure in using this idea, that you have a new, original angle. Ben Ames Williams had one in "Always Audacious," and Stevenson had one in "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde." So did Sam Hellman in "The Christening of Twin," in a recent issue of the Saturday Evening Post.

This idea had its genesis in an old criminal case of the sixteenth century—if I remember right—where a man disappeared from his home for ten years, and died in exile. Another man of striking resemblance returned, claimed his property and even confounded the widow of the dead man. After living with her for a long time, and enjoying the property of the dead man, the imposture was discovered, and the impostor put to death.

THE idea is a good one, but it has been done with variations so often of late, that it is best to avoid it. Editors are beginning to tire of it.

I find further that a certain story of mine, of seven thousand words, written in one day, about five years ago, brought me less than a cent a word—all it was worth. You cannot expect to get a good price for hasty and slipshod work. The old trite saw that "a thing worth doing, is worth doing well" is doubly true in regard to literature.

I make it an invariable rule never to write more than fifteen hundred words in one day, and quite often I do less than a thousand. Results have more than justified this rule.

IN regard to the length of stories. I find that the five to seven-thousand-word story is the best seller. The reason for this is that the more names an editor can carry on his title page, the better his magazine sells. Every writer has his own little flock of fans. It also gives the magazine variety. If you will observe the current issues of the magazines you'll find a certain well planned balance in their contents. The ideal issue of a magazine catering to both sexes, will contain a sprinkling of sport, sea, adventure, simple love stories, business, dog and juvenile stories. Such a balance means increased circulation.

There is another matter which I might mention here. When an editor asks you to change a story to suit him, don't get on your high horse, and emit artistic brimstone and sulphur. Be as reasonable as you would be when you are selling your house, and a prospective buyer asks you to make a few slight changes.

I have found that when an editor suggested a change, the story was usually improved by the

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Could you, on twenty-four hours' notice, select the minor characters, assist them in making up and in costuming, see that all properties were available and be ready to aid your director in "shooting" the scenes shown above? That is what James Ewens, Assistant Director for Richard Walton Tully, had to do in filming "Omar, the Tentmaker." His own account of how he did it is given below.

The Mysterious Assistant Director
Revealing the Unlimited Capacity of the ‘Official Goat’

By George Landy

CHIEF among the unsung heroes of the film world is the mysterious assistant director, whose functions have never been strictly defined, but whose duties bring him in contact with every member of the organization staff and the cast down to the lowliest property boy or extra. There may be disagreement about his duties, but there is certainly complete unison about the title which is bestowed upon him by everybody in the motion picture world: the "official goat."

Not even the traditional second lieutenant in the army is cursed more freely or more volubly than is the hard-working assistant director. In no other sphere of activity can we find an individual to be compared to him. His salary usually ranges from seventy-five to a hundred and fifty dollars a week, yet he acknowledges only two superiors: producer and director, and has complete authority over everybody on the set whether it be a ten thousand a week star or a five-hundred-dollar a week cinematographer.

In watching the production of Guy Bates Post's forthcoming screen vehicle, "Omar, the Tentmaker," which was written and produced by Richard Walton Tully, I was forcefully struck by the multiplicity of duties assigned to assistant director James Ewens, and the dispatch with which he accomplished his multitudinous tasks. Here I felt was the long-sought-for opportunity to find out something about this mysterious a. d. (as the assistant director is known on the lots and as we shall call him henceforth for the purposes of brevity).

FOR weeks during production I tried to corner this particular a. d. but all in vain, for even during his lunch time or his occasional hours off at his hotel he was besieged by business. Finally, however, when "Omar, the Tentmaker" was all completed and even cut, and all the properties and costumes and other paraphernalia had been checked and returned or stored, I managed to have an hour with Ewens, and what he told me certainly should be of interest:

"All of the assistant director's work narrows down to one fundamental function: 'to feed' the director, to relieve him from the multiplicity of de-
tails that enter into production, so that he may concentrate his entire artistry and ability on the dramatic features of the photoplay in hand. Before the director shoots a scene the a.d. has made sure that the following factors are all in readiness: that the set is ‘dressed’ properly, that all the actors needed for this particular sequence on this particular set are ready on the set or in their dressing rooms from whence they can be called at a moment’s notice, that all the players of bits and extra people are on hand, properly made up and properly costumed, that all the electricians are at their stations, that all the carpenters and handy men for emergencies are prepared with all the necessary tools, that all the property articles are in their correct niches, so to speak, and that all the additional minor technical details are set for the scenes.

But long before the time for shooting comes a period of preparation in which the director and his assistant line up the scene plot of the photoplay and go over the cast. Usually the producer and the director, sometimes with the additional advice of the star in their conferences, select the important members of the supporting cast, but the players of bits and, as in the case of “Omar, the Tentmaker,” the thousands of extras—these are all left to the assistant director. It is up to the men in my branch of production to know everything. That sounds like a very large order but it is spoken in all humility rather than in boastfulness. A trick rider is wanted for a certain scene. I must know where to get him. In the case of “Omar, the Tentmaker” he had to be about the same build as young Will Jim Hatton. It was a stunt that needed a man of iron strength but he had to look like a boy of fourteen. Other scenes called for camel drivers, Arabian tumblers, a practical operator of an old fashioned potter’s wheel; rough-riding horsemen for wild Arabian steeds—these are but a few of the unusual demands that it was up to me to fill.

An especially interesting call came one day when one of our leading players had an automobile accident which incapacitated him for four days and thus put our production schedule out of whack. It became necessary to shoot a certain scene three days ahead of schedule and it was the scene in which the Shah’s mother, played by Rose Dione, comes to tell Shireen (Virginia Brown Fair) that the Shah wishes her for his harem. With her comes a troupe of emissaries from the Shah and also a couple of eunuchs who bear rich jewels with which to tempt the young maid.

We had engaged two negroes to play the eunuchs but when the disarranged schedule called for their services immediately I found that they were both employed on another picture. It was a case where we had to have these two men because we had ready only this other set; unless we could find the two eunuchs production would have to be held up for several days, with the consequent waste in overhead cost. And the two men who finally were substituted consisted of the bootblack whose stand is outside our studio and the studio bootblack.

This was just a minor example of the “messages to Garcia” which are a daily occurrence in the life of the assistant director.

Take the matter of location work. After the locations are provided it is the duty of the a.d. to see to it that all the members of the directorial staff and the cast are transported in comfort to and from the location, that they are fed on locations, and, during night shooting, even that they are kept warm.

Yet at all times the a.d. must take care to keep down the cost because all of these details multiply in finances faster than the mythical locusts that were one of the ten plagues of Egypt. And the all-powerful office looks to him first when any sequence seems to run into unusually expensive figures.

To sum it up in a phrase which became familiar during the great war, the assistant director is the Liaison Officer between the director and everybody else on the lot. If the director has to worry about make-up, lights, props, costumes, extras, carpenters, electricians, property boys, food, transportation, etc., etc., etc., it can readily be seen how his real work will suffer and the consequent weakening of the entire photodrama.

The a.d. is a sort of mysterious power behind the throne that can make or break the lesser actors, players of bits, players of atmosphere and even the photodramatist himself. For the public has become a captious critic, very prone to pick out small faults in settings, costumes and so on, which distract their attention from the thread of the story to the naturally consequent ruin of its popularity. The man in the audience may know his England or his country life in America—he may have visited the Yukon or had explored the South Seas—he may have been in the service and is therefore cognizant of all the minutiae of military equipment and uniform—he possesses, in short, some little bit of specific information on which he is certain and therefore competent to criticize.

In the production of pictures his stage is the entire world and all time, and his stories treat of every social stratum, all of these details are right or wrong in the last analysis according to the information, the ingenuity and the patient research of the a.d. Hence my earlier statement that the a.d. must know everything. The technical director, the art director, the costume designer deal in large mass thoughts, the individual costume which has the wrong number of buttons on it is blamed directly upon the a.d.—without any ifs, ands or buts, it is up to him to see that everything is right.

Naturally it is the ambition of every a.d. to become a full-fledged director. There are two essential qualifications which the successful assistant must have to progress in his craft; he must have the artistic-dramatic sense and he must possess the organizer’s ability. In Ewen’s case, he gained the former qualification through his work in Eastern art schools and dramatic companies, while his experience in organization came with his army service. For he entered the infantry as a private and was promoted through the ranks to a first lieutenancy in the Great War.

The average youth of eighteen or so who wishes to become a director and who realizes that he must first become an assistant gets a position as an extra in some production. There it is up to him to watch, not so much the actors, as the organiza-

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The Unpublished Author
A Plea for the Cultural Value of Learning to Write

By Douglas Z. Doty

This practical age is reflected in our educational system which teaches our youth how to make a living but does little to teach them how to live.

It is natural that we should think first of how to insure ourselves against want. It is so in every land—of necessity. But Europe's richer cultural background is absorbed by the most illiterate peasant because it is all about him—in the legends, in the landscape, in the architecture, in the very air. And the lowest immigrant to our shore brings with him a greater natural appreciation of music, story and color than the average American youth ever knows, with all our prosperity and all our schools.

Why? Because the cultural values of our life are sadly neglected. We demand applied education—of course. We must be practical—naturally. But that is not enough!

When we think of poor old China we think of a rich and ancient civilization, with a store of wisdom and a priceless art that was matured a thousand years before Columbus discovered America. Yet if you were to overhear the talk of any two coolies working in a rice field, you would discover that the topic of conversation is always—food! For in China, famine, like a grim shadow, is forever lurking over the land and each year blots out thousands of lives.

But in "free America," physical starvation is as rare as the bubonic plague. And for most of us the worst fear is that our neighbor can afford a better Victrola or a more expensive car. Our pride is touched by this—the outward and visible signs of success.

There is another kind of pride—the pride in what we are, rather than in what we have.

During the first year of the war there came into the Century office a young American etcher. I had recently published some of his work and this was the first time we had met. He came in timidly and sat on the edge of his chair. He was thin and pale—from actual want, as I later discovered.

He told me that for several years he had resided in Antwerp, Belgium, with his young wife, making a very modest living but happy in the work he loved, amid a group of understanding, cultivated people. With the onrush of the Germans, he and his wife fled to Paris, and thence back to New York. He thought of it as home.

His welcome was rather inhospitable. His work was not commercial, in a city where, for the most part, only commercial success covered the public.

"The Greatest Defect in our present educational system is that it teaches our youth how to make a living but does little to teach them how to live," says Mr. Doty. "The cultural values of our life are sadly neglected. We cannot appreciate the best in art and literature until we have studied. You cannot," he adds, "enjoy an art without knowing something of it. To enjoy literature you must have learned something, through practice, of the art of writing." To those who have sought to become artists merely because of the possible financial rewards, we recommend a careful reading of what Mr. Doty has to say on this vital question.

is recognized. Men whose work was by no means the quality of his, but who were making money, looked down upon him. He could find no sympathetic soil in which to take root, and without it no sensitive artist can flourish and grow.

On the one hand were the portrait painters whose success depended more upon their social graces than their brush; on the other, the magazine illustrators, many of whom prostituted their real talent making the "pretty girl" covers which the public is supposed to admire.

Down in Greenwich Village, where at least he hoped to find some friendly environment, for the most part he merely found the fakers. Lacking both commercial and artistic ability, these people were feeding their egos, deceiving themselves by seeking notoriety in place of the fame which they were not capable of achieving. Vain professors, short on dollars and long on hair. And they had no more interest in modest genius than had their more successful brothers uptown.

So this young etcher went back to war-devastated Europe and entered the service with the Allies, and to the beat of drums marched back to Antwerp where only two years before the lovely Queen of Belgium had climbed three flights to his attic studio as a tribute to his art.

Now, this is no indictment of the American people in general, or of New York in particular. Few of us would be willing to trade the wholesome freedom of the United States for the sophisticated cultivation of Europe.

But this is true: Unless we enthusiastically and intelligently foster our native art, whether it be writing, painting or sculpture, we shall always play second fiddle to Europe. The only way to foster the creative genius of our own land is to be able to appreciate it, not merely to wait for Europe to discover it for us about the time that the artist is dead and buried—and this has happened so many tragic times.

But we cannot appreciate the best unless we study. And by studying I do not mean merely "reading up" on a subject, but actually attempting to practice as well.

We in America have two passions which perhaps are indications of our youth—a passion to possess that which we admire and a passion to excel in whatever we attempt, and our standard of excellence is the dollar mark. The average American likes to imagine himself a patron of art when he pays a large price for something that somebody else tells him is good, not trusting his own judgment or taste. What art needs is the col-
Every story idea is characterized by the method—be it quick or battered—by which it is delivered to the performer. The audience is collaborating with the performers, and any actor will tell you that his work is five times as good before such a house.

BUT in order to collaborate, you must know something of the art that you are enjoying, whether it be a book or a play. You must have written, even though you never published; just as so many of us, before the days of the pianola, learned to strum upon a piano, even though we never played before an audience. But it did teach us to appreciate good music. You cannot even be a good reader unless you have learned something, through practice, of the art of writing.

There is nothing more pitiful than the self-made man, who, having amassed a fortune at the expense of self-cultivation, is unable to get any fun out of his money. A picture means nothing to him unless he owns it. The uncut books upon his shelves have no other interest for him than their expensive bindings, which most people could not afford to own, and that is his pride.

It is significant that so many people are engaged in attempting to write for the screen; and already there has been a curious reaction. Few of these writers are commercially successful, but it is distinctly noticeable that the average motion picture audience is growing much more critical of what it sees, and this is bound to have a salutary effect upon the productions of the future.

China painting and piano playing are losing their vogue at our finishing schools, and high schools and universities are adding yearly more and more courses in English composition and writing.

The day may come when we shall have democratized art and our people shall have a common appreciation, if not a common ability, for creative work.

## Developing the Story Idea

### Inspiration Less Important Than Technique and Logic

**By Frederick J. Jackson**

Bare Story Ideas are worthless until developed fully and correctly—just as the strongest college youth is useless as an athlete until he has acquired "form." "Inspiration," says Mr. Jackson in this interesting article, "has its place, of course; but it must be supplemented by the mechanical work of construction." This is no mere theory; it has been amply demonstrated by every really successful writer. By using actual examples from his own experience, Mr. Jackson has made his treatise on this important topic of unusual value to everyone who writes.

Captains were afraid, with good reason for their fear. The remnants of wrecked steamers, sinking ever deeper in the surf-pounded sands, were grim warnings.

Up from the south on the wings of the gale came a battered, underpowered tub of a steam-schooner, in command of a certain Scandinavian mariner. In any weather, at any time of day or night and at almost any stage of the tide, he would unhesitatingly plunge his craft through a smoother of foam and smashing seas as he piloted her safely into Humboldt Bay. He always got away with it, and other captains were afraid to risk following him. They were wise.

This was described in detail, for I know Humboldt Bar in all its moods. I characterized the daring skipper, whom I called "Midnight Johnson." So far I had written nothing but fact, and discovered that it was made-to-order for the purpose of fiction. I ran out of facts, and still lacked the slightest inkling of how to continue the story and build the necessary plot. I thought that with this running start my imagination would readily supply the missing "ingredients."

But the so-called "inspiration" was lacking. By what I call "mechanics" the tale was continued. The next part of the story was devised by reversing the situation. Johnson was placed in command of a new mail steamer running to Humboldt. On her maiden voyage, in the middle of a clear June day, with the bar figuratively "as smooth as a mill pond," he ran the steamer onto the north jetty.

I thought this would stimulate imagination. It did not. Therefore more mechanics. The steamer

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Shooting the ‘Einstein Theory’

By Sheldon Krag Johnson

EINSTEIN’S famous Theory of Relativity has been shot, not at sunrise, as some of our esteemed solidifications of scientific learning would have it done, but into motion pictures. The most attenuated of modern theories has been illustrated upon the screen.

There is a lesson in this for the mechanistic producer, were he but able to open his eyes to the spirit that informs the machinery of life. All thought can be reduced to action; behind every action there is some thought. But an effort to establish this truism in the mind of the average motion picture magnate would result in a scene something like this:

Scene: Any office of that type of executive who faces the influx of new ideas as a man who cannot swim faces a rising tide.

Outer office filled with tired men and women who are still waiting to have appointments kept which are anywhere from a day to a week overdue.

A young man, recognizable by his wistful dogged look as an Eminent Author, approaches stenographer, whose face shows a quizzical pity for these queer types who persist in trying to sell stories when there are steady clerical jobs available.

In reply to his question she says:

“Mr. Blank is still in the projection room.”

Movement behind glass door of inner room. Stenographer hurriedly goes in. The Eminent Film Canner has entered by a private door, having just arrived.

With resignation he indicates that he will see a few of the most persistent, after a while. Girl re-enters outer office.

A Serene Individual stops her.

“No, Mr. Blank is very busy in conference.”

Serene Individual says:

“You just told this youth that he was in the projection room.”

Brushes girl aside and enters inner office. Eminent Author desperately follows.

Eminent Film Canner, disturbed from a semicomatose condition induced by three hours at lunch, pretends to be busy.

Eminent Author feverishly asks:

“When can I have my check for that story you bought six months ago?”

Eminent Film Canner, greatly annoyed, fumbles in his files:

“Oh yes, there’ll be no check. Our Committee decided not to buy it, backed by the New York Office. Report says it is too ‘sub-tile’ or something, contains some idea or other. What we want is something primitive and punchy, something the great mass of moro—that is something the great public can get. They don’t think, they feel. Get that? They feel. Now if you could rewrite this, set it at the South Pole (North one’s been done) and give us a primitive struggle for women and meat. There—we can’t give you fellers all the ideas. Do some work yourself. Get your script from the girl, maybe she can find it—I can’t.”

EMINENT Film Canner swings back to desk greatly depleted. Eminent author sinks limply into chair.

Serene Individual says:

“What is your decision on that Einstein picture?”

“Einstein? Never heard of him. What did he direct?”

“It is a story around the Einstein theory of Relativity.”

“Another d—idea, hey! Come down to earth—”

Serene Individual takes charge of the broadcasting:
"You do not mean earth, you mean mud. You talk about heart interest when you mean sensation. You think your public is a man whose heart is in his abdomen and whose thinking center has never functioned nor served to inspire his feelings. It is the significance of a thing that invests it with emotional value. You cringe before ideas when ideas are but the formulae of emotional significances. The significance of Einstein’s theories is one of the most dramatic and emotional gestures of the twentieth century. It means—" The Serene Individual stopped. He was looking at the face of the Eminent Film Canner.

That gentleman was gazing up as if he were facing Jack Dempsey—from the mat. He managed to gasp:

"You can get Einstein’s script from the girl."

"It is not a script. It is a picture shot, cut and titled. You were to have screened it two weeks ago."

"What? You—" he tremulously takes up telephone. "Help!" he whispers feebly. "There’s a mad man—" Telephone drops to floor as he faints. Offices are closed for the day.

When Delmar A. Whitson, Los Angeles scientist and authority on Einstein, a sort of cross between Jules Verne and Tom Edison, got his big idea of filming Einstein, he naturally gravitated to J. B. Walker as one of the very few cameramen who combined the scientific knowledge, artistry and technical skill necessary to undertake such a subject.

Such qualifications were necessary, for obviously this is pioneer work. That the difficulties were serious makes all the more emphatic the success with which they were surmounted.

In order to pave the way for an appreciation of these difficulties it may be well to outline some of the theories involved, although in the nature of the subject this outline will be but a relative discussion.

The language of the subject is filled with pertinent phrases. One of the most significant of these is that of the "reference frame." Up to the advent of Einstein the reference frame for our astronomers, for purposes of astronomical calculations, was that of the ascertainable distances within our own solar system.

By the calculations involved within this comparatively restricted area, one might say segregated district within the celestial universe, estimates were made of the distances involved within that larger area.

For, jolt though it may be to the provincial-minded earth being, our own solar universe carries on its self-centered existence within a larger sphere, to which it bears the ratio of one average minded censor, to the forward march of universal intelligence.

Naturally, calculations of the larger universe based upon this limited reference frame were at best but approximations. They had that degree of inaccuracy which many of us hire expensive lawyers to inject into our income tax reports.

What was needed was a reference frame so large that it would prove accurate for both the larger universe and our own which moves within it. This Einstein sought to establish by taking the speed of light as a time reference measurement by which
hitherto existing errors of astronomical calculation might be eliminated.

Light is said to move at the somewhat excessive speed of 186,000 miles a second. Yet it does no harm, violates no traffic rules, while mere man becomes quite a menace at some snail-like 86 miles an hour. Such is the relative difference in conditions and effects.

Our stellar universe is quite a large place. We have light moving through it at a rate that would make any self-respecting speed cop fade away from sheer impotence. Yet, such is the magnitude of the distance involved that rays from some remote star may have had so far to travel that by the time they reach us their source may have been extinct for 100,000 years or more.

There may be beings, merely midway out, as it were, who are only now getting telescopic pictures of our earth in its earlier periods and were they able to instantaneously transport themselves here they would be surprised to find how our erstwhile prehistoric monsters had modified their sports from catch-as-catch-can fighting in mid-air, with hooks on fifty foot wings and beaks like dirt dredgers on supple scaly necks that gave them an effective fighting range of a hundred feet or more, to a game played by a beast with a million heads emitting poison gas and using Big Berthas with an effective range of a hundred miles or more.

(No one who did not know his way about in these higher realms could afford to take a chance with a sentence like that.)

Such is the progress for which we live and die, and such is the relativity of space in its effect on time. In a grander sort of way it is much the same as that peculiarity observable today which enables us to get the morning paper the afternoon of the day before with all of tomorrow’s news in it.

Another angle which reveals the pseudo-absolute nature of Time and Space is gained by supposing a universal shrinkage to occur. Suppose all bodies, Heavenly, earthly and otherwise, were to simultaneously shrink to half their present size. Would we know it? And if as a result of this reduction our time factor were just doubled, would we know it? The answer is—we would not.

In other words, there is no constant factor independent of the world we are conscious of which predetermines our concepts of Time and Space. Our awareness of these values is always relative to something else which in itself has no absolute, fixed and per se existence. So we begin to realize the relativity of our material conceptions, which is only another way of saying that the supposed material kingdom reigned over by the Dual Lord of Time and Space is in the last analysis but a mental concept, mentally perceived and mentally interpreted. This kingdom represents no more than a collective agreement within the mind of man that such and such is so and so.

Particularly is this true of those significances which man places upon those “externals” which he thinks he discovers to be facts. But neither the so-called facts nor the externals rest upon immutable material realities having a positive existence independent of this interpretation. All of which constitutes a hint of the more or less unwilling contribution of the material physicists to the metaphysical viewpoint in this our twentieth century.

In illustrating the possible shrinkage of all
"You do not mean earth, you mean mud. You talk about heart interest when you mean sensation. You think your public is a man whose heart is in his abdomen and whose thinking center has never functioned nor served to inspire his feelings. It is the significance of a thing that invests it with emotional value. Your crinkles before ideas when ideas are but the formulae of emotional significances. The significance of Einstein's theories is one of the most dramatic and emotional gestures of the twentieth century. It means—The Serene Individual stopped. He was looking at the face of the Emitte Film Camera.

That gentleman was gazing up as if he were facing Jack Dempsey—from the mat. He managed to gasp: "You can get Einstein's script from the girl."

"It is not a script. It is a picture shot, cut and titled. You were to have screened it two weeks ago."

"What? You—" he tremulously takes up telephone. "Help!" he whispers feebly. "There's a mad man—Telephone drops to floor as he faints. Offices are closed for the day.

When Delmar A. Whitson, Los Angeles scientist and authority on Einstein, a sort of cross between Jules Verne and Tom Edison, got his big idea of filming Einstein, he naturally gravitated to J. B. Walker as one of the very few cameramen who combined the scientific knowledge, artistry and technical skill necessary to undertake such a subject.

Such qualifications were necessary, for obviously this was pioneer work. That the difficulties were serious makes all the more emphatic the success with which they were surmounted. In order to pave the way for an appreciation of these difficulties it may be well to outline some of the theories involved, although in the nature of the subject this outline will be but a relative discussion.

The language of the subject is filled with pertinent phrases. One of the most significant of these is that of the "reference frame." Up to the advent of Einstein the reference frame for our astronomers, for purposes of astronomical calculations, was that of the ascertainable distances within in our own solar system.

By the calculations involved within this comparatively restricted area, one might say segregated district within the celestial universe, estimates were made of the distances involved within that larger area.

For, though it may be to the provincial-minded earthling, our own solar universe carries on its self-centered existence within a larger sphere, to which it bears the ratio of one average-minded earthling, to the forward march of universal intelligence.

Naturally, calculations of the larger universe based upon this limited reference frame were at best but approximations. They had that degree of inaccuracy which many of us hire expensive lawyers to inject into our income tax reports.

What was needed was a reference frame so large that it would prove accurate for both the larger universe and our own which moves within it. This Einstein sought to establish by taking the speed of light as a time reference measurement by which hitherto existing errors of astronomical calculation might be eliminated.

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Particularly is this true of those significances which may place upon those "externals" which he thinks he discovers to be facts. But neither the so-called facts nor the externals test upon immutable material realities having a positive existence independent of this interpretation. All of which contributes a hint of the meaning of the shrinking connotation of the material physicists to the metaphysical viewpoint in this our twentieth century.

In illustrating the possible shrinkage of all...
things, and man's obliviousness thereto, a simple and graphic example was used by our Einsteiner, Whitson and Walker.

Two globes were shown of equal size. These were brilliantly lighted against a black background and each painted with the outline of a continent, thus informing any patriot that he was gazing upon the World. Then by slowly and steadily moving the camera back upon a sliding platform one world decreased in size until it was but half its former diameter. Then there is a cut of two men each with a yard stick and each representing Man upon each of the two worlds. One now shrinks in size as his world has done.

Does he suspect this loss of magnitude? Not at all. He is just as enthusiastic about his three-foot rule as he was before it shrunk to a foot and a half. His three-foot bed now fits him as comfortably as it did when it was six feet long. For though he has no way of knowing it, he is himself but three feet tall. Time now flies past just twice as fast but he continues to pay his rent the end of each month in satisfied indifference to the fact that he is now paying every fifteen days, by former standards. His landlord derives no satisfaction from this fact, for even though he is a landlord, he is not materialistic enough to have preserved an absolute standard of Time independent of common agreement and acceptance.

The shrinking world was a simple problem compared to the ingenuity necessary to show what happens to an object like our earth when completely under the spell of the theory of reversibility.

This theory, which has arisen out of some of Einstein's premises, is that in the movement of a body through space, it suffers a flattening from front to rear in proportion as it approximates the speed of light, until by the time it is running neck and neck with light itself, it is no more than a straight line. This will always be an objection by some parties, such as fat men, to attaining any such speed, and it really seems a poor reward for such an effort. But this is not all. Supposing our body, filled with the love of speed and not mind- ing the resulting shallow appearance, really opens up and steps out ahead of light. What happens? The body turns inside out and wrong end to. This is a consummation devoutly to be wished for among certain of our Lords of the Flickering Fillum. Also it is another instance of the Biblical statement that the "first shall be last—etc."

Henceforth everything will seem very different to our little Alice in Wonderland. So different, that I personally have only a very relative and easily reversible idea of what it would be like. I am hesitant to go further into this, not through shrinking modesty, but because Herr Einstein let it slip one day that there were only twelve beings, human or otherwise, that really understood what he was talking about. My circle is even more restricted. I cannot afford to say too much as one or all of his eleven might read this and so know who had betrayed them.

Now all this is not hard to write about, no matter how it may be to read, but when it comes to telling it in simulated action, any one who has not gone in for this sort of sport would be surprised at the difficulties presented.

Our cinemaphotographer, Walker, drew upon his entire line of ancestral Scotch (I mean in the blood, not in the bottle) before he had enough patience on hand to carry him through. To make a long story of creation short, in the end he and scientist Whitson looked upon their work and called it good, though they had by no means accomplished it in one day.

The starry expanse to be seen above, that is somewhere above these words, is not a night shot from Mt. Lick Observatory, but is the result of what two resourceful young men can do in the way of remoulding the universe closer to their heart's desire. In this case, however, they reversed all precedent by making it first and then shuttering it to bits.

The device they worked out which enabled them to obtain some exceptional optical effects consisted of a heavy frame work upon which, in grooves, were placed two parallel pieces of plate glass. Upon the rear glass was painted that celestial view already referred to as above. Upon the front glass were painted transparent clouds, suggestions of atmosphere and ether. Both of these glasses were moveable by a screw device which made possible that steady and smooth movement of the heavens which we have so often noticed on a summer's night. Between these two glasses was introduced a child's toy balloon, inflated.

With everything working, the effect was remarkably like that of a moon's eye view of the earth on its way through the heavens.

As the balloon approached the general center, the air was gradually let out until it was entirely deflated. It then presented to the camera eye only a straight line. This effect was had by previously introducing a wire within the balloon which maintained it extended in a vertical direction even though deflated.

In the try-out this miniature world behaved in characteristic egotistical fashion. It swelled up more than was intended and shattered the starry heavens to pieces, showering Walker and his assistants with star dust and slivered plate glass.

The effect, however, as finally shot, gave a very good idea of reversibility, for after passing the flat line zone the balloon gradually resumed its normal shape and the illusion was one of its having passed through itself.

However, this was felt to be too impersonal, not homespun enough for popular consumption. What was needed was to reverse something of such common usage that it would bring home to every one the results of too much speed. A timely moral lesson in this age of Jazz. Naturally the choice settled on a Ford as the commonest and homeliest object known to man.

But by the terms of the script this was to be shot standing at a curb with all the problems of double exposure under conditions of changing lights and shadows for the camera man to solve.

Therefore a special Ford with a streamline body was obtained and right easily, too, in this city where "custom made" bodies are turned

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Our Every-Day Mistakes

By Hazel W. Spencer

By some ironical arrangement of our mental processes it is inevitably the weakness of a work of art rather than its power that we remember. A clumsy stroke in an otherwise flawless picture, an awkward line in a statue conspicuous for grace affronts the eye and lingers tiresomely in the memory long after the beauty upon which they may be but the most trivial of blots has been forgotten. Shakespeare recognized this from the moral standpoint when he made Marc Anthony say:

"The evil that men do lives after them; The good is oft interred with their bones."

The evils we commit in the name of art color men's judgment of all we are able to accomplish; the fly in the ointment looms elephantine and obscures alike both vase and fragrance. Perhaps the psychological explanation for this anomaly is to be found in the fact that the well-known beam in one's own eye stimulates an undue regard for motes elsewhere, but be that as it may, the fact remains that it is upon our mistakes that our reputations are crucified. What we have done well may, and probably will, pass into oblivion; but what we have done ill will set us apart forever as bunglers, amateurs, knights of the mediocre.

If we are determined, therefore, to follow art as a profession, let it be as artists, not as unskilled mechanics; as masters, not as undisciplined school-boys. Let us at least write correctly; if we can be sure of doing that the question of style will take care of itself. For style involves correctness first and beauty afterwards, and indeed, correctness is beauty, and there you are!

To the end that each one of us, no matter how untried, may learn discrimination, in other words, what to choose and what to avoid, how to detect and to overcome erroneous tendencies in expression, it may be helpful to consider some of our commonest mistakes.

Let us begin with the use of the word like when giving the meaning of as if. Thus: "I feel like I had met that man before." "He looks like he wanted to cry."

Do You Make Mistakes?

If you do not, you are superhuman. However, those who would attain perfection in any art must eliminate, as far as possible, the minor errors that so persistently creep into one's work. Mrs. Spencer in this instructive article on "Our Every-day Mistakes" tells you some of the things you must avoid if you wish to be known as a master of the English language. She has not, of course, been able to enumerate all of the errors that may be made, but she has set down many of the most glaring ones.

SCARCELY less common and equally reprehensible is the tendency to differentiate between the number of a noun and its accompanying pronoun. Thus:

"When you introduce a character for the first time, characterize them." "It is always a mistake for the young writer to write about matters with which they are not familiar." "Everyone has their own point of view." Written correctly these sentences should read:

"When you introduce a character for the first time, characterize him." "It is always a mistake for the young writer to write about matters with which he is not familiar." "Everyone has his own point of view." The noun and its pronoun should invariably be in the same number, gender and case. Neglect of simple rules of this nature proclaims an ignorance quite incompatible with successful authorship.

If correctness first, then elegance, is our aim we shall avoid this usage as we would the plague. It is provincial in the extreme and never occurs in either the written or spoken language of men and women of true culture. It is refused recognition by dictionaries and vehemently condemned by scholars and it is inexcusable in the vocabulary of anyone attempting to write professionally. If you are in the habit of employing this expression no amount of polish in other respects will obscure the fact that you are not "to the manner born"; it is enough of itself to label you uneducated.

FOR, governing prepositionally a noun or pronoun followed by an infinitive, is sometimes used, in familiar or careless speech, with the value of that before a verb in the conditional, thus:

"I meant for her to do that." "We like for you to study earnestly." "She intends for him to go to college." Corrected these would read: "I meant that she should do that." "I meant to have her do that." "We like to have you study earnestly." "We wish that you would study earnestly." "She intends that he shall go to college."
The expression is often met with:

"Try and………."
"Be sure and………."

Both constructions are incorrect. What we want here is not the conjunction but the preposition, thus:

"Try to………."
"Be sure to………."

A n inelegant and surprisingly common expression is the following:

"In back of………."

At the back of, or simply back of, is preferable. "In back of………." is quite as provincial as 'in under' which we all know to be a vulgarism of the worst character. It is carelessness rather than ignorance which allows so many of us to use was instead of were in the subjective, but this usage is none the less objectionable on that account.

In the following sentence you will see what I mean:

"If she was your leading character she would need much more important action than you have given her."

Of course this should read:

"If she were your leading character……….etc."

We must avoid such a confusion of tenses as the following:

"It would have been well to have shown that he feared her."

"We should have liked to have given you more encouragement."

These should read:

"It would be well to have shown……….etc."

"It would have been well to show……….etc."

And:

"We should like to have given you……….etc."

"We should have liked to give you……….etc."

It is a very common mistake to substitute the comparative form of the adjective for the adverb. Thus:

"Dramatic appeal is easier developed in a story based on theme than in one without it."

"This is fuller developed than the other."

"You should have tried to establish stronger the fact of his innocence."

Instead of "easier," "fuller," and "stronger" we should have: more easily, more fully, and more strongly.

We often see this construction:

"The kind of a person………."
"The kind of a thing………."
"The kind of a day………."

This is incorrect. "Kind" in itself denotes the particular rather than the general, and the article before it is superfluous. It is enough to say:

"The kind of person………." of thing"……….etc.

A COLLOQUIALISM that seems to be strictly American and one of which we cannot be proud is the use of the verb get in the sense of able to. This is painfully common in our speech and is fatal to anything like literary style. Thus:

"We did not get to see her."

"They did not get to move."

This use is utterly unsuited and must be looked upon as an impertinence.

Let us not make the mistake of using 'neither' and "none" with verbs in the plural. This is a common failing with beginning writers and is discernible to a startling extent in the work of those who should know better. So also is the use of "neither" with "or" instead of "nor."

It is incorrect to say:

"Neither John nor Mary believe it to be true."

What we should say is: "Neither John nor Mary believes it to be true."

It is incorrect to say:

"None of us are going."

But correct to say: "None of us is going."

Now some, if not, indeed, all of these mistakes to which I have drawn your attention may seem to many of you to be trivial and unimportant. But the fact remains that any single one of them persisted in and constantly recurring in your manuscripts will damage your reputation as a writer. Possibly not with a cheap class of publications nor with an unlettered public, but certainly with those whose taste is critical and accurate.

If we are spurred to write it is because we are interested in being read; the author who has no ambition beyond that of making money does not enter the ranks of those we are now considering. Consequently it is of the first importance that we be read by the right people.

The right people are not the so-called "high-brows." On the con-

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'Knowing' Is Enjoying

THE American people like to be amused; and the chief American amusement is the motion picture.

Especially popular is the motion picture in Los Angeles, its home since birth some twelve or fifteen years ago.

One often hears the statement, "Since learning the 'inside' of pictures, I don't enjoy them any longer." But there is sufficient reason to believe that knowing the "inside" of the manufacture of pictures does not destroy their entertainment value for the great majority. For instance, in Los Angeles, the world's largest film center, government statistics show that during the summer months of the present year nearly 10,000,000 persons visited the motion picture theatres each month. Taking into consideration that the theatre is more sought in winter than in summer, the yearly patronage amounts to more than 120,000,000.

The average person who has lived in Los Angeles for any length of time knows a great deal about the film industry in general and about picture technique. He at least has seen a troupe of players, in makeup and costume, performing before a camera on a street corner or in some rural locality. He cannot help but know that the most stupendous "sets" are constructed from paint, paste and plaster; that awe-inspiring scenes are obtained from miniature structures or photographic effects. Also, in the average motion picture audience—whether in Los Angeles or in various other parts of the world—there are those who have made special study of photoplay writing and who, consequently, are capable of differentiating between a "foreground shot" and a "medium long shot," and understand scores of minor details pertaining to the mechanical phase of photoplay production.

This knowledge, evidently, no more depreciates the picture-goer's pleasure than does "back-stage" knowledge affect lovers of legitimate productions. One naturally knows that beautiful backgrounds are due to the work of clever scenic artists. He knows whereby the players have obtained their irreproachable complexions. He knows what artificial means produce the thunder-peeal and lightning, the hoof-beats in the distance, or the "chug-chug" of the midnight express. Yet all this does not detract from his pleasure in witnessing the unfolding of the drama.

Realizing this fact, Photodramatist endeavors each month to present to its readers treatises on the various phases of motion picture production. These invariably are authoritative; in fact, the men selected to write them, or who are interviewed by members of the staff, are those who have achieved distinction in their respective fields. A careful study of these articles is bound to give one a more thorough knowledge of the motion picture and, consequently, enhance the pleasure the reader may find in viewing the latest releases.

What Makes a Great Picture?

At the present time when there is so much ado about motion pictures, and so loud is the cry for good pictures, it is a boldly discordant fact that there are too many standards for determining what constitutes a "great" picture.

Of course, we necessarily must overlook hero worship on the part of the "fans." They either like or dislike a certain actor or actress, and consequently approve or disapprove of the picture in which he or she appears. Their unqualified verdict is either, "wonderful" or, "terrible."

But it is not so difficult to understand the prejudices of a pampered public—which always demands a royal margin of opinion—as it is to comprehend the antithetical comments appearing in the various photoplay magazines and trade journals, written by well-paid and supposedly authentic critics. However, as in the case of the "fan," their opinions also seem too personal rather than founded upon any established rules for criticism. Where one critic writes as a summary, "superb," "magnificent" or "powerful drama," another may write "mediocre," "hokum" or "worn-out melodrama."

In addition to the above-mentioned sources of opinions, there remains yet a third one—that of the exhibitor. His idea of a great picture depends altogether upon its possibilities as a box-office attraction. In fact, a leading motion picture magazine which provides a special column for the benefit of the showman, contains a review of Rex Ingram's production, "Trifling Women." And the headline above this box-office analysis for the exhibitor reads: "Bank on Ingram's Name—Talk up New Handsome Leading Man and Newest Screen Vampire." This indicates that the exhibitor knows the value of hero worship and realizes he must cater to the "fans" and play up the producer's past successes in order to realize the most adequate returns.

It is impossible to please everyone, of course. The views of the "fan," paid critic, exhibitor and reformer are too widely at variance. But nevertheless, there have been produced some really great pictures; and careful analysis of these productions reveals the fact that such films have possessed not only capable casts, exploitation values and direction, but also—most of all—have been built upon real stories.

Without a story, no picture can achieve greatness. "Trifling Women," for instance, which is an adaptation of Balzac's "Black Orichards," fell short
because the book did not lend itself to picturization; and an anti-climax detracts from its dramatic power. On the other hand, "Tol'able David," which was undoubtedly produced at a cost much less than that of the Ingram picture, proved to be one of the greatest pictures of the year, mainly because of the sheer strength of Joseph Hergesheimer's remarkable novel.

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Diamonds In the Rough

IN and around editorial offices one hears often the phrase, in the discussion of some short story, "It's a diamond in the rough; this story will be a worthwhile writer some day—if he learns how to use the English language." Then the editorial force proceeds to discuss another literary "diamond" which is not "in the rough" but which has been perfectly constructed and polished, and the fortunate author thereof is favored with a check.

It should be remembered that in telling stories, whether for the screen or for the printed page, the only medium of expression is the language in which they are written. Granted that the photoplay does not need to be couched in language as near perfection as required by the fiction story, the fact remains that poor phrasing and loose construction are bound to weaken the appeal of such stories and to lessen their chances of sale. For this reason we urge every reader of Photodramatist to give the matter of good English his most careful attention. A study of the articles by Hazel W. Spencer, which appear in this magazine each month, cannot help but be of benefit to anyone striving towards perfection in the telling of stories. Even though you may not be a writer or a student of writing, the cultural value to be derived from such study will be of unusual worth.

The ability to express oneself in good English is not, of course, the thing most essential to good citizenship and character. But it is of vital importance in a world wherein one must constantly be judged upon first impressions. Clothes do not make a man, but the neatly dressed man is more liable to secure an appreciative audience than the one who is slovenly. The well written business or personal letter is apt to bring about the desired results more quickly than one dashed off in a careless, slip-shod manner. The speaker who allows awkward phrases to creep into his conversation will never be accorded the respect shown one who can voice his argument in precise, direct sentences.

This is an English-speaking country. Whether you be brick layer, shoe clerk, lawyer, minister or writer, learn to speak and to write good English.

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Then—and Now

RECENTLY there was submitted to one of the larger studios a photoplay in which occurred the following situation:

"A middle-aged politician, having become infatuated with the wife of a subordinate, used his influence in having the young husband sent in to battle in the recent World War on a mission so dangerous that there would be practically no chance of the young man's emerging from it alive. Upon receiving a report that the unfortunate husband was dead, the politician immediately made the wife his mistress. However, as old age crept upon him, he became overcome with remorse and, in consequence, donated his wealth and ability toward philanthropic enterprises in an effort to quiet his conscience."

The scenario, excellent as it was in construction, was rejected on the grounds that it would not pass the board of censors in at least seven states.

It certainly would not, despite the lesson it would have taught to many a man possibly about to enter a situation just as reprehensible. Ministers, in all good faith, would have made such a film the object of violent attack, and would have used it as a lesson in pointing out that the trend of modern times is toward indecency and that the motion picture magnates have lost their moral sense and are attempting to corrupt the nation. One quiet-thinking chap in the studio, however, afterward called the attention of his superior to the fact that the story they had just sent back to the ambitious author was not original. And, in truth, it was not. It had been lifted bodily from the Old Testament, revised to date and the leading character was none other than King David brought into modern life in the person of an American politician.

There is food for thought in the above. We believe that it bears out the argument we have offered many times in the past, that the world is not getting worse—that human nature is the same today as it was centuries ago. Indeed, anyone who has read "Arabian Nights," "Canterbury Tales," Shakespeare's plays and other classics in their unexpurgated editions, exactly as they were originally written, might well be amazed at the change for better that has occurred during the past few decades. And as for motion pictures, as lurid as some of them have been, not one has been as frank in showing contemporary life as did the books of former periods.

It would be well for censors, or those who have censorious minds and who believe our nation is going to the "bow-wows," to read a few of the old plays and books. It might give them a new viewpoint and make them somewhat less intolerant.
INDIAN Summer is the appropriate time for the gleaners and they are certainly having their day in the motion picture world at this writing. Most of the bigger independent producers who started shooting in the Spring and early Summer have collected the advance payments on their big films and are now making active preparations to shoot again late in the Fall. The middle of November and the first part of December will see a renewal of activity in Hollywood and environs which will certainly seem like the "good old days" again.

Ben Sculberg, the only First National producer now active, is filming "The Scarlet Lily" by Fred Sittenham and starring Katherine MacDonald, the adaptation by Lois Zellner, and Victor Schertzinger is directing—the supporting cast includes Orville Caldwell, Stuart Holmes and Adelé Farrington. Other Schulberg productions include "Are You a Failure?" by Larry Evans with Tom Forman directing Madge Bellamy, Lloyd Hughes, Tom Santschi and Hal Cooey—also "The Hero", Gilbert Emery's successful play in which Gasnier is directing Barbara La Marr, Gaston Glass, John Sainpolis, David Butler and Martha Mattox.

At the Lasky Studio Pola Negri is well under way on her first American-made feature, which is Robert Hichens' "Bella Donna"; George Fitzmaurice is directing, the adaptation is by Ouida Bergere and the cast is headed by Conrad Nagel and Conway Tearle. James Cruze is filming "The Covered Wagon" by Emerson Hough, which was adapted by Jack Cunningham and is played by Lois Wilson, Alan Hale and Ernest Torres. Cecil B. deMille is working on an original by Jeanie MacPherson, whose story brings Milton Sills, Elliott Dexter, Theodore Kosloff and Anna Q. Nilsson into sets representing a museum collection of prehistoric mammals. William deMille is also filming an original by Clara Beranger; this one is entitled "Paths of Glory" and its cast includes Bebe Daniels, Lewis Stone, Kathlyn Williams and Adolphe Menjou. Sam Wood is finishing Monte Katterjohn's adaptation of "My American Wife" with Gloria Swanson and Tony Moreno; and Wallace Worsley is directing Wallace Reid in "Nobody's Money."

Julia Crawford Ivers Directing Again

It is several years since Julia Crawford Ivers, one of our best known scenario writers, has directed one of her own stories. The present production is called "The White Flower" and is being filmed in Honolulu with Betty Compson in the stellar role supported by Edmund Lowe, Sylvia Ashton, Leon Bary and Edward Martindale.

Universal Flourishing

Above all other studios Universal City keeps on its grip of productions. Most important is the news that Von Stroheim and Carl Laemmle have finally come to a definite parting of the ways, which means that Rupert Julian is now directing "The Merry-Go-Round", the complete cast of which includes Mary Philbin, Norman Kerry, George Hackathorne, Maud George, Dale Fuller, Cesare Gra- vina, Maurice Talbott and Capt. Albert Conti Ceddasanare. King Baggot is working on Bradley King's original "The Madonna of Avenue A," starring Gladys Walton supported by Edward Herne and George Cooper. George Archainbaud is directing "The Power of a Lie" by Johann Bojer, the famous Dutch novelist, featuring Mabel Julienne Scott and June Elvidge. Matt Ross is doing "The Ghost Patrol" by Sinclair Lewis with an all-star cast including Bessie Love, Ralph Graves, George Nichols, Max Davidson and other celebrities. Robert Hill is directing another special entitled "The Social Buccaneer" with Jack Mulhall, Margaret Livingston and Robert Andersen. Edward Sedgwick is behind the megaphone for Edward Gibson, sometimes known as "Hoot"; the story "Alias Sebastian" is an original by Ray L. Schrock, heading Universal's scenario department. Jack Conway is directing Herbert Rawlinson in "The Green Angel" by Meredith Nicholson, while William Worthington is officiating in similar capacity for Frank Mayo in "The Bolted Door." Scott Darling continues with his Lewis Sargent comedies and William Watson is still directing Neeley Edwards. Duke Worne starts Art Acord's new serial, "The Trail Blazers," a tale of the Oregon settlement.

Another Busy Lot

The Fox Studio seemingly vies with Universal City in the consistent quantity of its output. Present productions include Jack Gilbert in "Truxton King" directed by Jerome Storm; "Man's Size" by J. V. Poland, starring Bill Russell and directed by H. M. Mitchell; "Shirley of the Circus" adapted by R. Lee, starring Shirley Mason and directed by R. V. Lee; "While Justice Waits" by Jack Strumwasser, starring Dustin Farnum and directed by Bernard Darwin; "Without Compromise", starring William Farnum, by Bernard McConville and directed by Emmett J. Flynn. The usual quota of comedies and other short subjects continues to pour forth from this studio as per schedule.

Other Studios

Colleen Moore will be starred by Vitagraph in "The Nineteen and Nine," under Albert Smith's direction, another one in the flood of film versions of the old time melodramas which is about to besiege us. Incidentally Vitagraph is all agog over the expected arrival of Corinne Griffith.

Mae Murray will soon finish "Coronation" for Metro—it is being filmed at the Goldwyn Studio. Other Metro productions that will be under way by the time this appears in print include "The Famous Mrs. Fair" on which Fred Niblo will direct Cullen Landis, and "Your Friend and Mine," an original.
THE other day I received a letter from a chap over in Serbia. He sent the letter to a friend in Paris, and the friend translated it and sent it to me. The fellow in Serbia wrote to tell me that he had just seen "The Virgin of Stamboul" and that he didn't like it because it was not costumed correctly and it did not adhere to Turkish customs.

A few days later, I received another letter, from a woman in Boston, who said she spent several years as a resident of Stamboul, and that the costuming and details of "The Virgin of Stamboul" were absolutely accurate. She enjoyed it because it "revealed such evident care and thought in its preparation." The lady from Boston is right.

On the other hand, a gentleman in New York recently devoted a lot of valuable time, and three sheets of nice neat monogrammed stationery, to inform me that he never knew there was any desert in the vicinity of Stamboul. He admitted that he ought to know, because he was born there. He ought to. But he apparently doesn't, or else he has forgotten, I can show him more sand, and desert, within a radius of twenty miles of Stamboul, than he and his whole family could move if they spent the next hundred years shoveling. I spent two years in Washington, but never visited the famous monument; despite my many journeys to Paris, I have never climbed the Eiffel Tower, and, though I have been in Los Angeles five years, I have yet to call on Mount Lowe. A good many of us are like the man from Stamboul.

A LOT of people who formerly had been in the habit of going to moving picture theatres didn't go last year. We have absolute proof of that, because the annual receipts show a forty-three million dollar decrease. That's worth looking into. There must be a reason for such a difference. It wasn't due to the photography; neither can it be attributed to production. The pictures are getting better all the time. Such stars as Norma Talmadge, Mary Pickford, Douglas Fairbanks, Rodolph Valentino and House Peters are all doing good work. But the public doesn't go to see any one of these unless they are seen in a good story. It goes to see a story—a story well told, engrossing, with real suspense, smooth continuity and pleasing climax. That forty-three million decrease was due solely to the scarcity of good stories. The magazines are full of them, and the bookstores are crowded with them; but when they are transferred to the screen the heart has been pulled out of them. That is because they are not screen stories.

Richard Walton Tully wrote a play about ten years ago called "Omar, the Tentmaker." It has appeared in every city, village and tank-town in the country and he has made enough from it to pay all the European debts. He recently picturized it for the screen, and he told me that in order to make it into a real photoplay he had to entirely rewrite the story. That's what happens to books and plays when they are transferred to the screen. "Omar, the Tentmaker" was a very good play. It is an excellent photoplay. Mr. Tully wrote both of them, and that is the reason. If the authors, themselves, would write the screen adaptations of their stories, books, or plays, perhaps there would be a greater number of successes. There is only one individual capable of making any changes in a story, and that person is the one who created it and wrote it. As long as authors refuse to make a thorough study of the screen just so long must they sit back and witness the massacre of their brain children. Richard Walton Tully has taken the screen seriously. He proves it and shows the answer in "Omar, the Tentmaker." Others would do well to follow him.

A CORRESPONDENT writes me, seeking advice regarding the following: "There are too many writers for the screen that shouldn't, and not enough writing for the screen that should." That's worth consideration. Many people who have real creative ability, and analytical and synthetical minds, have not ventured into the field of the photodramatist because they believed it was over-crowded. Very well, let's discuss this a little. Last year, there were only about twenty thousand scripts submitted to moving picture producers. One of the largest companies received only thirty-five hundred original stories from aspiring screen writers and free-lance photodramatists. The majority of these scripts were returned because they were slip-shod efforts on the part of their creators to make some quick money. They deserved to go back to their owners. Perhaps some of those were good stories. Maybe they were sent to the wrong place. By that I mean, they might have been sent to a producer who was not interested in that particular type of story at that particular time. The author, perhaps, became discouraged and threw the story into an archive. It requires more persistency than that to progress. I was several months trying to sell "The Virgin of Stamboul." Don't get discouraged. Put that down in your note-book.

SOMEBODY said to me the other day: "The trouble is I have been working on a story for some time, and came to the point where one of my characters killed her father to avenge her mother's disgrace. She is an illegitimate child, and because she is nameless, can't, or won't marry the man she loves, and through jealousy she contrives to lay her crime on her half sister's husband, but later she experiences a change of heart, confesses the crime and commits suicide.
Now, what I don’t want is that murder and suicide. I haven’t touched my script in almost five weeks, trying to work it out some other way. But every time I come back to the same thing. Would you leave it out or use it? Can the opposite sexes be pals? Do you think such a theme would be universal in appeal? You know so many women of to-day prefer men friends; I mean a platonic friendship. Yet I don’t believe it will ever succeed—do you? But, why not?"

In the first place, I do not think the average producer would be interested in this type of story. It is a sex story. Sex stories are being banned just at present. The public doesn’t like them. I am not in sympathy with this type of story. "As far as I can see, the above plot has no heroine. If the illegitimate child is the heroine she would lose whatever sympathy she has gained by her act of murder. She kills her father to avenge her mother’s disgrace, and yet I am one of those who believe that this is an age when it takes two to make a bargain. A woman doesn’t give herself to a man unless she wants to. I could not sympathize with the mother any more than I could the father. Both of them sinned. There is a penalty for sinning, no matter which sex commits it. The illegitimate child contrives to lay her crime on her half sister’s husband, but later experiences a change of heart, confesses, and then commits suicide. This plot is too unconvincing. Its motive is not inspiring and its only moral seems to be, "the wages of sin is death." I am one of those who believes that the opposite sexes cannot be pals. Such a theme, treated in a big and noble way, would undoubtedly be of universal appeal. But it would have to be mighty convincing. I do not think platonic friendship has met with any great success in this generation. I do not believe it will, because such a constant association usually results in an intimacy which is dangerous. The subject is too dangerous to handle and is better left alone. There is no doubt but that the majority of us want to be good. But the best way to do that is to show us how to improve; not tell us how bad we are.

For several years past the United States has been making steady gains in the export of motion pictures to practically all parts of the world. Reports received from nearly all the countries of Europe, the northern coast of Africa and South Africa, the Far East, Australia, Asia, South and Central America, besides Canada and Mexico, show that the American film is delighting audiences wherever it goes. It is estimated that more than twenty thousand separate subjects are shown in the moving pictures of England, and of these tenths have dealt with American life and customs. The latest figures show that there are forty-five hundred picture theatres in the United Kingdom, with an annual attendance of 1,075,000,000. The average number of visits to the moving pictures for the entire population is one every two weeks for each person. Europe is by far the best customer for the United States in this line of goods, and France, Italy and the United Kingdom imported more than 47 per cent of the total exports of moving pictures from this country during the first eleven months of 1921. The American pictures are of a high standard in every particular—scenic beauty, photographic art, variety of incident and sustained interest. One desirable feature is that the films be true to life; for example, scenes regarding the seafaring life will fail before the seafaring people of England unless accuracy is maintained throughout. The better features of the American outdoor life—especially the wild West—are enjoyed, but in this class, as in others, the demand is for plays of depth and fidelity to detail, and it is here that the American screen writer eclipses the English photodramatist. For the past few months several European companies have been endeavoring to tempting some of our American screen authors.

In a recent issue of the Los Angeles Express, the following question is asked by its dramatic editor, Monroe Lathrop: "Who shall pick the themes for our photoplays—the public or the gentlemen who sell them to the public?"

The issue has been rather sharply raised by Charles Ray’s announcement that he is to do "The Courtship of Miles Standish." The news that America’s first love story was to be put upon the screen brought to him a flood of comments pro and con. Clergymen, teachers, professional men, club leaders wrote in enthusiastic praise. A specimen letter from a prominent California minister was shown by the star. It read in part: "I have learned with the greatest interest of your plans to present the story of the Pilgrims on the screen. I believe the American people will give you a great welcome and glorious response in that role."

But now look at this. It comes from an exhibitor of large importance in New York: "You may be right from an artistic point of view, but I do not believe it will bring half as much money into the box office as 'A Tailor-Made Man.' Instead of spending your time and money on things primarily intended for the classes, why don’t you consider the commercial side of things a little more by filming some smashing stage play or big book with tremendous circulation?"

"Now," said Mr. Ray, "there is the answer to the question often raised why producers of pictures don’t get out of the old ruts. Most of them are scared back by such exhibitors and men on the commercial side if they venture out. It is exhibitors of this kind, not the producers of pictures, that are holding the majority of pictures in a groove. Thank goodness, not all of them are like this."

This is the principal reason why I have always warned aspiring screen writers to refrain from writing the so-called "costume" story. Exhibitors claim that such stories never bring them reasonable box-office returns. They declare that the public does not like this type of picture. But how many exhibitors, or producers, know just what the public does want? The public doesn’t know, itself. I have always maintained that all the public wants is a good story, and it doesn’t care whether it's "costume" or not, as long as it possesses the correct ingredients.
AFTER a week of sightseeing in New York, Pola Negri has arrived in Hollywood to begin work in George Fitzmaurice's production, "Bella Donna," by Robert Hichens, author of "The Garde of Allah" and other famous tales. Ouida Bergere is preparing the script. Remarkable atmospheric effects of Egypt and the Nile will be among the noteworthy features of Miss Negri's first American-made photoplay.

**Director and Star Consult Author**

Alfred Green, the director, has gone East, where he will meet Thomas Meighan, and the two will go to George Ade's home at Boone, Indiana, to discuss the forthcoming production of the famous humorist's new photodrama, "Back Home and Broke," which he wrote expressly for Mr. Meighan. The new story is declared to be full of delicious comedy and human interest.

**Rawlinson in "Scarlet Car" Story**

"The Kidnappers" is one of the "Scarlet Car" stories by Richard Harding Davis, in which Herbert Rawlinson is starring under the direction of Stuart Paton. George Randolph Chester prepared the continuity.

**Reality in Dana Production**

Viola Dana and twenty members of her company have returned from "location" in the mountains eighty miles from Los Angeles, where a reproduction of a large South Carolina mountain cabin was built for use in "Miss Emmy Lou," an original photoplay by Bernard McConville.

**Writes Pickford Continuity**

Elmer Harris, well-known scenarist, has gone to Canada to rest and at the same time obtain atmosphere for his continuity of "Dorothy Vernon of Haddon Hall." Mary Pickford's next picture.

**New Metro-Tiffany Picture**

Mae Murray and her husband-director, Robert Leonard, are in Hollywood, soon to begin work on "Coronation," a story by Edmund Goulding, which will be their latest Tiffany production for the Metro corporation. Miss Murray plans to spend about four months on the West Coast filming many elaborate episodes of the picture, which, however, will be completed in Europe.

**To Produce Harvey Gates Story**

Irving Cummings has begun work at the Hollywood Studios on the first of a series of Irving Cummings productions to be released and distributed by Principal Pictures Corporation. The story was written by Harvey Gates.

**Kenyon-Chester Collaboration**

Charles Kenyon and George Randolph Chester are collaborating on an original photoplay to bear the title of "The Infinitesimal," which, it is said, is based on the life of Julius Caesar.

**Hawaii Furnishes Background**

Betty Compson, star of the new Paramount picture, "The White Flower," has gone to Honolulu, together with her leading man and others of the cast. Julia Crawford Ivers, author and director, has already preceded them to the beautiful tropical location. The role afforded Miss Compson is strongly dramatic and highly emotional.

**Tully Delivers "Omar"**

Richard Walton Tully has gone to New York, taking with him the completed film of "Omar, the Tentmaker." Upon his arrival he will deliver the big production to First National headquarters and continue to Europe for an indefinite rest.

**Scenario Staff Busy**

Mack Sennett's scenario forces are preparing Mabel Normand's next stellar vehicle, Ben Turpin's next comedy and a comedy-drama to serve Phyllis Haver as her first starring picture.

**Studio to Reach Capacity**

Announcement has been made by the management of the Fine Arts studios that present indications are that the plant will be filled to capacity within a short time. Three new units recently added include the Charles R. Seelng unit which will begin at once on "The Purple Dawn," a dramatic story written by Mr. Seelng. Bessie Love will play the stellar role.

**Writes Photoplay for Bosworth**

The photodrama which Hobart Bosworth is now filming under the working title of "The Beloved Unknown" was written by Ethel Gillett Whitchell, daughter of a former governor of California, and the scenes are being taken on the exact spot where the scenes of the story are laid.

**Josephson Completes Continuity**

Julian Josephson has completed the manuscript for the next Warner production, "Brass," which Sidney Franklin will direct.

**Original by Le Saint**

Edward Le Saint will start production shortly at the Wilmot Studios on his own original story, entitled "The Shop Girl."

**Bull Montana in "Glad Rags"**

"Glad Rags" is the title of Bull Montana's next comedy for Metro. The story is written by Rene Rivierre.

**Miss Schroeder Prepares 'Script**

Doris Schroeder is preparing the continuity for "Forsaking All Others," in which Colleen Moore will play opposite Colleen Moore.

**Barronmore Offers Verdict**

John Barrymore, famous dramatic actor, says that the motion picture of today is more in need of imagination than of regulation.

**Universal Acquires Mayo Vehicle**

"The Summons" is a story by George Patullo, Saturday Evening Post writer, which Universal Film Corporation has purchased for a Frank Mayo starring vehicle.

**Scenarist Entertains Club**

Two hundred and fifty members of the Story Writers' Club were entertained by H. H. Van Loan, well known scenarist, who was speaker of the evening at the regular meeting on October 11th at Blanchard Hall, Los Angeles. Among the next speakers scheduled are Rupert Hughes, Rex Beach and Peter B. Kyne.
was salvaged, the accident being laid to defective steering apparatus. Again the steamer put out of San Francisco for Humboldt Bay, with Midnight Johnson reinstated as master. For want of other action I decided to wreck the steamer again in the same way. At noon on a clear day in July, with again a smooth bar, by way of variety Johnson smashed her onto the south jetty.

The next step needed no imagination. I set down what was logical, what would happen in real life under the circumstances. Johnson's master mariner's license was suspended for the three remaining years of its duration. I pictured his descent. He started drinking. He wound up as a common, drunken, seafaring hobo.

And then came the much sought "big idea." Up to this point I had been rambling on, knowing there was a story concealed somewhere, but unable to discover it. I put him in the forecastle of a crack Pacific coast liner. A southerly gale raged, as the steamer left San Francisco for Seattle. Navigation was possible only by dead reckoning; the weather was too thick to permit checking up at the ship's position by landmarks or lighthouses.

The steamer strikes Blunt's Reef, about twenty miles south of Humboldt Bar. The water gains on the pumps. She has less than two hours to float. It looks like certain death for the hundreds of people aboard. On such a black night, with mountainous, breaking seas, it would be useless to attempt putting out the lifeboats. Absolutely the only chance for life is to get the sinking craft into Humboldt. And there is only one man in the world who could take a steamer over the raging bar at night.

The frantic captain remembers that Midnight Johnson is in the forecastle. In desperation he turns the command over to the man who for years has been regarded in maritime circles as a drunken bum.

Johnson takes the steamer across Humboldt Bar. Just in time, for she sinks immediately after reaching the calm, shallow waters of the bay. Her decks still remain above water.

Developing the Story Idea

(Continued from Page 20)

The rest of the story is mechanical. A steamer is sent to pick up the passengers. It is the same steamer that Johnson wrecked twice on the bar, and which in the meantime has never been sent to Humboldt. In attempting to enter the bay this steamer is wrecked for the third time. The explanation is nautical, technical, and completely vindicates Johnson.


The genesis of this story was the growth of something which cannot be called a definite idea. All I had in mind was the characterization of a certain shrewd type of woman. My working title was "The Cussedness of Blondes,"—not that blondes are necessarily any worse than the rest of us when it comes to "cussedness." I went just so far in writing it, then realized that I had no story.

It happened that some years before, when in New York, as a publicity man, and necessarily thinking along this line, I had thought of an elaborate "press agent" stunt. But it was too complicated and expensive to put through. Since my desire at that time to do it in real life had been frowned upon, I now decided to do the next best—to work it out in a magazine story. So I combined it with my vague theme anent "blondes." The editor's introduction was this:

"When two young men with brains set out to make a screen star, there is bound to be something doing—and they may spring a surprise even among themselves . . . ."

The action resulted in a million dollars' worth of publicity, but the girl turned it down for a "million dollars' worth" of husband.


In a British publication entitled "Reed's Seamanship" is an illustration which is the real genesis of this story. The caption beneath the plate reads thusly: "How a spare propeller was shipped in the Pacific Ocean." It was enough to suggest a tale to a writer of sea stories, and might be called the father of the plot. The other parent was a matter of setting—the kelp beds beneath the cliffs on the California coast south of Cape Mendocino. Small vessels sometimes put into the kelp for shelter from high seas or gales. The heavy kelp has much the effect of oil on breaking seas.

With the story suggested by the illustration and the kelp beds, the rest was a matter of mechanics. The steamer Donegal left Eureka for San Francisco, a run of less than twenty-four hours. She disappears for eleven days and is given up for lost. Her deckload of lumber her lifeboats and all loose deck gear is thrown up on the beach north of Cape Mendocino. With a southwest gale raging, the wreckage is accepted as almost certain evidence that the steamer has gone down with all hands.

But her young skipper has managed to get her into the kelp—he knows the kelp—and there piled all her cargo forward until the propeller shaft is above water to permit repairs. The steamer lay against a background of cliffs; the country behind the cliffs is deserted, isolated. Other steamers passing would be more than fifteen miles out to sea to get around Blunt's Reef. (The Donegal lies in a bight south of the reef and the cape). She carried no wireless. Therefore she remained unseen, given up for lost until one morning, battered, smashed, burning her lumber cargo for fuel, she limped into San Francisco Bay.

The editor of the Popular made strong inducements for a series of stories about Hugo Martin, the nervous, never-at-a-loss, young skipper of the Donegal. I had characterized Martin without giving much thought to it. A writer comes to put in characterization as a necessary human element in a story. In fact it is more than that: it is a vital essential to the technique of a short story. But to me at the time of writing, Martin's characterization was just that—mechanical technique—and no more. What I thought made the story was the suspense, the dramatic situations, Martin's grasping a slim chance for life when his older officers could see no chance at all. But upon close analysis it was really Martin himself who made the story. By accident, I had characterized him in a way that

(Continued on Page 40)
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SHOOTING EINSTEIN'S THEORY

(Continued From Page 24)

out in the same quantities as the cars themselves.
In ordinary practice it is an easy matter to
telecope any automobile not made of rubber. Most
any telegraph pole will do. But to do it a la Ein-
stein and through the eye of a camera, exceptional
skill and accuracy are required.

The script provided a driver for this speed de-
\n
ning. He is seen reading Einstein and then gets
out leaving this book in the car. So far reaching
are these revolutionary ideas that he has no sooner
departed than they begin to have their effect on
the flivver. It gets to dreaming of attaining a
speed of 66,960,000 miles an hour, which is light
speed in terms of speedometer reading. Naturally
such a dream has its effect on even a Ford and it
smoothly and even turns wrong end to, through
itself.

It took five good men and true, two days to ob-
tain this effect. They worked with an equipment
of wire cables, windlasses and a five thousand dol-
al camera. They invoked the patron Saint of all
watch makers that the spirit of concentrated ac-
curacy might attend their efforts. Really the tele-
graph pole is a less expensive method. By means
of the windlass the car was pulled forward until
all but the rear wheels had vanished into that
oblivion that lies behind a vertical matt on a camera
lens. This process was repeated in reverse order
after first rewindning the film. This much of the
film if printed and projecte would show the car
shrinking from both ends into the rear wheels.
The next step was to begin at this point and draw
the car out from behind the mat first from one
side and then the other. The total effect was of
the car shrinking to its rear wheels and emerging
therefrom in a reversed position.

The blowing up of the heavens through the
over inflation of the earth was not the only casu-
ality. One of Einstein's points is that light is sub-
ject to deflection from its straight course when
within the influence of a planet like the sun.

In setting forth this problem pictorially, our Ein-
stein collaborators made use of a black background
with brilliantly illuminated globes representing the
earth, the sun and a distant star, with a beam of
light passing from the latter to the earth and be-
ing bent from its course by the sun.

It is odd that while all photography is done by
light, in order to photograph light itself, in the form
of a beam, something must be introduced in the
path of the beam which will make the light pick
up by reflection. In this instance this light-maker
stuff was aluminum dust.

\n
T HIS dust, sifted or blown into the path of the
light beam, makes it stand out like a rope of
diamonds on a colored lady's chest. The gentle-
man who was doing his bit by blowing the alu-
minum dust was, unfortunately, a pipe smoker. Re-
acting to the feel of a pipe between his teeth he
inhaled instead of blowing out. As a result the af-
fairs of the universe were entirely suspended while
all efforts were concentrated upon trying to ac-
climate the pipe smoker to an aluminum coated
interior.

At this point however, this Einstein collaborator
in the second degree, realizes that space in a maga-
zine is one of those reactionary facts not yet
functioning under the law of Infinite Relativity.
The corollary any scientist would make to this
proposition is that the writer must stop and end
this article. On the other hand, a full and com-
plete stop would be too jarring a note in even a
very relative article on Relativity. Therefore it
seems best to assure the reader that no matter
what it may seem like to him, I make no stop, but
on the contrary, have speeded up, until I have
passed beyond the "flattened zone" and am there
continuing this, fluently and freely, wrong end to in
reversed English, in the truly marvellous realm of
the Fourth Dimension.

At this moment I cannot say whether I shall
continue this hindend foremost flight on through
Eternity and so be prevented from getting back in
time to write for another issue, or whether, being
out of Time. I am already back and the article has
been published in some issue a year ago.

One has such a loose and insecure feeling out
here in this plane where Time is not, where one's
hands turn inside out and one's feet aren't
mates and nobody knows whether anything is go-
ing or coming, will to be, or ever was to have been
—if you can follow me you will understand—I am
slipping, slipping, sinking, sliding, rising, falling.
Going—g-o-n-e!

'SITUATION' CONTEST

(Continued From Page 6)

ments to this effect on the contest page of Photodra-
matist beginning with the July issue, instructing each
author to retain a carbon copy of his work, since to
return all unavailable contributions would entail the
expenditure of no small sum of money for postage and
labor. However, there need be no fear that an idea
is going to be appropriated, because all non-winning
contest material is to be destroyed. As to the prize-
winning "situations", appearing in the December is-
ue, these will be copyrighted upon publication, after
which Photodramatist will release all literary and dra-
matic rights to their respective authors.

The Contest Editor is greatly pleased with the re-
results of the contest, and feels that it has served the
purpose for which it was intended—a universal awak-
ening of interest in drama and its elements. Although
each and every contestant could not win a prize, each
should realize that he undoubtedly has gained some
benefit by competing—the experience of discriminating
between the dramatic and undramatic, together with
the actual practice of selecting a "situation" and pre-
senting it in a clear and concise manner.

Photodramatist takes this opportunity to express
hearty appreciation of the enthusiasm and interest man-
ifested by its readers; and congratulates each and
every one for his sincere co-operation.
He Sold Two Stories

The First Year

THIS sentence from J. Leo Meehan's letter to the Palmer Photoplay Corporation, tells the whole story:

"Within one year I have been able to abandon a routine life that provided me with a meal ticket and a few other incidentals for the infinitely more fascinating creative work of the photoplaywright."

But it would not be fair to you to end the story there. It is interesting to know that this young man in an underpaid job was able to sell two photoplays and attach himself to a big producer's studio in one year; that a short time ago he was retained by Gene Stratton Porter to dramatize her novels for the screen. But if you have ever said, or felt like saying, as you left the theatre, "Why, I could write a better story than that," you want to know just how Mr. Meehan proceeded to become a successful photoplaywright in one short year.

He Tested Himself

DOUBTFUL, but "willing to be shown," as he expressed it, Mr. Meehan proved conclusively to himself and to us that he had undeveloped talent. The rest was a simple matter of training. The Palmer Course and Service merely taught him how to use, for screen purposes, the natural storytelling ability which we discovered in him.

We Offer $1,000 and Royalties

THOUGH we are daily discovering among men and women in every walk of life, new screen writers, like Mr. Meehan, we continue this nation-wide search, because, regardless of the rich rewards that are being offered in this field, the demands for good screen stories are far from being filled.

We are now offering $1,000 and royalties to new and unknown writers for acceptable screen stories to be produced by this corporation. This is the first time that new writers and photoplaywrights have had the opportunity to share in the success of screen stories of their own creation.

One hundred and sixty companies in Los Angeles alone are seeking for better screen stories, offering from $500 to $2,000 for each one that is acceptable. Yet their demands are not filled. Our Sales Department, the biggest single outlet for film plays, cannot begin to supply the needs of producers.

One Way to Know About Yourself

H. VAN LOAN, the well-known scenarist, in collaboration with Malcolm McLean, formerly instructor in short story writing at Northwestern University, developed the Palmer Test Questionnaire, which has proved its usefulness in discovering in men and women the ability to write screen stories.

Among those whom we have recently discovered, developed, and whose stories have been accepted are people in all walks of life; a California school teacher, a New York society matron, a Pennsylvania newspaper man, an underpaid office man in Utah, and others.

Still others, men and women of all ages, are enrolled, not because they want to become professional screen writers, but because they realize that Creative Imagination, properly developed, is the power which lifts those who have it to lofty heights in any field of endeavor and they appreciate the opportunities for training presented through this new channel.

You may have this same ability. It is for you to decide whether these opportunities are attractive enough to make you want to test yourself, free. It costs nothing and involves no obligation.

All you do is to send the coupon for the Palmer Test Questionnaire, answer the questions asked and return it to us. We will tell you frankly and sincerely what your answers show. We hold your answers confidential, of course. If you prove that you are endowed with creative imagination, we will send you further information relative to the Palmer Course and Service. If not, we will tell you so courteously.

The Chance is Yours
You Must Decide

KNOWING as you do the rich rewards, can you afford to pass this opportunity to test yourself? It costs nothing—no obligation.

And if you are endowed with creative imagination a simple matter of training will prepare you for photoplay writing, for many other highly paid positions in the film producing field which now await properly trained men and women, or for higher places in other lines of endeavor.

Send the coupon. Make this intensely interesting test of yourself. Know whether or not you are endowed with the ability to grasp the opportunity for rich rewards which are now going begging.

WITH THE PRODUCERS

(Continued From Page 29)

inal by Willard Mack which Clarence Badger will direct.

At Robertson-Coel Ethel Clayton is still busy on Achenh Abdul-
lah's original "The Remittance Man," under Wesley Ruggles' di-
rection: while Harry Carey will soon commence his third R-C pro-
duction, and the Carter de Havens their sixth. H. C. Witwer's second
pugilistic series now running in Collier's, "Fightin' Blood," is being
directed by Mal St. Clair.

The Independents

ALTHOUGH the listing of ac-
tivities in what might be desig-
nated as the "regular" producing
companies given here sounds more
impressive than it has been for a
couple of weeks, it is the month of
the independents in the producing
field right now. Gene Stratton-
Porter is entering the lists with her
own productions, the first of which is "Michael O'Halloran," now being
made at Inc's Studio under the
direction of James Leo Meehan,
another comparative newcomer.
Irving Cummings establishes him-
self with "Flesh and Blood" and is
now at work on "Chicago Sal," by
Harvey Gates, which he will follow
in turn with an unusually imposing
production. King Vidor's next
offering—he has just finished work-
ing with Laurnette Taylor on "Peg
o My Heart"—presents Florence
Vidor in "Alice Adams." Roland
V. Lee is directing Jess Robins
continues with his Edward Everett
Horton comedies: the present pro-
duction is entitled "The Trouble
Buster," and was written by Arthur
Goodrich.

The Warner Brothers are busy
on their series of film versions of
seven well-known books, present ac-
tivity being concentrated on "The
Little Church Around the Corner"
adapted by Olga Printzau and di-
rected by E. Mason Hopper.

Other cities continue in their
hitherto unsuccessful endeavors to
oust Los Angeles as the production
center of the film world; Miami,
Florida, is still in the ring and the
latest contenders for the throne is
Portland, Oregon, where Ruth
Stonehouse is making a series
known as Premium Pictures. For
these she has just completed a

(Continued on Page 39)
Q. So many of the younger stars are taking the leading roles in recent screen productions, crowding the older women out, I am wondering if it would be acceptable to write a photoplay with an old woman for the leading role. Will you please advise me? H. M.

A. For the reason that the public almost demand a young and beautiful woman or handsome man for the leading part in a photoplay it has become almost the custom to write with this idea in view. Such is not always the case—in “Over The Hill” the mother, played by Mary Carr, takes the leading role; she plays the part of an old woman, but the heroic and romantic action goes to John, her son. If you can so construct a story that the character portion goes to an older woman and permit her to play a leading part but contrive to give the romantic element and some of the heroic action to the younger member of the cast it might be successful, but if it depends upon the way it is worked out.

Q. I have in mind a story that somewhat resembles a recently produced picture which was an adaptation from a published story; do you advise me to work it up into a photoplay? F. V.

A. Every successful picture brings to producers hundreds of photoplays that are said to be just as good or better than the one which created the original idea, but we cannot say that this speaks for the originality of the writers who use the basic idea of the original one for their stories. Unless the story you have in mind is sufficiently different to attract attention on its own merit we cannot advise you to work it up.

Q. I have a story the title of which reveals exactly what the story is about; it has been returned with the usual comment, “not available.” I know it is a good title as well as story. What would you do in a case of this kind? F. F.

A. It seems to us that you are more taken with the title of the story than the story itself. Stop and reason it out—did you decide upon the title first and then devote your time to working the story out around the title? If you did, doubtless the story is quite weak. The right way to proceed is to write the story, making it human, natural and appealing simply from the material it contains, then let the title be suggested by the story, not the other way around. Try this method and see if you don’t have better success.

Q. Can you recommend any pictures which will serve to illustrate the importance of dramatic conflict in a screen play?

A. “Tol’able David,” with Richard Barthelmess, directed by Henry King, is one of the most successful and dramatic pictures of the year. In it there is dramatic conflict of the most effective sort. “The Seventh Day” with the same star and director was not a success. There is no well defined conflict or triad in this story—it is almost entirely narrative.

Q. What do you think of Mr. De Mille’s use of retrospect in “Manslaughter”?

A. A cheap expedient for the purpose of introducing spectacular and salacious scenes from history.

Q. Why is it that so many magazine stories are bought and produced when it is supposed to be a fact that narrative is not drama?

A. A narrative may be dramatic, and most of the stories that are bought from magazines are dramatic narratives. Very often they are changed enough to make them dramatic if they are not already so. The chief reason that producers buy them is that they have advertising possibilities.

Q. Is a courtroom scene considered hackneyed? I am planning a story with such a scene. L. V.

A. Yes. Courtroom scenes have been done so much in just the same way, since it seems inevitable that the hero or heroine is to be saved at the very last minute by the other heroic character. Change your plot around to avoid such a scene.

Q. What can I do in writing the scenarios, to avoid the terrors he said and she says?

A. That is a difficult question to answer in a few lines. You should preferably use dialogue whenever you want to convey to the reader what your characters talk about. Then you should twist your sentences around in such a way as to avoid this constant repetition. Buy several books to help you in the beginning. Get Doget’s Thesaurus and Allen’s Book of Synonyms and Antonyms, also Woolley’s Handbook of Composition and you will learn how to write correctly.

Q. How can I acquire concentration so that my stories will be homogeneous and the plot will be knit properly together?

A. Learn to keep your mind on one subject until you have finished with it. If you find this difficult at first, practice committing to memory some line of prose or poetry which you know to be good. When you find yourself speculating on several different ideas catch yourself and go back to your lines. Do this a hundred times a day if necessary. Take but two or four lines and you will be surprised how soon concentration will become a habit.

Q. When I saw Manslaughter I was horribly bored with the Roman sequences, and I felt that my intelligence and knowledge of history was being insulted. Were these scenes really necessary to make a great picture? K. N. M.

A. No, these scenes were not necessary and your judgment shows that you are judging a picture as a story and not as a spectacular appeal to the senses. As more and more spectators come to think as you do, we shall have better and better pictures.

Q. Is hypnotism good material for a moving picture? I have some quite unusual incidents I could work into a story if you think the public would want it. K. G. C.

A. Hypnotism would make an appeal to but a very small portion of the public. It has been tried on both stage and screen and has not been considered a success. The normal rather than the abnormal is always more universally interesting.
THE AGE of AUTHORS

(Continued From Page 10)
age was Corneille, who, at that age, wrote "Melite," a drama.
The best works of Calvin were written when he was 25.
It is said that Horace wrote his first odes at 23 years.
"The School for Scandal," by Sheridan, was written when he was 26.
Lamartine was only 30 when his first poems appeared.
When Thackeray was 36 his "Vanity Fair" appeared.

D AVID, of the famous Psalms of David, is said to have written his first sacred psalm, at 18 years.
Another case of youth writing a masterpiece was the one of William Cullen Bryant, who wrote his "Thanatopsis," written when he was 19. Confucius began his religious works at 30 years.
Dante began his "Divine Comedy" before he was 35 years of age. The germ of the thought came to him when he was quite young. He finished it when he was 51.
Samuel Johnson began "London" when he was 27 years.
"The Imitation of Christ," one of the most solemn and most profound works in literature, with the exception of the "Divine Comedy," by Dante, and "Paradise Lost," by Milton was written by the saintly author of Thomas A. Kempis when he was only 34.
A book that made the author instantly famous was the "Robbers," by Schiller. Lord Byron died when only 37 years.

A GAINST the above, youthful authors are such authors: Tacitus; Homer, who wrote the "Iliad" after he was 60 years of age; John Bunyan, famous for his "Pilgrim's Progress," the satires of Perseus; Robert Browning wrote the "The Ring and the Book" at 57; Sir Thomas Moore, who finished his "Utopia" at 73; Coleridge, who published "Christabel" at 44 years; Butler, who was over 60 when he wrote "Hudibras"; and Virgil, who wrote his bucolics between his 43rd and 47th years.
Now, if one takes a trial balance he can easily see which side wins, old age or mere youth and inexperience in the ways of the world. Genius is genius and cannot be manufactured. There is only one answer, youth wins, and wins without a struggle of any kind. Some people say that one must go through life and see the pitfalls and pleasures of this world to be able to write. Literature and history say such philosophy is incorrect. And, furthermore, the ages of the various authors prove it.

Every-Day Mistakes

(Continued From Page 26)
trary they are really the great reading public, the public whose interest is the final goal of all real literature, the big, clean, wholesome, hero-worshipping public which instinctively prefers the best and recognizes and despises mediocrity.
This public includes many hundreds of thousands who are far from being scholars but they have the ability to distinguish between the true and the false, the real and the counterfeit, and what is innately fine in themselves responds to artistic perfection in others as naturally as a child to his mother's voice. It is such people as these who must be our audience, and it is to them we must appeal if we are to win success. Remember, then, that though they may be careless and inaccurate themselves in the use of English they resent carelessness in you, their story-teller. You never please them by coming down to them. They prefer and demand that you should lift them up to you.

With The Producers

(Continued From Page 37)
newspaper story called "The Flash" and will soon start "The Clean-Up."
Resume

ALTHOUGH most of the important studios are now vast regions of silence—present production activity being concentrated largely in the less pretentious and independent State Rights organizations—we can definitely expect that the next month will be the busiest which the industry has seen in many moons. Big plans are afoot—rather they are mounted on steeds whose fleetness and certainty are assured.

You can make money by writing stories, plays, novels, jokes, essays, letters, verse, greeting card sentiments, etc.
It is not easy—but it is being done by many folks, and you can do it.
The Editor Weekly will show you how—tell you what and how to write, and where to sell it.
Jack London once said: "I may not tell one-hundredth part of what The Editor did for me, but I can say that it taught me how to solve the stamp and landlady problems."
Mary Roberts Rinehart says: "The Editor helped to start me, cheered me when I was down, and led me in the straight path to literary success."
For 28 years The Editor has been the friendly adviser of aspiring writers.
The Editor gives the following in each weekly issue:
—names of new magazines and their manuscript requirements and news of photoplays, novel, essay, letter, title, short story, poetry, play and other literary prize competitions.
—news of changes in editorial requirements and other news of the week of interest to authors who have manuscripts to sell.
—articles on the technique of fiction, play and photoplay writing, and on other interesting and helpful aspects of literary work.
—autobiographical letters on the conception, genesis, development, writing and selling of short stories, novels, plays and photoplays by well-known authors.
—scores of brief, practical, "experience items," by authors, telling of the writing and selling of their work, prices received, etc.
—definite information regarding property rights, copyright, contracts for placing plays, etc.
The Editor will bring the atmosphere of literary accomplishment into your workroom, and put your feet squarely in the path to literary success. Today is the day to begin your subscription.
The cost for this service is $15 a copy—$1.50 a year, every week.

THE EDITOR MAGAZINE
BOOK HILL,
HIGHLAND FALLS, N. Y.
"How I Did It"

A Vivid Message to Screen Writers

by

H. H. VAN LOAN

WHEREVER photoplay productions are known—wherever screen stories are sold—wherever scenarios are written, the name of H. H. Van Loan stirs the fire of admiration. He is recognized as the most successful screen author of the day.

You remember the triumphant "Vive La France," Dorothy Dalton's spectacular masterpiece; you recall "The New Moon," the tensely dramatic classic that brought to the screen interesting emotions of Norrna Talmadge; you were thrilled by the breathless action in "The Virgin of Stamboul" with Priscilla Dean; perhaps you have wept or laughed as the greatest stars have unfolded the action of other notables of the screen.

Those and scores of other cinema triumphs came from the magic pen of H. H. Van Loan. They brought him success—showered him with wealth and spread his fame throughout the world.

"How did you do it?" asked thousands when he sold his first scenario. Van Loan withheld his answer. He continued to write. Closer and closer he got to his goal. He sold another scenario, and then another—and still more. With each success came a greater flood of letters, anxiously driving the questions—"How did you do it?"—"Where did you sell your stories?"—"Where did you get the ideas that brought greater wealth and worldwide fame?"

But Van Loan had no time to tell his story. He wrote and wrote until he found and completely mastered that elusive little "twist of something" that spells success in the business of writing for the movies.

Now, at the zenith of his fame—when more fortune awaits each new stroke of his pen than success brings to writers and thousands of people from all walks of life are still asking, "How did you do it?"—"Why do producers want your stories?"—"Why do they pay you thousands of dollars for a single photoplay?"

Van Loan has told his story. He has told it as no one thought he would—as only he COULD tell it.

Van Loan's fascinating volume, "How I Did It," is just off the press. It's his answer to the question: where he got his ideas—how he built the stories that won him wealth and fame—how and where he sold them. He unfolds everything that helped or impeded his success. He speaks, exclusively from the place where the story is told in the minutest detail. He plunges in and out of every nook and crevice of the new profession of scenario writing. He tells "how" and "why" and the reason for every stumble block and every upward boost. Then he takes you in and out again—racing through the "how" and "why" of his own success, his fame and his fortune—driving you deeper into the photoplay industry than you have ever gone before.

"How I Did It" is not intended as a textbook or a course in scenario writing. It is considered a remarkable "stabilizer" even for those photoplaywrights who have "arrived." It is a practical, straight-from-the-shoulder, interestingly written guide to men and women who would like to taste the fruits of fame and fortune as screen writers.

"How I Did It" is issued only in a limited and reserved deluxe edition. Advance reservations for copies must be made immediately. Your copy will be mailed direct from the printer for $3.50. Fill out the coupon below and mail today. If not satisfied, we will refund your money if the book is returned in three days.

From "The Resurrection of the Donegal" I took a lesser character. He was Martin's employer, owner of the Page Shipping Co. To give my imagination something to work on, I mechanically wrote a scene showing the old gentleman in his private office, with wrath oozing from every pore. What will make a ship owner angry? The loss of money, was the answer. How could he lose money? By one of his steamers being barboured. So I caused the largest steamer of his fleet to have been barboured in Gray's Harbor for over three weeks. With an empty hold she had crossed in over the bar easily enough, but now with two million feet of lumber aboard, and a timorous skipper in command, she couldn't reach the ocean.

And the demurrage charges were rapidly curdling whatever milk of human kindness remained in Page.

I sent Hugo Martin to the rescue. He took her over the bar by liberal use of oil at the start of the ebb. All this was straight "manufacturing," with never even the ghost of an idea one paragraph ahead of my fingers on the typewriter. But with the steamer on the open sea, ideas began to come galloping.

The finished product was "Classic Salvage," which it might be mentioned, brought a larger check than any I had received up to that time for a short story. Two more of the series, "The Flat-Footed Road" and "Extra Money" were mechanically built up the same way with not an idea to start on.

Don't Fail to Read

"Omar In Hollywood"

In Our Next Issue

THE STORY IDEA

(Continued From Page 33)

made him live. Therefore more of Martin was wanted.


RASHLY I had promised more stories about Martin, although realizing that I was up against a blank wall as far as more sea stories were concerned. I had already used up every possible idea for tales of the sea. But I had full confidence that promised the high rate of payment would stimulate my imagination.

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Don't Fail to Read

"Omar In Hollywood"

In Our Next Issue
CINEMA ARCHITECTURE

(Continued From Page 12)

that may be made attractive and beautiful, and reflect glory on the designer. Avoid scenes which must be played in a locale or structure not amenable to changes or subtleties of design: i.e., locomotive cabs, telephone booths, any interior or exterior having characteristics, measurements and forms whose familiarity to the general public prohibits license, and which must be copied very accurately, very prosaically and very un-beautifully. And whatever your set, do not attempt to tell the Art Director how it ought to look.

RIDICULOUS, obviously. Many stories are vitally dependent upon action which can take place in only such a particularized setting, however uninteresting and even ugly it may be. Many writers too, learned as well in the arts of Architecture and design, are capable of giving because of their intimate acquaintance with the theme, moods and locale of the story, particularly and truly valuable assistance to this greatly burdened man. And finally, setting is after all only secondary. The story is the thing and the Writer is a far more important person than any other, not to be dictated to by any.

To the Director, my answer might be even more prejudiced, and certainly couched in stronger and less polite language. Omitting the fireworks, I would say to him, "Hand's off!" Once the script is complete, turn it over to the Art Director and let him design the sets. Look at them only when they have been turned over to you as ready to shoot. Then, don't argue. If he says they are right, they are right.

QUITE as obviously, ridiculous. In the first place it implies a tyranny as dangerous and unsufferable as the tyranny of the Director who holds his associate a mechanic only. Nor does it admit co-operation. The Director, in the present scheme of things, is immediately responsible for the whole success of a production, is, or should be, not merely a mouthpiece, but co-ordinator: one who weaves of various strands a fabric close and smooth. It is necessary if this fabric is to be close and smooth, that each strand shall be at all times within his reach and under his control.

Reason, sanity of thought, therefore brings a truer answer, one that applied can and will in the measure of its application bring to the screen pictures that will inspire the same people who have heretofore damned them, to admit that the movies may be intelligent, may be finely mounted and skillfully faceted.

TO the Writer: Study the relation between the underlying idea of your story and the idea suggested by use, form, or association underlying the structures that you may call for as backgrounds. Visualize as carefully as you do the action, the place in which you have intended it shall occur. Analyze your impression of this place. Feel it; as yourself, or as your characters might. Then weigh it against the impression you would convey by the action of the play. If, in the two impressions there is unity, harmony, tell it. Sum up briefly the characteristics of the place, and rest assured that the Art Director, to the limit of his ability, will endeavor to create a structure that will bring to the eyes of the beholder the same impression, having the same characteristics.

It is not necessary to give a long and detailed description. A sentence, carefully turned can convey to him the whole. Witness the brevity with which a setting, a photograph of which accompanies this, has been described. "The cold, harsh, disordered and dingy Montmartre garret of a recluse student." To you as the beholder, would not his setting bring the same impression as had the writer who described it?

TO the Director: Study the relation between the underlying idea of the story and the idea suggested by the structures called for as backgrounds. Visualize these settings and analyze your impressions. If you are convinced that there is a lack of unity, by all means, if it is possible, so arrange the tale that the action may be played against a background more in keeping.

If you can, confer with the Art Director during the preparation of the continuity. Do not wait until the day before you are ready to start shooting and then ask him to begin design. Believe you me, he cannot give you the best that he has in a moment's time, and yet in nine cases out of ten that is what he is asked to do.

Explain to him the manner in which you conceive the action, where and how the big moments are to be played, what closeups and long shots you wish to use, business that may employ structural elements such as doors, windows, mantels or bookshelves. Above all, make clear to him the idea that you would hammer across the screen to your audience, the theme and mood that you intend.

IF you, as a student of Architecture, have conceived a particular type, style, period or character as expressive of the idea, suggest this to him. Your suggestion will without doubt receive his first and most sincere consideration. If he alters, or discards it in the end, it is because close and careful study has disclosed a weakness, a lack of unity.

Allow your Art Director actually and unhindered to choose the final design. Allow his inspiration, his erudition and fine perception to manifest themselves in material that may be photographed. If on the other hand, you are convinced that yours is a genius all embracing and his the skill of tools and nothing more, force him to follow implicitly the scheme you shall have suggested, even to the placing and detail of all ornament. After he has given hours to research, thought and drawing, quibble with him over the location and proportion of a door, a window or a fireplace. Or, better, when it is built and ready, refuse flatly to shoot the set. See at once that he is fired, call in your "grips" and have them arrange the various pieces of the set more to your liking and go ahead. You will undoubtedly be pleased with the result. There is, in fact, no better way to show the whole studio who is boss, to advertise your superior intellect and talent—in short, of acquiring immediate and lasting fame.

Don't Neglect to Read

"Omar In Hollywood"

Beginning with the next issue
DO'S AND DON'T'S

(Continued From Page 16)

suggestion. The editor is more apt to be a competent critic of your work, than you are yourself. He may not be able to write a story half as well as you can, but his judgment and suggestions are the result of reading thousands of stories. Further, changing a story for an editor, makes him your friend. In the solitude of his harassed sanctuary he'll put a check mark against your name, and when you mail him your next story, it is half sold before he has run his pen-knife down the flap of the envelope.

So much for the Don'ts. The Do's are even more important.

NUMEROUS stories, irrespective of locality, are always in demand. But be very sure that you have a true sense of humor, before attempting one. They are the most difficult form of literature. The two kinds that sell the best are the farcical type and the quiet, "dry" type. A genuinely humorous story of about five thousand words will be welcomed in nearly every editorial office in America.

If you have been a sailor or if you know the sea well, you are lucky. There is an insatiable demand for sea stories. A fairly consistent sea yarn of any literary merit at all, is rarely passed up by an editor. He knows that they are hard to get, in any shape, and he will overlook faults in such a one which he would not countenance in other types for a moment.

Desert stories are also in good demand. To most people, the word desert carries an Argosy of romance, and justly so. The American deserts of California, Arizona and Colorado are full of romance. If you have watched the sunsets over the High Sierras from the Mojave Desert, as I have, you'll know what I mean. The deserts of Inyo and Kern counties are the most romantic spots in California, both in traditions and in their physical aspects.

Snow-stories of the High Sierras and of British Columbia, are also popular, as are adventure stories, laid almost anywhere. Adventure stories of the South Sea Islands are particularly easy to sell at present.

STORIES of business intrigue have a good market with a certain class of magazines, notably the American and the Saturday Evening Post. But it must be business with the glamor of romance thrown about it. Not a dry, director type of yarn.

Let me mention here that certain magazines, Adventure for instance, do not want a love interest in their adventure stories. They cater to men exclusively. Others, like Everybody's of the same company, make a specialty of the Love-Adventure type.

Stories of a limited provincial appeal, such as of the Ozark Mountains, the slums of New York, or the New England hills, are in good demand, if they are done exceptionally well. But unless you can do them thus, you had better avoid them.

John Fox, Jr., Myra Kelly and Flota Campbell Springer have set a pace that is hard to keep step with.

THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

(Continued From Page 18)

tion on the staff. Above all else he must be avid for every conceivable kind of information. This he can secure by careful reading and the constant attendance at pictures of all kinds, for the screen is the greatest university of the present day. His first opportunity for advancement comes in a scene where a large number of extras are employed. If he has shown an intelligence above the average and a quickness to understand orders he is given the handling of three or four or perhaps eight men—like a corporal in the army. These men follow him as a leader, entering the scene behind him and doing as he does. When he shows that he can handle this small group he is entrusted with a larger group, and so on. For in every big scene there are a number of assistant directors ranging again, as in the service, by seniority and importance even though they all have the same title.

In fact, the military simile is the best for describing the multitudinous ramifications of a producing unit in the pictures. Like an army division, the production unit must be practically self sufficient and all inclusive. If the producer may be likened to the general and the director to his chief of staff, the assistant director is the aide-de-camp. All orders come through him from above and it is up to him to see that they are carried out correctly, expeditiously and economically.

HELPFUL THOUGHTS

In the future the photodramatist will have little cause to complain of lack of recognition, because producers are coming to see that the output of the writer is just as important as that of the director or the players. In fact, many writers are being called upon to criticise and to make suggestions in regard to the filming of their stories. Herefore, writers have received too slight recognition, and as a result, the commonest errors have occurred in the finished production. As the industry progresses this change in policy will be perceptible.

RESUMING that the writer has the ordinary talent which has caused him to decide upon scenario writing as a profession, a thorough knowledge of life is the qualification which will make for his success. The motion picture of the present time endeavors to give a true picture of life. This cannot be done by a writer who does not understand the psychology of his characters. A great many of the most successful writers have been newspaper men, who acquired a knowledge of life in the great training school of the metropolitan daily.
These Books are the Open Gates

to Positions in all Branches of Motion Picture Industry

The motion picture industry seeks new imagination, new brains and new hands to carry on the important work of its development. Better stories is the first step, but in screen interpretation of better stories, better studio technicians and craftsmen in every branch of picture making are required. These experts will be recruited from the talent of the land—men and women now engaged in other lines of commonplace work but who possess the very requirements that make success in this great art-industry.

Your present vocation may be fitting you for work that commands a salary that only the motion picture industry can afford to pay. The present day film leaders in every branch of the industry, who lay bare their struggles and frankly discuss their strides up the ladder of fame, in these books, served an apprenticeship that can be had today through the printed pages of these volumes. You may have the talent, if you have the desire, to fit yourself for a place in this rapidly growing and ever fascinating field of endeavor. These books will tell you, "Opportunities in the Motion Picture Industry" is a veritable encyclopedia of the motion picture industry in its present highly developed state, and is an invaluable desk companion and reference book for the writer of screen stories.

Your Place May Be Here

Your ability to contribute to the motion picture industry the talent it so earnestly seeks is shown in the way these books, hidden all over the land are men, women and children who can and will make the motion pictures of tomorrow. Somewhere there are undiscovered G. Gardner Sullivans to create new and greater screen stories. Somewhere there are unknown Jeanie MacPhersons to write continuities. Somewhere there are many girls better equipped to achieve success as film actresses than were some of the foremost stars of today. And many men with natural acting ability simply await the "lucky" opportunity. But there is no luck. Honest application of inborn talent, or experience, developed according to well defined rules is the only secret. Your present work may be fitting you for studio work of the highest type and yet you may not know it. Sellibly, for the good of an industry that must live on the infiltration of new blood and new ideas, the Photoplay Research Society has compiled this great illustrated book in three volumes. These volumes represent an outlay of many thousands of dollars in the assembling of authentic information designed to show those on the "outside" how to get "inside" this great art-industry. These costly books—three volumes—are offered to you for $2, complete. They are virtually the gates to opportunity in the Motion Picture Industry.

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PHOTODRAMATIST
THE MAGAZINE FOR WRITERS

December

OMAR KHAYYAM IN HOLLYWOOD
  - Douglas Z. Doty

THE WEST IN FICTION
  Eugene Manlove Rhodes

MODERN MAGIC OF FILMLAND
  G. Harrison Wiley

"LEAVE 'EM WITH A LAUGH"
  Frederick J. Jackson

ORIGINALITY and VERSATILITY
  Carl Clausen

THE FACTS IN THE CASE
  J. R. McCarthy

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**That** is the way one noted author described the January issue of *Photodramatist* after looking over several articles that will appear therein.

We know you will agree with him. An unusual feature, for instance, will be a contribution from Wm. R. Lighton on the topic, "What is Human Nature?" Few writers know human nature as does Mr. Lighton. His "Billy Fortune," hero of more than sixty Saturday Evening Post stories, is one of the most likeable human characters ever created by a fictionist. "Human" stories sell the best. Let Lighton point the way to your success.

Omar Khayyam offers another contribution in his inimitable style describing studio life in Hollywood.

Less humorous, but of vital importance to everyone who has stories to sell, will be the new *Photodramatist* Service Bureau. A complete list of all photoplay and fiction markets will be printed. Supplanting this will be a direct-by-mail service by which *Photodramatist* offers to all its subscribers full information on any matters pertaining to the story world. These are but three of many valuable features of the coming issue. Reserve your copy now.

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The coupon at the bottom of this page is the Key to a new world of fascinating enjoyment.

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Review of Reviews Company, 30 Irving Place, N. Y.
Self-Confidence

By Sheldon Krag Johnson

SELF-CONFIDENCE is a bi-focal word. We all look through its lenses but the divergence of vision begins with that which we are confident of, or with, or about. Confidence indeed! But whom or what do we mean by "self"?

The world is filled with leaners. For every man with a straight spine who stands on his own feet, there are a hundred thousand that lean. They lean on other men, or sticks, or stones, or any one of the countless superstitions that clutter the open spaces with the chaos that we see.

For we worship gods many. Not only does each of the gods differ from the next but each worshipper swaps god for god. As crisis follows crisis he shifts the emplacement of his confidence, so that yesterday he sought a leech, today he injects a serum and tomorrow he will invoke another's prayer in his behalf.

SUCH is the curse of partaking of the Dualism of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. Always man would that he had confidence and always he runs forth into the external to prostrate himself before that, which is merely a manifestation, while all the time that which caused the manifestation, lay within—the rejected Stone, the trampled Pearl.

No artery, no vein in Man's social body is untainted by this poison. Because real marriages carry radiant beauty and prosperity, mothers and daughters minister daily to Flesh and Trail Riches. Because real writing brings with it a Name, short-circuited aspirants dedicate themselves to getting the name instead of to writing. Because a successful picture means wide recognition, the Weather Cocks in High Places whirl madly about locating Recognitions—that were, instead of taking the stuff that has the essence from which all recognition flows.

This World of Man is a dark earth in a luminous heaven wherein effect is mistaken for cause and worshipped in its place, and its history is a sorry tale of misplaced confidence, for these worshippers have read "self" to mean anything but the Causal Self within. But the Self is an enduring truth that abides when all else has had its day. There is real magic in Self-confidence and it will survive all the manhandling it has had.

THE Scriptural writers had another name for self-confidence. They called it Faith and defined it as "the substance of things hoped for." Note well the definition, for it carries the implication that there can be substance to something not yet realized in the manifest.

In other words Faith is the affirmation of an unseen cause from which visible effects may come. So is self-confidence the affirmation of self-identity with the power to realize in the outward, that which has been conceived within.

This power is One Power. This Self is a Unity. In the declaration of self-confidence each, in his own way, claims his share in this Universal, which he thereby particularizes. This Self is a Principle which each may appropriate for his own use. This Verity is unconditioned and so too is its appropriation unconditioned, except that it, itself, in its Universality may not be denied. No individualized self, standing upon this universal may deny it. No self may set himself apart from his source and successfully repudiate it. The positive aspect of not denying the Self produces a state of mind, or feeling, sometimes called Peace, sometimes Good-will, but more often Love.

Let each, then, invoking Self-confidence, find himself and so find God, or let him seek God and so come to find himself. For if you seek the least it will lead unto the All and if you seek the All it will be found to include the least.
THE Photodramatist Situation Contest is over. Long live the contestants! (Even those who neglected to follow the rules.) Each and every contestant is to be congratulated upon having done his best—and we hope the losers better luck next time. They all displayed interest, enthusiasm and sometimes even anxiety, and all three of these elements—especially enthusiasm—are necessary to become a writer.

The contest was inaugurated for the purpose of stimulating interest in writing. Many who have never written a line of fiction are extremely interested in the art; they think and dream of plots thus aiding imagination; they dream of becoming writers; each says, “Some day I’ll write a story.” But the chances are that they never will, unless shaken out of the dream rut by a chance to write something short as a starter, for many are daunted by thoughts of the time and labor necessary to write a long story.

The entries in the contest were so numerous that the Contest Editors were forced to work late many nights to pass upon the manuscripts in time for the December issue. The task of reading and passing judgment upon over six thousand situations was no light one, for each manuscript (provided the author had observed the rules) was read very carefully, and thoughtfully weighed to merit.

Unfortunately, a great number of submitted manuscripts were automatically eliminated from the contest because they were not typewritten, or not double-spaced (to facilitate reading) or were too verbose. Another point which would have eliminated fifteen to twenty per cent of the entries had the editors been inclined to be too techni-cal was the lack of attention to the proper sized paper. The rules specified 8½x11 inch paper, but manuscripts were typed on everything from postcard size to sheets almost large enough to wrap up the family laundry.

The foregoing is intended to be educational as well as explanatory, to impress upon these writers that rules are not made to be broken. A few friendly tips for guidance in submitting manuscripts to other contests follow: Do not put two separate situations or stories on one sheet of paper. Put your name and address on the page with the story. (Many sent their names and addresses on separate sheets.) When it is specifically stated that no manuscripts will be returned, do not enclose stamped envelope. If it is possible, put all your story on one page. Above all, do not start the story in the middle of the page and then run just one or two lines onto a second sheet. The two pages may become separated, with resulting confusion. Do not send in illegible copies. Take pity on the eyes of the overworked editors. Do not enclose letters—especially letters asking for criticism. The editor would like to oblige, but when these letters come by the hundreds, he can’t.

The majority of the contestants may feel that their intelligence has been insulted by the setting down of the above hints. But kindly consider that they have been printed solely in a desire to assist the untrained writer in the writing game. Beginners need assistance and as a rule are grateful for any hints that may be given them.

Those who entered the Photodramatist ‘Situation’ (Continued on Page 35)

Winners of Situation Contest Named

Four Writers Awarded Prizes in Test of Creative Imagination

The Prize Winners

First Prize ($75.00)—Miss Inez Kemker, Parkes Apts., Nashville, Tenn.
Second Prize ($50.00)—Mrs. O. Dorsey Grey, New Orleans, La.
Third Prize ($25.00) to each of two tying contestants—J. G. Miller, R. D. 1, Sutherland, Ore., and Vernon May, Katy, Texas.
Putting the Westerner Into Fiction

By Eugene Manlove Rhodes

"HOW do you get such beautiful turf?" asked the American visitor in England.

"That's easy, sir; just keep the grass clipped and rolled for two or three hundred years."

Just so, one is tempted to tell the would-be writer of western tales that the first thing needed is to be a westerner. Curiously enough, it does not always work out that way. It is true that many people write western stories who know less of the west than I do of Harvard. But if I were foolish enough to write a story of Harvard, an indignant multitude would rise up to expose my ignorance. No one ever checks up on western stories. I don't know why.

The dyed-in-the-wool westerner too often fails to tell his readers the thing he knows best; simply because it is so obvious to him that he thinks it must be obvious to everyone. For example, one of his people rides forty-five miles, hungry, thirsty and tired. Your old-timer fails to state that in those miles there was no other house and no other water till the end of the ride. The outsider, unused to these great distances, will speak of it, to the helping of his audience.

BOOKLY people are having a great deal of fun these days about "the great open spaces where men are men." 'S all right—it's a good quip and richly deserved. But don't be fooled about those great open spaces. They are there. I know several spaces so open that you could hide the state of Delaware in them, where it couldn't be found by this generation.

The first duty of any writer is to be interesting; and to do that he must have the collaboration of the reader. Observe that in writing of New York, Cincinnati or Savannah, Paducah, Groversville or Portsmouth, you may be sure that ninety-five per cent of the background is the familiar, common property of most readers. But for the authentic western story, it will be found that motives, desire, methods and codes are different and strange; there are many things to be explained. These things are new and interesting to the newcomer, old and familiar to the west-born. The one remembers to explain, the other too often forgets.

I AM asked to give a few hints about writing western stories. It is a thankless task. As Mr. Kipling says, "there are nine-and-sixty ways..." But I can lightly outline the limits within which a western story should move; and I can, and will, mention a few things you ought not to do.

First and most important, if you are a real westerner, never let the movies do your stuff. They will twist and distort it to present a fantastic and unreal report. They will insist upon a "strong heart interest" every time, though there were very few women in the cow countries. And they will dress that compulsory girl in the latest dainty gossamer.

The movie people believe in gauze and effect. The man who does not know the west will accept this as a true picture; the man who does know the west will chalk you up as a liar.

The most interesting thing the cowboy did is the one thing which cannot be shown on the screen—a hard day's work.

Second, do not spell bronco with an "h." If you will take the trouble to be correct in this slight matter, you may form the habit of informing yourself before you write—who knows?

Third, don't overdo the dialect. Many of these people used a back-woodsly vocabulary or town-talk just as it jolly well pleased them.

Fourth. Don't present every Mexican as a villain. Because it is not true. Please!

It is no bad idea to have in your story at least one incident which actually took place. It serves the purpose of a tuning fork; it helps you to keep on the key of reality.

A FEW facts not generally known about drinking, for instance. Despite semi-occasional jags at trail's-end or shipping place, the cowboys were rather abstemious than otherwise in the matter of liquor. Not all of them—only the survivors. For each day's work, there was need of both caution and recklessness, of skill, daring, and a lot of luck; in every hour they put death aside, smiling, tranquilly, not a second too soon and not an inch too far; liquor would have doubled every hazard. The cowboy who drank on the job was soon put to bed with a shovel. Another factor was the simple matter of eating. The cowboy with the wagon lived on the stray beef, black coffee and brown beans; when he reached town, it was an even chance that he would be so absorbed in the joys of pie and potatoes, butter and cream of the cow, that he would never get around to John Barleycorn at all.

Observe three words, cowboy, cowman and cattle-man. The cowboy stole cattle for wages; the cowman worked for himself. A cattleman was the owner of large herds. Again, to be a "cowman right" was something quite different from any of these three. It had reference to uncanny skill in that hard way of life, and the amount of other people's property you managed to
passable showing in a few others. They were excellent mimics, admirable story-tellers, accomplished and convincing liars. But their architecture was unequalled in the annals of this earth. The cowboys built no poorhouses. For that, his sins shall be forgiven him.

Mexicans excepted, the cowboy could not sing, and did, incessantly; the worse, the more. I sing a great deal myself.

There was little reading in the range country, but if the object of an education high to know a good man when you see him, these men were educated. It was hard to fool them with imitations of the real thing.

Abraham was the first cowman of record. Theodore Roosevelt was a cowboy, so were O. Henry and Eddie Bok; Benedict Arnold, Horace Greeley, and Henry Cabot Lodge—cowboys all.

It is quite generally believed, beyond the Mississippi, that Roosevelt invented the cowboy. This is a mistake. The cowboys influenced Roosevelt more, perhaps, than any other factor of his life. But Roosevelt did not change the few and simple habits of the cowboy. The cowboy characteristic was fast color.

Let us touch lightly on the cowboy as a criminal; first stating that the cow-country was ever refuge for fugitives from older lands, who were all classed as cowboys when they got into action, for the simple reason that there was nothing to do in that country but to work cattle. As one of them said pathetically, "I don't really have to punch cattle. I got my choice—I can do this or starve." It happens, therefore, that the cowboy got credit for much ill-doing that was not properly his: train-robbing, bank-robbing and the like. But after we have eliminated outside talent, there remains a substantial credit of self-made crime.

I WOULD have you note, in your writing hours, that little of this was due to pure avarice, when unspiced by risk and adventure. They cared little for confidence games, beauty or subscription contests, and the safer avenues to wealth. They were more apt to do their ill deeds through stubbornness or mere whim—to see if it could be done—or just to see what would happen afterwards. And they were heirs to a mischievous tradition: the prompt appeal to arms on slight provocation. Sir Walter Scott was the grandfather of them all, and his high-spirited and high-speaking heroes have passed on the simple code of the fighting man, through the sons of the old South to Texas, from Texas to the entire West. Not a very good code, but remarkable for one thing; it was observed. You were supposed to pick on someone of your size; you must not shoot an unarmed man, and you must not shoot an unwarmed man. If you did these things, you became unpopular. You must back up your friends even when they were wrong; even when they were horribly wrong. This was some times more convenient for the friends than it was for you; but then it was often convenient for you and not for your friends. So that was alright. In brief, you were allowed to be vicious, dangerous and violent; you were not allowed to be mean.

A PArt from two classes of cattle—branded and unbranded—the cowboy was strictly honest. If he borrowed your money—which he did—he paid it back. He also loaned you his money, or gave it to you. He paid his bills promptly once a year after the cattle shipping, and as promptly and cheerfully began running up new ones. It followed that when the cowboy had the misfortune to be dead, the store-keeper often found himself obliged to make an entry on the page devoted to profit and loss. But that was provided for in the original price, so there was no complaint.

As to the w. k. way of the cowboy with the big loop, and his cheerful ethics in the matter of permanent ownership of live-stock, that dates back to the time when there were uncounted thousands of cattle, and no market for them; when it was of no practical advantage to anyone to have five thousand head of cattle under his brand rather than one thousand; when the brush was full of cattle unbranded because nobody particularly cared to brand them, except as a matter of sport and exercise. Then came higher prices, big companies, claiming and branding everything they could catch. The cowboy did likewise; continued in that habit up to the day I saw him last, some sixteen years ago. I am told, however, that there are not so many cow thieves on the range as when I lived there.

LOOK now, dearie—if you really must write Western stories, and have not first-hand

(Continued on Page 33)
From Pen to Silversheet

By Melvin M. Riddle

XIII—Titling and Editing

Motion picture sub-titles serve several very important purposes. They establish the time and locale of the story, plant the theme, introduce the characters, bridge the temporal gaps in the action of the picture and explain certain technicalities in the story which would be either very difficult to get over by action or would require an undue amount of film footage.

In addition to playing this very necessary part in the picture, the sub-titles contribute materially to the entertainment, if cleverly and properly worded. A good title, now and then, is a dash of spice to the picture and serves to break the pictorial sameness. The spoken title also helps to establish the personalities and temperaments of the characters, if worded in the proper dialect or phraseology typical to that character and expressing his sentiments in relation to the story. There have been numerous instances, especially in the case of film comedies, where a good set of titles have been known to strengthen materially what would otherwise have been a very poor picture.

In large studios where production is carried on on a big scale, the procedure leading up to the titling of the picture is something like this:

After the scenes are all photographed and the laboratory has finished a complete set of positive prints of all scenes, as described in the article just previous in this series, the director assembles the scenes into a continuous, perfect sequence and cuts it down by trimming out superfluous footage, to about five or six reels, providing the picture is to consist of five reels. The continuity writer's guide titles, as they appeared in his script are then typed, photographed on to film and the filmed titles inserted into their proper places in the assembled picture. The picture, in this rough state, is then turned over to the title writers and editorial department for a complete set of new improved titles and the final editing and cutting down to footage. The titles in an average picture will require anywhere from a thousand to fifteen hundred feet of film. This means that the picture proper must be cut down to about thirty-five hundred feet of film, provided the completed production is to be in five reels. Thus, the editorial department must do a great deal of trimming on the rough, assembled picture as turned over to it by the director.

Frank X. Finnegan, one of the staff film editors at the Lasky studio, explains in detail the methods in vogue at that studio in the titling and final editing of Paramount Pictures:

"The title and editorial crew under the chief director of the studio or one of his assistants invariably will with great care view this assembled picture in the projection room and then go into conference with the scenarist's titles as a guide sheet. In writing a set of titles for the picture we strive for brevity and clarity, perfect grammatical construction, perfect English and in the case of spoken titles, to make them conform to the character of the person doing the speaking. For instance, if we had a French-Canadian character we would have him talk in the dialect peculiar to that race, or if the character were an underworld type, he would use the appropriate slang. This makes his portrayal stronger and more impressive upon the audience, stamping his character in their minds.

"In titling comedies, the general policy is that every title must provoke a laugh, even though it be purely descriptive. We try to give the titles literary and entertaining value in addition to making them serve their necessary purpose in the picture. A title without a punch is more or less a hold-up in the action. In drama, the titles must have dramatic strength as well as serving to clarify the scene in the minds of the spectators.

"In the title conference, the picture is reviewed from the beginning and suggestions are made by the title writers. These suggestions are discussed pro and con and one is decided upon for each title. After a complete set of titles has been evolved, these are typed, photographed and inserted into the picture in lieu of the scenario writer's original titles. In some cases, some of the scenarist's titles are retained, if they are considered better than any of the new suggestions. All work with the spirit of cooperation, for the betterment and in the interest of the picture. The picture, containing this new set of titles, known as 'temporary title' or 'temps' is again review in the projection room by the title and editorial staff, who are thus able to judge them on the screen and see that they fit perfectly with the action or dialogue. Changes are then often made again and all are made to fit perfectly. For instance, if a character speaks on the screen and the corresponding spoken title doesn't seem to synchronize exactly with his gestures and expressions, the title is changed so that it does. This is a sort of literary smoothing-out process.
"All superfluous action and slowing-down action is trimmed from the picture. In cutting-in spoken titles, the title begins right where the character starts to speak and when the title finishes the character is shown just completing his speech. If the character were allowed to speak in the scene and the title were then flashed on, that would be a repetition of action and speech and would slow down the picture.

After the temporary titles are all perfected and okayed, a title sheet is then sent over to the art and title printing department for illustration and printing. The editorial staff gets up ideas for illustrations and the title artists execute them on black title backgrounds. The title is then printed on the illustrated board and the whole is then photographed to proper footage—allowing three feet of film to every five words of title. These permanent titles are then cut into the sample edited picture, and after it is reviewed again and perhaps more minor cuts and changes made, it is then in its perfect, completed state and all ready to be turned over to the laboratory for negative cutting.

"In getting up illustrations for title backgrounds, we try to hit upon a certain illustrative theme or series of symbols which will conform to the idea of the picture. Simplicity in illustration is of prime importance. If the background is too involved or too elaborate, the eye is distracted from the printed title and the spectator often fails to read the title, taking up the time in contemplating the illustration."

In the average five reel picture, there are about a hundred and fifty or a hundred and sixty titles—or about thirty to a reel. This, of course, varies. The title staff generally takes about a week to title one picture. There are four title writers at the Lasky studio, working in crews of two each. Frank X. Finneghan and Alfred Hustwick comprise one crew and Mr. Lee Dougherty, the other film editor and R. Beers Loos, constitute the other crew.

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Your Willing Slave—The Typewriter

By Walter Floyd Messenger

Is your typewriter your friend or foe? Is it a help-mate that enables you to pound off reams and reams of copy at a rapid speed or is it merely an annoyance and necessary evil that you must use to make your final manuscript acceptable to the busy editor? It should be your friend and companion all the writing days of your life. It is a vital tool in the hands of every author and as such its technique should be mastered. Once you have mastered, subdued and conquered your typewriter, it will be your willing slave and friend, enabling you to increase your output and at the same time it will save you many hours of laborious drudgery.

To master the typewriter is not as difficult as it sounds. It is of advantage to know a good touch system but even with the old "hunt and find" method it is easy to acquire a speed that will far surpass the best penmanship and every word you write will at least be legible. Your ability to write fast will come only from practice. In learning a touch system, copying is the best method of practice but as soon as a knowledge of the keyboard is acquired it is better to begin at once to install your new system into your daily work. Writing your first copy on the machine, correcting and then re-copying will give the average writer all the practice that he needs and he will be surprised to see how soon he will begin to take pride in his speed.

The best mastery of a typewriter must of course include accuracy, not so much for the first copy work as for the final copy which you mail to the editor. This requires only a holding in at the beginning. Make haste slowly; but keep consistently at it, then you will soon master the manipulation of the typewriter.

The difficult part however is yet to come. To use the machine to full advantage it is necessary to be able to sit and think out your story as you pound the keys. To one who has always used a pen or a pencil, this is very difficult. Words refuse to come forth, ideas get lost in the making and everything seems clogged. Once again, practice is the only remedy. You must set yourself to the task with resolution. A good plan is to begin the day by slipping a sheet of paper in your machine and then write out in detail everything you desire to accomplish during that day. Such a procedure will limber up the fingers and the thoughts in unison, making the rest of the day’s labor easier, always bearing in mind the end you desire to obtain. If you keep at this scheme day after day, you will conquer the difficulties. If you are tempted on certain days to go back to the old method of the pencil and pad and the story you try to write will not come, try something else until your thoughts begin to accord with your fingers. Then go back to the story. Persistency is the only way to overcome this difficulty.

If you are the average writer you frequently find it wise to change words, sentences and possibly whole paragraphs. Some of these alterations are made during the course of your writing, others after the first draft is completed. To facilitate this work it is advisable to use triple spacing for the “first copy.” When you correct the manuscript you then have plenty of space to write in the new words or sentences. After you have made all the alterations you think desirable it is an excellent plan to make a second copy of the articles upon your cheap “first copy” paper and then re-read it carefully. When you see that you are not going to further revise your work before submitting it to the eyes of the discriminating editor, carefully type your final copy. Carefully read this over for errors, technical and grammatical alike, and never hesitate to correct, change and recopy as many times as are necessary to make the manuscript your best. Then tuck it into its envelope and after recording it, drop it into the mail box and forget it. Thus day after day, by constant use of your machine you will develop an acquaintance with it. As happens so frequently with many of our friends, familiarity does not breed contempt. Rather like the inner few and most cherished friendships that we hold, familiarity gives to us usefulness, respect and love.
I RECALL, with very vivid pleasure, tales of the Arabian Nights, in which there wandered strange and powerful genii, who with a gesture or a magic word were able to bring into being, in a place where but a moment before there may have been only barren desert, ornate and massive palaces and things. I am beginning to believe that such genii no longer exist, for let me ask you, if in this modern day some survivors of the race should live, where, than in Hollywood, should they find greater need of their services; greater opportunity to display their talents, wares; the scope of their imagination? And, in this world of barter, is it not the place we best may show, and bring, our value, that we seek to dwell? But no, I have yet to see a geni waiting, with pulse racing, while a pompous studio manager, with reports of last year’s income and excess profits tax before him, figures how little or how much said geni might be offered under contract.

HOLLYWOOD then, if genii no longer exist, or for some strange reason have remained away from the land of sunshine, sudden wealth and hokum, has worried along quite nicely, and in lieu of genii, has developed a craft that might compete with surprising efficiency against their magic, and in deserts quite as barren, can bring forth without the sound of saw or blade or hammer temples greater than Solomon’s, palaces the like of which Aladdin never saw, and gardens that vie with Eden; in which men and women, mummers, move and act. To hark back a bit into the history of the cinema: Early, there were two ways only in which settings, or backgrounds might be had. One: an interior or exterior of the type required, was to be found, and with hard cash and honeyed words permission obtained to bring in lights and camera and actors and photograph it. The other: to build, in wood, plaster and metal the rooms or structures needed. There arose often, in either case, difficulties that seemed not to be surmounted. Reluctance upon the part of property owners to rent, for many reasons (not by any means the most infrequent of which was the memory of previous indignities suffered at the hands of irresponsible directors and producers), their property; the inaccessibility of many of the most choice “locations” in the matter of transporting and maintaining the elaborate lighting and photographic equipment necessary, and finally the fact that certain structures and locales essentials to the tale had never, or no longer, existed, made the first generally inadvisable if not impossible.

THE excessive cost of material and labor, the time involved in design and construction, limited the latter. So, in the face of necessity, in the absence of genii to whom might have been addressed the command, “I would tell a tale of Babylon, a thousand years ago. Speak, you, and bring before me the market where slaves were sold!”, certain crafty cinema men betheught them:

“Babylon is long since dust, nor its like the world over to be found. To build, even as a hollow shell, again its walls and courts and streets would cost a fortune. Shall we then turn our backs upon the past, bury with Babylon’s dust all the tales of history, the strong tales of the passions of kings and the rise to power of slaves? No. These tales are treasure. Some magic must be found to set them, quickly, cheaply.”

And today, as these cinema magicians practice and perfect their craft, on screen the world over, are seen temples from Siam, palaces in the Sahara, gardens that vie with Eden, through which heroes strut, villains slink, or Ladies Faire do glide, and which to all save the enchanted eye of the camera, or the favored eyes of the initiated few, were, as they glided, slunk or strutted on the “lot” in Hollywood, invisible. To the stranger, a plain plastered wall, not more than thirty feet long, or ten high, offers little clue that on
the screen it is to appear a part of the elaborate facade of a Spanish Castle; yet that it may be. There is no deep secret involved. The various systems of "tricked photography" by which settings of elaborate effect may be secured with a minimum of structure, are all based on well-known physical laws; the laws of optics and perspective.

BRIEFLY, the primary law is this: The apparent size of an object diminishes as the object recedes from the lens through which it is viewed. (A glance at Figure I may make this clear.)

It is then, to be seen, that a small object, placed close to the lens, may be made to appear identical in size with a larger object placed some distance away. (Figure II.)

It is in the application of these laws that the methods vary. There is, first, a method that makes use of miniature structures, built to exact scale and matched with other structures, or parts built full size. Second, a method which uses a painting made either on plate glass or on compo board and cut out to match full size pieces, and third, a method of double exposure, in which background or settings and the action are each photographed separately, though perhaps on the same film.

I have said that a small object placed close to a lens may be made to appear identical in size with a larger object at some distance. That might be amended to read "a small object placed close to a lens may be made to appear in correct proportion with or in relation to another, perhaps actually larger, yet normally smaller object, at some distance.

To explain: our impression of size is almost always comparative. An object is large or small in the measure that it is larger or smaller than other objects with which we are familiar. A horse, normally is larger than a man, but a toy horse is actually smaller. If then the toy be placed close to the lens, and the man removed, his apparent size diminishing as he recedes, they can be brought back to their correct proportion or relation, with the horse appearing to be larger than the man.

It follows that a miniature house, castle, or other structure, if so placed can be made to look like a real castle, or house.

SUPPOSE that, in a certain story, it were desired to have sweet Miss May Blossom, the dainty ingemine, come up to and enter the gates of a harsh, stern and forbidding castle, an immense pile of lichen-covered stone. The director is not content to build only the castle gate, which would cost but a paltry few dollars, to fade-in on Miss May alighting from her coach and entering, in a close-up, this gate, but wishes to show the whole castle, with its towers, and moat, its portcullis, gate and draw-bridge. Obviously the cost would prohibit building so large a set for one shot, or even one short sequence. It is decided, that since for "atmosphere" he must have the entire castle, the set must be tricked.

For the purpose of this, let us say they decide to trick it with a miniature. A tiny model castle is built with towers, walls and moat all correctly scaled. Now, if coach, horses, and Miss May Blossom might be at the same time reduced to the same scale, that is so that they would be, comparatively, just as much smaller than the miniature as they would be than the actual, it would be very simple. But May Blossom's five feet two of sunshine is not to be compressed into five some inches of height, nor can the horses. Voila! Let May and her coach retire into the far distance, diminishing in apparent size as they go. Let the castle miniature be set up close to the camera. Fine. There is yet, however, one small difficulty. May is supposed to alight in front of the castle and walk into it. Now the castle, being close to the camera lens, will be in front of May, and she will be jolly well hidden.

But the modern goni, when he thought of the scheme, thought of this, and has neatly solved it. Miss May and her coach, in actual feet and inches will not stand more than ten feet we will say, from the ground. So that, only that part of the miniature which represents the lower ten feet of the castle wall will cover her, or if the castle were actual, would be covered by her in coming up and going in. This portion of the miniature is therefore cut away (or if a glass transparency be used, the portion of the glass representing it is left clear) and a wall, with the gate, a little over ten feet high, is built, behind her.

The miniature is then suspended on a frame work some little distance in front of the camera and at a proper distance above the ground. It is the setting of the miniature that taxes the skill of those concerned. For, you see, each line of actual structure and miniature, must, viewed from the point of the lens, coincide. A glance at the photographs of the tower accompanying this will explain. You will note that the vertical lines of the tower, the edges as it were of the structure, seem to be continuous. Merely to shift the miniature on its scaffold one-half of an inch would be to show a break or jog in the wall that would represent several feet.

Nor is placing the miniature the only difficult operation involved. It is first to be made. This is an art, building a tiny castle of wood and plaster and other material so that to the eye of the camera it will have all the texture, line and grace of a larger work, a true semblance of reality.

(Continued on Page 42)
BY the time this number of the Photodramatist reaches the eyes of the literary public, so much will have been said and written of Douglas Fairbank’s Robin Hood that anything I may utter on the subject will be just so much more gild for the lily.

It is a picture that is above criticism, and consequently any review of it must take the form of a press agent’s blurb. Its settings are gorgeous beyond words, its pictorial effect is startlingly beautiful and its drama is legitimate and consistently forceful. Douglas Fairbanks himself is marvellous; and he does not play a lone hand, by any means. His support, in every department, is considerably more than adequate.

However, there is a lesson to be drawn from the story of Robin Hood, which every screen writer should observe and analyze.

When Fairbanks elected to play Robin Hood, he made an extremely wise choice—wiser, by far, than his choice of D’Artagnan. For in this case, he was dealing with substance which was largely mythical. There undoubtedly was an Earl of Huntingdon who assumed the guise of an outlaw brigand for political purposes, but our knowledge of him is so decidedly sketchy that we can not form anything more than a vague idea of his character and his actions.

Our conception of Robin Hood, indeed, is based upon the writings of various romanticists, all of whom have adopted the theme to their diversified styles, and none of whom may be rated as authentic. Robin Hood is in the same class with the Homeric legends. He is not a historical character, nor is he the figment of any one man’s imagination.

D’Artagnan, however, is a definite character, created by Dumas and limited to the pages of “The Three Musketeers” and its sequels. Fairbanks was necessarily restricted in his attempt to delineate this character, because he knew that, if he went far off the accepted track, he would offend those who had read and loved Dumas’ novel.

In The Three Musketeers, Fairbanks was compelled to make a picture which was essentially an imitation of a book. He did it well, to be sure, but it was second hand material. In Robin Hood, however, he had a free hand; he could go ahead and make a picture which was conceived, written and produced exclusively for the screen.

The distinction is important. Last month I pointed out that the ideal photoplay is one which is born and brought up within the four walls of a motion picture studio—a story which is written by people whose medium of expression is the silent drama, and which could not possibly be told as well in any other medium. It is true, of course, that Fairbanks had a historical basis for his story. King Richard did go on the Crusades, and in his absence, his brother John did indulge in an orgy of misrule. Nor did Fairbanks neglect to consult the various available literary sources. He borrowed a little from Shakespeare, some from Alfred Noyes, some from Maurice Hewlett, some from Sir Walter Scott and a great deal from Howard Pyle.

But what he took from them was largely atmospheric. He needed this to provide the background which, though incidental, is absolutely necessary.

The atmospheric element is most noticeable in the first half of the picture, before Robin Hood, as such, comes into being. To tell his story as he wished to have it told, Fairbanks had to “plant” the spirit of chivalry. He had to impress his audience with the fact that different rules of conduct for gentlemen obtained in those brave days. If street cars had been in existence a thousand years ago, Fairbanks could have shown a scene of a man offering his seat to a lady—and put his point over thus. But there weren’t even any jinneys then, so he had to use other methods.

Having established his main premise, and devised a reason for Robin Hood’s existence, he could then devote himself to sheer action—which he did.

In commenting upon Robin Hood, it is impossible to overlook the subtitles which, I may say without the slightest tremon, are the best I have ever seen in any picture. The choice of words is superb, as is the arrangement and presentation of phrases. They constitute an example in intelligence and effectiveness that no screen writer can afford to ignore.

“The Old Homestead”

THOSE whose memory dates back to the period when “East Lynne” was considered the culminating point of dramatic art will recall “The Old Homestead,” Denman Thompson’s rural melodrama which ran all over the country for many years. I confess that my memory falls far short of that; in fact, my personal knowledge of the pre-Floradora age is exceedingly hazy.

However, I have now seen The Old Homestead in its film form, and I am almost able to hold my head up with those ancients who like to tell me that I don’t know what a real play is.

At a venture, I should say that
The Old Homestead is better as a movie than it ever was in the "Town Hall—Tonight" days. It is certainly more legitimate than it could have been on the stage. In the hands of James Cruze, the director, and such splendid actors as Theodore Roberts and George Fawcett, it is made to appear almost human.

The story, of course, is archaic stuff. There is a kindly old rube named Uncle Josh, and a tight-fisted skinflint named Eph. and a great many homilies upon the virtue of farm life, as contrasted with the inevitable vice of the great city. Nevertheless, it is enlivened by expert treatment. A tornado at the finish is one of the most thrilling scenes that aeroplane propellers have ever accomplished, and provides a punch just where it is needed most.

Sooner or later, the film producers will have exhausted the supply of ham mellerdraymas, which are nothing more than senile relics of the dramatic dark ages; then, perhaps, they will be able to devote themselves to making motion pictures.

"Tripling Women"

SOME years ago, Rex Ingram was employed by Universal. During his residence in the Carl Laemmle corral, he made a play-entitled Black Orchids, from a story which he had written himself.

When Mr. Laemmle viewed this opus in the projection room, he promptly accorded Ingram the freedom of the air. "There are too many ugly types in it," said the Emperor Carl, and added: "The public won't stand for ugly types." (This, it might be added, was some time before Foolish Wives was produced by Universal.)

Now that Ingram has become a personage of importance in the cinema world, he has elected to do Black Orchids on his own hook. The new title is Trifling Women, and after seeing it, I am inclined to believe that Mr. Laemmle was wrong.

It is a curiously weird picture. Although equipped with a rather cut and dried story—along the accepted vampire lines—it resembles nothing that has ever been done before. Ingram, the screen writer, is in no way extraordinary; but Ingram, the director, is a highly gifted young man. He has done marvels with his own commonplace plot and, by departing from all the accepted standards, has lifted it into the exceptional class.

Tripling Women is a bit sordid; at times it is almost brutal; but it is drama. And for that reason, worthy of attention.

"One Exciting Night"

WHEN it comes to red-hot, rapid-fire melodrama, there is no one more adept than David Wark Griffith. He is the man who invented suspense on the screen, and he always has been a master at the hair-raising art.

In One Exciting Night, he departs radically from his usual formula, and presents an unpretentious mystery melodrama which, though several miles below Intolerance and Orphans of the Storm in the artistic scale, is just about as exciting as any of them.

Aside from the talky sub-titles, with their superabundance of verbos moralizing, one would never be able to identify this as a Griffith picture. It bears none of the regular trade marks: no allegorical symbolism, no historical significance—and no chase at the finish.

Viewed from a purely critical point of view, it is just sheer bunk. But if, for one, am compelled to confess that I found it vastly entertaining. Even a critic is reminded now and then that he is just as susceptible to hokum as the next one, provided that hokum is handed out by someone who knows how to wink.

"To Have And To Hold"

THE romantic drama is coming into its own in the movies—which is a good sign, for it lends itself well to this form of treatment. To Have And To Hold is a vivid tale of the early seventeenth century, with dissolute courtiers, sturdy colonists of Virginia and blood-thirsty privates of the Spanish main providing the characters about whom the story is wound. The heroine is a lady of King James's court, who journeys to Jamestown in a bride ship that she may avoid the odious advances of a swaggering nobleman who covets her. When she reaches the Virginia colony, she meets a bold adventurer and in desperation marries him—although, for some obscure reason, she remains "his wife in name only."

Her aristocratic lover comes after her, but is thwarted by her husband who wields a wicked rapier when the occasion demands.

It is a truly beautiful production—but not so beautiful as to be dull. There is excitement enough for all. Ouida Bergere, who adapted the story from Mary Johnston's novel, did an excellent job of the continuity, so that the interest is maintained right up to the bitter end. To Have And To Hold suffers unfortunately in comparison with Robin Hood and When Knighthood Was in Flower, but it is way above the average, for all that.

"The Young Rajah"

RUDOLPH Valentino is said to have remarked, when asked for a reason for his sudden departure from the Famous Players, "Go to see 'The Young Rajah,' and you'll understand why I was dissatisfied."

Taking him at his word, I attended a showing of the film in question, and my sympathies from now on are all with Valentino. If that's the best they can do for him, he had a perfect right to quit.

There is no excuse for such a third rate picture as this. It possessed a good story to start with ("Amos Judd," by John Ames Mitchell) and certainly no funds were lacking in the Paramount coffers to do it right. But done right, it emphatically is not.

The plot has been all hashed up, so that it makes little or no sense, and aside from spasmodic spurts by the swarthy Rudolph himself, the acting is considerably below par. I doubt that the persons responsible for it deliberately tried to ruin it as a personal affront to Valentino (that, apparently, is the way he takes it). I can only assume that they didn't know any better.

"Clarence"

BOOTH Tarkington's Clarence is not good motion picture material. It is essentially of the speaking stage, depending as it does on brilliant dialogue rather than expressive action.

In spite of this, William De Mille has made a good photoplay of it. He has not strained for effect, but has chosen to do the thing quietly and discreetly. He has concentrated on the characters, which are all typical of Tarkington at his best, and has saved as much of the talk as is possible.

Clarence will never knock any audience out of its respective seats: it is no whirlwind of action or holocaust of emotion; but it is amusing, entertaining and, above all, beautifully done. (Continued on Page 33)
The startling and bizarre is often confounded with originality. The ability to invent new and hitherto unused devices upon which to hang your tale, has its proper value. But it is as nothing compared with an old situation treated in a new, fresh, and yet simple way. That is true originality.

The author who resorts to the bizarre for his effects is the clown of his profession. The writer who can command interest by simplicity and sincerity is the true artist.

The normal human mind in all its complexity is an exceedingly simple mechanism. Its judgment in accepting or rejecting is infallible. It may be led astray by critics whose intellects have been reduced to a state of vicious sterility by single-track dogmas and pigeon-hole platitudes. But left to itself, it knows!

Intricate complications of plot are merely a matter of mechanics. Their value is ephemeral. The senses demand of art, above all things, the simplest and most natural form of beauty. That is mathematics in art. The economy of simplicity.

Technical skill without originality may confound the critics—never the people. Originality even without much technical skill hews its own niche in the Hall of Fame, quite frequently, without benefit of critics.

I need only point to “The Great Hunger” by Johann Bojer for confirmation of this. Critics seem to agree that Mr. Bojer’s technique is ghastly. They never weary in telling each other, and the public, this. Yet the people go on reading and loving Johann Bojer, while these gentlemen rave and pound their desks to get attention for their “realistic” pets.

Into a plot as old as the hills, Johann Bojer has injected a virile originality that charms, a beauty that entrances. If you do not feel a spiritual ennobling upon closing this book, you are in a bad way. Undoubtedly Mr. Bojer would have had a better story if he had conformed to certain technical niceties, but genius of his caliber can afford to dispense with mere rules. At no time in his book did he make such absurd and long-winded digressions as, for instance, Victor Hugo in his dissertation upon the sewers of Paris in Les Miserables, a novel of exciting romance.

At times it seems as if the American ear has not yet become attuned to distinguish between true originality and rhetorical legerdemain. Perhaps this is due to the fact that Americans have had their hands full with the stern problems, the business of winning homes from a wilderness.

How long will it be before the ears of the great masses will listen to the splendid originality of Stephen Crane’s “Red Badge of Courage,” or Willa Sibert Cather’s “O, Pioneers” and “My Antonia.” One almost wonders if the popularity of Jack London’s “White Fang” and “Call of the Wild” were accidents. Certainly the originality of Stephen Crane and Willa Cather is of as high an order as Jack London’s. Yet not one American in a thousand has even heard the name of Crane, and not one in five hundred, the name of Cather, and that in spite of the fact this last named writer has written at least three or four books that react most truly and sincerely the spirit of America.

The thing which strikes the discerning magazine reader today, is the amount of good writing which is wasted upon plots and subjects of passing value. The efforts at originality seem to be divided between inventing bizarre situations and choking the page with amorphous action, totally devoid of drama.

The reason for this is, of course, the tremendous demand for stories. The writers of established reputation are put to it hard to deliver. The ones who are just getting their pace are watching the man above to see what the editors buy from him, and the struggling tyro, finding no market for his
poorly presented originality, flounders hopelessly about, imitating first one, then the other, of the public favorites instead of cultivating his own personality.

Originality is like a bloom,—an old, old bloom in a new setting. It may be likened to the pioneer instinct, the desire to impress your own individuality upon an old bit of the primeval. It cannot be forced. Spontaneity is its fountain head, and spontaneity again is the enthusiasm which love for your task gives you. So guard this enthusiasm well. Do not be led astray by cynics. It is your most precious possession.

After you have weathered the struggle, and the fog of your disappointments has begun to clear away, you will discover that the stories which you have sold to the best advantage are the ones which were dominated by your own personality. Many of them were no doubt crude efforts. You had not learned artistic restraint, nor how to adjust your originality to technique. Yet these stories sold because the editor saw, here and there, a flash of a new personality—your own. Later he will buy because of your reputation, and that is your ultimate test, as a writer. You will do one of two things. If money means more than anything else you will plunge yourself into hasty and slipshod production; if love of your work is your true motive for writing, you will call a halt, take a new grip upon yourself, and with that you have learned, proceed slowly and carefully.

The first will bring you a few short years of popularity and affluence, then oblivion. New, clever writers of this temperament are constantly cropping up. Figuratively speaking, you'd cut your own throat. In the end you will have less than if you preserved your pride in your work by plugging along conscientiously and turning out fewer and better stories. You will sell more stories, but your price will reach a zenith and then drop. The other way you will sell less because you turn out less. But from year to year you will get a little more for your work than you did the preceding year. You will never reach any zenith of remuneration—because progress knows no zenith—until your last script is penned.

Do not let the fact that the bulk of the stories you read in the current magazines appear to have been turned out to a pattern of mediocre uniformity, discourage you. The greatest genius the world ever produced could not turn out great stories under the press of demand. Having made a reputation after years of struggle and privation, it is only human to fall for the temptation of the great offers certain magazines make for stories under well known names. The best thing a writer can do under such circumstances is to turn out stories according to the formula of those magazines until he has become economically independent.

It is impossible to be spontaneous and harrassed by financial problems at the same time. We hear the prattle that great stories are written under great stress. Undoubtedly some great stories have been written under such conditions. But economical difficulties of years' long duration will break down the strongest body and the stoutest heart.

By the same token, too much success will also kill spontaneity unless you are the hundredth man. Moderation should be the writer's watchword. From the stories sold during a wave of popularity, a certain amount of prestige is gained. This prestige will be very useful in gaining the ear of the editor for the better work to come later.

Remember always that editors are usually men and women in subordinate positions. Their purchases are governed by the policy of the magazine they edit, not by their personal preferences. They are like you and me,—timid in their judgment. They are loath to take a chance on the unusual and untired, even as you and I. They hold their positions on their judgment. The bread and butter of their families depend upon it. Remember this when your story is rejected.

Again perhaps you have not learned to harness your originality with the technical principles mentioned in my former articles. What I said at the beginning of this article about Johann Bojer applies only to genius of the highest order. You may possess such genius, but it is best to give yourself the benefit of the doubt by mastering rules of technique. Even genius cannot be anything but benefitted by this.

This harnessing of your originality is most important, particularly for the short story, whose success depends upon the effect gained in the fewest possible words.

Unharnessed originality in the pen of a writer is what nitro-glycerine is in the hands of a child. Many a promising story has been ruined completely by lack of restraint, and by the author permitting himself to be carried away with the mood of his story and his own exuberance of spirit.

Versatility is one of the surest signs of genius. Great, original minds are always versatile.

We are told that we live in an age of specialists. This is dinned into our ears constantly. It is false teaching at best as far as art is concerned. The writer who follows it, signs his own death warrant as an artist. There are one or two notable exceptions. Conan Doyle, for one,—but these only prove the rule. I could mention off-hand a round score of American writers living today, now forgotten, who made a short meteoric success with a certain kind of story, and followed it up with a perfect deluge of yarns of the same type. In a year or two the public began to tire of them. Of course, many of these writers made enough money in that short space of time to retire on—a round hundred thousand dollars in one year was the record of one writer. I've been told—but was that a desirable consummation? A hundred thousand dollars for artistic oblivion? Esau's mess of pottage was a king's ransom compared to this.

Michael Angelo was a great painter, also a great sculptor. Marcella Sembrich sang and played the violin with equal grace. Kipling writes fine prose and beautiful poetry. Shakespear's sonnets are no less well-known than his dramas, and here in our own country we produced Hopkinson Smith whose reputation rests equally upon lighthouse

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The difference between joy and tears is often the difference between getting a check or a rejection slip from a magazine editor. Leave out the tears—in your story—and increase your chances of getting a check. Page George A. Cohan; he had the right idea. Perhaps he is not the author of the phrase, "Leave 'em with a laugh," but he certainly capitalized it. The same five words, to a magazine writer, constitute a formula which means money.

Equally important, if one writes to live, is to start the story with a smile. Some may frown at this advice—perhaps they can afford to—but it has been the experience of most professional writers that humor is the biggest selling point. Several writers with whom I am in touch agree that a really humorous story invariably means a check by return mail. As a rule the story finds a market with the first editor who reads it.

In the course of his series of articles on the short story, Mr. Carl Clausen has set down several experiences of his own in regard to the difficulties in selling a tale based on a theme that is unpleasant, sordid or grim. Other successful writers have had similar experiences. I could recite scores of them, but one is enough. It is a classic.

Some years ago, I wrote a drama of the sea called "Brothren of the Blue," in which brutality, bloodshed, murder and sordidness ran riot. This story was mailed out until it became dog-eared and badly soiled. Then I rewrote it and changed the title to "Blood Brothers." Six more attempts at selling it brought six more rejections, but three editors in returning it enclosed letters of comment and commendation. These letters restored my waning faith in the yarn. Again it was rewritten, and this version brought more letters. The editors admitted that it was a good story; they praised it as "gripping, vital, elemental," some of them even suggested other possible markets. They did everything but purchase it.

The editor of the American Boy requested some sea stories, and "Blood Brothers" was revised to fit this market, by changing the leading character to a boy of sixteen and cutting out much of the unpleasantness. It was returned with the comment that it was "too inhumanely brutal." Again the story was rewritten, to be rejected repeatedly.

Three years ago I found the MS. in my "boneyard." The record of the story reads: Who does not appreciate and enjoy humor. In consequence, the writer who can inject this element into his work is more likely to achieve success than the one who depends merely upon a heavy drama. Mr. Jackson, who is noted for his whimsical characterization, tells you how to make your readers smile. What he has to say is well worth study.

showed that it had been rejected exactly fifty-three times in five years. There were sixteen other stories which had also failed to find a market. Fifteen of them were tragedies. The other story was too slight: I had tried to make a story out of a mere incident.

Finding that "Blood Brothers" still held elements which pleased me, I determined to sell it. Too many budding writers submit a MS. with an enclosed letter telling the editor that it is a story lifted from real life that they have fictionalized—or words to that effect. I laughed and decided to reverse the process by passing off some "whole cloth" fiction as a story from real life. Accordingly, "Blood Brothers" was rewritten in the first person as it was supposed to have been told to me by an old sailor. The story was toned down and made absolutely logical. It was then mailed to The Wide World Magazine, the editorial offices of which are in England. The editor purchased and published it as a true story, thus proving that fiction is stranger than truth—sometimes.

The fifteen tragic stories in my "boneyard" are a sore point with me. They represent about a year's work and I do not expect to sell any of them for the simple reason that I consider none of them worth spending time or postage on. They are written off the books, charged to experience. I can't afford to write heavy drama or tragedy. The result is too discouraging.

Every time I think of those fifteen stories I grow more prejudiced in favor of the element which makes an editor want to buy a story. They have had the effect of causing me to put as much humor as possible into each story I now write. Even if the plot holds no chance for humor in itself or in situations, it can be clothed with phrasing humorous in itself or at least different enough to seem humorous. But the humor must be natural; the tyro must curb a tendency to drag it in by the heels if he has reached a point where he realizes that humor more than anything else will make his stories salable.

And there are an infinite number of methods to put humor into a story—humor in whimsical wording of sometimes really serious things; humor in speech, dialogue; humor in quoted words of cogitation; humor in characterization; humor in action, situation and plot. Put it in—if you want checks.

A short time ago an aspiring writer, who had inquired how certain effects were achieved, was given a test problem. He was instructed to rewrite a sentence containing the opening situation of a story. He was to tell at least in a different, even if not necessarily a humorous way, that the state of New Mexico had offered a reward of $2500, dead or alive, for a bad man named Buck Williams.

This budding author, a very good friend of mine, by the way, thought it over.

"There isn't anything funny in it," he said at last, "I don't see how it can be made to seem funny."

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Here with a little Bread beneath the Bough
A Flask of wine, a bite at John's—then Thou
Beside me singing in some bungalow—
O, Hollywood were Paradise enow!
Omar Khayyam in Hollywood
Loosely Translated from the Persian

By Douglas Z. Doty

EDITORIAL Note: Few peoples know so well the secret of longevity as do the Persians. Omar Khayyam, for example, who is supposed to have gone to his rest in the first quarter of the 12th century, in reality has never ceased to live, and though few have been aware of it, Mr. Khayyam has been spending the last three months in Hollywood. This famous anti-prohibitionist from Persia was induced to visit us at the instance of his old friend Abu Ben Rothwell—whom he knew in a previous incarnation as a kindly Afrit of Araby, and who has been working so indefatigably to place the motion picture rights of The Rubaiyat.

Mr. Khayyam has graciously consented to write exclusively for Photodramatist, and his quaint observations on life in general, and studio life in particular, will be thoroughly enjoyed by our readers. In order to preserve the Arabian Nights' flavor of his Persian style, these articles have been translated most reverently by Mr. Doty.

But the editor of this magazine wishes it to be distinctly understood that in no way is he responsible for Mr. Khayyam's intemperate attitude toward the Volstead Act. In The Rubaiyat, thirty-five of the one hundred and ten quatrains are given over to wine and drinking. Of course, this is very reprehensible. Nevertheless, we believe in free speech; and we are hopeful that the immature mind will not be unduly influenced by Omar's pagan philosophy.

PRAISE be to our Lord and Master, Mohammed! I, Omar Khayyam, who lived these many centuries and have adventured through many lands, have but now come to a strange new world; and it doth interest me strangely.

I am old in the Wisdom of the East; my beard is long and frosted by many centuries of living; but my eyes are still keen to note the red of wine—the loneliness of women. How many times, in these passing days, hath my blood stirred to behold the unveiled faces of your fair maidens who, unattended, dance their way from one sweet folly to another in this new sprawling town of Hollywood—so different from that Bagdad of the ancient days and yet so like it in its humaness.

Of a verity there must still be youth in my mien—or mayhap 'tis only the bright sparkle of the jewels I wear that wins inviting smiles from lovely lips, the warm yet appraising glances from glowing eyes.*

With all the ardor of returning spring do I respond to the challenge of pulchritudinous charms. Once more, as of old, do I sing:

Here with a little Bread beneath the Bough
A Flask of Wine, a bite at John's—then Thou
Beside me singing in some bungalow—
Oh, Hollywood were Paradise now!

IF WHAT befell me in my journey hither shall not chronicle here—save that while the mighty ship was yet afar off from your shore, a blighting drouth did settle upon us all. The sweet solace of the Cup was denied us. Only those that were Wise had drunk their fill, so that when they did leave the ship, they were happy, not knowing whither they went.

Oh, you craven fools who have put so sad a blight on this fair land! Do you not remember what I have writ, lo many centuries ago?

Why, be this Juice the growth of God, who dare Blaspheme the twisted tendril as a Snare?
A Blessing, we should use it, should we not?
And if a Curse—why, then, who set it there?

By Allah, if I could but summon from out the sea a sympathetic jinn** from Araby bearing wine of the Orient in a magic flagon that is always full! Here customs differ much from those of mine own land—where red wine is openly displayed, but red lips veiled. In Hollywood 'tis quite the opposite.

And again: We of the True Faith hold that the dog is unclean. No true Mohammedan would so much as

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*Translator's Note: Mr. Khayyam is not yet acquainted with the phrase, "Gold-diggers."

**Translator's Note: A powerful but kindly Spirit—not to be confused with "synthetic gin"—which is a new and subtle poison called by some a beverage.
What the Public Wants in Pictures

An Interview With Director Allen Holubar

By George Landy

A t least once a week some executive in the film world whose pronunciamientos find their way into the public press, declares that “the motion picture is still in its infancy.” Personally, we are inclined to doubt this because of one fact: we have never heard of any group of people crowding to see an infant. Usually the proud parents have to grasp the visitor firmly by the hand and lead him or her to the crib, whereupon the said visitor murmers the expected words of approbation and beats a hasty retreat. Surely this is not the case with the films. Even during the days of stress through which we have just passed, millions of men and women of every age and class have proceeded to the box office every day in the year and have paid their more or less hard earned money for the privilege of seeing a motion picture production.

The infant analogy is further disproved by the growing realization that the cinema world has a history of its own. Even though the age of films is still reckoned in years and months rather than in generations and centuries, we are coming to call certain individuals in its ranks oldtimers. Certainly in this case, too, the appellation is reminiscent of its collegiate use, for many of our “oldtimers” are just over thirty; besides the phrase also denotes the fondness which it has in the rah-rah vocabulary. There are several producers and directors who have been in and of the motion picture industry for a long time, but very few who have maintained a place of real eminence over more years than Allen Holubar has remained among the leaders in pictures. Even before he directed Dorothy Phillips, Holubar had achieved a substantial success; since combining, their dual accomplishments as star and director-producer have won them both additional glory.

S INCE the motion picture has achieved a history and since Allen Holubar is preeminently qualified to speak of its past as well as its present and future, we put to him the question which is the title of this interview. It was a direct question and he answered it directly, not only because of its nature but because of his own temperament.

“No,” said Holubar, “fundamentally the public’s story tastes have remained the same and always will remain the same. The real thing that varies is the attitude of the spectator toward the presentation; his subconscious likes and dislikes are preeminently. Drama on the silversheet has the same fundamental characteristics as drama on the stage or on the printed page. To my mind the only essence of drama is the conflict between good and evil. If the reader will hark back to the origin of the theatre in the old morality plays presented during the Middle Ages by churchmen who used them to impress upon less literate churchgoers the stories of the Bible, he will find there the nucleus of fact supporting this assertion.

“All art tends simultaneously toward simplicity of execution and subtlety of thought. It is the truly great artist who presents his story—whether he be a painter, a novelist, a dramatist or a photodramatist—directly, vividly and simply. The refinements of artistic creation come in the realization that the forces of good and evil whose conflict makes drama are not necessarily all white and all black. It may not be so striking at first glance, but it is a lot more interesting and appealing to portray a conflict between two shades of gray. Transferring it to the human equation, we have much finer drama in a story where the villain has one or two good points and the hero one or two bad ones. This is the type of story which will make a greater and more lasting impression on the public’s mind—and will even make more money for the writer as well as for the producer.

N ATURALLY the public which goes to see pictures wants its stories adapted to the present day mental viewpoint. That viewpoint is what we should all study, whether we be directors, producers, stars or writers. All the great pictures have been founded on great stories and they have been successful not only from this fact but because in the telling those responsible for the adaptation have been familiar with the “audience angle,” which is the industry’s patois for the mental attitude of the public.

Have you ever heard two people tell independently their versions of a certain incident which they witnessed, or repeat the gist of a book they have read, or even try to tell the same joke? Discounting the slight differences in personal receptivity, what they saw, what they read or what they heard was practically the same. Yet one narrator will bore you; the other will interest you. The first man did not have the audience angle; he did not appreciate your viewpoint as the (Continued on Page 37)
‘Weather Effects’ in the Films

How They are Obtained—Their Importance in Picture Production

By Wynona Johnson

If it were not for that little word—"probably," the weather-man's job would be a most unenviable one. But when he says: "Cloudy tomorrow—probably showers," or "Probably snow" or whatever the trimmin's may be, he has a nice loophole for graceful escape from embarrassments in case the weather does not perform exactly as per schedule—and everybody knows how 'unusual' and variable weather has a little way of behaving.

But the real weather man is the only one allowed the use of "probably." The man who forecasts the weather in motion-picture land has no right to the word; he says, "Rain tomorrow," or wind, or even snow, or cyclone, and he does not even glance up at the sky or squint barometer-wards, but looks over the script, and, the word having gone forth, the weather is allowed no vagaries, but must conform to orders. It will rain, or blow, or snow at that studio tomorrow, or the director will know the reason why! And everybody knows you cannot reason with a director!

Time was when sentimentalists said, "Oh, don't destroy the illusion—don't tell us how the wheels go 'round! We'd rather not know," but that was long ago. There is no destruction of illusion when one learns how certain effects in motion-picture photography are obtained, only admiration for the ingenuity and skill displayed, and increased enjoyment because of the recognition. As for authors, the processes employed should be of double interest; a stroke of the pen on their part will describe the destruction of fair cities, or the devastation of buildings, but it is the working-out of these actual effects which makes the photoplay realistic.

Since the majority of the studios are located in California largely because of the reliability of the climate, and the prevalence of sunshiny days, it goes without saying that one cannot count on rain, snow, wind, sand-storms and other elemental disturbances during the greater part of the year—the days of cool bright sunshine and blue skies—and, likewise, one cannot wait until the winter months for those showers. In fact, Nature is wonderful, but she is capricious, and Art improves on her, carefully imitating when necessary, and blandly originating when that seems best.

In the early days of motion-picture photography, nature effects were limited to bright sunshine, violent wind to give the effect of 'life' and snow for desolate winter.

Ah, those snowstorms of the good old days! Well might the villain, turning the orphans out into the world from their mortgaged home, murmur cynically "I see by the papers that it is snowing," for paper snow it was, that fluttered whitely down from Heaven, and folded the pure young heroine in its soft embrace! As it had been used in countless stage snow storms, the torn flakes were released from above, and sped through the air more or less regularly and drifted on door-sills and roofs.

But today, a movie snowstorm is different. It is often a real one—pictures taken in the mountains, or over the Canadian border—but sometimes script calls for one snow storm, or snow-effect, not of enough importance to transport a whole company to the colder regions. Then the salt man is called, and the stage set with tons of regular cooking salt, of the coarser size—the ground spread with it, the roofs powdered. In the recently completed
picture of Miss Pickford’s, “Tess of the Storm Country,” the miserable fishermen’s huts were surrounded with salt, and the roofs and porches covered with the drifts; the effect on the lot is startlingly cold and realistic, while in the picture itself, it is masterly. If a falling snow is desired, the asbestos flakes used in Christmas decorations—not the tinsel stuff, but the dull finish—is allowed to flutter down, instead of the once-familiar torn paper, and composition icicles are employed on sloping eaves and in natural places to complete the illusion. In actual filming of the storm, the wind machine is brought into use, and this creates the draft which, blowing the whirling flakes, makes the illusion complete.

It is this wind-machine which is the weatherman’s right hand in obtaining weather effects, and which is almost as good as a ‘probably.’ It is usually an auto chassis, very light, with a six or eight cylinder airplane motor fitted with propellers; this is the developed compact wind-machine, and with its speed engine controlled for producing every variation of wind from a gentle zephyr to a hurricane, it is called into use during snow storms, wind-storms, rains, sand-storms and so on.

If rain is indicated on the weather chart, then pipes or hose are brought into use. Such lengths of pipes, pierced with holes every few feet or inches, as desired, as are used in California lawn sprinkling are raised above camera-height; on the roofs of buildings, or over the streets. Wind-machines placed at either side, and sometimes five or more of them are needed in a violent storm—will blow the sheets of descending water into realistic whirls, and if lightning is described in the photoplay, it too has its machine. In the old days, art directors relied on the clever scratching of the film to give the instantaneous zigzag effect; various experiments have resulted in improvements in this effect. A static machine such as one sees in physics laboratories is pressed into service at some studios. An induction coil, such as is used in X-Ray work, capable of throwing a 6-inch spark, has been successfully used by the weather-man, set up and covered by black velvet cloth so that only the two balls between which the spark jumps are exposed to view. Of course in the case of a person struck by lightning, careful double exposures are used, and as lighting, whether voluntary or made-to-order is quite tricky, one has a delicate task confronting him in the placing of the machine, with the balls painted black with non-lustre varnish, and the counting, turning of the switch or key for one instant, and the photographing of the resultant bolt.

During a rain and wind storm, there is no chance of restricting it to the few feet surrounding the heroine or hero. The camera man is very close to the flood, and as the wind machines spray the rain drops in every direction, he is often more comfortable clad in boots and rain coat than otherwise.

The late ‘rage’ for desert pictures has resulted in a wave of such films, and of course the rescue of the heroine from devastating sand-storm, or its convenience in obliterating tell-tale tracks has given the weather-man some busy days. The selection of a sandy strip of desert—there is an excellent one by Oxnard, as well as other beach localities—when the company does not go in search of a real desert
is the first consideration, then the placing of the wind-machines, which whirl the dusty cloud over the scene, and certainly produces a grizzly and uncomfortably realistic effect.

The weather-man has fogs up his sleeve—as witness the wonderfully effective one in Guy Bates Post's masterly "Omar," pictured above; he may prefer, for romantic purposes, moonlight—and he orders an effect which would inspire Cupid as on those nights when, as recounted by Jessica and her swain—"On such a night" the lovers of history and literature came into their own. The moon may be a pearly globe with a light within, and filmy effects are obtained by blurred focus. Recently a splendid scientific picture, showing planets and their relations, was produced in which a black velvet curtain figured as the "sable garments of Night," while the moon was a lighted globe, and the stars smaller lighted spheres, correctly placed against the curtain. A slight rocking of the curtain gave the latter their 'twinkly' effect: the optical illusion was perfect. A photoplay recently made by Nazimova used one of the most beautiful moonlight effects achieved in late artistic picture-making.

Sometimes the elements—in script—prophesy an earthquake, and it must come to pass. It does—without fail, after much planning and hard work on the part of the weather man. For a big earthquake effect, tons of gun-powder are used to mine an area, maybe as large as 800 feet square, as in a picture recently, and to a depth of four feet. Expert quarrymen were engaged in the making of the 'coyote holes' and placing of the wires, as well as the filling of the holes, and tiny steel huts, fully enclosed, protected the camera men, who had two peep-holes—one for observation, and one for the camera lens. Buttons attached to galvanic batteries performed the task of exploding the hills, and volumes of rocks poured forth, giving a marvelously inspiring effect. Sometimes the cameras are worked at a distance by electric motors, for such effects.

A cyclone is another cataclysm which must be carefully planned. As in the making of "The Old Homestead," with Paramount picture stars recently at Lasky's, the wind-machines—five in number—were set up, and ropes and pulls and tackle attached to such buildings as needed to be overturned or shifted askew in the picture. The motors furnished the violent wind, the houses shook, or were bodily lifted and careened away, water fell in torrents, smaller objects whirled by, and what with dust and storm and leaves and debris, the set certainly looked as though a cyclone had passed that way, and the picture, recently released, gives the thrill to the stolidest of spectators.

Miniatures are often used in getting cataclysmic effects. The burning trestle is usually of soft wood, saturated with turpentine, which produces thick black smoke, and an explosion produced in miniature is done so by the use of slow burning flash powder. Smudge pots for fires furnish smoke and glow, but relieve from intense heat; camp-fires at night, and volcanoes, forest fires and the like are cleverly contrived by the use of miniatures and lights and smudge pots or powder flashes. In the case of wrecks of boats or buildings, miniatures carefully double-exposed on real backgrounds, are generally used.
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Sometimes the elements—in script—phosphoryn an earthquake, and it must come to pass. It does—without fail, after much planning and hard work on the part of the weather man. For a big earthquake effect, tons of gun-powder are used to mine an area, maybe as large as 800 feet square, as in a picture recently, and to a depth of 20 feet. Expert quartermen were engaged in the making of the "cavey holes" and placing of the wires, as well as the filling of the holes, and thin steel slats, fully enclosed, protected the camera men, who had two peep-holes—one for observation, and one for the camera lens. Buttons attached to galvanic batteries performed the task of exploding the hills, and volumes of rocks poured forth, giving a marvelous inspiring effect. Sometimes the cameras are worked at a distance by electric motors, for such effects.

A cyclone is another cataclysm which must be carefully planned. In the making of "The Old Homestead," with Paramount picture stars recently at Lasky's, the wind-machines—five in number—were set up, and ropes and pull and tackle attached to such buildings as needed to be overturned or shifted askew in the picture. The motors furnished the violent wind, the houses shook, or were bodily lifted and tossed away, water fell in torrents, smaller objects whirled by, and what with dust and storm and leaves and debris, the set certainly looked as though a cyclone had passed that way, and the picture, recently released, gives the thrill to the stolidest of spectators.

Miniatures are often used in getting cataclysmic effects. The burning house is usually of soft wood, saturated with turpentine, which produces thick black smoke, and an explosion produced in miniature is done so by the use of slow burning flash powder. Smudge pots for fires furnish smoke and glow, but relief from intense heat; camp-fires at night, and volcanoes, forest fires and the like are cleverly contrived by the use of miniatures and lights and smudge pots or powder flashes. In the case of wrecks of boats or buildings, miniatures carefully-built-exposed on real backgrounds, are generally used.
The Facts in the Case

By J. R. McCarthy

A GREAT deal of writing, talking and worrying is done over the question: Who or what shall be starred in the creation, sale and exhibition of a photoplay? Perhaps it is well enough for us to reach a decision (where that decision is not irrevocably reached for us), but we should understand at the beginning that neither worry, conversation nor the printed word can alter the self-evident facts in the case.

The first and most important of these facts is that the matter of starring, that is to say of giving pre-eminence on the screen and in the advertising, is of importance only when the photoplay as a whole is worthy of long continued runs and occasional re-showings. The average film which goes to the exhibitor is over-advertised, and is shown for a night or two or a week at the most, then forgotten as completely as last year's hair-cuts, may star an actor, the director, or the story, with not a dime's value accruing to any of them.

What of the five thousand or so books printed in this country in 1920? What of the long list of thirty-night stage-plays? What of any work that, attempting art, fails; or, attempting usefulness succeeds in being useless?

The only screen-plays in which prominence to any name matters at all are the plays that live, either upon the screen or in the memory of the public. Such plays have been few enough in the past, but it is comforting to know that we have had even a few. With the perfection of technique, with the new zeal to make of the photoplay an artistic achievement, with the development of a group of men and women able to create the true screen drama—with all these advances now in progress, many photoplays of the future are sure to escape oblivion. We shall delight in a certain production of a certain marvelous story, and shall wish to see it again and again, as now we return perhaps every year to the pages of a favorite novel. It is in such photodramas as these that the starring of one name or another matters, if ever.

Another fact which not only the critics but the public recognized long ago is that no arbitrary starring is final. The villain may "steal" the play from the featured heroine, or the story alone be enjoyed and remembered while every actor is forgotten. For that matter, when is a director graduated to stardom? Is it not after he has "stolen," by his superior directorial ability, a certain number of plays from the stars under his direction?

You may advertise "Dotty Do-little in Her Greatest Triumph" with all the mazda lamps and on all the billboards within the land; yet, if Dotty's acting is poor, she will be forgotten within the week, while her unadvertised play, if it happens to be a gem, will be remembered for years. Merit will out, as Mr. Horatio Alger may have said.

If the "star" is better than your story, she or he deserves the remembrance thereby attained, and your story deserves its comparative obscurity. If your story is better—but what's the use? It's the truth, isn't it?

The other fact—three are enough for a thing—is the most obvious of all yet least frequently is appreciated. There is not a producer, director, star, or photodramatist living (or dead) able of himself or herself to make a photoplay successful.

You may write a poem, and the sin is on your head. You may write a novel, and there is none to blame or praise but your proud self. You may do a fine Monday's wash, with none to share the credit save perhaps the advertising genius who thought of "99 44-100."

But when you conceive a photodrama (which is about once a month with most of us) you have but begun a patch-work quilt whose success depends upon many other patches, sewed on by other hands than yours.

Your photodrama alone will go far, certainly. But not far enough. A splendid rendition by the continuity writer will carry the drama further on in its proper course. A good "prop" man, an able director, a competent technical staff, these will aid vastly in its progress. The sympathetic and appropriate interpretation by a cast of artists will carry the photodrama a long way further on its road to success.
The Fruits of Toil

By Hazel W. Spencer

A FEW months ago I received a letter from a friend who is a writer of international reputation. It was in answer to one from myself in which I had chanced to mention the work of two young writers with whom we are both personally acquainted. "Speaking of N—," the letter ran; "do you remember his early attempts? Colorless, mediocre, utterly lacking in distinction. And look at him today, master of a graceful style, a really charming writer. "He has worked steadily and his present success is due to years of the most devoted, I might almost say, fricnicky, effort. On the other hand, there's W—, who began so brilliantly, I myself predicted a great future for him. But what has he accomplished? A brief meteoric success and virtual oblivion. Simply because he stopped working when work was the one indispensable factor of his permanent establishment."

"CONTENT to rest upon his present laurels he goes on writing, but I rather fancy it is only his early fame that keeps the publishers friendly. Certainly he shows no progress, but rather a falling-off in every way. It is the old situation of the tortoise and the hare. N— is plugging away and arriving at distinction through sheer hard work while W— is asleep. A thousand pities for him the brilliance of his début. Infinitely better to start with a handicap and win success slowly. Once achieved you are so much more certain of its enduring."

I am taking these remarks of my distinguished friend for the text of this month's sermon. They seem to me distinctly encouraging and reassuring and at the same time provocative of most earnest consideration. How often, not alone in the business of writing but in the business of everyday living, do we see this incident of the tortoise and the hare exemplified. And may we not all find in it a spur to flagging energies? A solace to drooping spirits?

The race is not always to the swift. If it were some of the world's supreme treasures would never have seen the light of day. This is true in the writing-game to

Careless Construction

and the appearance of unwarranted mistakes, although they may not impede the sale of your manuscript, undoubtedly impose upon the sensibilities of the editor. Do not write things which you know, upon second thought, are incorrect. Or, if you have not been taught to speak and to write the English language properly, it is not yet too late to study it. In this department Mrs. Spencer does not use the mystifying rules which invariably appear in text-books; but she shows you, by concrete examples, the right way and the wrong way.

a remarkable extent. It is not by any means a rule that the men most brilliantly endowed by nature achieve the most convincing and permanent success. Tragically enough this very endowment has often proved its possessor's curse, laying him open to the fiercest and most stultifying temptations and thwarting his ambitions on the very threshold of his career.

If it does not check him ruthlessly at the outset how often we see him attain distinction only to lose it as soon as attained. Far too often, at any rate. But quite as often men of apparently commonplace ability amaze us by accomplishing all and even more than we expected of their more brilliant brothers.

SO it appears that it is work which counts in the long run; steady, persistent effort to overcome obstacles and to master principles. The ability to persist is very often all that is needed to turn a workman into an artist and to lift "that one talent, which is death to hide" into the category of genius.

Gray took seven years to write the Elegy, one of the masterpieces of literature. He was not brilliant, but he was supremely faithful to such talent as he had, and he made up in careful attention to detail what he lacked in power and originality. The Elegy is but a single, short poem, but it is absolutely perfect of its kind and many writers with numerous volumes to their credit would willingly exchange their bulk for Gray's perfection.

Clever and readable stuff is sometimes dashed off in haste and given to the public without revision, but its popularity is a thing of the moment and it achieves its purpose through presentation of ideas that happen to be particularly apropos, rather than by reason of perfect workmanship. Of course from the standpoint of finances this is all that is necessary. But we are not studying English from that standpoint, we are studying it from the standpoint of art.

NOTHING worth while in art was ever accomplished in a hurry, and no great artist ever worked or worked with his mind on money values.

Perhaps I should qualify that statement by saying that it is impossible to associate art and commercialism. Unfortunately many a true artist has been obliged to earn his living by prostituting his art to the "base uses" we speak of as "pot-boilers," but what he accom-
Photodramatist produced.

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the final answer: “Frank and Mabel’s wedding?”

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“K. B., Mississippi.” Is a ques-

tion-mark necessarily a period? How should the following be written? “The real issue of the story should be who the girl in this case the singular. But this is not its position in your sentence.

The detours you make have the dual character of temptation and privilege, for they may beckon to loitering or inspire to progress according as you have it in you to perceive them.

A certain gift of language coupled with a few vivid and rather unusual ideas may win you sudden recognition, but do not be content with this. Neither let yourself become discouraged if the recognition and the reward are slow in coming. Honest workmanship will win in the end and perseverance will accomplish the most difficult and disheartening task. There is no editor in the world. I care not how inaccessible, who cannot be moved to pleasurable emotion by the sight of a first-rate manuscript, and if any manuscript of yours has reached this state you may be comfortably sure of its acceptance. But first-rate manuscripts are the result of the most painstaking effort we know anything about.

DOES every word mean exactly what you want it to mean? Is every sentence constructed upon an approved and recognized pattern? Is the whole effect so perfect and complete that the eye lingers delightedly upon each succeeding paragraph as it would linger over a noble landscape? This is the final test of really perfect English, or of any other language, that it should attract and hold the eye as well as the mind. Does yours do this? Does it roll so littingly over the tongue that the reader marmer it aloud for pure pleasure? If it is and does all these things no editor would dare refuse it.

But if you fancy that such effects are obtainable in a short time you are sadly mistaken. Remember, it took seven years to write the Elegy. Are you willing to devote seven years to the writing of a story or photoplay? Be very sure if you are that when it is finished it will be a masterpiece.

Unfortunately there are very few of us who have time to devote years to the accomplishment of a work of art. That is why so little really worthy of the name is produced. Modern haste and materialism are against patient and loving toil such as we associate with the world’s great artists. And yet, even now, nothing really splendid is accomplished in a short time. Think of the months and even years spent on some of our great engineering projects, and that not by one man alone but by hundreds. Nothing fine and noble and lasting can be done quickly.

EARN your bread and butter if you must but take time with your stories and your photoplays. When you think your English is just as good as you can make it take your story to pieces and write it over again. This was the advice hurled in stentorian tones at the students of a famous instructor.

“Refuse to be satisfied!” he would shout at them, as if they were all deaf. “Go over every page ten to twenty times, a hundred if need be. Don’t allow yourselves to feel anything but impatience with your achievements until you know beyond the shadow of a doubt that they admit of no improvement. If you are satisfied you are lost: there’s no further hope of you.”

An extreme view, you say? Perhaps. But it is upon such extremes that true success is founded. There can never be any half way methods in the pursuit of perfection, you must give all or nothing. Above all you must never accept your work as flawless. If the time ever comes when you find yourself doing this further progress is for you impossible. You have come to the end of your blooming; you are done: finished.

BUT while you remain dissatisfied you are still developing. You still have possibilities. It is the dissatisfied souls who do the great work of the world. Be content to tear down, to destroy, in order that you may rebuild to nobler purpose.

When you are writing it is a help to think of yourself as painting. You have in your mind a definite picture which you wish to reproduce for the edification and enjoyment.

(Continued on Page 33)
Service for Writers

In pursuance of Photodramatist's policy of offering every possible assistance to writers, a new department will be opened with the January issue. This department, to be known as the Photodramatist Service Bureau, will endeavor for the main part to furnish information regarding the photoplay and fiction markets.

With the increasing production of motion pictures comes an increasing demand for original stories. Producers are searching for suitable screen material, and now is the time for writers of photoplays to get busy.

But in view of the fact that so many abrupt and radical changes are constantly taking place in the studios, the photoplay market as published each month in Photodramatist, or any other magazine, cannot possibly be up to the minute. To overcome this drawback, the Service Bureau will answer promptly by mail or wire, at the inquirer's expense, of course, any questions regarding the wants of the larger studios and of the various independent producers. If any problem about marketing a screen or magazine story is bothering you; if you do not understand methods of copyrighting; if you desire information regarding addresses of film companies, magazines or picture people, we shall be glad to help you. Also, details pertaining to prize contests—or any other information, technical or otherwise, concerning the fiction or motion picture world will be furnished.

We believe that this department will supply a long felt need; and we feel that no other writer's magazine offers adequate personal service of this nature. Photodramatist in the past has held a high standard of service to its readers. It has published authoritative, exclusive articles imparting to its readers "inside," technical information on the making and showing of pictures; its new department on "Good English and Its Use" is second to none; its editorials have been quoted repeatedly by leading magazines and educators; it has gone, and will continue to go, to great expense and trouble to obtain constructive, inspirational contributions from the men and women best known in the film and magazine world. However, we feel that despite all this, Photodramatist may be made even more valuable to its subscribers.

But let it be understood that this is not a criticism bureau. We cannot undertake to read scenarios or stories, to make comments on them, or to sell them. To supply high-class service of that kind would place us under prohibitive expense. It is a profession of its own and entirely out of our province.

Do not hesitate to make use of this new service, because subscribers to Photodramatist are not mere readers. We take a personal interest in each and every one. We all belong to the same family; we all aim for the same mark—better stories for the magazines and for the screen; and our new service, we feel will be of invaluable aid to you in reaching this goal. It is free to you, except that for our convenience and to avoid error, we request a self-addressed, stamped envelope for reply.

If you are not a subscriber to Photodramatist, send in your name and remittance at once and receive full benefit of this unusual service.

The Tide Turns

It is an admitted scientific fact that for every action there must be a reaction. This incontrovertible law governs not only the realm of physics but also applies to the spiritual and political life of any people. America for the past four or five years has undergone a severe reaction from the terrific direct action involved in the Great War. This reaction had many attendant evils. Especially prominent has been the tendency of a rabid minority to endeavor to impose their own fanatical, narrow ideas regarding morals upon our great nation. Catching the body politic in a post-war dazzle, as it were, they made rapid strides in this direction. Almost over night censorious laws, including especially the censorship of motion pictures, were "steam-rolled" into the various legislatures.

The pendulum, however, is swinging back. In the elections of November 7th, throughout the country, the advocates of the Dark Age doctrine of censorship were much surprised to learn that they lost considerable ground. Massachusetts, which has been one of the strongholds of the fanatics in this respect, voted down censorship by an enormous majority. New York, another state in which the people have been forced to allow a small minority to tell them what they may or may not see upon the silver sheet, ousted a governor who has been a bitter opponent of motion pictures and elected Governor Al Smith, whose first announcement was to the effect that he would immediately recommend to the legislature of that state that the motion picture commission be abolished. Senator Walker, who has been fought viciously by the censorship group, will aid Governor Smith in carrying out this reform.

There now remain only four states of any prominence in which the citizens are still under the dictatorship of professional moral guardians. These commonwealths are Pennsylvania, Ohio, Kansas and Maryland. It is extremely probable that Ohio at an early date will do away with her censorship board, especially following the ridiculous record made by the late Mrs. Evelyn Snow. Kansas, of course, being the stronghold of practically all the freak legislation originated in this country, will probably adhere to its present sixteenth century regime. However, we expect to hear favorable news within two years from Pennsylvania and Maryland.

The principle of censorship is intolerable to free-born citizens who recognize only the rule of the majority. The American people as a whole can never embrace censorship without relinquishing the birthright of liberty granted them by their forefathers; and professional reformers or fanatics who would forget the
glorious history of the world's greatest republic and introduce anti-American, foreign ideas are due for even greater rebuffs in the future than received during the past few weeks.

Words of Wisdom

Once in a while we read a wise statement. It be in the translated work of some sagacious philosopher of the early centuries, or it may be in some later but equally knowledge-laden publication. Such a truism appeared in a recent issue of the Los Angeles Times, credited to Edwin Schallert, widely recognized critic of music, art and drama, the latter of which, naturally, embraces the drama of the screen.

Mr. Schallert says: "Largely, this picture game is a matter of originality of conception. If there is one fault at present it is too many mere adaptations—too many inconsequential borrowings from sister arts."

That is it, exactly. The sister arts consider themselves—and are generally considered by the outside world—the privileged "big sisters" in the household of arts. They so long have been pampered and given to dictating that when a little newcomer arrives in the family, they stand by jealously and question the rights of the intruder. Then, as the little sister struggles to develop and unfold her natural beauty, she is continually weighed down and disguised by the hand-me-down clothes of the selfish big sisters.

Sponsors of the old established arts fail to comprehend the possibilities of the new arrival, the screen play, should she be given the freedom to which by birth she is entitled. Mediocre stage successes and published books are the unbecoming and ill-fitting garments which retard the physical growth and dampen the progressive spirits of the Little Sister. She must have clothes designed for herself alone. What can be displayed on the stage in artistic splendor by means of spoken lines when transferred to the screen becomes a thing uncouth and lifeless. For instance, the opera "Carmen," made beautiful by the histrionic genius of Calve and Farrar and the accompaniment of sensuous music, gave the opera-lover an evening of delight. But the film version of "Carmen" proved a different thing altogether. Madame Farrar was unable to interpret Carmen as a pleasing, seductive creature. Instead, she was revolting as a wanton cigarette girl.

The real motifs of even the most successful operas, plays or works of fiction often fail to "get over" on the screen, unless, as in the case of Douglas Fairbanks in making "Robin Hood," the author and producer think, feel and breathe the theme of the production both before and during its development.

However, such a procedure is exceptional because of the commercial attitude the producer must take; and it is rare indeed that any adaptation merits praise approaching that won by the usual Fairbanks interpretation.

Concerning Imagination

Among all the gifts bestowed upon humanity by an all-wise Providence, the power of creative imagination undoubtedly ranks first. It was Imagination that builted the early empires; that formulated the ancient philosophies; that lifted mankind from a low state of civilization to its present high plane of existence.

The words, "creative imagination," are, however, frequently misunderstood. The average person connects this phrase only with the arts and a few of the professions. This is an error.

It was imagination that transplanted the first wild grape vine; that mined the first gold from the bowels of Mother Earth; that prompted the construction of the first humble habitation; and that, finally, brought into the commonplace such world wonders as the Pyramids, the Eifel tower, radium—and radio.

Granted that these things are true, it inevitably follows that the person who most diligently stimulates this vital force is the one who will do the most to better the world in which he lives; who will be the most successful both materially and spiritually; who will earn the respect of everyone with whom he chances to associate.

The great captains of industry today probably do less actual work than the lowest of their employees; but most of these employees will remain in their obscure positions throughout the course of their lives, unrecognized, unrewarded, and in many instances bitterly asserting that labor receives inadequate compensation and that those higher in rank have achieved their positions through luck, "pull" or unscrupulousness. This, of course, is untrue. The difference between these persons and the men higher up is merely the difference in their power to use Imagination.

Imagination is not to be confused with intelligence—sheer brain power. Myriads of technically trained men are solving the most intricate problems in the laboratories and research departments of the great financial and industrial institutions. But, they are working under the direction of the men who have brought up these problems and who have Imagination enough to bend the solutions thereof to their own ends.

It stands to reason that anything tending to stimulate Imagination is well worth cultivation. And nothing, we believe, can do this better than the study of the silent drama and of literature. Imagination is, after all, the creative power of life. A great savant once said, "Literature is Life." Literature, of course, includes drama. Study drama and literature and you will know better how to live and how to help others to live.

Even though you may never gain tangible financial rewards through the direct sale of the product of your pen, you cannot help but gain a broader vision and a finer sense of perception therefrom.
A couple of months ago production conditions were at such a low ebb that even the most sanguine members of the motion picture industry felt that a re-vival of activity would mark the millennium. Praise be, the millennium has arrived and the year of 1922 will wind up in a blaze of glory with practically every studio going full tilt and in a spirit of artistic ambition as well as zealous industry. Which—if "pointing with pride" is still permissible after election day—the readers of this department may recall we predicted in the two preceding issues of the Photodramatist.

First National Leads

First National assumes its original place in the van during the month of December. Richard Walton Tully returns from a triumphant trip abroad during which he spent a fortnight in Paris filming some atmospheric scenes for "Trilby" to go into active production on this classic at the United Studios. Guy Bates Post, the star of "The Masquerader" and "Omar the Tentmaker," will be the star of "Trilby" and will play the role of Svengali. Tully himself is preparing the screen adaptation and although we have no definite information to this effect, it may be safely presumed that the same staff will officiate on the coming production.

James Young, director, Wilfred Buckland, art director and George Benoit, cinematographer.

Allen Holubar has practically completed his work on the script of Dorothy Phillips' next starring vehicle, their second production for First National under their present contract. It is "The White Frontier," originally written as a novel by Jeffry de Prend and adapted for the films by Violet Clark. Many of the scenes of this production will be shot in Montreal and in the innermost forest fastnesses of Northern Canada.

The inimitable Jackie Coogan rested only a short time after his memorable "Oliver Twist," and is now working on "Tobey Tyler," in which he is being directed by Eddie Cline of Buster Keaton fame. Cline and his assistant, Harry Weil, wrote the script: the cast includes Barbara Tennant, Claire McDowell, Sam de Grasse and Russell Simpson.

Maurice Tourneur, whose productions are being sponsored by M. C. Levee, president of the United Studios, will film "The Isle of Dead Ships" by Crittenden Marriott.

Shortly after this appears in print, Norma Talmadge will have returned to film "Within the Law" under the direction of Frank Lloyd, while her sister Constance will work with John Emerson and Anita Loos on one of their original comedies. All of these productions will be made on the United Lot.

The Ince Studios are concentrating on activities on "News," an original by Bradley King, directed by John Griffith Wray and starring May McAvoy, Katherine MacDonald is making "Refuge" also an original, by Lois Zellner, and directed by Victor Schertzinger.

Another interesting production on the United lot is "Rupert of Hentzau" which Selznick is producing under the direction of Victor Heerman with a remarkable cast which includes Bert Lytell, Elaine Hammerstein, Bryant Washburn, Marjorie Daw, Hobart Bosworth and Adolphe Menjou. Heerman has just completed directing his own story of "A Dollar Down" with Owen Moore as the star and Alice Lake as the feminine lead.

The Lasky Studios

A casual visitor to the Lasky plant on Vine Street might believe that all production was being concentrated in the great annual convention of the department of distribution of Paramount pictures, which convened in Hollywood during the last week of November. As a matter of fact, however, pictures are still being made according to the usual busy schedule.

The colorful Pola Negri has practically completed "Bella Donna," her second will be an original by Frances Marion entitled, "The Song in The Dark," directed by Penrhyn Stanlaws. Cecil B. De Mille's production by Jeanie McPherson has finally been titled "'Adam's Rib?" William de Mille will shortly return to film "Granny," the stage success. Gloria Swanson is being directed by Sam Wood in "Prodigal Daughters," written by Joseph Hocking and adapted by Monte Katterjohn; her cast includes George Fawcett, Ralph Graves, Louise Dresser. Jack Holt is working on "The Tiger's Claw," an original by Jack Cunningham; his director is Joseph Henabery and his cast, Eva Novak, Evelyn Selbie, George Periolat, Bertram Grassby. Agnes Ayres is filming "Racing Hearts" by Byron Morgan and adapted by Will M. Ritchie; Paul Powell is directing her, and her leading man is Richard Dix. Mary Miles Minter completes the list of active stars. She is working in "The Trail of The Lonesome Pine." John Fox, Jr.'s famous novel, which was adapted by W. M. Ritchie, Charles Maigne is directing her with Tony Moreno in the lead.

Good news for serious patrons of the films comes in the announcement that United Artists has finally consented to distribute Nazimova's "Salome." Another interesting production for this same organization will be Charles Ray's "The Courtship of Miles Standish," now being filmed.

Goldwyn Lot Renting

Goldwyn is several months ahead on its production schedule and so there is a hull in its own picture making although massive preparations will shortly commence for the production of "Ben Hur." It is rumored that among the directors who were approached to work on this magnum opus were...

(Continued on Page 37)
Legislators at Washington are about to pass upon a new child labor bill, under which it will become a crime to employ a child under eighteen. This of course includes all the moving picture kiddies from "Jackie" Coogan down. Screen authors should make a note of this, and it might be well to remember it when writing the story. It means that we may have to eliminate children from our plots. Well, they can't do much more restricting, and it looks as though it won't be very long before somebody will decide it will be sacrilegious to have a character wear a beard, and indecent for us to show chickens running around a farmyard en disabilie, whatever that is.

A very nice young man by the name of Le Berthon said, in a recent monthly moving picture publication, that the average outsider has about as much chance of selling a story to a producer as Satan has of being crowned Queen of the May. The article was not very lengthy. In fact it wasn't short enough. It was entitled, "Why Write Scenarios?" Why write about the movies, when you're not in sympathy with them? Those of us who know Le Berthon know that, while he was for a limited time in the industry, yet he was never a part of it. One day, I have been informed, a gentleman who was paying him a salary called him into the office and asked him if it was true that he was not in sympathy with pictures. Le Berthon admitted it, and was straightway invited out. The moving picture industry will reward anyone who puts something in it. If we put nothing in it we get nothing in return. "Why Write Scenarios?" was an appropriate question for Le Berthon to ask because he never wrote for them. He refused to take them seriously, and they rewarded him by taking him in the same way. The moving picture industry today is badly in need of stories. It doesn't care who writes them and there is a perfectly good reason why anyone who has creative ability should try to write photoplays. The real truth is that not enough people are trying to write for the screen. The producers will tell you the same thing. It requires courage, thought, care, time, patience, persistency and a lot of other things. The office of a producer is not a receptacle for sloven, slip-shod scripts. It should not be a dumping-ground for spineless scenarios. It's a high-class institution for the reception of serious efforts from those who are sincere in their desire to contribute something really worth while to a great art.

Cecil De Mille, through the columns of the Los Angeles Times, has been searching for an idea for a moving picture and offered one thousand dollars to the individual who could supply him with a theme for his next photoplay. That seems like a reply to Le Berthon's question. In discussing this novel contest, Mr. De Mille said: "I am in great need of a real idea for a photoplay. Somewhere, there is some one with an idea that would send a thrill through the world. It may be a freight brakeman, or a millionaire, a starving beggar or a society queen. I don't know who has it. But some one has. Therefore, I am sending out an S. O. S. call to the world." When a producer like De Mille makes such a move there must be a pretty good reason for it. The reason is, a lack of sufficient screen stories. This is no reflection on those who are professional screen writers. It means that not enough people are writing photoplays. It is to be hoped that this great director will discover new writers as a result of this search. If he does, nobody will suffer. There's plenty of room for everyone. "Why Write Scenarios?" Because, the "movies" want new writers. There is always room, in any profession, for new talent. Those who have read Le Berthon's article, and permitted it to discourage them, need not expect sympathy from those who have succeeded. Success usually demands a struggle.

Devote considerable thought to the main title. Don't accept the first title that comes to you. Think it over. Maybe you can think of a better one. Spend as much time in the selection of your title as you spend on the story. Of course, many times the producer changes titles, but when you send your story to him you have every reason to believe he will retain the original title. If it is really good, he will probably use it. Make certain that your title has a punch in it. Try and see that it delivers a message. The title should attract attention, arouse interest and create desire. If it does this then it will be a drawing power for the box-office. A poor title has often prevented a good story from being a success. A fine title very often makes a success of a mediocre production.

The coming winter season will mark the reappearance of tremendous sets with thousands of actors, and it looks as though the spectacle is going to be more popular than it has ever been before. Spectacles are not unpopular, providing the pictorial values are not permitted to interfere with dramatic action. The public likes to see gorgeous sets, lavish surroundings, striking picturesque scenes and beautiful costumes. But, it wants plenty of action and drama as well. It wants heart interest, too.
WRITE about the things that have come within the range of your own experience and observation," says Julian Josephsen. "Too often the writer who is just beginning, writes about people and places with which he is utterly unfamiliar. In that case his stories are most certain to lack that reality and fineness of detail that make a story live and breathe on the written page." However, in writing facts we have to embellish them with fiction. The basic idea, the theme, may be inspired by a fact, but it requires fiction to give it that fascinating appeal. Fact without fiction is not as interesting as fiction without fact.

KEEP the ladies in mind. Aim to please the women. A story that does not interest the feminine portion of the audience is not a success. Bear in mind that the greatest part of an audience is composed of women and they are the greatest critics. Every producer knows this. He keeps this in mind when he's reading your script. Wives inform their husbands of their likes and dislikes. The young man asks his sweetheart which one of the current productions she would like to see. He goes where she wants to go. Then too, remember that the women always outnumber the men in any amusement place. Write something that will please the women and the men will go and see it too.

MISS FRANCES HARME, the chief reader for the Lasky Company says something which should interest us. "You have no idea how many scenarios we get that are taken bodily from successful plays and books," she says. "We have in our office right now a scenario taken from Bernard Shaw—using his exact words and subtitles. We get Hugo and Balzac and even Shakespeare, not to mention hundreds of less well-known writers. People seem to think we moving picture people have never read, seen nor heard anything." It isn't considered polite for us to put our names on somebody else's story, and, they're very hard to sell, too.

"THE Virgin of Stamboul" was written especially for Norma Talmadge, but the Universal Company purchased it for Priscilla Dean. "The New Moon" was written for Dorothy Dalton and Norma Talmadge bought it. "Bring Him In" was created for Lewis S. Stone and Earle Williams purchased it. "Fighting Mad" was originally written for ack Dempsey and William Desmond finally appeared in it. It requires just as much patience to dispose of a story as it does to write it.

VERY few screen authors write the continuities for their stories. Very few of them like to do it. It is too mechanical. The majority of screen writers have found that in writing continuity they have not done their best work because it required so much close attention to technical details that it interfered with the smoothness of the plot.

IF you have only one scene in your story that will arouse discussion and commendation, your picture is a success. People will go out and talk about that one scene. Talk is the greatest advertisement for anything.

TRY and put a message in every story you write. See that it has a moral in it. Avoid the sordid things.

TOO many principals confuse the audience, complicate matters and involve the plot. This results in the audience mixing labor with its amusement. People don't go to the theatre to work.

TO get anywhere doing anything requires a tenacity of purpose, a will that cannot be crushed and a determination that refuses to acknowledge defeat. The one who succeeds is the one who sticks to his task, even though it takes him to the borders of purgatory. Then, if he has the right kind of stuff in him he will put on an asbestos suit and wade through it.

PUT this down in your note-book. You can't continually fail doing any one thing unless there's something wrong with you.


SOMEBODY has said: "Before we can write, we must first learn to read." It assists us in the assembling of words and helps us to create a style.

ACTION is the most important element in a screen story. Put in some action, and then some more action, and then some more action after that.

THE ideal screen story is one which appeals to most everyone. We haven't seen many of late.
For this month Paramount announces the release of two of its strongest features of the year—Thomas Meighan in "The Man Who Saw Tomorrow" and the Irvin Willat production, "On the High Seas" with Dorothy Dalton and Jack Holt. The old question of whom to marry is solved for Burke Hammond, played by Thomas Meighan, in "The Man Who Saw Tomorrow." The story is said to be very unique and is the work of Perley Poore Sheehan and Frank Condon. The latter and Will M. Ritchey collaborated on the adaptation and Alfred Green directed. "On the High Seas" is the first story written for the screen by Edward Sheldon E. Magnus Ingleton, former scenarist with Thomas H. Ince wrote the continuity.

Dorothy Farnum Arrives From East

Dorothy Farnum, well known in the photoplay world, has been brought from New York to the Goldwyn studios by Marshall Neilan and is now writing the scenario for Mr. Neilan's new production, "Fess of the D'UBerville's." Double-Murfin Production

Laurence Trimble, director, and Jane Murfin, author, are responsible for the high praise being attributed to "Brawn of the North," which is said to surpass their former success, "The Silent Call." Again does Strongheart, the famous police dog, stand out for his almost human acting in this dramatic story of rough, new Alaskan country.

Gibson in "Different" Vehicle

Edward Gibson has just completed a picture at Universal City which is somewhat "different" from the usual type of vehicle in which he has been featured. "The Gentleman from America" was written for Gibson by Raymond L. Schroek, scenario editor. It is a sad tale of a doughboy separated from the A. E. F. by bad train connections and landed in Spain, where he is promptly mistaken for a bandit.

Mairaine Finishes Continuity

Charles Maigne has finished the continuity for "The Isle of Dead Ships," to be directed by Maurice Tourneur at United Studios.

Author-Cinematographer

Don Short is an author as well as a cinematographer. He wrote the original screen story, "While Justice Waits," and also photographed it.

Prize Story to be Released

The Chicago Daily News-Goldwyn $10,000 prize winning scenario by Winifred Kimball will be released for distribution December 24th. This is an Allen Holubar production for Goldwyn, starring Colleen Moore who is supported by Malcolm McGregor, Ernest Torrence and Beryl Mercer.

Wrote "Dope" Evil Story

Mrs. Angela C. Kaufman has written a story based on the "dope" evil. This story, entitled "The Greatest Menace," will provide Albert Rogell's first independent production.

Contest Reveals Story Preferences

A canvass of the 30,000 entries in the Cecil B. DeMille $12,000 "Idea" contest indicates that stories of married life, Biblical themes, historical subjects and stories which relate to modern business are most in demand. Tales of crook life and of young love are requested by very few. Contributions to this contest have come in from every state in the Union and from many foreign points. Among these Mr. DeMille has found one which will be his next picture, following "Adam's Rib."

Mr. DeMille has expressed himself as delighted with the manner in which this poll is registering actual public opinion. Ideas have come from pool halls and from exclusive clubs, from ditch diggers and from homes.

Authors' League Elections

Thompson Buchanan, scenario writer, was elected an honorary vice-president of the Authors' League of America at the eleventh annual meeting. Other film folk on the Council for the coming year are Dwight Cleveland, Jeanie McPherson, June Mathis, Frederick Palmer, Eugene Presbery, Rob Wagner and Frank E. Woods.

John Lynch Writes Continuity

John Lynch has written the continuity for "The Go Getter," a Peter B. Kyne story to be produced by Cosmopolitan productions.

Vitagraph Selects Calhoun Vehicle

Vitagraph has selected Alice Calhoun's forthcoming vehicle, temporarily titled, "Mary Mixes In." The story was written especially for Miss Calhoun by C. Graham Baker.

Schulberg Purchases Stories

Photoplays to complete the year's program have been purchased by B. P. Schulberg for Preferred Pictures, Inc., three of which are originals by Frank Dazey and his wife, Agnes Johnston, entitled "The Hero," "Poor Men's Wives" and "Mothers-in-Law." Another is "A Mansion of Aching Hearts" by Harry Von Tilzer and Arthur J. Lamb.

Associated Exhibitors Release

This month witnesses the official release by Associated Exhibitors of "The Woman Who Fooled Herself," a six-part feature picture in which May Allison and her husband, Robert Ellis, are featured. It is the first production made by Edward A. MacManus for Associated Exhibitors. Charles A. Logue, well-known as a photodramatist and short story writer, wrote the photoplay.

Griffith Seeks Scenario

D. W. Griffith's studios at Mamaronke, New York, are closed and will remain so for the winter. In the meanwhile Mr. Griffith is looking for a good story which he could make in the South, dealing with the cotton plantations and the old-fashioned negro.

(Continued on Page 39)
knowledge, read Emerson Hough's "The Story of the Cowboy," and Philip Ashton Rollins' recent book, "The Cowboy," both classics. They will tell you in detail what I have hinted at, and much more. Mr. Hough was an old-timer; Mr. Rollins was a Princeton man who lived in the cow-country until he recovered.

Another suggestion, which I make with difference. You might go out into the cow-country and see with your own eyes. There's a lot of it left, though only in spots. I asked a man last night if there were any big cow ranches left. He said there were plenty, mentioning the Chiricahua outfit in Arizona, which still runs twenty-five thousand head on their range.

You may have noticed that I have been writing about the cowboy when I am supposed to be writing about the West. He has imposed his traditions, his medieval code, his limitations, his virtues and his vices upon those who fared forth with him and came after him, miner, freighter, merchant, and the others who provided for his wants.

The farmer was too much for him. The farmer has his own traditions, and where he comes, other modes of life are crowded to the wall. But it was fine while it lasted.

**GOOD ENGLISH**

(Continued from Page 25)

ment of future readers. Your paper is your canvas, your vocabulary your collection of pigments. You choose your words with the same delicate care, the same regard for color as that with which the artist chooses his paints.

He scarcely hopes, certainly never expects, to hit upon the perfect combination at the outset, but he tries first one, then another, always with the ideal before him, until he finds what he is seeking and makes you see the picture he, himself, has seen.

In your vocabulary are many words and phrases admitting only of the finest shades of distinction. Are you going to pick one at random and set it down upon your canvas without further consideration? Or are you going to hate it before the bar of your judgment and subject it to a rigid analysis? Can you paint your picture equally well either way? Can you make other people see what you see by the indiscriminate employment of the first words that occur to you?

You know you cannot. You know the picture in your mind is positively dependent upon certain descriptive phrases and no others and that you must see these and these alone or the result will be a blur. Is this a matter to be treated lightly? Do you know English so well as that? Does anybody? Hardly. The choice will consume hours and hours, days and days, months, perhaps years. And oh! the sweat and labor and toil of it. But oh! the joy.

If you merely think you would like to be a writer yet are staggered by the prospects of such infinite-simial attribute of the artist. Writing is not child's play: it is not even the relaxation of adults. It is grim labor. And if you cannot love its particular brand of labor for itself you will never make an author.

We have all heard, and felt, the sneer with which certain ignorant men and women have alluded to the profession of literature. "Oh, he's a writer! Makes a lot of money just loafing around. Never amounted to anything. Never will. What he needs is to roll up his sleeves and go to work."

But put such people at the desk of the well trained writer for half a day. Will they turn out a hundred sheets of copy? Fifty? Twenty-five? No. Not one. Then what right have they to sneer at the man who can? I fancy it is the mere fact of his keeping clean that annoys them. What he does looks easy because he, himself, retains the appearance of a gentleman.

But nevertheless he works harder than any ditch digger when it comes to persistence and nervous force, and as far as he is concerned the work never is accomplished, never completely satisfies him even after it is done.

So if you think writing is something like golf or tennis, a rich man's hobby and a fool's profession, requiring nothing in the way of effort beyond the pleasurable effort to win over the other fellow, you are poorly equipped for becoming a writer of stories or photoplays. And the sooner you abstain yourself from the game the better for everybody concerned.

On the other hand, if you know it is hard work, always hard work and love it for the very work's sake you cannot enter the game too quickly either for your own pleasure or ours. And it is for you that I am laying all this stress on the apparently trivial matter of perfect English. To you it will not seem trivial for you are to the manner born. You will love and cherish your language as the lapidary his tools for he knows and so will you that it is to them he owes the lustre of his finished gems.

**REVIEWING STAND**

(Continued from Page 14)

all, intelligent. That is recommendation enough.

"The Electric House"

PLOT is not ordinarily an important element in a two reel comedy. In fact, it is doubtful whether most comedy producers ever heard of such a thing. Their pictures are not stories, but Anthologies of Gags, written backwards after all the scenes have been shot.

In a new Keaton comedy, however, there is a basic idea which is so ingenious and original as to be well worthy of comment. The film is called The Electric House, and in it Buster plays the part of an earnest correspondence school student who is taking a course in Botany. Commencement Day rolls around, and the graduating class gathers in the post office to receive their diplomas from a letter carrier.

Buster, by mistake, is handed a degree in Electrical Engineering, and is immediately ordered to install equipment in a millionaire's home. This he does, to the best of his ability, so that all the work in the house is done mechanically. Everything goes well at first. The escalator runs on schedule, and the food is carried from the kitchen to the dining table on a little electric train. But then, the real Electrical Engineer appears. He had received Buster's diploma in the general mix-up at the commencement exercises, and he is eager for revenge. So he shifts the plugs in the control room, and all of Buster's mechanical devices start running the wrong way.
The Spite Wedding

Here in a lonely corner of the isolation hospital, in the dead of night, they were hastily married—this handsome young fellow whom they didn't expect to last out the night—and the nurse, some said, was too pretty for her own good.

Not for love was this strange marriage—neither even knew the other—but for spite, to satisfy a deep hatred!

What could come of such a wedding—a deliberate mockery built on revenge?

Read this story of a young man's folly, and its price. It is told as only one person can tell such a story, with the thrill—the touch of mystery, the daring humor of MARY ROBERTS RINEHART

Do you enjoy detective stories? No one alive—and few who are dead—ever wrote such thrilling, such baffling, such exasperating mysteries as Mary Roberts Rinehart.

Do you like love stories? Mary Roberts Rinehart knows how to write them. All the lure, all the absurdities, all the charm of love are in her books.

Infinite is her variety. Send the coupon. Try to solve the mysteries; laugh with Baby; laugh at Tish; get all the thrills of romance and adventure.

Get all in this one set—these tales for which magazines paid as high as $30,000, at which movie audiences sit entranced all over the world, which have made great fortunes on the stage in New York.

Truly has it been said that she has dapped her pen in magic—truly has it been said that she is the most popular woman in America!

½ PRICE INTRODUCTORY OFFER!

This is the first collected edition of Mary Roberts Rinehart's best stories ever published, and naturally she wants it to be a success. In order to enable us to make you a real "before-the-war" price on these fascinating volumes—in order to make this first edition go like wild-fire—she has agreed to accept exactly one-tenth of her usual rate of royalty on one edition of 10,000 sets.

Paper prices have come down, labor costs are lower, and now, with this generous concession of Mrs. Rinehart's, we can make you a price on this one edition actually lower than the pre-war prices—just about half what these same volumes would cost in a bookstore, and in addition, if your order comes in at once, we will send you the three latest and best volumes of FREE 3 Volumes CONAN DOYLE

All the latest Sherlock Holmes stories—his greatest, best mystery tales are in these 3 volumes. Think of it—the best works of two of the highest paid writers that ever lived—12 volumes of Mary Roberts Rinehart, for just one of which a great magazine paid $30,000—and 3 volumes of Conan Doyle—all yours for just about half what they would cost you in any bookstore. And you can pay for them, if you like, at the rate of only 35¢ a week. This is your chance. Send the coupon now, without money, and the 15 volumes will go to you promptly, all charges prepaid. If they are not the best stories you ever read—if you don't read them and reread them—send them back at our expense.

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For the sumptuous new Artcraft binding, more durable than ordinary leather, add only three more payments.
CONTEST WINNERS NAMED

(Continued from Page 6)

Contest are to be congratulated highly upon the high class, as well as great number, of the manuscripts submitted. The thousands of entries were with difficulty winnowed down to hundreds, and these hundreds were finally sifted to fifteen possible prize winners.

These fifteen numbered situations were copied in triplicate and a set sent to each of the final judges. The names of the authors were left off these copies, the only identifying mark on each being the number. It might be mentioned that these fifteen potential prizewinners were sent in from fourteen different states.

In the difficult task of choosing this small number from among thousands, the first manuscripts to be eliminated among those which followed the rules were those which contained no definite situation. Mere incidents, rambling narratives or complete story synopses were among this class.

THE next to follow into the discard were those which really contained situations, but which lacked originality, plausibility or dramatic poignancy. It was taken into account that stark tragedy, abysmal struggles of conscience or even serious predicaments at times do not necessarily make a dramatic situation. A well-known "standard" situation had little chance. To illustrate the trickiness of memory it might be of interest to mention several examples:

The three boxes (gold, silver and lead) from "The Merchant of Venice" were the basis of half a dozen situations submitted.

The execution scene from "Under Two Flags" with the pardon arriving at the last moment inspired a full dozen.

Edgar Allen Poe, unfortunately for about twenty contestants, was the first to write certain situations. The jealous husband causing a doorway to be bricked up solidly, thereby dooming his wife's lover, was the favorite.

De Maupassant's "Necklace" story was duplicated five or six times.

"Jimmy Valentine" arrived in about eleven different guises.

And there were infinite variations of Frank R. Stockton's "The Lady or The Tiger."

SEVERAL hundred manuscripts were carefully checked and each situation listed. They were checked one hundred at a time, on different days, and the percentage of certain given situations in each one hundred manuscripts tallied very close to the percentage in any other lot of one hundred. The editor was forced to discard innumerable manuscripts containing really good situations because they were duplicated by the score. After taking the average from the hundreds of checked-up situations, the following approximate total figures may be illuminating:

About 1500 manuscripts contained no situation, or one that was too slight to classify.

160 depended on twins, remarkable resemblances or mistaken identity.

460 summed up into, "Which shall he (or she) marry?"

180 were problems centering about the discovery that a sister was about to marry her brother.

520 hinged on a last moment discovery that the burglar or the criminal before the bar (etc.) was a relative or a loved one.

140 told of a doctor about to perform a critical operation and discovering that the patient is the one he has sworn to kill.

160 gave the "hero" a bad choice, that of standing idle and letting a man die (by drowning, as a rule) or of saving him and taking a chance that the rescued man will not expose the dark past of the rescuer.

220 contained a situation where somebody had been mysteriously shot (or some valuables stolen) and the blame placed on some innocent person.

60 were modern versions of Enoch Arden.

280 developed near-compromising situations where a husband or wife showed up at the wrong moment, and apparently caught the other "with the goods."

200 portrayed where someone deliberately assumes the guilt of a crime in order to save another's honor or happiness.

220 made it dangerous to possess information. If a man should tell the truth in order to protect a loved one or some innocent party, his own past will be exposed.

240 consisted of variations on "Which shall he save?" or "Which will be saved?"

160 told of false accusation or false imprisonment.

140 situations were built upon falsehoods coming home to roost.

340 gave a choice between love and duty.

140 let a husband or wife (supposed to be dead) embarrass the other marital mate by showing up just as he or she is about to remarry.

80 involved wives who had been secretly married.

Each is about to give birth to a child, but her husband has just died or disappeared and the marriage license is lost.

360 are listed as good situations, not classified above.

The four winning situations follow:

First Prize ($75.00), Miss Inez Kemker, Parkes Apts., Nashville, Ten.:

An incorruptible District Attorney is on the eve of prosecuting a brutal case involving the leader of a political gang that has long sought his removal as he is a stumbling block in their corrupt path. Heretofore, threats, and attempted bribery have left him unmoved, as he holds honor and fidelity to duty, as things sacred.

In order to secure perfect quiet and exclusion for the preparation of his brief, the attorney returns at night to his office, which is on the tenth floor of a large office building. The elevator has stopped running and the cleaning force has departed, so he is utterly alone.

Absorbed in his work he is startled by the cry "Hands up!" "We've got the drop on you." Instinctively obeying the command, he looks up to find himself "covered" by automatons in the hands of four members of the gang. Having him absolutely in their power, they make this cold-blooded proposition:

Surrender to them the incriminating papers and sign a pledge to the effect that he will not reveal what has taken place under penalty of death, or if he refuses to do this they will kill him in such a manner as to make it appear he has suicided. Then, possessing themselves of the papers, they will cause to be set aboil the rumor that he had finally "sold out" to the "gang" and overcome with shame at his own treachery to his high office he had ended his life.

Second Prize ($50.00), Mrs. O. Dorsey Grey, New Orleans, La.:

Mrs. Byrd Brennan, very proud of being elected first woman judge of the criminal court in her home town is compelled to sit in judicial state upon the bench while the man she loves is tried before her and a jury pronounces him guilty of murdering his divorced wife.

She knows he is innocent; but to clear him will have to admit that she was with him in his apartment, alone, at the hour his wife was killed by Mrs. Brennan's own brother, who was her lover.

To clear the man she loves she must defame her own and the dead woman's good name and condemn her brother to the electric chair.

She went to see the man on a perfectly innocent errand, but she knows the second-loving world will not believe that.

Third Prize ($25.00), J. G. Miller, R. D. 1, Sutherland, Oregon:

Jack Dool is night telegraph operator at Birna, a town on the Western Railway. Half a block from the depot, in a two-story house, lives Mayme Grimm, Jack's sweetheart. Mayme's father is suspicious of all railroad men and orders Jack never to speak to

(Continued on Page 41)
We Pay $1000 and Royalties
to men and women anywhere, of any age, who can learn to write photoplays. A novel, free test, made at home, will tell you if YOU can learn as Mrs. Thacher did.


der the new Palmer Photoplay Production Plan we pay a minimum of $1,000 cash for scenarios which are acceptable for our own productions.

In addition, we pay royalties on the profits of the picture. This permits new, Palmer trained writers and photoplayers, for the first time, to share in the success of the screen stories of their own creation.

At the same time, we continue to be the largest single agency for the sale of scenarios to the great producing organizations of the country. They gladly pay $2,000 and rarely offer less than $500 for acceptable screen stories.

Yet the demands are far from adequately filled. These fortunes are actually going begging because many men and women, endowed with story-telling ability, have not discovered it. So we are searching the land for this hidden talent which we train for success in this rich field of endeavor.

We Will Test YOU without cost or obligation

This search is being tremendously successful because of a novel Test Questionnaire developed in collaboration with H. H. Van Loan, the well-known scenarist, and Malcolm McLean, formerly of Northwestern University.

You may test yourself under this plan without cost or obligation. Send the coupon below. Your answers to the questions will indicate whether or not you possess the creative imagination which opens this rich field to you.

We hold your answers confidential, of course. If they indicate that you are endowed with this ability, you will receive additional information relative to the Palmer Course and Service, which will fit you for this work. If you are not so endowed, we will tell you frankly and courteously.

The Experience of Elizabeth Thacher

Not long ago, Elizabeth Thacher, a busy Montana housewife, little dreamed that she was different from thousands of other housewives.

Yet she took Palmer training and soon wrote a successful photoplay and Thomas H. Ince was glad to buy it at a handsome figure—the first she ever tried to write.

Never before had she even written for publication. And, in fact, had no desire to write, until one day she saw an advertisement like this one which told of the opportunities for new and unknown writers of ability and training to earn rich rewards.

When shortly after her enrollment she sold her first story to Thomas H. Ince, she wrote: "I feel that such success as I have had is directly due to the Palmer Course and your constructive help."

Know About Yourself

Many men and women, like Elizabeth Thacher, have the ability to win success in this field. We are preparing qualified men and women, not alone for scenario writing, but also for positions of all kinds in the producing companies.

And many others, with no desire to become professional screen writers, are developing under our training their power of Creative Imagination, for they realize how much more success, in any field of endeavor, comes to those who possess this power, properly developed.

You may know whether or not you are endowed with Creative Imagination, if you will but ask for the Creative Test Questionnaire. There's no cost—no obligation. It may discover to you this gift that you will want to develop.

Perhaps your life holds stories which the world is seeking and for which the world will pay you well.

Mail the coupon. Test yourself. Know if you are wasting these hidden talents.
WHAT THE PUBLIC WANTS IN FILMS

(Continued from Page 20)

listener, consequently he leaves you unmov ed and of ten even uninter ested. It is all in the manner of telling, in other words, how well it is told.

"How," we asked Mr. Holubar, "has the audience angle changed in the last six or eight years?"

"Its desires as far as story are concerned have remained constant, but there has been a great educa tion in its attitude of watching these stories develop on the screen. Contrast the mental attitude of a post-graduate student in English literature as he reads one of Dickens' novels with the intellectual background of a public-school scholar reading the same book. There you have the analogy. We have been educating the public for twenty years cinematically. At first we gave it a toy. There was enough interest in watching the legs of a horse in action or the wheels of a train go around, but the public's intelligence soon grew tired of this mere plaything. Gradually we have builted the public's film wants to an ever higher plane. Least of all is the fact that we must exercise great care in the incidents of production.

The public has become a very keen critic of motion picture minutiae. It is almost as keen in detecting the creaking of machinery in the telling of film stories. When the photodramatist or the producer insists too strongly on the presence of circumstances to solve his dramatic problems, or where the 'deus ex machina' makes his appearance too often in the story, the audience complains and speaks its complaint by withholding its patronage. To be truly popular, a successful art such as the motion picture, must make money, and unless we receive this mark of approbation in the long run, we have failed.

"The public has educated itself to the point where it will accept the drama in the conflict between two shades of gray—if I may revert to my former illustration. This means a much more difficult task for everybody concerned in the making of pictures, preeminently for the writer, since his is the fundamental duty of depicting this conflict. Certainly, however, we should all welcome this heavier re-

sponsibility for with it comes a correspondingly greater pride in our accomplishment when we achieve it.

"Many budding writers of scenarios fear to tell a story in a day or in a place which they feel has been seen on the screen previously. Like most bugaboos this fear is without real substance. Nothing that is done well—especially in the story field—is worn out. It must be done well, that is the main point; furthermore, it must be done not only well but better than the last effort in that time and in that locale.

"To sum it all up, the only change of consequence in the public's taste is that fact that today it is more educated and cinema-wise. Our offerings must have more substance and more merit. Our technique in telling our stories must have the directness of simplicity and at the same time it must have the subtle shading which the adult intelligence requires. If we accomplish this, if we realize the audience angle as it exists today, we shall be successful not only in the acquisition of the world's goods but also of a legitimate satisfaction in our handiwork.

WITH THE PRODUCERS

(Continued from Page 29)

D. W. Griffith and Allen Holubar.

On this lot Hugo Ballin is filming his own adaptation of "Vanity Fair" with his wife in the stellar role. The picture will be distributed through Goldwyn. Supporting Mabel Ballin are Harrison Ford, Earle Fox, Eleanor Boardman, Laura La Verne and Robert Mack. Mae Murray is another renter at these studios. Robert Z. Leonard is directing her in "Jazzmanía" written by Edmund Goulding and with a cast including Rod La Rocque, Robert Fraser and Jean Hershold. Like the preceding Leonard-Murray production, this will be distributed through Metro.

Other Metro Productions

CLARA Kimball Young is filming "The Woman In Bronze" from the play which Paul Kester translated from the original novel by Henry Kistemaecker. Many readers of The Photodramatist probably saw Margaret Anglin on tour in this dramatic play. The picture is being directed by King Vidor at the Garson Studios. Kathryn McGuire, who recently finished a featured role in "The Shriek of Araby" and who has just returned from a vaudeville tour of personal appearances, plays the second lead in this production.

Viola Dana keeps on her merry way at the Metro Studios; her present vehicle is entitled "Noise In Newhoro," Harry Beaumont is directing and Malcolm McGregor is in the lead. Hunt Stromberg has written the first of what will doubtless be a long series of travesties, on Douglas Fairbanks' success; he is directing Bull Montana in "Rob 'Em Good."

At Universal

"THE Merry - Go - Round" continues apace under Rupert Julian—only one of a number of what promises to be really interesting productions that will bear the Universal-Jewell trademark. Stuart Paton is directing "The Attic of Felix Bau," a play of revolutionary Russia by Earl Carrol, adapted by Albert G. Kenyon, with a cast including Wallace Beery, Estelle Taylor, Forrest Stanley, Sylvia Breamer, Josef Swickard and Martha Mattox. Hobart Henley is at work on "The Abysmal Brute," adapted by A. P. Younger from the well known Jack London story of the prize ring, with Reginald Denny and Mabel Julianne Scott in the featured roles. Tod Browning is directing "Drifting" from the stage play by John Colton and Owen Davis, and adapted by Lucien Hubbard. Priscilla Dean is the star; her support is headed by Matt Moore and Wallace Beery. George Archainbaud is at the megaphone for Rupert Julian's original society drama entitled "Flesh," and starring Grace Darmond. King Baggott is directing Gladys Walton in "When Carey Came to Town," by Edith Barnard Delano and adapted by Hugh Hoffman.

Miscellaneous productions at Universal City include "The Trail Blazers," a historical serial of the Northwest directed by Edward Laemmle and starring Art Acord, with Louise Lorraine in the lead—"Around the World In Eighteen Days," an original serial by Robert Dillon, directed by Reeves Eason, starring William Desmond supported by Laura La Plante and soon to be completed. Duke Worne is making a series of two
reel detective stories by George Bronson Howard, while Major Jack Allen is writing, producing and directing another series of one reel animal stories for which the continuities are being prepared by Jeffrey Moffat.

At the Fox Studios Scott Dunlap is directing Shirley Mason in “Paw Ticket 210.” Emmet Flynn is directing William Farnum in “Brass Commandments” and Jack Ford is filming his own story “The Hostage,” starring Tom Mix. Clyde Cooke and Al St. John continue their schedule of comedies.

Great Independent Activity

Frank Borzage’s next Cosmopolitan production is “The Ninth Commandment,” adapted by Frances Marion from the story by Fanny Hurst. Colleen Moore will be the star of this production with James Morrison playing opposite her. B. F. Zeidman is producing “The Spider and the Rose” by E. Richard Schayer, on which Jack McDermott is directing a cast headed by Alice Lake, Gaston Glass, Robert McKim and Macey Harlam. Frank R. Adams is making his own story “Miles Brewster” with Lambert Hillyer directing. At the Vidor Studio Rowland V. Lee is directing Florence Vidor in “Alice Adams”; the cast includes Claude Gillingwater and Vernon Steele. Edward Everett Horton is starring in “The Trouble Buster” under Lloyd Ingraham’s director; Wally Van returns to the screen in “The Drivin’ Fool” written by H. H. Van Loan, directed by Robert Thornby and produced by Regent Pictures. E. deB. Newman, president. Other independent films now being made include the A. B. Maescher productions entitled the “Rip Tide,” featuring George Rigas—John P. Mills production “Black Gold” directed by Rex Thorpe and starring Mills, he is supported by Joseph Northrup and India Clifford—the Albert Rogell production “The Greatest Menace” featuring Esther Taylor, Robert Gordon, Mildred June, and the Doubleday production “The Vengeance of Pierre” written and directed by Henry McCarty with Lester Cuneo, Francelina Billington and Barney Furey.

The fast expanding Warner Brothers Studio is housing two active productions: Harry Rapf is making “Brass” with Syd Franklin directing Monte Blue, Helen Ferguson and other celebrities; “The Little Church Around the Corner” was adapted by Olga Printzlau and features Claire Windsor, Kenneth Harlan, Bessie Love and Alec Francis.

More independent activity is promised in the coming productions to be made by Frank E. Woods, recently at Lasky, and his associates; also those to be produced by Rollin Sturgeon, Lucien Hubbard at Universal City. Pyramid Productions also announces it is coming West to film “What Fools Men Are” and James Fennimore Cooper’s “The Deerslayer,” which will be directed by Ray C. Smallwood.

Postscript

These reports on production activity are skeletonized purposely. The colorful trimmings and superlative adjectives are zealously omitted because they can be found in abundance by those who want them, in the various motion picture magazines and the screen departments of the daily press. In a semi-technical publication such as The Photodramatist, it is our belief that the facts are what our readers desire and so we endeavor from month to month to tell you the authoritative last minute news stripped of all unnecessary trimmings.

The present condition is without doubt the most optimistic state of affairs that the film world has known since the end of the war. It promises—and the promise will surely be fulfilled—much, that is interesting and worth while for all of us who follow the screen.

Photodramatist for December

For Writers!

Beginning With the January Issue

Photodramatist offers its subscribers a service never before given by any writers’ publication. Subscribe now and increase your chances of success in your chosen work.

You can make money by writing stories, plays, novels, jokes, essays, letters, verses, greeting card sentiments, etc. It is not easy—but it is being done by many folks, and you can do it.

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The cost for this service is $15 a copy—$3.00 a year, every week.

The publishers of The Editor also publish the Black Cat, a monthly magazine of short stories and one-act plays by authors who are trying to avoid the beaten tracks—$0.15 a copy; $1.50 a year, and Yours Truly, a monthly magazine of fascinating letters and articles on letter-writing, $0.15 a copy; $1.00 a year.

THE EDITOR MAGAZINE BOOK HILL, HIGHLAND FALLS, N. Y.
CONCERNING HUMOR

(Continued from Page 17)

It's trite, anyway—old stuff."

"Sure, it's an old situation, tritely worded as it stands," I agreed. "But remember that anything any of us ever try to use is more or less old stuff. You must remove the taint of hackneyed phrasing, tell in a manner new or almost new that to the authorities Buck Williams, dead or alive, is worth $2500. Word it in a sprightly way to take the curse off it: make it sound more or less like a joke on somebody. Tell it in a manner likely to have the effect of making an editor, after reading the first paragraph, settle back with the conviction that the story will not bore him to tears, that he wants to read it."

"You do it," was the final invitation of the beginner. "I don't see how it can be done."

He was shown the first paragraph of "Unwept, Unhonored and Unhung:" the featured short story in the October 20th, 1921, issue of Adventure. The first paragraph consisted solely of the above mentioned old situation, but it was printed as follows:

"Buck Williams was young, careless and bad. He was bad twenty-five hundred dollars' worth, for this was the amount of the reward offered by the sun-baked state of New Mexico for the delivery of Buck's person. Furthermore, there were no strings to the offer; delivery could be made on the hoof or in a box."

"But I never thought of telling it that way," blurted out the beginner, with an air of grievance, as though in some way I had taken advantage of him. "And it is much longer than the way you originally told the situation.""

"That's a trick of writing, a trick that will come with much acquir-ing of technique, with practice in juggling words, with the confi-dence that having had many stories published will give you. More words were needed in order to cover the bald idea with a new wig, but don't run wild on words. That printed paragraph contains just about the limit; more words could not tell more."

THE three opening sentences about Buck Williams have been set down merely as an illustration of the fact that different wording will go farther than fine, polished phrasing in selling a story to an editor. Also it might be pointed out that in these three sentences is what might be called the "tempo" of the story. Once started in that particular vein the story must continue with it. Too much let-down from whimsical phrasing would spoil the effect.

Another paragraph humorously characterized the Mexican leader of a bandit army. In the last sentence I wanted to tell that he was a coward and a drunkard. The last two nouns were too hackneyed; they would spoil the "tempo." I sought "different" phrasing, so it was told in this manner:

"Thus it can be seen that the general was a strategist of the first water—the water being in his veins, mixed with alcohol."

This achieves the effect of what I call indirect humor or humor of phrasing. Beyond a new way of implying what was wrong with the general there is certainly no humor connected with it.

The end of the story was a happy one—despite the fact that Buck was lying in bed, seriously wounded. I wanted to try to "leave 'em with a laugh," as well as finish with typical characterization of Buck's nonchalance. It ended with this paragraph:

"That's different," yawned Buck. "Now get the hell out of here! I want to catch up on my sleep. Wake me up at ten o'clock next week."

GOSSIP STREET

(Continued from Page 32)

To Write Film Reviews

Clayton Hamilton, director of education of the Palmer Photoplay Corporation and one of America's best known screen and stage dramatists, has been engaged by Theatre Magazine to conduct a monthly motion picture department for that magazine's readers. According to the announcement, Mr. Hamilton's first contribution is scheduled to appear in the January number.

Van Loan Scenario for 'Independent'

Arrangements were recently made by Mr. Newman, head of the Regent Pictures Company, to produce "The Drivin' Fool" at the Christie studios. Wally Van will be featured, supported by Patsy Ruth Miller who was "borrowed" from Goldwyn. H. H. Van Loan wrote the scenario.


Of The Photodramatist, published monthly at Los Angeles, California for October 1st, 1922.

State of California

County of Los Angeles

Before me a Notary Public in and for the State and county aforesaid, personally appeared HUBERT LA DUE, the Editor and General Manager of the Photodramatist and that the following is a true statement of the ownership, management, and circulation (if a daily paper, the circu-lation) of the foregoing publication, for the date shown in the above caption, re-ferred to by the Act of August 24, 1912, em-bedded in section 44, Postal Laws and Regu-lations, printed on the reverse of this form:


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5. That the average number of copies of each issue of this publication sold or dis tributed, through the mails or otherwise, to paid subscribers during the six months preceding the date shown above is:...............

(This information is required from daily publica tions only.)

HUBERT LA DUE,

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 2nd day of October 1922.

A. M. SCOTT.

(SEAL)

(My commission expires May 13, 1934.)

Money Expended in Subscribing for PHOTODRAMATIST IS NOT SPENT IT IS INVESTED
He stuck his pick into a rich gold vein—

H. H. Van Loan

H. H. Van Loan tells

"How I Did It"

A Vivid Message to Screen Writers

H. H. Van Loan isn't a miner. He is the master scenario writer in the world of photoplays. He is the author of many of the most notable screen classics. His genius has brought him wealth and fame. Most of his scenarios are sold before they are written. Producers pay him thousands of dollars. Why? Because he is H. H. Van Loan? No! It is because he discovered that elusive little twist of something that spells fame and fortune in screen writing—because he knows how to write.

Van Loan's pick was his pen. The rich gold vein he struck was the fortune that awaits success in scenario writing. But it was not long ago that Van Loan was a "prospector" in the photoplay field. He "mined" a lot before he found the "pay streak." Then he made his "strike." From that time on he went straight into the richest veins. Each new stroke of his magic pen brought him greater success, fame and fortune.

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Mr. Van Loan has consented to autograph a limited number of copies of his book for the holiday season. Your copy, or the one you want to send a friend for a present, will be autographed by the author, providing you mail the attached coupon before Xmas or New Year.

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Photo Dram.
OMAR IN HOLLYWOOD

(Continued from Page 19)

lay a hand on one. Yet here, each fair houri who doth desport herself in the strange glass palace of the Sultan, while the Sultan’s slave doth make endless pictures with a magic box—these hours, I swear, do exalt the dog beyond aught else, such care and petting do they give him; till in many homes he hath come to hold the place of unborn children vainly clamoring for their Earthly Shape.

WE of Persia think much of our homes, and many slaves prepare choice dishes for our delectation and maidens serve us wines and dance tillumber claims us as we recline on soft divans.

How different here, where nearly all are housed in odd places call Bungalows! There are kitchens but no kitchen slaves foreshoot. And in the cupboard lie rustling all the implements of a lost culinary art—no longer used, except perchance the corkscrew and the lemon-squeezer. Of all the pots and pans—no use they serve except to catch the drip from leaky roofs in winter-time. For all go forth to sup in the noisy marketplace, where sinister menials in black attire grudgingly serve and haughtily demand silver in tribute from those who tremble at their frown.

It pleased me not at all that such things should come to pass. But I must relate to you how I first came to the Realm of Magic Pictures and my first visit to the Sultan Will Fox and his Grand Vizier Sol Wurtzel.

My friend Abu Ben Rothwell did warn them of my visit and with such glowing eloquence did he picture to them the beauties of my humble work, The Rubaiyat, that the Sultan shed tears and did order the Grand Vizier to prepare for my visit; but on the way thither my friend did take me to the house of one called, “Director” where we did make merry albeit we spoke different tongues. For there was a place in which which maketh the heart to quiver and causteth a man to call even a stranger “brother.”

IT happened in this wise; even as I entered and shook hand, after the fashion of the Western world, with him called “Director” and did greet the unvelled ladies of his harem, there appeared a swarthy afrin bearing a large glass vessel full of a red liquid that gurgled pleasantly. This afrin had the eye and mien of a bandit, but I learned that he belonged to a new and honest calling named “Bootstrap” and that his benevolent mission was to brave the vengeance of the law that thirsty mortals might not languish in their misery. His welcome appearance recalled to me the 60th quatrains of The Rubaiyat:

And lately by the Tavern Door agape,
Came shining through the Dusk an Angel Shape
Bearing a Vessel on his Shoulder; and
He bid me taste of it; and ’twaas—the Grape!

I did read this and other scenes which Abu Ben Rothwell translated and the Director appeared much pleased. And I noted how he wore the garb of one who rides a horse; yet I am told he shouts the mystic order, “Camera.”

At the Glass Palace of the Magic Pictures the Grand Vizier did greet me with a smile of great width and permanence; yet I could never tell if it meant mirth or what. Then the Sultan spake strange things that were translated to me. It appears that they demeth my work rich in romance and passion but that many changes must be made lest the Grand Caliph Will Hays be roused to anger—how that he liketh not the coupling of wine and women; and that he hath other queer notions whereby a moral is more to be desired than sound Art or even the realities of Life itself.

THEN the Grand Vizier, still smiling with his mouth, spoke up to relate how he liked not the title of my work and that there was lacking what he so quaintly phrased as “Mother Love.”

And so to contrive that he could win much tribute from the eager subjects who witness the magic pictures he did propose we call my beloved work, “Where Is My Ruby at Tonight!”

I know not what may be the meaning of these curious words. Yet my friend Abu Ben Rothwell doth counsel me in his kindly way, quoting from my own work, “To take the cash”

And let the credit go.”

Yet I could not bear to have my work so altered out of all semblance to what I had writ and so I did state to the Vizier. He did lose his smile as he told me haughtily how that I did not know what the Public wants. Then sorrowfully I went away, strangely depressed.

Verily, ’tis passing strange—the Realm of Magic Pictures; and of its mysterious ways I shall have more to relate with the coming of the next month—how that I journeyed to the City Beyond the Pass, called the City Universal, where I was received in audience by Sultan Irv. Thalberg who, in the pride of his youth, rules therein.

CONTEST WINNERS NAMED

(Continued from Page 35)

Mayme, swearing to shoot him if he does. A large tree stands in the Grinn front yard, and by climbing this tree and crouting on a limb, Jack can get close enough to Mayme’s window, to the second story, to hold a whispered conversation with her. He cannot, however, gain entrance to the room.

The lovers are thus holding a clandestine meeting one hot night. On leaving the office Jack, for safety, sets his semaphore signal at “Danger—Stop,” which no train dare pass without written authority. The signal is due at 9:20 and at 9:20 Jack whispers to his girl, who slides back on his limb. The door of Mayme’s room opens and her mother, sleepless from heat, enters. Jack noiselessly gains the tree top, then the front door opens, and Mayme comes quietly. A heat sufferer, comes out. He takes a chair from the porch, tilts it toward Jack and, lighting a candle, he cries “Boo!” to the distance is heard the whistle of the Limited’s engine.

Jack is tried. If discovered by Mayme’s father he will be haff killed. If he remains hidden in three minutes the Limited will skid to a stop and its crew start a search for him that will arouse the town. During the search Mayme’s father may leave the tree and Jack escape, but unable to explain his absence he will be discharged in disgrace, forced to find work on another road and lose Mayme.

What shall he do?

Third Prize ($25.00, tied with J. G. Miller for Third Place), Vernon May, Katy, Texas:

Justin North, a preacher, who has been sent to a Southern Penitentiary because he is unable to explain the disappearance of his beautiful, unsophisticated wife, whom he married the night of making her acquaintance at a supper where disguised cocktails were served. He killing a guard in escaping to a rice swamp, where he finds his wife, who has fled to her stepfather. She believes their marriage a fake, having read of similar cases, and defies him. After his hair has grown out North appears in the community as Clarke, a travelling evangelist. The stepfather is trying to break up a match between the girl and her boyhood sweetheart. The church’s endorsement of evangelists who speak of the devil, and Clarke will expose her, and writes a correctly worded note which the girl reads to the evangolist. The note reads the announcements. The note is so worded that, before he real-

is so worded that, before he real-

is so worded that, before he real-
IN LIEU OF GENII

(Continued from Page 12)

Both of the miniatures shown as illustrations, are the work of Mr. Art Smith, than whom, if you will take my word for it, there is no man more clever at this in the industry.

The second method of "tricking" settings, the use of a painting made on plate glass or compo, is very similar in operation to the first. In this case it is decided, as in the first, just what portions of the set will be "covered" by the action. This portion is then designed and erected. A plate of clear glass is set up between the camera and the built part, and on this plate marked out the general lines of the setting desired.

OVER these lines is painted the complete set, leaving clear, of course, the portion represented by that part built. This method is, in the very nature of it, far more complicated than the first, and depends entirely, it might be said, upon the skill in perspective drawing of the artist. For, where the worker in miniature has been able to do his work to an exact scale, in painting to perspective no scale can be absolutely exact, and the accuracy is determined only by the artist's accuracy of sight.

Again, in the work with miniatures, it is necessary to match the lighting of the two pieces. In the use of paintings, this lighting must be stimulated by gradations in the shading of pigments. With the miniatures, if the lights were directed on both parts from the same direction, the shadows naturally fell alike, but on the painting, since there can be no natural shadows, every shadow must be calculated from the supposed angle of light, mass of object and distance.

The angle of light varies, obviously, at different hours of the day, and as a painting is, more obviously even, unvarying, it is necessary to photograph the set at the hour when the light will strike the full size part at exactly the same angle as in the painting, or otherwise, to light it artifically.

It is, moreover, far more a task to give to a painting a semblance of reality, the feefing, or sense, of depth, of mass and material, than it is to a miniature. Yet, on the other hand, I am convinced that the work of an artist, at times, can have a charm, an atmosphere, that even the finest reality cannot approach; the touch, the individuality of the artist.

LOOKING at the third picture, the scene Chinese. No miniature, however cleverly made, could have hoped to duplicate the delicate detail of this painting, its softness of line and of key. This is a setting by Mr. Walter Hall, who, before his picture connection, was a well-known scenic artist. I am told that he holds patent rights in this and in foreign countries for his process. Aside from his legal rights, he is I believe well protected, for few men are there, skilled in both art and mechanics, who could hope to achieve as splendid results with this method.

It might be interesting to try to discover the line joining painting and built structure. This for a clue: water, road and all walls in the foreground to a height of nine feet, are actual. Above that, and the town in the left background, all is painting. Can you separate them? Nor can the audience who sees it on the screen.

The third method, that of double exposure, obviates the use of any built structure. A small painting, complete, of room, street, building or whatever the setting may be is photographed at a calculated distance from the camera. The actors then move through their business on a stage draped in black velvet. The camera this time is set up at a greater distance, so that the figures, diminishing, bear the correct relation to the apparent size of the settings.

The black velvet, non-reflecting, does not register on the negative. The figures do, and the painting. Certain involved chemical and photographic processes create the illusion that the figures are walking in front of actual buildings, and prove that the camera, in spite of the old saw, can be made to lie.

THE lighting too, must be carefully matched on each piece, their colors, or rather the respective color values of each in the camera's monotone recording must have a corresponding flood of light on the other; shadows on each must be alike in darkness.

It is necessary, after the miniature has been set, in certain cases, to hide the scaffolding by which it is suspended. This is accomplished by the use of "masking pieces," that is, walls, trees, shrubbery or other objects placed between the camera and the scaffold. Looking at the photograph of the castle accompanying, such masking pieces will be seen as trees at the right and left extremes of the picture. The shrubs in urns are also masking pieces, and hide the line of the bottom of the miniature. The black line drawn upon the photograph is to show the approximate outline of the two parts. Below this line, all is of normal size. The paths of the garden are laid out and bounded with real hedges. But above the line, the whole castle is not more than six or eight feet in height.

ORIGINALITY IN FICTION

(Continued from Page 16)

building, water-color paintings and literature; Poe and Stevenson, who excelled in both poetry and prose; and Mark Twain, who capped his humorous career with one of the keenest satires ever penned by mortal man.

VERSATILITY is the twin sister of originality. In your career as a writer, you'll be tempted to specialize. A certain story of yours will take the public fancy. Editors will clamor for more along the same line. Be chary about acceding to such demands, or you'll find yourself slipping into a rut. I am speaking from personal experience. Some years ago, a certain story of mine made a "hit," to use the vulgar phraseology. As a result, I was requested by no less than half a dozen magazines to write them stories along the same lines. I had none on hand, so I set to work, deliberately, to write them to order. The prices paid me were more than satisfactory. But I found that when I grew tired of the grind of turning out mono-types and tried to sell other and better stories to these editors, they returned my stories with regrets, etc.

I had automatically shut off half a dozen promising markets by permitting myself to become definitely identified with a certain type of story. It was only one of the many things I was to learn along the way.
Bring the Studios
to your elbow as you work
on that screen story

PUT the professional touch to your screen story. Know the technical requirements of your subject. Take advantage of the "kinks" that make new plot twists and can be had only through an intimate knowledge of how films are made; how every step of production is followed out.

Learn how and why effects are achieved and illusions created to make big pictures from ordinary stories. "Opportunities in the Motion Picture Industry," in three volumes, tells you. These books are written jointly by fifty-three authorities on the many phases of picture making and are profusely illustrated with more than 120 photographs. They bring to the writer of screen stories an accurate, detailed, truthful composite picture of the greatest Hollywood studios and their methods. It is the only work of its kind in existence.

Viewpoint of the Studio Writer

Staff writers look out an adjacent window or take up the studio telephone to check on some important detail that will improve the story before them. Other writers just as prominent, but removed from the studios, reach for "Opportunities in the Motion Picture Industry" and glean this advice to strengthen their stories.

You'll want these books at your elbow. You will consult them continually as you write your plays. They are to the writer what the builder's experience is to the designer. They keep the flights of fancy within bounds of practical production methods and open up new plot fields by showing how easily "impossible" things can be achieved. Remember the producer judges the story by his facilities for producing it. The writer who writes his tales with consideration for his ultimate market, the producer, is the writer whose stories reach the screen. "Opportunities in the Motion Picture Industry" gives you 320 pages of this valuable information and furnishes you with an up-to-date technical reference book on all phases of picture making.

No professional or staff writer will be without this information. No new writer can afford to be without it. And yet these three books bring it to you in durably bound, well printed form for only $2, with the privilege of receiving your money back if you are dissatisfied with your purchase.

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Mr. Doty, formerly editor Century and Cosmopolitan Magazines and fiction editor at Universal Film Company, is now Associate Eioider of the Palmer Photoplay Corporation.

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Rob Wagner, the creator of this scintillating volume, is also the author of the long series of motion picture articles appearing in the Saturday Evening Post that established him as one of our great American humorists. A novel of his called "A Girl of the Films" is just finishing in the Red Book, the critics hailing it as the most brilliant story yet written on this lively subject. Many amusing scenarios have also come from his pen. The latest, "Smudge," with Charles Ray, is among this fall's releases.

Mr. Wagner is at present on the scenario staff of the Famous Players-Lasky Co.

Curiously enough Rob Wagner was a famous illustrator before he turned to writing and in his Almanack he has combined both talents in a most hilarious way.

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Romance

By Sheldon Krag Johnson

Saffron sail 'neath an azure sky,
White capped billows mountain high,
Quests perennial for Golden Fleece,
Lilting songs that never cease.
Romance ship with vibrant keel
Gaily riding waters real.

It is an ancient custom, albeit erroneous, to contrast the Real with the Romantic. It has been the fashion to call the world of sensible form, the real, and the world of ideas, not yet realized, the romantic.

But no such difference exists. The so-called real is the mintage of Ideation. They are to each other as the two sides of a coin, a coin that has come into such common usage that we have forgotten its intrinsic value. It is error to affirm that which merely transcends current experience is romancing, for history is but the record of experiences transcended.

The Real of today was the Romantic of yesterday. Each today has its reality, born of the romancing which preceded it. This romance still inheres, have we but the vision to see it.

Romance is not the letter of the occurrence; it is the spirit of the happening. The Seen emanates from the Unseen. The Seen is no more "real" than its source. It is merely more obvious.

Because of this fact of emanation, Romance is eternal. It is the very mystery of the Emanation itself—the mystic sacrament of the Coming Forth. Romance is the thrill of the ever-expanding affirmative.

Not by the negative, not by the limited, the restricted, the crabbed, crimped and curtailed, does Romance live, but by the generous overflowing plentitude of the Affirmative, of the will to see, to do and to be.

For life is lived by us in our interpretations. We set our own values and then cast about until we perceive those values.

A very long time ago this world made its transition from the Reptilian Age to the Age of Mammals, from the reign of the cold-blooded to the sovereignty of the warm-blooded animal.

In that transition Romance was born. The cold-blooded animal had no power of generating heat. It functioned at the temperature level of its environment. So does the Realist of today.

The warm-blooded animal possesses the power of originating heat independently of its surroundings. So does the Romanticist possess the power of warm and colored vision independently of the seeming drabness of things about him.

The high glory of creativeness throbs to the rhythm of Romance. With it comes the power to thaw and warm the cold world without. It is the inner light and fire that is one with the Cosmic Light.

In the realm of the photodrama the false realism is represented by the "newspaper" no matter by what title it may be named. It is called live news, true to life. But it is dead stuff. Only in so far as the "What" of life is caught with the "Why" lense of Romance is it seen to live. Report life as you see it but see it through that rare clarity, that translucent vision that beholds Romance at its heart.
Motion Pictures and the Church

By Rev. O. Hagedorn

Motion is only a "voice in the wilderness," speaking in no official capacity. But if there are 42 million church people in our country, I am sure that I am voicing the sentiment of more than 41 million of them when I say in unison with all theatrical producers:

"The story's the thing."

This is more than a truth. It is a truism.

What is the message of the church? A story. The most wonderful of all stories, the Gospel, the story of God, beginning with the Mosaic account of the Creation, ending with the visions of the Apocalypse. This story makes the church. To tell this story is the one legitimate business of the church. Preach this story, and your church is a living, thriving, flourishing organism. Neglect to tell it, and all your philosophy, science, ethics or whatever else you may preach, will not justify even the name of a church. True spiritual life originates in the imagination, conceived, brought forth and nourished by divine revelation, the Gospel.

The story's the thing. The spoken story. The written and printed. And the screen story.

The motion picture is the new world language, understood and enjoyed, as no other medium of expression has ever been, by all the children of men. Therefore, in this twentieth century of the Christian Era, one of the next big things for the church will be the translation of the Gospel into this new language. It takes no prophetic vision to make this prediction. It is the inevitable logic of historic events.

A NEW Gospel? Indeed not. The same old Gospel which has been proclaimed by the spoken word of the patriarch; by the inspired pen of prophet and apostle; by the harp of the singer, the brush of the painter, the chisel of the sculptor, the trowel of the architect; by the printing-press and every new mechanism invented by a new age. All inventions were new in their day, often regarded with suspicion by the church, but in course of time they were harnessed to the chariot of the Gospel, and the Gospel remained the same as old.

My appeal, therefore, on behalf of the forty-two million church people is not for a new church message, but merely for a translation of the same old message into the newest of all languages: Give us the Gospel in screen stories!

There may be a few million among the 42 who shake their heads and say, "Why should this be necessary?" But we might say the same of the printing-press. The necessity of the printing-press was not felt, of course, until it was invented. The church prospered for thousands of years without ever thinking of the printing-press. But when the contraption was there, all set up and ready to serve those that wanted its service, and when the devil and his host were right there to utilize it for their evil purposes, the church soon felt the necessity. Why cannot the church do without the printing-press now, as it did even without the art of writing in the time of the patriarchs? If it is true that necessity is the mother of invention, it is equally true that invention again brings forth necessities. The world moves, and you have to move with it if you would accomplish anything.

So there we are, with the projectors set up and running for a number of years, the devil on the spot as always, working day and night, the church looking on in alarm, but still reluctant to realize (Continued on Page 35)
What Is ‘Human Interest,’ Anyway?

“Conflict” the Foundation of All Real Drama

By Wm. R. Lighton

EVE gave Adam an apple and told him to eat it. That was all right. But he’d no sooner got the apple down than she set to work to make him believe he was just full of prunes. That wasn’t quite right. She must have known that the apple inside him would warp his judgment and tangle his emotions and confuse his motives so profoundly that, while he might dispute her prunes proposition merely for argument’s sake, he’d have his own grave misgivings. Never after that could he wholly trust himself. Nor anybody else, including Eve.

Somewhere within that apple incident lies concealed the very beginning of what we story-writers call “human interest.” Eve started something that didn’t exist before. I’m not referring merely to the “original sin” of the theologians. She laid the foundations for human drama—that eternal conflict which would keep life interesting and make it really worth while for the rest of us. I know this isn’t a bit orthodox; but I can’t help thinking that in her transgression she rendered humankind a genuine service.

LIFE in Eden before the appearance of the serpent may have been idyllic, but it must have been sort of stupifying to anybody with an active mind. Most likely it was beginning to go stale for Eve herself; else she wouldn’t have listened at all to the snake. There was the deadly dullness of three square meals a day, world without end, and without any obligation whatever of earning a single mouthful; there was the blank monotony of a lifetime of unconcern about poverty or riches; there was the soul-destroying state of never having to exercise mind or spirit in deciding for oneself between right and wrong. Life just moved smoothly and without effort, day in and day out, as if it had been greased. Never a doubt and never a question. Would you have liked that? Why, there wouldn’t have been enough good human interest in a thousand years of that life to make one short story for The Ladies’ Home Journal!

By the same token, you remember how the old-fashioned story, when it had worked up to its climax through strife and fret and worry, would cut itself off with the poor phrase, “And so they lived happily ever after.” As much as to say, “Well, that’s all that’s likely to interest you. Nothing doing now that has any human punch in it. The play’s over and the curtain’s down. Nothing after this but a dead level of happiness.”

William R. Lighton knows ‘human interest’ as do few American writers. In the hundreds of stories of his that have been printed this element is always outstanding. His Billy Fortune, for instance, hero of more than sixty Saturday Evening Post stories, has become almost as much of a personage as many great men of real flesh and blood. This is because the author has created a truly ‘human’ character. All writers should learn what this noted writer has to say on this vital topic.

Now we’re getting to it. Real human interest lies in real human drama; and real human drama lies in strong human effort. Effort born of strong motives and directed toward worth-while ends. Effort of the sort that gives to the man a little more of decent pride in himself than he had before, or to the woman a little firmer fibre in her faith; or effort which may make life a little more tolerable for those who will come after. Take away the element of effort from any life or from any story about life and you take away every shred and tatter of its power to hold a gripping interest.

I’m not trying to say that all effort is interesting. There’s just the point. Most human effort is almost purposeless—mere half-blind struggle, like that of a man who has fallen into deep water and can’t swim. You know that unless somebody else rescues him he won’t get anywhere—except to the bottom. Nobody in his senses would try to make a story out of that. It might be news, but it certainly wouldn’t be drama. Real drama—the truly stirring drama out of which big stories are made—must rest upon effort that has courage in it—fighting courage, or the courage of sacrifice, or the courage of great moral conviction.

There’s a breed of story-writers—and their tribe increases—trying to make a poor counterfeit drama out of what they are pleased to call “realism.” Their stuff, they insist, is “true to life”; and that, they argue, is ample justification for its use as story material, just “as is.” If the writer happens to be an amateur, he’ll tell you: “This story must be good, because it really happened.” Therefore it’s “real life”; and therefore it must be humanly interesting.

All life is real life, if you get right down to it; but only a small fraction of one per cent of it holds any vivid or honest interest. The rest is mere stodgy commonplace, vacant of reason, empty of motive, meaningless. And not all the art of all the clever craftsmen in the writing game can give any real meaning to the commonplace until it’s given a reason for being and a motive for effort.

Don’t think I’m belittling the commonplace merely because there’s so much of it. Don’t imagine I’m arguing that the actors in great dramas must be demi-gods, supermen. To my way of thinking, the greatest of all drama conceivable, and the greatest of all human interest, is that in which the average story-reader or the average man in the picture house can see himself taking part. Do you get what I mean?

It’s an everlasting fact that every commonplace mother’s son of us has in him a living germ of possible greatness of mind or heart or soul. To lay hold upon that deep-hidden impulse with your story, to quicken (Continued on Page 42)
HOW motion pictures are killed, almost before they are born, by faulty christenings, is discussed by Harry Carr in a recent issue of the Los Angeles Times. "If Peter B. Kyne's story, 'Brothers Under the Skin' fails to make money on the screen it will be due to the name," says that learned critic. "It seems amazing that the Goldwyn studio should go to the expense of a wonderful cast; a tip-top director; then assassinate the picture with a title like that.

"There are three reasons why this was a poor box-office title:

"First: It referred to men. If it had been 'Sisters Under the Skin' it would have been less damaging. If a producer is determined to give to a play a name suggesting men, then it must also suggest blood and action, for instance 'Blood and Sand.'

"Second: 'Brothers Under the Skin' sounds like one of those sweet social propaganda pictures where the millionaire, softly sobbing, places his arm around the shoulders of the noble working man in the last reel and says, 'Brother, my brother, you have taught me how to live.' And what the audience says can't be repeated in the home and family circle.

"Third: 'Brothers Under the Skin' hasn't the right sounds in the words when pronounced. The words of a good title should have a certain staccato effect. 'Brothers Under the Skin' sounds smooth and flowing, just as though you were saying to the crowds, 'You Can Walk Right Along Past This Theatre.'

"By the same token, any good old roughneck exhibitor could have told Rupert Hughes that 'The Bitterness of Sweets' wouldn't get him anything. It has too many smooth flowing sounds when you say it; also it doesn't mean anything, and it sounds tame. They are going to change the name of his play to 'Look Your Best.' That sounds quick and sharp and suggests action and appeals to your curiosity. Who looked her best and why?

"That is one of the most important considerations in naming a play—the element of curiosity. Although I do not applaud the ethics involved there is no doubt that the most skillful box-office title ever put on a picture was Lois Weber's 'The Girl and the Doctor'—an absolutely clean play, by the way, when it really got on the screen.

"Year in and year out, Cecil De Mille is the most skillful of all play namers. 'Adam's Rib' is a perfect box-office title. It sounds piquant, it suggests girls, it sounds unusual. Most of all, however, it suggests that it is to be an abrupt departure from the former run of motion-picture plays. Just at the minute, this is an important element in selecting names."

I bow. Harry Carr is right. If the authors would only spend more time in thinking up good titles we would have better ones. I have always maintained that the title is just as important as the story. Some of us spend three or four weeks writing a story and then devote a few hours to selecting the title. We should select the title by a series of rejections until we are finally convinced that the name we finally give it is sufficient to attract attention, arouse curiosity and create a desire. Unless a title has that pulling power then it is not going to attract the public to the box-office. When you are selecting the title for your photoplay remember the exhibitor. The success or failure of the picture rests with him. If you give him a good title he becomes enthusiastic and uses every ounce of his exploitation genius and showmanship to put the picture over in a big way. You have presented him with something to work on, a foundation on which to build a permanent success. The shorter you make the title, the better he will like it. But be sure that it has a big punch to it. Remember, there is a limited space in the front of his theatre for the display of the title in incandescents. If you give him a long title, he has to eliminate some of the words. Exhibitors have told me that in reducing the words, in order that the name might fit in the reserved space, they have lost money on good productions. The title is just as important as the story. Remember that. Also remember, that many exhibitors have booked pictures on the strength of good titles. Someone recently sent me a story with the title, "The Night That Sandy Came Back Home." I wouldn't be permitted to quote what an exhibitor would say if such a title was handed him.

A GENTLEMAN writes from Alabama to inform me that he sent a story to a New York broker last winter, and, after six weeks the play came back just like it went. In view of this, he has asked me to render an opinion on agents and authors' representatives in general. Agents are like measles, whooping-cough and civil wars. Some of us have to have them before we can make the desired progress. Agents can do things for us that we could not modestly do for ourselves. They can ask prices for our product which we would never be able to utter without becoming nervous. They have more courage and greater nerve than the majority of writers. Their persistency is admirable. They can talk about us in such a pleasing and convincing manner and know the real value of ten per cent.
They can sell us where we cannot sell ourselves. It's much more graceful, and a great deal nicer, to have somebody else tell somebody else how great we are than to tell it ourselves. Then too, it makes us look bigger in the eyes of the prospective purchaser. Some of us can graciously sell our material, and others can't. If we can't, then I know of no greater medium for spreading our ability than an agent. Some of the greatest stories, books, plays and photoplays have been sold by agents. And, bigger prices were paid the authors than they could possibly have received if they had handled the transaction themselves. A good agent is a gift from God. Such an agent can "make" a writer. A good agent will not accept a product that does not represent an effort to contribute something really worth while to the world. He is a severe critic, and unless he feels certain that he can dispose of a story he will not consent to market it. There is a lot of labor attached to the sale of anything. It requires good salesmanship to dispose of a good story, and, if the agent returns it to us after a reasonable length of time, with the admission that he has been unable to sell it, he probably has a perfectly good reason for doing so. There must have been something wrong with the story, somewhere; something which was overlooked by both the author and the agent. Our friend from Alabama emphasizes that the story was kept six weeks, before it was returned. Comparatively quick action, I should say. It takes much longer than that, sometimes, to sell a good story. We must have patience. When you get a story returned from an agent pause and think of the time he probably has wasted in trying to sell it. He no doubt has put to a lot of inconvenience and has spent time, oil, gas and water in conversation and motoring in his effort to dispose of your product. If he doesn't sell it he is the one who is "out." Eventually you will sell the story. If it is a good story you are bound to sell it some day. Agents are necessary things. They are constantly in touch with the market and know the type of story in vogue at the present time. They are always at the elbow of the producer and know what he wants. I would say that about eighty per cent of the photoplays produced each year are sold to the producers by agents. The producers seem to enjoy dealing with the author through an agent, and no doubt better results are obtained this way. My friend also asks for a list of the good agents. Experience will provide him with such a list.

HERE'S a little inside story. It is absolutely confidential and I trust the reader will not disclose it to anyone. There seems to have been an impression circulated by someone that I had done something. I gather this from the number of letters I have received from various personalities, where-in they asked me "How I Did It." I attempted to answer them in as modest and unassuming a way as I knew how. Then I received some more, and then some more, and I continued trying to tell them "how I did it." Finally, the thought occurred to me that it might not be a bad idea to tell those who were especially curious just "how I did it."

So, I decided to write a lot of stuff—sort of an autobiography—and disclose my experiences in writing and selling photoplays. It might serve as sort of a reply to those who decided I had done something and were desirous of learning "how I did it." So I did. That was six months ago. I immediately shouldered the pleasant task and spent three months writing and preparing a little volume of my experiences. It came out of the press the other day, all dressed up in an orange suit and a black cravat, and made further attractive by twenty-four pretty illustrations of beautiful leading ladies and handsome men. It is my answer to the question how I did what some people seem to think I've done. It isn't a course, a text-book or a plan of instruction. I am not a teacher. It is merely my story. It was not original with me. My correspondents inspired it. I thank them for it. Even the title was suggested by them. I must admit it is a rather daring title, for it suggests a declaration on the part of the writer that he has really done something. I trust the readers will not accept it as an evidence of immodesty or the bleating of a self-satisfied and vain-glory individual, but rather as a message to those who are earnestly attempting to contribute something really worth while to a great art. It is simply the story of how one writer did it. His way is not the only way. There are lots of ways of doing anything. Perhaps your way is better than his. Maybe you won't find anything in the text worth consideration. If so, then you may enjoy the pictures. You really should not miss this opportunity of getting a lot of nice pictures of some of our most famous stars. Everybody likes to look at pictures. However, this book is the realization of my greatest ambition; to assist those who are now struggling as I have struggled in the past. And, believe me, it was some fight. If "How I Did It" assists some of its readers in getting over the hard places, then I shall feel it was not written in vain. One thing I do know, and that is; no one will get as much pleasure out of it as I did in writing it. It was a labor of love.

So, that's how I happened to write "How I Did It."

A n eastern lady has invented a system for photoplay writing which probably will ring the gong on scenario instruction and cause many university students to take mathematics instead. She has an index, with a noun, verb or adjective upon each card. Having fattened up the index, she was ready for business. Any day that an original plot did not descend from the skies and sparkle right in front of her eyes, she would grab for the index, shuffle the cards and deal herself a plot. That's one way of doing it!

A STORY that one producer would pay ten thousand dollars for, another wouldn't pay two thousand for. Of course, that's vice versa, too!

O NE way of determining the type of stories a studio wishes is to study the pictures they release. I really think that is about the only way the out-of-town writer can find out.

(Continued on Page 33)
Selling Your Picture to the Public

By Garrett Graham

The great new plastic art—living sculpture—the world's universal language—motion pictures are all that and more. But few men producing the silent drama are in business solely for their health, any more than are the studio carpenters whose noisy hammers rasp the nerves of a $5,000-a-week actress until she drops her make-up box and French accent and screams for peace and quiet. The industry has to be self-sustaining—financially profitable as well as artistic. Hence these producers are making few pictures they're not certain have a definite marketable value, in which the "box-office angle" is not easily discernible to the naked eye.

The writer who sufficiently understands financial geometry to get such an angle into all his stories is on a well-paved boulevard to success. Instead of a sheaf of multi-colored rejection slips he may easily have unlimited credit at the corner delicatessen. Happy is the one who can capitalize artistic ability; who has not only dramatic sense, but who also can turn out something easily sold to the public after it is recorded on film.

Selling a picture to the public is one of the most specialized jobs of the film industry. This work has grown into a high-salaried profession. Thousands of writers, artists, and advertising men do nothing but devise ways and means to catch the public eye and to create a desire to see certain productions when they are finally screened.

The authors play a bigger part in this work than many of them realize. Some stories are easily exploited. Their titles are adaptable to advertising catchlines; their climactic situations lend themselves well to art work for newspapers and billboards. Other photoplays, though beautiful of theme and containing good dramatic material, are particularly difficult of exploitation. Some haven't a single peg on which to hang a "selling" campaign. Many manuscripts are rejected for this reason.

Often a picture will be sold on one big scene. A single production "still" will be used as the motif for a nation-wide advertising campaign that precedes the release of the picture by several months and costs a large sum of money. The author who can work such a scene into his story, whose photoplay has a tangible "something" the film salesman can talk about to the exhibitors, will encounter urbanity instead of absence among scenario editors when he calls with another manuscript for sale.

A good example of this was in one of the last pictures a certain famous actress made before her recent return to the speaking stage. She had the part of a drudge whose bully of a husband had subjected her to almost every insult and indignity a woman has ever endured. She bore it all until he attacked his little niece. Then all her primeval hatred flared up. She bound his hands and flayed him unmercifully with a horse whip.

There was much incidental action, but this was the big scene. On it alone was built the advertising campaign through which the picture was sold to the ultimate consumer—the typical American family that ventures forth to the neighborhood theatre once or twice a week. The campaign was particularly aimed at women. "How much," they were asked through newspapers and billboards, "would you endure? Was this woman right in suffering interminably herself, but tak-

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The Value of Training

Education Essential to Success in Writing

By Ethelyn Leslie Huston

IN a letter just received from a clever newspaper woman in the East there is a significant sentence—"I believe I am beginning to feel the limitations of not being trained."

Though a busy wife and the proud mother of a son who is head of a Science Department of a Normal School, this woman who has an impressive quantity of published work to her credit, adds—"This year I shall study instead of doing any more work, and am now looking up courses." Yet her son has a baby—and in the very recent times of good Queen Victoria, a "grandma" folded her mitted hands and retired to the neutral region of "atmosphere!"

This is the spirit of the age.

NOT only to think, and to express one's self in one's work, but also to seek those who can train the thought and the thinker—this is what the cheerful young mother-of-the-son-who-has-a-baby is doing. Her job of wife, mother, clubwoman and citizen has given her thoughts to express and things to attend to. The thing then to do was to be shown the best and most efficacious way of doing them.

And so she is, in plain words, going to school—and more power to her!

We are wonderfully well satisfied with our earlier efforts. We "lisp in numbers, but the numbers come" and their newness and the novelty of them blinds us to their faults. That comes later.

And then is when we become humble and hungered, and seek the wise and the learned to show us how we may take this marvelous language of ours and use it for our own building of things. And the story-writer is the builder of an infinitude of things.

IT is a very encouraging "gathering of the clan" of those who like to think, and who like to have their thoughts marshalled into order, this new awakening of interest in matters intellectual. There are no restrictions and no bars. The divine spark is everywhere, begging only to be released and given a proper setting. And the first setting is, perhaps, just a modest one—a letter that is "different" to surprise and stimulate one who is dear and distant—or a paper for the next club meeting, that is polished and worth listening to—and after awhile a story, screen or fiction, to go out and make friends for one in the world's far places.

But intelligence and imagination need to be raised on a diet. Left to their own devices they dash gaily between the fat Scylla of gout and the lean Charybdis of indigestion, and come a cropper. Rules of grammar and syntax are not enough. Eye, ear and memory must co-ordinate. A simple sentence may appear to have the simplicity of the utterance of a little child. And in the same way, a simple gown will be gazed at in puzzled bewilderment by the genius man, who wonders why a plain dress like that cost in three figures—and why it has that air of distinction!

But it is the simplicity of exquisite perfection, that is attained only through fasting and prayer. It is the simplicity that has passed through the seven fires of purification. The untrained and voluble erupt a stream of words. And they tumble meaninglessly into oblivion. But of them, the trained eye selects with careful nicety—the cultivated ear bends to the rhythm of their grouping—and memory brings from its storehouse a symbol or picture. And a sentence is born, of simple phrasing, that yet rings with the pulsing, perfect melody of a temple bell.

Do you remember the story of the old Dominie's pet pupil who was striving for the essay prize? With his essay half written, the boy slumps over his desk and waxes his pencil and stares into space. The big hand on the clock works jerkily on—the other boys sigh and scribble and perspire—and the Dominie watches, with a little, odd smile.

Suddenly the favorite springs into life and his pencil works furiously. But the asthmatic old clock strikes the hour with sour finality. Time is up—and the essay is unfinished.

The prize is lost, and the boy's peasant parents shout and bewail. It is the world's way! "He has lost the beautiful money, and the
soup pot is empty, and he is a fool, a swine!"

The boy says nothing. His explanation, to them, were to speak in an unknown tongue. But his eyes reach up to the old Dominie—and the little, odd smile is still there.

And the old Dominie takes the unfinished paper, and holds it to his breast, and at night gloats over it, and gloats over one word that rests, perfect and beautiful as a pearl, in a sentence that is a perfect setting for it—the one word that the boy spent forty minutes of his hour groping for.

I like that story. It checks the galloping tempo of the age. The wise old Dominie brings us up with a round turn and bids us seek the word, and let the essay go!

When we leave school or college, then does our education begin. The faculty has given us a crowded feast of facts and theories that mass in undigested discomfort in our poor tummies, and we amble clumsily out into the race-track to be shoulder aside by lean and keen runners who dash by us like meteors. And the further we go the more we find out the less we know.

Our chatter is not interesting, our theories are childish, our thoughts are like milling cattle, we are not at all important in the general scheme of things, and among people who are doing things, we hidefully admit to ourselves that we are merely very much in the way.

WHEN I found this out, I was aggrieved and indignant. I had beautiful theories about running the universe, but nobody seemed to be excited about them. So I jimmied my way into newspaper work and became a cub reporter on a paper where about thirty busy and hurried men took up my education with glee and without mercy. And I began to learn to write stories.

A good deal of water has run under the bridge since then, but I am still learning. And the training in story writing has been invaluable. Seeing one's stuff in print, or on the screen, and the check, are the first two thrills. But that passes. And daily, as life's queer kaleidoscopic turns, and the scenes dissolve and change and reform, the value of mental training crops up in new and amazing ways. The untrained mind takes reflections as does a mirror—on the surface merely. Only patient treatment by an intelligence that knows how, can change the several brittle strata beneath till it becomes softened and receptive to light, to ideas, to understanding of things.

And the changing, which progresses like some marvelous action in chemistry, "registers" most delightfully in the writing of the stories. The work of today goes through the crucible. The Dominie prunes and trims and grafts new ideas upon old, and coaxes little timorous shoots to thrive and blossom. And you, tomorrow, look with much wiser eyes upon the work of yesterday and find in the one day how you have grown.

AND confidence grows, as grow the stories. The business man with his driving cares, now seeks a "counter-irritant." The Dominie teaches him and pulls his brain out of the ledger and into the illimitable fields of imagery, where the mind expands and thought wings into heights where the air is clean and sweet. It is an effort, and the effort sends new blood pulsing through the fagged brain, a new depth and flash into dull eyes, new enthusiasm into speech starring on its business diet of bones and dust. His advertising man must have a trained and developed imagination. Then why not the man who employs the advertising man? His copy-writer must vision the world, not just the store. Why not the president of the company? His ads must be suave, intelligent, polished, entertaining. His letterhead must be in good taste. His store equipment must be a picture that rests the eye and that does not offend in any way. This cannot be done—none of it can be done—unless the Chief himself enriches his mind and daily refines the refinements of yesterday.

And this applies to the man and the woman everywhere. The trained imagination builds empires—and it made a New York chef famous around the world. The mind honest enough to want to learn, and earnest enough to watch its growth day by day on a written sheet of paper, is the mind of one who will be possessed always by that "divine discontent" that climbs steadily toward the stars. It writes its own history in the facts. A little story of today, that is yet better than the timid story of the day before, and that is a stepping-stone to the really good idea that suddenly springs in—

to being in the quite creditable story of tomorrow.

THIS is growth. And a mind so trained has its own brilliance in the home and among friends, that draws other minds to it as irresistibly as the arc-light draws the cloud of little winged worshippers of light at night.

The brawn of Samson merely brought ruin crashing down upon him. His was energy untrained and undirected. The brain of Napoleon, of Foch, won wars. But the mind of a man such as these has been trained and polished and clarified through long and studious days, ready for instant action when the hour strikes. The little mind—the petty soul—is satisfied with itself. And the cocksure pygmy is "hoist by his own petard," attracts criticism because of his smug self-approval.

But he of the big mind is never content. The seer is still the school boy, asking questions. One of my chiefs showed me some matter he had written, the first week I was with him, and asked: "Do you like that?"

"N-no—I don't exactly like that one paragraph," I replied.

"That's right! That's right! For God's sake don't agree with me!" he encouraged happily. And together we plunged into that paragraph and did things to it and had a perfectly grand time.

He knew a good deal more than I did, but he invited criticism from those who saw things from a different angle, and was not afraid to ask assistance from one who might possibly have an idea that would strengthen his own work. My own defects he hammered as cheerfully, and this alacrity to "go to the mat" and have a royal scrap over the fine shadings of a phrase, is one of the undying joys of the scribe.

It is a splendid and stimulating gamble of wits, a game where words are elusive as trumps. And there is a joyous camaraderie about those who drink "at the Pierian spring," who insist upon mental growth which alone admits one to that fine fraternity of the "Intelligence," which encircles the globe. But it is an admittance that must be won by effort. Money will not buy it. A superficial smattering of tuition and travel will not suffice. A desire to be entertained by that gay and brave body of men and women who are gallantly trying (Continued on Page 36)
IT is an unwritten law that, as each year staggers to a close, every critic must sit him down and compose a review of the preceding twelve months—listing the ten best pictures, the ten outstanding performances, the ten worst sub-titles, the ten squawkiest pies hurled by the ten homeliest comedians, and so forth.

I am unable to understand why ten should always be selected as the magical number which holds over from season to season. There have been years when any list of the ten best pictures would necessarily be choked up with deadwood. There have been other years when ten would be a miserly number.

Viewed from the rather close vantage point in which I write, 1922 shapes up rather leanly. It represents a distinct drop from 1921, when the silent drama climbed higher than ever before.

Just why this should be, is difficult to explain. There was an undeniable business depression, which probably inspired the producers with discouragement. There was also the chilling shadow of censorship.

These two factors would account for certain of the prevailing conditions, but not by any means for all of them. Some of the most successful pictures of the year have been those in which money was no object and on which the censorship problem did not have any effect whatsoever. Robin Hood and When Knighthood Was in Flower both cost fortunes to produce, and neither depended upon any situations which might be questioned on moral grounds. Consequently, neither of them would have been any better if there had been more money available, or fewer censors.

The mention of these two pictures brings up a point that is worthy of note: There has been a noticeable reversion, throughout the year, to spectacular costume dramas, either historic or otherwise. Aside from the pair mentioned above, there have been Nero, The Eternal Flame, Oliver Twist, Monte Christo, To Have And To Hold, The Prodigal Judge and Orphans of the Storm.

These films, for the most part, have proved successful—and this in spite of the general aversion among our crudest exhibitors toward any subject that isn't as up to date as this morning's shave.

It is not hard to assign a reason for this flood of costume dramas.

In This Month's contribution, Mr. Sherwood offers to our readers his selection of the best photoplays of the year 1922. Not everyone will agree with him, since opinions on any works of art are bound to differ according to personal likes and dislikes. One outstanding feature of the year has been the tendency toward spectacular costume dramas. Photoplay writers, however, should bear in mind that the public taste changes quickly and the very fact that costume plays adapted from the classics have proved popular in the past year indicates to the wise student that simpler dramas from original stories will probably be in vogue for the coming twelve months.

It is the influence of the German pictures, which exercised a vital effect on our own producers. There is scarcely a photoplay mentioned in the foregoing list which has not borrowed something from Ernest Lubitsch.

The Hokum Flood

In addition to this commendable trend toward the classics, there is a perceptible, and less gratifying, trend toward the blackest age which the drama has ever survived. I refer to that period which stretched over the latter part of the nineteenth century, and produced such hokumish atrocities as "Nel- lie, the Beautiful Cloak Model" and "Bertha, the Sewing Machine Girl."

We have seen, on the screen, Where Is My Wandering Boy Tonight?, The Old Homestead, Only A Shopgirl, More To Be Pitied Than Scorned and any number of similar ham dramas.

It is a shame that the movies should descend to this. It is equally regrettable that they can get away with it as well as they do. These stories never reflected real life in any of its phases, even when they were first written. They were the merest trumpery, and their value was essentially temporal.

Even though they do make money for their producers—and I know that they usually make a lot—it is my belief that they are inflicting an incalculable amount of harm on the motion pictures as a whole. They are inoculating the industry with false blood, which may provide artificial vigor for a time, but which ultimately will prove fatal.

Rags may be royal raiment when worn for virtue's sake; but when they are worn for box-office purposes, they look like nothing but rags. And they don't keep out the cold.

Comedies

MOVIE fans can always count on one thing every year: no matter how bad the feature pictures may be, the comedies keep getting better and better. It is their business to atone for everything bad that the five, six or twelve reelers may offer, and thus keep the grand old law of adjustment intact.

There seems to be no limit to the ingenuity of Mack Sennett, Charlie Chaplin, Clyde Cook, Harold Lloyd, Buster Keaton and the Christies. It is as reliable and steady as the Old Faithful Geyser. Their supply of gags never seems to be subject to the ills which affect the rest of the industry.

The foremost figure in this group
just at present is Harold Lloyd, he of the horn-rimmed spectacles and the indomitable spontaneity. Grandma's Boy is a film that deserves to be ranked with the best. Its success has been overwhelming and perfectly legitimate.

Charlie Chaplin has spent most of his time this year reclining on his laurels—a favorite occupation, we regret to say. However, it is no cause for alarm. Next year, or the year after next, he will produce another immortal work of art, like Shoulder Arms or The Kid, and everyone will be satisfied.

The sombre visaged Buster Keaton has continued his persistent rise, onward and upward. He has completed a large number of two reel comedies, and has maintained a consistently high average for all of them.

The Christies have departed a little from the usual formula, and have laid more stress on satire than before. Cold Feet, their parody on the Curwood Northwest dramas, was a delightful bit of burlesque.

Melodrama

THERE have been just as many thrills on the screen as ever, but fewer examples of originality. In fact, it seems that the specialists in melodrama have gone right back to the days of Perils of Pauline, before Pearl White had begun to appreciate the usefulness of doubles.

Hurricane's Gal, probably the wildest melodrama of the year, introduced little that is new. Neither did Mr. Griffith's One Exciting Night, or Mr. Fox's The Fast Mail. They were all absorbing, because their action was swift and continuous. But they all relied on the oldest tricks known to man.

There have been plenty of pictorial thrills—the forest fire in The Storm, the tornado in The Old Homestead, the cloudburst in The Town That Forgot God and the torchlight ride of the French cavalry in When Knighthood Was In Flower. These, however, have all been done before—although it must be admitted that they have not been done so well.

There were two farce-melodramas which showed to especial advantage—The Dictator, played well by Wallace Reid and directed well by James Cruze, and Government Morris's strange tale, Yellow Men And Gold, which burlesqued itself with considerable adroitness.

The back-wash from The Sheikh turned up a great number of Arabian subjects, which served to cover much of the territory usurped in former years by the old faithful Western cowboy dramas.

Educational Pictures

ONE of the most striking developments in 1922 has been the increased prominence given to those pictures which, for want of a better term, are known as "educational films." There is something forbidding in the word "educational" which indicates dullness and dryness.

This is unfortunate, for many of the movies which come under this head contain far more drama than the average photoplay. Take, for instance, Nanook of the North. Here is a masterpiece, if I have ever seen one—a picture which fulfills the highest possibilities of the cinema. Its producer, Robert J. Flaherty, worked without story, without actors and without studio equipment; but he proved that there is more human interest in real life than in the greatest fiction ever written—and obvious though difficult conclusion.

The same thing has been done by Robert Bruce, on a smaller scale. His Wilderness Tales are not only beautiful to the eye: they are supremely stirring dramas, and have been accepted as such by audiences everywhere.

It is a healthy sign that pictures of this type should be receiving the recognition that they deserve.

Foreign Films

AFTER the promise held out in 1921, there has been a disappointing slump in importation during the past year. I have seen one great German picture, The Loves of Pharaoh, but that is all.

There has also been one colossal flop from a Teutonic source—Mistress of the World, which inspired nothing but coarse laughter everywhere except in the offices of the Famous Players-Lasky corporation.

Missing Husbands, from France, and The Stroke of Midnight, from Sweden, had possibilities, but were marred by serious technical defects. The latter served to establish Victor Seastrom as a good director and a fine actor.

There are indications of a second German invasion, which will bring many more films like The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari. I, for one, am ready—nay, eager—to be shown.

Personalities

THE most sensational development of the year was the rise and fall of Rodolph Valentino. His success in The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse, The Conquering Power and The Sheik boosted him to the very top of his profession. He became the most popular star of his day. But then his marital difficulties, and his quarrels with his employers, served to pull him down again, and he is now in quite a very uncertain position. He can undoubtedly climb back again to the heights, but he will do well to hurry up—because the public is notoriously adept at forgetting. Anyone who doubts this is at liberty to consult Francis X. Bushman.

Douglas Fairbanks, on the other hand, continued his acrobatic ascent, and now stands at the pinnacle, with a smile that is sunnier than ever. Mary Pickford, William S. Hart and Charlie Chaplin have been comparatively quiescent.

Richard Barthelmess made startling progress with Tol'able David, and held his advantage with Sonny. Griffith made a big splurge with Orphans of the Storm, and then a smaller splurge but more money with One Exciting Night.

The De Mille boys— Cecil and William—continued their careers in characteristic manner, the former contributing Man'slaughter to the screen, and the latter Nice People and Clarence. Williams, as usual, scored the highest artistic success—and Cecil gather the box-office receipts.

The Fox pictures, too, ran true to form—Nero, Monte Cristo, Silver Wings and The Town That Forgot God all being cut from the same cloth that had been used in their predecessors.

Tom Mix made progress, as did Priscilla Dean, Madge Bellamy, Reginald Denny, Claire Windsor, Hilda Chadwick, Colleen Moore and Jack Holt. Nazimova showed a marked improvement.

Rex Ingram failed to equal his first great production, The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse, but he came close to it with The Prisoner of Zenda and Trifling Women. He developed two potential stars, Ramon Navarro and Barbara La Marr, who will be watched with considerable interest.

A comparatively new director, who leaped into substantial fame, is Frank Lloyd. His three produc-

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The Game and the Candle

By Carl Clausen

BEFORE the novice decides upon literature as a career, he should ask himself this question: “Why do I want to become a writer?” Then, answer it honestly. If money, fame or social prestige be his only reason, he had better go about his business laying bricks or selling automobiles. But if he has an ingrown propensity for tearing down barriers, if a granite wall excites him to prehensile stunts, if obstacles send his blood to tingling with a love of battle, then he is at least fundamentally equipped to grapple with the initial problems of writing. If he has imagination, and patience, the battle is half won before he starts, and if his love for the work is great enough to make him suffer hunger, cheerfully, and to forego even the simplest of human necessities for the sake of his art, then nothing but ill health can keep him out of print.

I say this advisedly. For only the creative minds have these qualities. God in his wisdom endowed his artist children with a prodigal hand. They are his picked warriors, chosen to blaze new trails. They are wise enough to know that he who blazes new trails in tears shall be followed by the many with a song. But this does not discourage them. Prejudice, discrimination means nothing to them. They know that patience and perseverance will break down the strongest barriers. For the same reason they do not count their blessings by the dollar mark, and fame when it comes means to them only wider opportunities for carrying their message to the hearts of the people.

SELLING their stories is merely vindication of their faith in themselves. Unsold script does not worry them. They know that every page penned has a cultural value, which makes twenty-five cents a word look like a beggar’s ransom. They know that even if they never sell a word for years they are training their brains to do what brains were made for—creating and original thinking.

Eight years ago there came to a certain editor a young man with a suitcase full of manuscripts, some thirty in all.

Taking a dozen at random from the suitcase, the youth laid them upon the editor’s desk.

“Look them over and see what you think of them,” he said. “I’ll stop in and call for them in a few days.”

The editor smiled.

“So you think perhaps they are not good enough for us, eh? That’s refreshing. Most writers don’t see how we can go to press without their stories.”

“I know that they are good enough,” the young man replied, picking up his hat, “but I don’t think you have the nerve to print them. Goodbye! I’ll be back for them in a few days.”

WHEN the editor came up for air, he glanced through the top script. Something caught his eye and he began to read. Lunchtime came and went and he was still reading. A week later when the youth came back with his suitcase, the editor asked him how much he wanted for the stories.

“All twelve you mean?” the youth asked.

“Well, no,” the editor confessed. “I can’t buy that far ahead. I’ve picked out six.

How much?”

The young writer seemed to be thinking.

“A hundred and fifty dollars,” he replied, suddenly.

“How?” said the editor, “pretty steep for us, but I’ll take ‘em. You’re a salesman as well as a writer. Suppose you sit down and tell me something about yourself while I send the voucher down to be O. K’d by the purchasing department. Or have you prima donna objections against being interviewed?”

“It never happened to me before,” the youth grinned, “anything once.”
After ten minutes of quizzing the editor had extracted the information from the youth that he had written over half a million words in three years, and that as he had given himself ten years to make his first sale, the editor's rejection would have meant nothing to him.

When the check for nine hundred dollars was brought in, the youth stared at it, surprise in his face for the first time.

"Egypt's queen," he exclaimed, "I thought you meant a hundred and fifty for the six."

The editor leaned back in his chair and roared.

"The joke's on me," he said. "I guess after all you're not much of a salesman. But you're a whale of a story teller."

The youth is now an established writer. His name, which I am bound by solemn promise not to mention, is well known to you. His sales record of eight years shows two hundred and fifty stories disposed of to forty different magazines. More than half a dozen publications have featured his work. Yet, he feels that he has not yet arrived.

"Some day," he said, "I'm going to begin writing in earnest."

He has a family of seven depending upon the earning capacity of his pen, for food and shelter. His early stories, eight years ago, were written in his spare time, no fewer than a round score in a car seat, going to and returning from work. Another score were written one winter in a small, dark room with an old blanket wrapped about his feet after the gas company had turned off his gas for non-payment of bills.

Barriers strong enough to withstand determination of this kind would have to be built of ten inch Bessemer steel. From his own mouth I have it that he hasn't got his pace yet, by a long shot. All I can say is, when he hits it, I want to be on hand for the fireworks. Even now it's been whispered that they are dusting out a niche for him in the Hall of Fame; but he doesn't know it.

A case quite the opposite came to my notice recently. A humble space writer on a large Eastern city Daily, dabbled spasmodically for a year or two in fiction. A volume of short stories made him suddenly famous—overnight almost—Cinderella style. The stories are good. He deserves, richly, his fame. After reading the volume I wanted to meet him. I did. I wish I hadn't, now. Success has turned his head. The once humble space writer, glad of a ten dollar assignment, is now a thoroughly disgusting egotistical ass. When something happens to jar him from his selfmade pedestal—and the signs are that the jar is very imminent—he'll go down into oblivion without a ripple.

What has writing done for him? Worse than nothing! Had he loved his work instead of himself, he might have gone far.

Beware of conceit. The truly great are never concealed. They don't have to be. Their work speaks for them. Conceit stifles receptiveness. Without receptiveness your career as a writer is ended. Why kill the goose that lays the golden egg, especially after it has taken you years to raise the goose from a gosling? Conceit brings you nothing but empty flattery from the lightweight or from those who think they can profit by flattering you. The worthwhile people, the thinkers, will have your number at once, and you'll have their contempt—nothing else—no matter how fine work you've done in the past. They—the thinkers—know that conceit is the smoke screen of the man who has shot his wad.

True genius glories in the work he intends to do, or what he is, at the moment, engaged upon. He deals in futures. Past performances he regards merely as stepping stones to the great something which he knows some day he will produce. He may be living from hand to mouth. He may never have published a story or hung a picture; but ask him whether he thinks the game is worth the candle and hear what he has to say.

How do you think Jack London felt about it? Or Rudyard Kipling, the youth who came out of India with a trunk full of manuscripts which nobody would buy, for years? Or our beloved O. Henry, writing stories in blood and fire behind the bars when every man's hand was against him? Or Edwin Markham, who after years of patient apprenticeship gazed upon a great painting, and went home and made the world hold its breath at the sublime simplicity of The Man With the Hoe.

As I write, out of the past, the earnest, patient faces of the men who kept their faith, rise and crowd about me; those who died honored and unsung by a world who did not understand them, and those who lived to wear their laurel crowns. If they could talk, I know that their answer would be a big flaming YES.

And so you too must keep your faith. If you possess the qualities I mentioned in the beginning of this article, you're bound to win. There will come a period in your career as a writer when you will find that your best work goes begging while certain conventional potboilers of yours find a ready market. Do not let this discourage you. This world of ours is a conventional one. Originality is ever looked upon askance. When the editors refuse to buy anything but hokum, give them hokum until your fame as a hokum writer has spread to the ends of the earth. Make your name so valuable to their magazines that they'll print anything you write short of high treason. Then put over your message.
This and That
Advice to the Student of Magazine Writing

By Frederick J. Jackson

At one time I heard facetiously that most of the books of advice on the care of babies were written by old maids. And there was a daring bachelor who announced his serious intention to write a book on the same subject. His feminine relatives immediately took him to task.

"What do you know about babies?" they cried scornfully.

"Oh, a great deal," was his calm reply. "I know all about babies. In fact I was one of them myself."

When it comes to a question of my knowledge of amateur writers, of my ability to give them competent advice, I can give the same reply: "I was one of them myself." I know their problems, their weaknesses, their illusions, their doubts. With a groundwork of about two hundred published stories and novellas, I am again an amateur to a certain extent; I am trying to write novels, and am finding some difficulty in breaking away from the short story style.

Although Many Books on the care of babies have been written by old maids," says Mr. Jackson, "undoubtedly the average person would prefer to take advice on this subject from one who has been a mother herself." Similarly, the printing presses are kept busy by theorists, with no experience, who would offer the beginner writer instruction on the art of breaking into print. Photodramatist believes that the best teacher is the person who has accomplished what he wishes to tell others. That is why the editors consider this article, by the author of more than two hundred magazine stories, worth thorough study.

pupils will absorb the faults of the master.

The average beginner, the word "technique" is a stumbling block, an insurmountable wall, a vague foreign word of which he seldom gains a clear definition. The explanation is simple. As a synonym I like the word "mechanics," for technique is nothing more or less than the mechanics of the story art.

There is seldom a story which cannot be told in more than one way. A poor writer can tell a story from real life in a manner that makes it unconvincing even as fiction, while a man with a natural gift of narration can take the most unconvincing story and make it read like something that has really happened. He can make it mechanically perfect in placing together the various elements that go to form a story. He will delineate the plot to perfection, tell it concisely, clearly, cut to a minimum the unimportant, stress to the right degree the important factors, season the story in the proportions called for with suspense, appeal, characterization, atmosphere. The story probably will contain a single viewpoint (unity) and will hold the reader's interest. All this will be the result of technique.

Technique, in a sense, can also be summed up in the word "proportion." And technique is a queer substance in this way: once learned, it is quickly forgotten. Professional writers seldom think of the word. Intuitively, instinctively, they will follow certain lines in connecting up the elements of a story. At times they will smash every rule of technique—and get away with it. A trained writer can do it where the amateur can't. Why? The professional is the master of his story, while the story is likely to master the beginner. The trained writer has a sureness of touch that he has gained through years of work. He has acquired a deftness of phrasing and in handling situations. It all looks so simple that the beginner will be misled into thinking he can do it.

One of the things in which the beginner is apt to sin is in allowing his own personality to creep into a third person story. The beginner can't get away with it. He will be unable to do it gracefully. Personally, I have never tried it. I am fearful of the result, and am content to stick to the precepts of what technique I have learned. But in the September 20th, 1922 issue of the Popular Magazine is a story by Clarence L. Cullen. He has written hundreds of stories for the Popular and is paid a higher rate by far than is paid by most of the "bigger" magazines. In this particular story he plants himself by referring several times to things that had come under the observation of "the writer." He gets away with it beautifully. It is a human story and holds the reader's interest. I'm glad I read it. But let the untrained writer beware. Mr.
Cullen is several hundred stories ahead. He can create his own technique—successfully. There is nothing to stop the beginner from shooting holes in technique, but he is not likely to make a bullseye in the way of a check. And this is speaking form experience.

Invariably the greatest fault of the beginner is lack of originality. With joy he will seize upon ideas that have been worked to death by writers for the all-fiction magazines. These ideas will seem new to the amateur in the magazine game and he will use up his enthusiasm in writing them. His consequent disillusionment will be pathetic, for while the experienced writer, with his deftness of touch that will give a sense of originality to things that are old, can sell these same ideas, the beginner has no chance at all. He will leave the "old stuff" too baldly discernable.

But let not the untrained writer grow discouraged. There is much hope for him and, provided that through study he has acquired the rudiments of technique, through my own experience I can tell him the best and easiest way to sell a story. One story in print makes a difference. Cold black type will make the story look much different than it did on the pages of a manuscript. It will do much to show his weaknesses, by comparing the phrasing and construction of his story with other, and probably more experienced writers, in the same issue.

I repeat that the greatest fault of the amateur is lack of originality. A plot or situation that perhaps he has read years before, and carried in his subconscious mind, leaps into his brain and is eagerly seized upon and written. And in nearly every instance this is done unintentionally and unawares. The most glaring example I can recall happened some years ago. A fellow writer, a very good friend of mine, told a story at an informal reception. "A Dozen Doughnuts" was the title he gave it.

Among the guests was a woman who was trying to write. She confessed that her weakness was lack of ideas. Some weeks later, to my fellow writer she gave the MS. of her latest story, with a request for a criticism. Her story was called "The Six Nails." In situation and all the incidents it was nothing more than his plot of "The Dozen Doughnuts." The woman had entirely forgotten the latter story. It was simply a case of unconscious plagiarism.

About ten years ago I was fortunate in arousing the interest of Arthur S. Hoffman, editor of Adventure. In those days he had so little to do that he had the time to educate me in the story art. Nowadays I regret that he is so busy that he has less time for struggling writers. The magazine has grown from a monthly to tri-monthly, with various departments which intrude the more on his now precious time. Mr. Hoffman is a firm believer in the rules of technique. I believe that he invented some of them himself, or at least simplified them. In few words he laid down rules, which, if followed, will not lead the beginner astray. I have taken so many of his rules to myself that now sometimes I am in doubt whether I am quoting myself or Mr. Hoffman or some other kindly editor. In a previous article I quoted Mr. Hoffman to the effect that: "A story is seldom so dead as when buried in useless words." It is a rule worth repeating, a worthwhile thought for the amateur writer to keep ever with him.

Another that I learned early and took to heart was this: "The fewer the characters the stronger the story."

The following paragraph was contained in a letter of advice I received about eight years ago from a writer of note:

"And remember this, first, last and always: writing is a great deal like learning to play a piano. You cannot hope to become an accomplished musician in a week—and writing is even harder to master. To each successful writer there are hundreds of musicians. When you study music you take exercises to enable fingers and brains to coordinate. In writing, the parallel is that you must teach your imagination and your technique (as you acquire the latter) to function in harmony. After writing one story, as soon as possible write another and another. They may seem hopeless when criticized by someone competent. But each mediocre story is another stepping stone, for it has served to exercise your brain muscle."

Mr. Hoffman once wrote: "A good plot is half the battle. State your plot in one hundred words and see whether you haven't already read many stories with the same plot, though perhaps laid in a different scene or among a different kind of people. If your plot is very old, discard it. If only fairly old, see whether you can at least make it a little different from the others—different in structure, not merely different in scene, characters and time. If it is brand new—but it won't be."

Some beginners try to write literature. And literature is often very different from magazine stories and "best selling" books.

The beginner who is the most likely to succeed in gaining a foothold is the one who is willing to expect very little of his first stories. Most amateurs are inclined to place an exaggerated value upon their first work. The encouragement of friends and relatives is deceptive; it means less than nothing. It may impel sending a first effort to the Saturday Evening Post. The result is almost certain to be discouraging. It must be admitted that a few—a very few—writers have sold their first stories to the Post, but almost without exception you will find that these stories have been developed under the tutelage of some professional writer; that they were not sent to a high market until they had been revised and rewritten according to the suggestions of the professional writer and perhaps edited mercilessly by him.
Omar Khayyam in Hollywood

Freely Translated from the Persian

By Douglas Z. Doty

( knots Note.—This is the second of a series of articles by Omar Khayyam, the original advocate of light wines, recounting his experiences in Hollywood, inside and outside the studios.)

WHILE yet afar off from this Western World I did hear enticing stories of veritable Arabian Nights entertainments in a large Tavern, called the Hotel Hollyhock; how that there were many dancing Houris of surpassing beauty, unveiled—and not unwilling—who toiled by day at Magic Pictures and desported themselves at the tavern by night; how that noble youths of rich estate did offer them entertainment and warming liquids in the alluring secrecy of their palatial suites and that through the witching hours of darkness the tavern did resound with the sweet laughter of women, the tinkling of ice and the soft pit-a-pat of brown slaves bearing flagons filled with the juice of the orange and other things.

On arriving, such tales had I heard, that

"Before the Phantom of False morning died. Methought a Voice* within the Tavern cried When all the Temple is prepared within, Why lags the drowsy worshipper outside?"

And indeed I lingered not but straightway took up my abode within, resting through the sun-hot hours of the first day and then laving myself and putting on my best Persian robe that in merry

* "The Voice" probably was Bert Lytell's—The Translator.

mood I might join in the sensuous delights of the night.

But alack and alas! If such tales were ever true then of late a sad change hath been wrought.

The Houris had fled, the gay youths with them. A solemn peace as when the Koran is read by the Faithful brooded over the place.

Of ladies there were many, but over-large to my liking, and no longer pulchritudinous; and all had the hopeful air of waiting for something to happen. Yet nothing did, save for a moment a mighty stir as a slim man hurried out who was thought by some to be a youth called Chaplin. It appeareth that Abdu Charl Chaplin (may his tribe increase) hath the rare gift of rousing both tears and laughter—that all the Western World doth love him for the joy he brings. And the heavily upholstered ladies and the thin old men—worn out from making money in the State of Iowa and now residing in this Tavern in a state of stupor—all waited hopefully for the vicarious thrills that came not.

When later I did question mine host on the sad change within the Tavern he answered me how that he liketh not the ways of those in Pictures but rather the innocent gayety of Kansas. This did please me not at all and I did recite him the 26th quatrain of my Rubaiyat, as follows:


Oh, make the most of what we yet may spend,

Before we too into the Dust descend;

Dust into Dust, and under Dust, to lie,

Sans Wine, Sans Song, Sans Singer and—Sans End!

Whereupon he did frown upon me suspiciously

and saith if I liked not his hostelry I could depart thence,

And forthwith I did. Then through the kindly aid of my good friend Abdu Ben Rothwell I did enter into the bunga-low life of Hollywood.

IT grieveth me that here are no well ordered Harcems after the goodly custom of Persia. Here the system is different though vastly similar the result. In Persia a man has many wives at once but in this curious Hollywood he has but one at a time. Yet in the end wherein lies the difference? With us, our wives live together in friendly harmony which is as it should be. Verily it is not so here, as I will say more at all sicks the first wife of my bunga-lowlife—what my new friends call quaintly the house-warming, with much merriment extracted from vast glass jars full of a white burning liquid that had the pungent fragrance of the juniper—a liquid secretly prepared by a benevolent chemist. And there was present one of the war-like tribe called Directors and with him his wife that now is; and behold, there appeared the wife that was. And the two wives spoke not, but their glances were like the thrusts of gleaming swords; and the war-like one appeared strangely depressed so that he drank long and deep of the burning liquid. Thereupon he straightway forgot that the wife that was, was no longer the wife that is, and spoke fair with her, saying how that she was grown to lovely thinness and a pearl above price; and she did purr with the pleasure of his ardent words. Then the wife that is, fearing that mayhap she was soon to be a wife that was, did straightway go hence—taking the warlike one by the ear. And I mused upon the fact that human nature changeth not with the passing of the centuries—how that a Chinese poet did write two thousand years ago as follows:

Old and New*

She went up to the mountain to pluck wild herbs;
She came down the mountain and met her former husband.

"What do you find your new wife like?"

"My new wife, although her talk is clever,
Cannot charm me as my old wife could.
In beauty of face there is not much to choose,
But in usefulness they are not the like.

My new wife comes in from the road to meet me;
My old wife always came down from her tower.
My new wife is clever at embroidery silk;
My old wife was good at plain sewing.
Of silk embroidery one can do an inch a day;
Of plain sewing, more than five feet.
Putting her silks by the side of your sewing,
I see that the new will not compare with the old."

Then I did return to my guests and found they had left the soft-lit rooms, drawn by the shining whiteness of the modest kitchen and mayhap by the gurgle of glass bottles in a row; and all did drink and make merry till the hour of Dawn. And I could see no hint of the wickedness that many have writ of—naught but the youthful spirits of those who, having toiled hard at Magic Pictures for the world's delight, must needs relax into happy play. And shame on those who would have these Children of Art live always the dull life of the Cabbage and the Carrot!

But I do recall that as I withdrew to meditate apart in the seraglio (that some call patio) there appeared before me an exotic maiden of early youth and great beauty; and warmed with the liquid fire from my friend the Chemist, she said confide to me that she had an husband of twice her years, that he dealt in land, and was called a Realtor—that he toiled endlessly in his greed of gold and that to her he was never more than what she so quaintly called "a meal ticket." I could see that in her young heart was the urge of love under a full moon, and there were strange stirrings within her bosom of which she knew not yet the meaning. Howbeit she did sigh and with her slim arms stretched aloft she did softly murmur, "I feel so Rabelaisian* tonight!" Then the sleepy Realtor did enter, yawning mightily and reluctantly she departed hence. And I was sorry at her going, for I fain would have had her linger that I might have recited the 108th quatrains of my Rubaiyat:

"Ah Love! Could you and I with Fate conspire To grasp this sorry Scheme of Things entire, Would not we shatter it to bits—and then Re-mould it nearer to the Heart's Desire!"

But I must now chronicle my further adventures in the world of Magic Pictures. You will recall that I was not pleased with the Grand Vizier Wurtzel, and what he did propose in making pictures of my Rubaiyat. So that I did take my beloved work from thence and journeyed over the Pass of Cahuenga to the City of Universal, there to have audience with the Boy Sultan called Irv.

THE haughty Afrit at the Gate when he beheld my robes and my parted beard of snow did deem me of those men called Extra, and was for turning me away; till I had made plain my mission. In the anteroom of the Sultan's audience-chamber were many awaiting his pleasure, and all did eye me and mutter strange words whereat there was much laughter. And there was one they called "Tod" who uttered behind his hand two cryptic words of which I know not the meaning. Saith he: "Lamps Twinostymur"!*

Yet their rough good humor did not displease me and my old heart responded warmly to the crude young strength that was all about me. Then came the chief eunuch who took my name and bade me wait.

The hours passed slowly in the anteroom, as patiently I waited. Yet ever as my turn had come some fair damsel of the pictures tripped gaily in and passed quickly through the double doors of the chamber, the eunuch bowing low. But I am a philosopher and to myself I saith, "I am only a humble scribe and these Princesses of the Pictures (Continued on Page 38)

*We can't imagine a Hollywood girl using such a word. It is likely that Omar is in error. She probably said "rebellions".—The Translator.

*Translator's note: Undoubtedly the phrase is "Lamp his twin Ostermoores," which is underworld slang for "Look at his cotton whiskers!"
Miss Winifred Kimball, formerly an unknown student of scenario writing, whose $10,000 prize-winning photoplay, "Broken Chains," has proved a smashing success.

Breaking in from the Top

A Review of the $10,000 Prize Photoplay "Broken Chains"

By Sheldon Krag Johnson

MOST people trickle gradually into high places. It seems to be a natural law, for even that well-known American element, water, follows the rule. Not that water particularly seeks out high places but when it gets in anywhere it generally makes a seepage sort of entrance.

Not so, however, with Winifred Kimball. This now far-famed scenarist took the Stutz motto for her own and literally "made good in a day." She very much desired to succeed as a writer of photoplays and so, after a period of patient experimental work and study she stepped out and took the prize of $10,000.00 offered by the Chicago Daily News and the Goldwyn Pictures Corporation, for the best scenario submitted.

The story was immediately bought by Goldwyn and now within the year it has had its world premiere at the California Theatre in Los Angeles.

The "patient experimental work" above referred to must not be lightly passed over nor confused with the handouts of Lady Luck. It meant some three long years of trying, discarding and trying again, under the guidance of the Palmer Photoplay Corporation's instruction, until at last, she was able to enter a story in one of the severest contests ever held and win against the field.

These three years were no easy period of casual study. To have the dark tragedy of suicide twice enter one's home, to be forced into reduced circumstances with others dependent on one for support, to have the high faith and courage to spend money and time from a slender store on the study of dramatic art, to persist gamely through three years of discouragement while things grew steadily worse and the mortgage on the old home became past due and then when things were the blackest, to win enough to clear everything, in competition with 27,000 other contestants, such is the history in brief of Miss Kimball's rise to fame. It is a narrative of fact with a dramatic climax only equalled by her photoplay story "Broken Chains."

The screen version maintains the tempo of the entire affair. It is swift, colorful and rife with action. It has been given beautiful photography, rich interiors and delightfully artistic exteriors. The sincerity of the underlying theme as put forth by the author, is retained, with a few changes in the action, and given completely adequate expression by continuity, cast and direction. Director Holubar evidently here found a story 'to his liking,' for he has blended action, suspense, pathos and comedy into a dynamic current that sweeps one on into the last fade out.

The story of "Broken Chains" is rich with object lessons for the student of dramatic art. There is much about it that is reminiscent of Griffith. There is the consummate handling of a subtle and really difficult theme, the sure touch in characterizations which so easily could have slipped into burlesque and bathos, the rapid piling of suspense on peril until the cumulative effect is terrific.

If you want to study a strong photodrama and your heart is weak, content yourself with reading the script, but if your nerves are good, see it on the screen.

One of the first questions raised by this photoplay is: What is melodrama? Is melodrama the portrayal of physical jeopardy? If so, if thrills,
strong situations and repeated incidents of physical peril are melodramatic, then this play is indeed a dark swift stream of melodrama. But if melodrama is the depicting of strong situations and violent acts which have no proper justification in the motivation of the characters, then "Broken Chains" is by no means a melodrama. For the very difficult character of the male lead, Teddy Wyndham, is well built up and established and sustained consistently to the end. The other characters are so sincerely portrayed that one readily accepts them at their face value. This is particularly true of Colleen Moore as the child wife of Boykan Boone and is even true of Boone himself in spite of the extraordinarily brutal character that Torrence is called upon to render.

It has been well edited and there is a particularly happy choice of names throughout. The name of the story itself, "Broken Chains," has more than one application. Broken chains of cowardice for the boy, broken chains literally and figuratively for the enslaved wife, broken chains in another sense for the author who did it. A most richly significant title. Paul Bern is credited with the editing. To those who know him there will be many places where his peculiarly keen grasp of certain angles will be detected.

There are many daring things about this interesting drama. Not merely the depicting of acts daring in themselves, as, for instance, when the sheriff leads his men in a jump across the broken bridge that would have given abrupt pause to those most spectacular of the world's riders, the Italian Cavalry. That was nervy of the Sheriff to say the least. But when Malcolm McGregor as the boy, Teddy Wyndham, casually goes accounting the wife of that super-villain, Boone, right on his own home ground, it taxes the nerve of all concerned. All but the boy, who, of course, does not know what a pleasant little playmate Boykan Boone can be. But the girl knew, and the producers knew and the audience knew and it strained the self control of the latter as was evidenced by the man in the next seat, who fiercely asked me what was the matter "with the darn fool boy, didn't he know any better?" It must have been an equal strain on the little wife but so child-like and unsophisticated was she, that the chance they were taking never seemed to occur to her. It was daring direction and it was worth it, for it created all the anticipation one has when the stout gentleman slowly seats himself upon the planted tack.

No other photoplay easily comes to mind where-in the contrast between the atmosphere of sheer deviility on the one hand and the utter unsuspectingness of the victim, is so delightfully established. One has to go back to childhood days for anything like it, back to such tales as Red Riding Hood and Goldilocks. The impending conflict is ominous, black, threatening and inevitable. Its dark shadow holds one chill and silent. Like the man on my right, if one could only warn the "darn fool boy."

It is to be noted that while this angle involves the triangle, yet so innocent are the characters of
any wrong thought and so justifiable is intervention by even a husband's rival, that it is wholly acceptable to even the most fastidious, in matters of this kind.

But it is in the theme itself that the greatest daring is to be found. It is not merely a theme of regeneration that is difficult enough but it is the most difficult of regeneration themes, that of the negative unsympathetic part of a coward which nevertheless must come out all right at the end and carry the spectator's sympathy with it so that at the end he is still interested.

And it is on this score that all responsible, are to be congratulated twice over. Malcolm McGregor does an extremely subtle piece of work in carrying this part through without once slipping from its very narrow path.

Bear in mind that this hero starts out an arrant coward, one of the kind that admits it. In the end he is still afraid but by refusing to admit it, proves himself courageous to the point of fanaticism. He does what so many men, also cowards, did in the war. He finally makes good with an excess of zeal and heroism that a less frightened and therefore more self-possessed and calculating character, would never have displayed.

No one but a thoroughly frightened man would have determined upon invading the lair of this human panther and on breaking him with his bare hands. The boy at last arrives at the point where he is more afraid of being a coward than he is of physical violence. He here becomes a truly heroic character ascending to the plane of deliberate self-sacrifice for the sake of an ideal.

Less profound handling would have developed the character into a fearless type. This the boy was not, nor could he be until he had first made his demonstration over fear. His opponent Boone, on the other hand, was a fearless type and this is adroitly shown many times, as when Boone casts the infuriated boy from him, yet refuses to use his gun and later having thrown the boy from the window, he lays down to recover, still scornful of any possible danger. He handles the boy much as a man would handle a newsboy who had suddenly gone mad over being short-changed a penny, or as Goliath must have handled David, to the former's undoing. It is obvious that it does not pay to under-estimate the enemy and it would appear that the race has been perpetuated, not by the fearless but by the courageous, who were afraid and would not give in.

There is another way in which this drama is daring. It is a daring thing to assemble into one story all the known sure-fire stuff that has won its way here and there in separate plays. At first glance, this may seem but a simple and sure-fire thing to do but it is not, for the simple reason that anything gets over for the first few times but after it has been worked for a season or so, it becomes in danger of falling flat.

To assemble this familiar stuff and make it not only acceptable but so gripping that one forgets previous introductions, is daring and clever in
strong situations and repeated incidents of physical peril are melodramatic, then this play is indeed a dark, swift stream of melodrama. But it melodrama in the depicting of strong situations and violent acts which have no proper justification in the motivation of the characters, then "Broken Chains" is by no means a melodrama. For the very direct character of the male lead, Teddy Wyndham, is well built up and established and sustained consistently to the end. The other characters are so skilfully portrayed that one readily accepts them at their face value. This is particularly true of Colonel Moore as the child wife of Boykin Boone and is even more of Boone himself in spite of the extraordinary brutal character that Terrence is called upon to render.

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To assemble this familiar stuff and make it not only acceptable but so gripping that one forgets previous introductions, is daring and clever in
the extreme and the greatest tribute possible. It amounts to sheer genius.

We have nearly all of our old friends in "Broken Chains." Hardly a link is missing. The only one that occurs off-hand, is the Mortgage on the Old Home. But the rest are there.

The Eastern Tenderfoot in a Western Environment. The Brutal Husband and the Starved Heart of the Child Wife. Motherlove. The simple com-ics of those simple souls, who people the Great West, such as timely kicks planted on the psychological moment. The Utterly Vicious Character in his Mountain Stronghold. Killings, fights and wanton cruelties. Trapdoor bridges and human traps. Situations inviting terrible intervention which is inevitable, yet never foreseen. The Eternal Triangle. Suspense upon suspense, until every principal is at the point of death and then the Ride of Rescue which always arrives on racing schedule. They are all there and it shows real mastership to be able to make them so new and real that one sits on the edge of the seat and whispers prayers that it will turn out alright.

One sometimes wonders what would happen to an audience which was hoisted from peak to peak by such consummate artistry and then at the end something were to slip so that the Rescue got in late and the Best People had all died. What would they do? Would they throw things or mob the theatre or what?

THERE is no more interesting commentary on human nature than that this Assembly of the Tried and True should have been awarded first prize in competition with 27,000 other entrants. It proves, among other things, that human nature craves peril and excitement, physical action and physical danger, that is only relieved in the latter half of the last split second.

But note that human nature craves these things vicariously and this is a very significant thing. For it teaches that vicarious indulgence in these thrills is a need and a necessity, not as a vice into which pure and gentle minded souls have been seduced but as a safety vent for ancient urges long suppressed.

Augustus Thomas, one of America's greatest dramatists, showmen and students of psychology, has told us that the answer to censorship lies in our coming to understand, that by giving man a safety vent through art for the vicarious indulgence of primitive urges, which are as yet but partly pushed out of consciousness, we thereby relieve society from the danger of having these urges vented in the form of personal action.

The premise from which all pro-censorship thought has more or less consciously worked, is that each juvenile is a pure and unsullied soul with no erring tendencies but highly suggestible, who is led to sin by the corrupting suggestions of perverted producers who prey on this suggestibility. Also, that all spectators are juveniles, those under age are a growing kind and those of maturity are of a permanent variety. The young merely grow into crystallized immaturity. Of course, looked at from this angle, it is a laudable ambition on the part of those few who have miraculously escaped being morons, to keep the rest of the gang up to the pure level, to which these few have achieved.

BUT supposing instead of this hypothesis being true, that the race has a heritage of urges, desires and wrong evaluations that it is slowly discarding as not being worth while. Might not Mr. Thomas and modern psychological investigators be right in predicting that for some, a vicarious vent is a better thing than a repress that eventually breaks out on a neighbor?

Whatever the final conclusion, the selection by the eminently competent judges of "Broken Chains" as the best out of 27,000, indicates that there is considerable recognition of the fact, that human nature still craves violent action, at least on the screen.

Keen judgment was shown in casting the picture. The fine work of Malcolm McGregor as the boy has been mentioned. The part of Mercy Boone, the abused child wife is most sympathetically and convincingly handled by Colleen Moore. This too, was a most difficult part and it required an artist of Miss Moore's sensitive artistry to carry it through without over or under stressing.

Lillian Gish, herself, under Griffith could not have done it more sincerely. When Colleen pats the little wooden coffin, one is startled that so sentient a touch could fall upon mere wood, even though that wood contains the body of one's first born.

There is an underlying connection between this child-wife's mourning for her babe and the theme of the story. The real theme, beneath the general one of regeneration, is, that a man who is weak comes into his own, when he finds some one weaker than himself whom he desires to protect. This dependency of a loved one brings out his reserves and under its influence, he learns to stand on his own feet. This is a theme, by the way, that many modern wives would do well to ponder over. Perhaps Miss Kimball could give us another story handling the same theme in a totally different way.

BUT to get back to the psychology of motherhood and this theme. Is this sense of protective ness the real reason why the young mother mourned her babe? It is difficult to understand why she should mourn the loss of such spawn as her cruel and bestial husband could give her. Was the real appeal the call upon her protectiveness? Supposing that mankind was born full-fledged without any period of infancy? Would there be any maternal instinct? If there were no helpless object, weakly seeking its nourishment at the mother's breast, utterly dependent, would there be aroused that tender and protective consideration which is so fine a characteristic in practically all animal life? Is not babyhood a profoundly wise provision of the Creator, that the sense of responsibility might be brought out in a race not exactly perfect to start with? Were not some such explanation available one would expect the child-mother to be vastly relieved, that a living tie between herself and so horrible a monster had been removed.

(Continued on Page 30)
Literary Veneer

By Hazel W. Spencer

There is a tendency among people of indifferent education to emphasize matters of no importance while disregarding others quite indispensable to good workmanship. Like the Scribes and Pharisees they “make clean the outside of the cup and the platter” but their fastidiousness concerns itself not at all with fundamental principles of accuracy and honesty. Fanatical in their insistence upon such trifles as the use of the indefinite article an before all aspirates, regarding you askance if you say a hotel, they nevertheless commit the outrage of “between you and I,” “it looks like it is going to rain,” “everyone has their own taste,” with a pertinacity as amazing as it is ridiculous. They say: “Won’t you?” separating the two words with painful distinctness lest you should class them with less intelligent persons who run the words into “Wontchew?” Yet they remark deprecatingly that they dislike “those kind of things,” and politely wonder if “one ought to call on he and she.”

Such people inspire the true lover of language with a sense of despair. Though possessing the profoundest sympathy for and patience with the blunders of persons frankly and confessedly ignorant his attitude toward the intellectual Pharisee is one of hopelessness. Like all honest workmen he despises a sham, is intolerant of veneer. The open sesame to his immediate friendship is teachableness, but the cocksure, know-it-all sort of person knocks at his doors in vain.

Humility being the invariable accompaniment of intelligence the artist expects this in those with whom he associates, the shortest cut to his antagonism being the twin high-ways of superfluous and conceit. Twins they are indeed; we never see one without the other, and so intimately associated are they in our experience that we have become accustomed to look upon them as identical. No one, so much as the master of style, admires and demands perfection, but to him perfection is a matter of fundamentals, of ground-work, before and beyond all else.

In his impatience with mere externals he has been known more

The Desire to Learn

must be supplemented by a willingness to be taught. If you are a “know-it-all,” cocksure of your ability to speak correct English, you are certain to inspire true lovers of language with a sense of despair and to make many enemies. Perhaps you know persons similar to those described by Mrs. Spencer in this unusual article. Maybe you are one yourself. In any event, you cannot help but profit by what the author has to say on this important subject.

The road to knowledge is not, as so many suppose, beset with dangers and pitfalls, dark, forbidding, lonely; it is a broad highway, easy and entertaining to travel, and incredibly rich in companionship. If you prefer to affect an intelligence and information you do not possess you will be the loser by many miles of wide, inspiring country and by many hours of choicest intercourse with men and women who know how to teach you. You are only limited by your own desire to learn.

If this be trivial and languid you will miss the road to knowledge altogether and wander helplessly in the quagmire of self-complacency, but if it be vigorous and determined you will no sooner set foot upon the path of your choice than a dozen helping hands will be held out to you and you will find yourself a member of the noblest and most genial fellowship in the world.

But the desire to learn must be supplemented by a willingness to be taught.

Strange as it may seem there is a vast difference between the two and you may possess the one without the other. We have all seen the self-important person who loves to ask questions, making every effort to convey the impression that his eagerness springs from a passion for information. But the truth of the matter is that it is not information he is after so much as an opportunity to refute the wisdom of others.

He challenges every statement, insists upon “reasons,” resists every attempt at explanation, determined to have the last word at any cost. He is really more difficult to deal with than the affected person because the latter is at least likely to have the saving grace of civility which the former lacks. But neither the affectation of wisdom nor the desire to confound the wisdom of
others will ever get us any where. Either attitude is an effectual deadline to progress and if we are to be learners in the true sense we must be very sure to be free from both affectation and conceit.

THERE are many commonly accepted forms in English construction we do well to acknowledge and respect. And we shall find as we advance in our acquaintance with literary English that these forms are not the arbitrarily imposed absurdities of fanatics but the result of slow, laborious evolution. When we go back to the very beginning of our language we are awed by its present grandeur. And the more seriously and reverently we study its development the more careful we shall be to use it as it should be used.

In your study of the great stylists you will notice with surprise the apparent ease with which they achieve their results, the unlabored flow of their language, its perfect simplicity. You may suppose, until you have learned otherwise, that such ease, such simplicity, are not the result of effort but the inevitable accompaniment of genius and therefore as far removed from your own possible experience as Shakespeare’s Sonnets. But such is not the case. The ease and smoothness you look upon with such envy are the reward of hard work, years of study, painstaking and punctilious choice in the use of words.

The fact that the finished work of these men conveys no sense of strain is due to their long apprenticeship. They sit among their words as an armorer among his weapons and sword or pistol gleams not more brightly from its accustomed niche than the words of the master from their niches in his mental storehouse. They have become his personal possession. He turns to his mind for them, not to dictionaries. They have been placed there, one after another, as he has mastered them, and now they belong to him. He has made them his by using them and they respond to his call on the instant.

No word has really become a part of your vocabulary until you have made frequent and unerring use of it for your own purpose. You may recognize the same word whenever you meet it, have a reasonably accurate understanding of its meaning, feel no further dependence upon the dictionary in regard to it, but it is not your word until you have used it. Nor can you be said to possess a vocabulary until you have made it work for you.

The misuse of words by many writers is a source of continual sorrow and offense to those who know language and such misuse is simply the result of carelessness. I know an author, unusually gifted with ideas and well informed upon countless subjects, who is handicapping his entire future by the employment of words he really knows nothing about. He has seen them in his reading, heard them in conversation, likes their appearance and their sound, but he uses them where they do not belong and in ways for which they are not fitted with the result that his work, clever as it is, appears crude and unfinished.

This is a form of literary veneer harmful alike to our literature and our taste but still more to our morale, particularly the morale of the young. If they learn that we handle our tools without regard to their essential purposes what is to become of the English of the future? May it not lose the fine flower of its perfection and deteriorate into mere commercial “give and take?”

THERE is a delightful method of increasing one’s vocabulary by which each added word assumes the importance of a veritable treasure. This is the method of the collector. We are all riders of the collector’s hobby to some extent, thrilling at the discovery of ancient brasses. Ming pottery, Japanese prints; why not transfer a part of our enthusiasm to the pursuit of words?

It becomes fascinating to see how many new words one can add to one’s collection in a day, a week, a month. Really add, of course, not merely learn definitions. One new word every day is three hundred and sixty-five in a year, a not insignificant number when we remember that twenty-five hundred words is a good average vocabulary. If you read anything at all, even the daily paper, you will come upon words you have never seen before, or, having seen, have never met; words to which you have had no formal introduction, therefore words with which you are not actually acquainted. Jot them down in your notebook or on a scrap of paper and look them up in the first dictionary presenting itself. Then
A Lesson for Writers

The recent acquisition by the Goldwyn Pictures Corporation of June Mathis, noted photoplaywright, carries with it a lesson for would-be scenarists—especially those who still persist in stating that success in the motion picture world is due to pull, or luck, and not to preparation. Miss Mathis has been given the assignment of scenarioizing the classic play, "Ben Hur," which will be one of the most difficult tasks that ever confronted a writer. Seven hundred thousand dollars have been paid for the screen rights; nearly two million dollars, we understand, will be expended on the production, and the fate of this colossal undertaking is distinctly in her hands.

It is evident that the men who are gambling on the success of "Ben Hur" have absolute confidence in this young woman's ability. Why? The answer lies in Miss Mathis' own words, printed in a recent number of Photodramatist. "If you would write—don't be half-baked," she advised our readers. "Be sufficiently prepared so that you understand the construction of stories. Many beginners get very clever ideas but are unable to fabricate other incidents to build them up. Unless your photoplay as a whole is fundamentally correct from a dramatic standpoint, it will not succeed."

Miss Mathis has never submitted a "half-baked" story. For two years before she—then an untrained writer—attempted to sell a scenario, she did nothing but study the writing thereof. She read all the text books on construction available at that time. And she wrote thirty stories, and re-wrote them several times. At the end of this period of arduous training she knew that she knew the fundamental and basic principles of the art she was entering. It was then that she offered her first scenario. Director Edwin Carew was the man to whom it was submitted. Several days later he telephoned to her. "I don't want your play," he said, "but I should like to talk with the young woman who wrote that scenario, for it shows cleverness and a knowledge of dramatic construction."

This photoplay later came to the attention of someone who was looking for that type of story, and was produced. It was the beginning of June Mathis' rise to success.

Now she has achieved her goal. And all, as one of her biographers states, because two years did not seem to her too long a period of training for a profession which, above everything else, requires both wide and definite knowledge.

Again let us quote from Miss Mathis' own words as they appeared in Photodramatist: "I do not wish to set myself up as a supreme example, but I do think that 99 out of 100 would-be scenario writers would save themselves disappointment if they took a long period of study and practice before attempting to sell a story."

Consider her words carefully; for she is offering the legitimate opinion of one who has proved the truth of her beliefs. It is not merely an untried theory. Motion picture producers do not pay salaries of $75,000 a year to theorists who are unable to deliver the goods, and that is Miss Mathis' present income. If you, as an ambitious writer, desire even to approximate her success, you must travel the same road.

Fooling the Public

Not many years ago, manufacturers of food products were accustomed to labeling their goods as it pleased them. Adulterants were freely used, substitutions made, and even the weights given erroneously. But the public, having as usual blind faith, accepted the situation as a matter of course.

However, thanks to two or three fearless magazines and a statesman or so at Washington, not controlled by packing houses, a law was put through which did away with this evil, requiring all packers to label the containers of their products with the exact contents, net weights, etc.

All of which is prompted by the knowledge that, at the present time, motion picture producers in many cases are not only adulterating their products but are also misbranding them in a manner that constitutes little more than plain, garden variety lying. Like the packers of former days they are not telling the public the truth.

For months certain film companies have been flooding the country with films purporting to be pictured versions of well-known books or stage plays. As a matter of fact, except in rare instances, the screen dramas in question—if they may be truthfully called drama—have had little or no connection with the books from which they were presumed to have been taken. That is, they have borne the same titles and possibly embodied the same themes, but otherwise the resemblance between the book and the film version ended.

One prominent producer especially has been advertising at terrific expense a series of so-called screen classics. Their advertising is couched in such a manner as to lead the average person to believe that all of their productions are based upon well known novels. Huge posters depict these alleged classics by means of a lithographic reproduction of a row of books—presumably photographed from the actual volumes themselves and enlarged for the purpose of display; but, as a matter of fact, at least one of these volumes has never appeared except in the imagination of the artist who drew the poster. The ornate lettering on the back of the book never came from the printing press. The name of the author has never been found on the title page of a book of fiction. In brief, this 'screen classic' is based upon an original story written
in synopsis form by a well known writer of originals and was sold to this particular company about one year ago. To give the theatre-going public the impression that they are witnessing in this picture the film version of a popular novel is nothing more nor less than an apparent rank fraud.

It is time indeed that this pernicious practice were ended. The screen is a distinct form of art, and the novel or stage play was never written that could make as good a motion picture as an "original" written directly for production. Misbranding of motion pictures, for the sake of advertising values, can only end as did the mislabeling of food products. The honest packers were out; most of the crooked ones landed in the penitentiaries or went into the hands of receivers. And several motion picture producers with whom we are acquainted will soon be bankrupt unless they change their ways; because, the belief of some to the contrary notwithstanding, Barnum was not right—Lincoln was.

What is Time Worth?

WHAT is one hour? Merely one-twenty-fourth of a day—one-sixteenth of the average waking time. But, think this over carefully, while one hour is but a mere fraction of something that is measureless, it is Time nevertheless and is probably the most valuable thing one can possess.

In drawing up contracts, lawyers often employ the phrase: "Time is the essence of this contract." You, as a writer—as a creative thinker—have taken a contract for life in which Time is the all important element. You have contracted with the Divine Creator to do a man's job while on this earthly sphere; and when you waste time, you are cheating.

Do not be a cheat. A cheat fools no one but himself. If he wins today, he loses tomorrow. Nobody has faith in him, and, worse than that, he cannot possibly have faith in himself. And when a man loses faith in himself, he is through.

Play fair. This Time which was bestowed upon you by an All Wise Providence is a precious heritage and, whether your allotment be but a brief span or extends beyond eighty years, use the time given to you wisely. Devote it to study, to self-culture, to a concentrated, continuous effort to make the world a better place in which to live.

Much may be accomplished in even a brief period if this time is used correctly. The greatest person who ever trod this smouldering cinder was Jesus Christ. He lived but thirty-three years. A mere youth, he would be called by the average man of the present day—as, indeed, he was classed by the large majority in the days when He did live—yet who can gainsay that He left the weary world a religion and a philosophy richer in inspiration and practical values than any one who has ever lived.

This great leader of men knew the value of Time. Crucified in His very youth, He put into a few brief years the concentrated knowledge of a lifetime. Although He taught Eternity, He had no eternity on this earth. He had, in brief, an almost absurdly short length of time in which to study, to teach, and to set forth principles so precious that they have endured to this very day and have attracted and will attract millions of followers.

His life should be an undying lesson; it should suffice in itself to teach the value of study and of concentration. The next time you begin to tell yourself, "I should like to study, but I am too old," or "I have no time," think this over.

Originals Again Endorsed

THOSE who have been following cinema history already are acquainted with the steps by which the screen author has been given recognition. They have heard the universal plea for better pictures, and have read the announcements of many producers that good stories were wanted. No doubt they also have followed with interest a large number of scenario contests conducted by prominent producers in cooperation with leading newspapers, in an effort to bring forth new photoplay ideas.

The latest impetus to the forward march of the screen author is the public announcement of a meeting in Chicago of a group of theatre owners from all parts of the United States, which resulted in the formation of a $5,000,000 corporation known as the Theatre Owners' Distributing Corporation. This organization plans to capitalize the latent literary talent of America, and, at the same time, assist the small independent producers to compete with the producer's trust.

The promoters of this newly formed company declare that any producer who has an original photoplay which is considered marketable, is to be guaranteed a run of 30,000 nights or more, with a rental of $10 a night. With this written guarantee that his play will be worth at least $300,000, he can go to a bank and borrow on it, employ his own producing unit, and when the film is finished, turn it over to the distributing corporation.

"This movement," M. J. O'Toole, chairman of the public service committee, is reported saying, "will revolutionize the film industry. There is a Niagara of ideas in America awaiting expression. We propose to bring this out, encourage it and harness it. Thus far the big producers have been having things their own way. Many of them employ their own scenario writers. The outsider is discouraged. The producers have cast a cloud of mystery over the industry, but there is nothing mysterious about it. Budding genius will be given a hearing by us. Reputations may be checked at the door. Manuscripts and ideas will be judged solely on their merits."

The Theatre Owners' Distributing Corporation is composed of independent theatre owners operating 12,000 theatres. This official endorsement of original photoplays by so great a number of experienced exhibitors is a remarkable tribute to the acumen of those who long since have proclaimed the fact that the screen is a medium different from that of any other art and that stories for it should be written according to its own peculiar technique.
By George Landy

LAST month, I announced the start of activity on Allen Holubar's forthcoming picture for Associated First National; "The White Frontier," starring Dorothy Phillips, an original story by Jeffrey Deprend, scenarioized by Violet Clark. Now comes news of the cast which will include Lewis Dayton, Ynez Seabury, George Seigmann and Maym Kelso. By the time this appears in print, Norma Talmadge will have returned West to film "Within The Law," with Frank Lloyd directing and Jack Mulhall in the lead. Her sister, Constance, will be starting shortly on another John Emerson-Anita Loos opus, while her brother-in-law to complete the family trilogy, Buster Keaton, will have commenced another of his justly famous comedies.

Maurice Tourneur is progressing on "The Isle of Dead Ships," by Crittenden Marriott, which Charles Maigne adapted and whose leading figures are portrayed by Anna Q. Nilsson, Milton Sills and Frank Campeau. Jackie Coogan will have just completed "Toby Tyler," by James Otis, adapted and directed by Eddie Cline, for Sol Lesser. Jackie's cast is led by Barbara Tarrant, Sam de Grasse, Cesare Gravina and Russell Simpson. At the Ince Studios, production activity is being centered on "The Tinsel Harvest," the first original photodrama by Harold Shumate, for which William Seiter is directing Madge Bellamy and Robert Ellis.

B. P. Schulberg Productions now in the filming include "Poor Men's Wives," an original by Frank Dazey and Agnes Johnston, directed by Gasnier, with Barbara La Marr, David Butler and Betty Francisco—"The Broken Wing," adapted from the stage play of the same name—and "The Girl Who Came Back," adapted by Eve Unsell and Evelyn Campbell, which Tom Forman will direct. The

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Photodramatist

‘Broken Chains’ Reviewed

In Berly Mercer, the wife of the lumber boss, we have something different in the way of a tyrannical wife. A sweet and motherly woman who rules her man but who does not carry her rod of iron as a scourge upon the world at large. A most winning characterization.

William Arlamond, as Slog Sallee, played the role of the none-too-bright-cheerful-drinker with a happy touch that saved it from being merely clowning.

Ernest Torrence seized the only role that bordered on the melodramatic, that of Boykan Boone, and made it real in spite of the fact that the audience was asked to accept a characterization which was uniquely evil, without being prepared therefor with any establishing motivation.

Claire Windsor was so appealing a sweetheart in the introductory episode that it made us sorry that the boy should, perforce have to come into his own through protecting some other lady. Not that the one he found did not need protection and we are glad he gave it to her, but still we would like to have seen more of Claire.

Taken on the whole there is a professional atmosphere about this play that makes one realize that Miss Kimball did not spend her three years of preparatory work to no advantage. There is a sureness of touch that indicates she now knows what she is about. We will be interested to see what this author will give us next.

‘Broken Chains’ is a play to be studied for its handling and development. Study it for its fine points and for its flaws—it has a few, though they do not mar the entertainment. Above all note how essential is Action. Here is a subtle and difficult theme driven into the spectator’s mind by forceful and vivid action. The same theme without the vivid action, would be lost to the spectator before the last fade-out. The language of the screen is Action. Life is Action. That is why all conscious lives love a real photodrama.

Here is the Original Synopsis of ‘Broken Chains’

(Editor’s Note.—By permission of The Chicago Daily News, we are reprinting herewith the original manuscript of ‘Broken Chains’ exactly as written by Miss Kimball, winner of the $10,000 first prize in the Chicago Daily News-Goldwyn scenario contest. Owing to the fact that manuscripts submitted in the contest were limited in length to 5,000 words, it was necessary for the producer—the Goldwyn Corporation—to amplify the original story to a considerable extent, introducing additional comedy relief, etc., and this fact must be borne in mind by those who witness the completed picture. The names of the characters also have been changed in some instances, in the completed photoplay. It will be noted, for instance, that the name of the lead, Israel, as given in the original script is Peter in the finished picture. The comedy characters, of course, being new, have been given appropriate names by the producer.)

The scene opens upon a Western railroad station. The express draws in, and Israel gets off. The porter, carrying bag, follows him. His trunk is tossed off. He walks through the empty station. Boone has driven up in a good but dirty car. He goes to the express car to get his bag. When Boone returns, Israel asks to be taken by the White Crow ranch. Boone grins. “I’ll take you, but you pay me for it.” Israel asks “How much?” Boone answers, “Ten Dollars.” He is surprised. Israel says, “I have no money.” Boone nods. “Toddlie over and get your grips I’m starting.” Whereupon Israel fetches a bag, looks it painfully. When it comes to the trunk, Israel asks “Will you kindly help me?” Boone answers, “I will for a dollar.” Israel says, “Ask him the money.” Boone hands over the trunk. When Israel assists, he shoves him out of the way, swings the trunk onto his shoulder and sashays off.

Boone gets into the car. Israel takes the other seat. Car proceeds. They come to a cross road. The outskirts of a little town loom up. A short way up the road, as if the people expect the town to catch up with it, is a Protestant church, with a cross upon the steeple. Boone points to the town. “That’s Phoenix City. There’s a bank there. If you want my advice, you’ll bank them bills. Ef you came out hair for your health, you don’t want to die that way.” Israel shivers, as Boone swings finger across throat. Israel says, “I started an account in the Phoenix Bank; will you take me there?” “It’s our way,” Boone grumbles; turning the car, he adds, “If you hired that Mulcahy, don’t leave cash near him.” Boone drives Israel to town.

They pass the church, enter the city. Here Boone stops by the bank. Israel coughing, goes into the bank. Cashier is respectful. Boone watches Israel hand over the money, get his check book, etc. Israel hesitates, asks the cashier, “Can you recommend a foreman? They say Mulcahy is a damned good character.” The cashier laughs. “Old Mulcahy is one of the best men who rides the range.” Israel points to Boone, who kicks a dog out of his way as he crosses sidewalk to car. The cashier says he doesn’t like Boone. Banker asks: “Is that man your friend?” Israel assents. Boone starts the car. Banker turns, “So that pusillanimous man owns the White Crow!” The cashier throws up his hands. “We need whole men, to fight Boone’s rascals. I wish they’d stop sending us the half-baked ones.”


In the kitchen, Israel sits himself. He counts his pulse. He takes his temperature. The men enter, and he explains. “I’m very tired. My temperature is above normal, I fear I shall sleep.” Mulcahy paints him his bedroom. The boys serve supper. Mulcahy comes back, “Say, Cookie, warm some milk. Jumping Jehosaphat! that’s the man we work for.”

The cold, braking air built up his body. Israel did not realize it; but he was getting well. At first he took long lonely walks. Even good natured Mulcahy could not stand him. When Israel went to the corral, while he watched the trainers break the horses, Mulcahy served notice. Israel accused it, “You can stand the corral, I suppose?” Mulcahy nodded. “Thank you.” Israel watched the expert riding. An idea seized him. “Have you got a real gentle pony?” he inquired. Mulcahy went after a gentle horse. The idea. Involuntarily, the boys—complained, the boys—said; but Mulcahy advised, “Give him notice. Act proper, if he is a shrimp.” Cowboy returns with the pony. Carefully, slowly, Israel mounts, and rides away. The men mimic him.

One day Israel went farther into the woods. The horse shied and threw his rider, who picked himself up. By the time he had reassured himself, the horse was gone. Israel plodded on. Off toward the East a dog howled. He proceeded in that direction. After a little he comes to a dilapidated house, concealed by a thicket. He goes to inquire. As he passes the broken down gate, a chained dog barked. He entered and went timidly toward the house, which consisted of two rooms and a lean-to. No one answered. As smoke came from the lean-to, he went round. He assures himself that the dog is tied; then he turns the knob.
With the opening of that door, came the re-incarnation of Israel Wade.

He entered. He saw at one end, an open hearth with hooks and grates, where kettles boiled. A dog opened into the back. Here were table, rude chairs and dishes. A cat doubtless, but the only cat by her side was examined the rain, and Mercy. She went about chained to a staple in the wall! The chain was fastened to one slender ankle. She had enough length, to move about the kitchen, but she could not enter the other room, and she could not go near the door. His first thought was self; he retreated. "Are you mad?" he asked.

Then she looked at him. When he saw those piteous eyes, he forgot himself. Mysterious and torturing things were happening to his list. He called for a dog and examined the rain. "You poor little woman. Who did this barbarous thing?" He tried to unfasten the fetter; she pointed to a staple, where, out of her reach, the key hung. He crossed, fettered hand, to the manacle, and urged up in his narrow chest that he thought he was going to have a hemorrhage! He sat down. He put his handkerchiefs to his lips; but there was no blood. But yet some companionship had. It was a lancet of love. She limped out and brought him water. She limped horribly. He rose and helped her to a seat. He stood by the table. "Tell me all about it, I want to help." She shook her head. "No one can help me. I'm bound to him. And when he has his way, he'll have me dead. And then, how he buried his baby, as one might a stray puppy, in the garden; how she had tried to run away. She said that she had gotten as far as the R. R. station, but he overtook her. When he pulled her off the track, she fainted. She went on to tell him of the powerful bunch of outlaws Boone commanded. "When they go away, they chain me. Yet I must have supper ready, whenever they return." Israel listened to his feet. "How do you know when they enter?" She bent her head, "It makes no difference, I must be ready."

He walked up and down. He wrung his hands. He swung around, and said, "Help you! I am going to help you." She smiled, sadly, "What can you do?" He was near the window, and the wooden blind made a mirror of the glass panes, in which he saw himself. "What could he do?" She offers her hand. He takes it. She continued, "Everyone fears him. No one dares come. He'd know if they did, and he'd drag me off. He'd hide me somewhere." She limped to the settle by the wall and sat down. Israel held his ground. "Something tells me, that I must help," Then Mercy springs up. "Tell me!"

The dog barked, and another hound answered. She ran to the door. Looked out. "They are coming, quick, help me." She scurried, limping for the manacle. The fear in her voice froze him. She locked the fetter back on her ankle. She looked at him, and said, "Her face, her face, her face, and there is time." Stupidly he did so. She pointed to the back door. "Go, Go at once. He will do something dreadful if he finds you here." A moment longer he held his ground. "But I feel that I must help." She waved him away. "You are mad, mad, to stay." Outside the dog yelped under the lash of a whip. A man jeered. The fear on her face, plus the yell of pain scattered his courage. He turned and fled.

He sneaked. He hid in the hedge. He saw Boone and his drunken men pointing to wait, but Boone unfastened the Dog. Then Israel took to the woods. He was half way home, before he thought again of that frail woman. Shame set him. Out there in that lonely forest, he moved upon her. It was already upon his feet, and upon his face, with Jonah when he smelled. He talked to Moses when he wanted to quit. He even set Saul to thinking, for His Mercy is infinite and His grace is even with His children. Israel tries to excuse himself. "She wanted me to go. My limbs are very weak. I can't stand excitement." So he confessed the rebuke of his new-born soul, then he realized that after his run he was not even breathed. He was still. He swung his arms. "And I ran like a coyote. I left her." He spoke with contempt in his voice. Some made He enter the ranch. As he entered the house, he walked briskly. Mulcahy stopped fastening the buckles of a saddle. "I am glad you are not hurt, sir. When the horse came back, I--I didn't know what to do at him putting something in your mouth. I asked. Then he remembers. He smiled. "It's all right. The pony caught me napping. It won't happen again." He entered the house. Mulcahy sought the other cowboys. He asked hard the way I say heeded one man has waked the dog and opened the boss. He ain't the same man." His remark is greeted with joy.

All the world thought Israel hopeless. He felt that way about it themselves. They forgot God. Now, Israel was ready to try God. Israel went to the window. He threw it open and stepped out into the night. He said, ""I will go and see her tomorrow. I will get the money. I will help her. I will make the man and the woman. I will give me strength." He left the window open, and tossed himself into a couch. Now, he lighted a pipe, he smoked. He was no longer a wretched thing. The angels rejoiced for a man born into the world.

Soon the watchdog stopped barking and greeted him with wagging tail. First he loosed the dog, who raced before him, while he freed Mercy. They sat on the steps, the dog sprawled beside them, wagging his tail. Mercy said: "You must go. You must be--love. You must live. I don't want you to be a man that ever dies, Mulcahy. The hardest thing Israel did was to fasten the chains on his new friend when he left.

He saw her several times after this. He was planning her escape. He went to town, to get the money. Mulcahy drove the car. When he got to the bank, he notified the president, that he expected to draw Twenty-five Thousand Dollars soon. One of Boone's men overheard this, and carried the news to Boone. That master mind, puzzled how to get both of Israel's money. He dispatched the man to the church. Just then, as Mulcahy answers him, Nora stagers across the road, in front of their car. Mulcahy scolds, and Nora stagers back, Israel gets down, and approaches. Her correctness, red-upon-Mercy. He puts his hand on her shoulder and helps her into the car. He places her in a seat by him. Nora says, "Picking me out of the road don't have to make a husky of me, l--" Mulcahy says, "Ain't you Nora Reese?" She assents, and he is opinioned.

Mulcahy is mad. He spatters all the way home. Nora rises from her stupor to explain, when he looks over his shoulder, but he scowls ferociously. They reach the ranch. Israel helps Nora out, leads her into his house, and she was in the next room. On her back, Mulcahy asks him. "If that female stays on, I go." Israel looks up. "You have already said that you left on the first, so perhaps Nora can learn to run my horse." This astonished the Irishman, he follows his master to his own room. "What has come over him?" Mulcahy wonders. He looks at the calendar. There are only fourteen days, before the first of the month. He counts them off.

But the whole history of the world had been changed for Israel. He was less than a fortnight. During those days, Israel went often to see Mercy. He sensed when her husband was away, and it was then he listened to the stories of her childhood, in a New England village. He loved the girl that had the West, with a sickly face, and mangled her to the end. It was just before her mother died, that she met Boone. One day, one of Boone's gang surprised these two. They did not know when they were discovered, but the bandit went to his leader, and told him that Israel was with his wife. This was what Boone had been waiting for. Soon he was in his plans laid. He puts pickets about Israel's ranch, and his men watched his own cabin. He knew the very hour that Israel entered the house, that Saturday.

Mulcahy's opinion of his master's intellect improves as Nora improves. She became a part of the household. The girl's selfrespect returned, and she grew pretty. She was remarkably clean, and unusually useful. He enjoyed seeing her cook. The men liked her. Mulcahy sits in the kitchen, and reads at Nora. A girl washes his hands at the pump. Mulcahy squeezes Nora as she passed him, carrying dishes. The grinning cowboy punches Mulcahy, and gets put out of the room. Nora smiles.

Back in the cabin. Israel greets Mercy. The dog puts tail between legs. Israel hands Mercy a roll of bills. "The horses wait to take you to the train, no one will know. Within an hour you will be free." She marvels at the money. She hesitates, for the dog sneaks out as Boone and his men enter. "She's free, will she stay?" Boone demanded. "She drags her half way across the room. If I didn't need you, here's where I'd twist your windpipe." With the surprise, Israel's new born courage failed. Like an automaton he picked up the bills, jams them into his pocket, and headdles out. While Boone was flushing his breath, he implored them to spare him. All laugh.

"You are so fond of my wife, suppose you make her a present." Boone jeered. They pushed him forward, making Mercy bring a chair to the table. With appeal in her eyes, she opens her lips, but Boone strikes across the mouth.
He takes the money from Israel. Counts it. "This ain't half enough. Make out a check to Mercy Boone, and the pretty dear shall cash it." With the blood trickling down her bruised face, Mulcahy pulled another check out of his pocket, and the tears welled up in her eyes. "I'm going to stay, and I'm going to be all right."

Boone crosses to the fireplace, grabs the steaming kettle and approaches Israel. "Tell you what, Boone is going to make tea." Boone writes obediently. "Give Mercy Boone this money. She is the woman I love. When she gets a divorce, I will marry her. Please don't sign it." Mercy begs. When he writes in spite of her she says, "Oh, what a coward." Her words halt him. Boone puts the pistol close to his victim's temple. Israel signs. Then Boone takes it and puts it in an envelope, which he makes Israel address. "Get your hat and shawl, you're going to cash this for your dotting husband you won't believe me, if you stay here, he'll bury you in that grave out there. As she passes Israel she smiles sorrowfully. He remembered how Peter denied his Lord, and he wondered if this was how Peter felt.

"Boone heard hecar heard the car starting. He heard Boone bully Mercy. "She'll do just as I say—you tell me if she dares!" Israel springs up, "God in Heaven, give me strength." He twists his hands. "In all my life, I never so wanted to be strong!" He runs for the door. Confronts Boone at the door. "I'm communauté; you're a bully. Boone ad-vances. He sinks down by the wall. Boone sits at the table. When Israel rises, Boone frowns him down. Again Israel sinks back. "Protection to the woman he loved! He had none. How he cared." There were tears in his eyes. Boone jeers.

At the ranch, Mulcahy helps Nora make a cake. He holds the cookbook. He looks in puzzled wonder at six whole eggs and six bowls. "Here is a puzzle for you, Nora. Tell me for the love of Moll how I'm to beat six eggs separately as she Norris explains. While he breaks the eggs, she looks out. "I wonder what details Mr. Weant?" Mike crosses, bends to oven door, looks over his shoulder and adds, "What his chancing to be! Good, now one, and the moon is full tonight." Nora says "Shame on you." Mulcahy opens the oven door. Is horri-fied. Calls aloud: "Come, quick, and help me head it off. The cake is in the oven now. Everything. It started already for the coast. When it rises, it looks inviting. You've a hard job, she whisper, they're under the good perfect cake." Mulcahy comforts her.

Outside the chained dog barks. Inside the two men sit as before. Outside the car enters. Boone goes out. Israel is alone for a place for foggers, understanding. He rushes the bench. They shrove Mercy in. She sees her face, he realizes the fate he has forced upon her. He tries to catch her eyes, but she covers by the stove. He groans as the men enter. He sees them rejoice over the money. Boone enters, slouches over to his wife. She huddles by the stove. Then he turns to Israel, "We are through with you. Boys, get the skunk's hat." One of the men pulls Israel to his feet. Another jams on his hat. Boone goes out, casts an eye at the car. He calls thru door. Israel passes Mercy. He tries to tell her of his prisons, to "boil the men?" He answers, "The horror of what he has done increases his suffering. Then Boone yells and he obeys. While the men jeer the car starts. In that wild ride, in an agony of shame, his soul comes to life. He has broken. His weakness had smothered him with dishonor.

In the first faint gray of dawn, Boone hurries through the sleepy town. Here and there a household wakes. He drives up the same road they took when Israel ar-rived. Boone pulls his car at the traffic lights, as the hands indi-cers Israel out. Israel obeys, and Boone points to the depot. "The freight comes in at six-thirty. You get on that freight, and get out of here." He reaches over, grabs the cap of Israel's coat, and shakes him. This ain't a health place for foggers, understanding. He releases Israel; still menacing him, he drives the car off. Stupidly, not realizing where his feet are taking him. Israel walks toward the little church. The priest opens the door; and unwittingly, grasping blindly at a place to hide, Israel enters the church. A few worshippers have gathered for early service, and seeing these good people all take the front pews, Israel sinks into an empty seat at the back. He slouched there, then the priest en-tered and the people knelt. Because he could bid best this way, Israel kneels.

What were the words that the minister said? "Have mercy upon us." The congregation took up the prayer. It pierced the dull drums of his ears. "Have mercy upon us; most Merciful Father. Forgive us all that is past." Israel looked up. He whispered, "Even God can't forgive my marriage a treaty—Israel." "Which treaty?" Israel buried his face in his hands. "What did the min-ister say now?" "Hereafter, serve and please thee in newness of life." "Newness of life?" "God! Was it possible?" Tears, a man's tears of agony, filled his eyes. Israel heard no more. The service continued. The holy words fell like manna on his parched soul. "Lift up your hearts," the minister admonished. As if it were an actual thing. Israel took his sinful heart into the cup of his two hands and offered it. Soon the bread was gone. He rose forward, and knelt at the railing. Israel remained on his knees. The service ended. Having blessed the people the minister left the chancel. The congregation rose to the sound of the chime, and Israel noticed Israel, where he knelt. The sun shines brightly outside. Its beam gilded the tops of the mountains.

Inside, Israel still knelt, in the back pew. He raised his eyes to the altar, they rest on the cross. He prays, "Dear God Almighty, if what the parson said is so, if I can stand in for Israel in newness of life now, may the sun, the sunlight that struck Cross upon the Altar; it blazed in glory. Israel was convinced. He rose. He went straight up to the chancel rail, and knelt down before the shining cross. "Almighty God, you are righting. The war has just begun to live. This is only the beginning." As one inspired, he left the church. He walked to the cross road, he heard the whisper of the approaching freight. He smiled, he didn't even look toward the town. He took the quiet path home.

At the ranch, as the sun rose, Mulcahy and the men in gala attire ride up to the house, where Nora meets them. "We're off for the rodeo in Phoenix," Mulcahy calls, "I'll bring you back the silver spurs." She runs into the house, and comes back with a try of clusters. "The sun is just begun to live. This is only the beginning." As one inspired, he left the church. He walked to the cross road, he heard the whisper of the approaching freight. He smiled, he didn't even look toward the town. He took the quiet path home.

Israel enters the front yard. Nora opens the door for him. She looks at him, surprised that he should be on foot. He seems to be different. There is a quiet confi-dence about his manner, that surprises her. She says, "I'll have breakfast ready in a jiffy." She goes toward the store to stop all of his riders. "Is that the men?" She answers: "They left for the rodeo an hour ago."

Israel takes writing paper from the table drawer. 'That's unfortunate, but it can't be helped." He slips his hand into a pocket, his face is fixed, his body is broken. Which Boone overlooked, smiles. Puts the bills in an envelope and addresses them. Hands package to Nora. "Give this to Mulcahy. It's my wedding gift." Nora is embarraged. He smiles. "Don't keep us waiting, Nora. life is short." He spreads out a paper and writes. When he has finished he turns, "You'll have to witness this for me. It's the best we can do." She hesitates, "Why, Mr. Weant, you are well paid. He explains, "It is not determined. "I am going to nut a stop to a crime, it may cost me this life. If it does, this paper gives Mercy my estate." Nora protests. He rises and puts his hands on her shoulder. "You will be good to Mercy.
Tell Mulcahy I ask it." Nora weeps. "Please wait for
the men." He shakes his head, "There is no time to
wait." He gives her the paper. "Hand this to Mulcahy,
If you don't I'll shoot you." He picks up his hat and leaves.

Nora hesitates, then she runs across to the gun rack,
reaches down a Winchester, and hurry's out to overtake
him. She offers him the gun. "If you must go, take this."
To please her, he takes it. It is so heavy, he almost drops it.
He laughs, "No, no, old pal. I'd be more afraid of that
than you of me." He rests the gun against the gate. Nora
cries, he pats her on the shoulder. "Stop crying, Nora."
He wanted to reassure her. "I'll tell you a secret. I'm
well armed." Then she lets him go. "Armed! Yes, the
mind was armed with the sword of the spirit of the Lord
God." He hurries on.

He came to Boone's cabin. It was strangely silent.
Smoke comes from the chimney. He wonders if they had
chained her again? He enters, she stands by the store.
She sees him, and his return bewilders her. "Why have
you come back? And what is it you want? They've got
the money." He walks toward her. He takes her two
hands, "I've come back, because I am going to set you
free." She shakes her head in unbelief. "You can't do
anything. My husband will be back in a minute. Run
while there is time." But he stands firm. "I'm not running
any more. By God's strength, I shall set you free." Mercy
studies his face closely, she sees the difference. She
smiles, "I don't know just what you can do, but I believe
you will do it." She picks up his hand, and presses her
cheek to it. "You are a changed man. Do you know,
you are very wonderful." At that moment, the kitchen
door opened, and Boone slammed in. Israel smiled. "I am
wonderful, because of my lovely one." Boone sees his
wife standing close by Israel. "Hello!" he ejaculated,
launching forward. Israel puts Mercy behind him. His
lips moved in prayer. " Courage, Courage, God, give me
courage now." He smiles at the approaching Mulcahy.
Something blazes up in Israel. He laughs heartily. Boone
asks, "What is so damn funny?" Israel hit him in the
mouth.

Back at the ranch, Nora worries. She reads the paper.
It reads: "Mulcahy, I have made my will, now that I am
to die. You will find me at Boone's cabin. You
and Nora care for Mercy. She is the woman I love."
Signed: "Israel Weant." "I knew something awful was
happening." Nora sob's as she runs to the phone. She
gets Phoenix. Mulcahy hurries out of the field, answers
phone. When he hears he drops the receiver and hurries
out. You see him gather the men and start. Then you
see Nora grab her sunbonnet and run in the direction
Israel took.

Back in Boone's cabin Boone slings Israel around very
like a cat with a mouse. Mercy cries out to her hus-
band, "Don't kill him, I'll go with you quietly, only don't
kill him!" Boone holds Israel by the neck, he sneers at
Mercy. "Kill him, do you think I'm fool enough to com-
mit murder? I'll lock him in the cellar."

Then Israel saw what he must do. He whispers be-
tween clenched teeth, "God see you for yourself that I
can't kill him. I've no strength; but if you'll help me, I can
make him kill me. We can do that." He sprang at Boone
just as a cornered fox turns on dogs. He tormented
Boone. He grabs for Boone's pistol, he seizes it. Boone
wrenches it from him, then hits Boone's wrist. Boone
loses his temper. "Damn you, take that." Boone raises
the pistol, holds the muzzle against Israel's side. Israel
recalls last night, how Boone shamed him. Now he faces
the muzzle and laughs, "But you don't dare. You've no
nerve!"

Boone, losing the last vestige of self control, fires.
Before his victim has sunk to the floor, he realizes his
mistake. He starts to fly, dragging Mercy with him. then
realizes that she is sure to bring the police upon him. He
releases her, runs, calling the men. He tells them to
scatter. He mounts a horse, and gallops off. The men
follow.

Back in the cabin, Mercy hurries to where Israel lies.
She claps her hands: "Boone killed him," she moans.
Israel rises to his knees, "Never be frightened again, you
are free at last." He totters, she tries to support him.
"Aye, aye, my wife. But she sobs. He smiles, "It is nothing;
if this is death, then there is no sting." His head grows so
heavy that he cannot hold it up. Neither can Mercy hold
his body erect. They sink to the floor. Outside, Mulcahy
and the ranchmen ride up. Nora runs in from the back.
They hurry into the kitchen. When Mercy sobs by the
dying man's body, Israel opens his eyes. She puts her arm
under his head, and he whispers, "It is the best thing I
ever did in all my life." He closes his eyes. If "It is
sown in dishonor, it is raised in Glory. It is sown in
weakness, only to be raised in Power.

Mulcahy and Nora drive near. Mercy puts her finger
to her lips. His men remove their hats. Nora kneels by
Mercy. She sobs, "He was such a good man." Then there
should flash on the screen a group of singing angels, a
copy of Corregio's group in St. John's church at Parma
would make a beautiful tableau. These angels should
smile, and this script should appear on the screen. "Then
all the angels in heaven said 'Amen.'" Fade out.

Fade in. The story now returns to the ranch, Mulcahy
and his men carry Israel's body shoulder high down the
steps of his own house. Inside the women embrace. And
so he passed out and on; and behold, all the trumpets
sounded for him, on the other side. A picture of the
same angels sounding a fanfare on bugles. Back to scene.
Mercy to Nora—still listening.

THE END.

VAN LOAN'S OWN CORNER

(Continued from Page 8)

IN looking over the scripts sent me by aspiring
screen writers, I note that the "sex" stories are always
written by women. Maybe someone can explain this!

I WISH people wouldn't write me, "I could write
a better picture than that." That may be true,
but, I would like to inform my correspondents that
they don't know what went into the making of that
picture. They have no way of telling what hap-
pended to the story during its production. If you
write a good story it will be produced, and, you
will be able to recognize it, too.

AFTER you have written your story, go and see
some of the big successes. Then go home and
read your own over again. When you've done this,
you will realize that it means work to write a suc-
cessful play.

MANY people ask me whether they should
write a brief or detailed synopsis. By all
means write a detailed synopsis. It is very easy
to write a brief synopsis, but the producer wants
to see how you would work your story out. I have
never sold a brief synopsis. I don't expect to.

A CONTINENTAL woman, after seeing one
of our costume pictures, wrote me the fol-
lowing: "Your extras and players are ap-
parently ill at ease in period costumes of other
countries. These productions really need foreign
actors. Your people are stiff and formal—they
lack grace. They look too modern, and not enough
care is given to dressing the hair. They lack proper
carriage. In other words they " strut in borrowed
plumes." In "Passion," for instance, even the
most obscure player seemed to "fit," for the for-
eign peoples have historical association back of
them." As she did not touch upon the story angle.
I prefer to remain silent on her criticism.
Photodramatist's Service Bureau

A New Department for Everyone Who Writes

WITH this issue Photodramatist inaugurates its Service Bureau for writers. Each month we will publish a list of reliable fiction and photoplay markets, to which authors may submit manuscripts; also, a tabulation of all prize contests open to writers. Being devoted to creative writing, Photodramatist confines this service to the enumeration of magazines which purchase original fiction. Incidentally, the editors have carefully eliminated from the list all indefinite markets or fiction magazines which do not pay satisfactory rates or which make payment following publication.

Subscribers to Photodramatist in submitting stories to the magazines enumerated consequently may be reasonably certain that their stories will be carefully read and that prompt decision and satisfactory payment will be made in case of purchase. There are, of course, certain technical and class magazines that also deal fairly with writers, but these do not consider original, creative work.

In naming the photoplay markets, it is impossible for Photodramatist or any other magazine to list them excepting in a general way. That is, we offer to our readers the names and addresses of all reliable studios and big independent companies, together with the types of stories they ordinarily are willing to consider for purchase. It must be remembered, though, that the demand often changes over-night, and, consequently, we advise those who take advantage of this list not to feel discouraged in case their scripts are returned with the notation, "Not in the market for this type of material."

The Photodramatist Service Bureau, however, differs from any other service to writers in that it supplements its general list of markets with free, direct-by-mail, over-night advice regarding market conditions. In other words, write to the Service Bureau at any time concerning marketing problems, and your query will receive immediate attention. Owing to the large number of persons who will take advantage of this service, we must, of course, request that a stamped, self-addressed envelope for reply accompany such inquiries.

Fiction Markets

THE following list of fiction markets includes only magazines that pay for fiction upon acceptance at a rate of one cent per word, or better. Magazines which ordinarily pay over two cents are marked with an asterisk. A double asterisk indicates those paying highest rates. In submitting work to these markets, writers should, to insure the return of their manuscripts, enclose stamped, self-addressed envelopes:

Action Stories—41 Union Square, New York.
Adventure—Spring & Macdougal Sts., New York.
Argosy All-Story Magazine—280 Broadway, New York.
Asia—627 Lexington Ave., New York.
*Atlantic Monthly—8 Arlington St., Boston.
Black Mask—25 W. 45th St., New York.
Blue Book—36 S. State St., Chicago.
Bookman—244 Madison Ave., New York.
Breezy Stories—377 Fourth Ave., New York.
*Century Magazine—353 Fourth Ave., New York.
*Cosmopolitan Magazine—119 W. 40th St., New York.
County Life—Garden City, L. I., N. Y.
Detective—12 Vance Street.
Detective Stories Magazine—79 Seventh Ave., New York.
Everybody's—Spring & Macdougal Sts., New York.
Farm and Fireside—381 Fourth Ave., New York.
*Good Housekeeping—119 W. 40th St., New York.
Holland's Magazine—Dallas, Texas.
Live Stories—9 E. 40th St., New York.
Love Story Magazine—79 Seventh Ave., New York.
*McCall's Magazine—236 W. 37th St., New York.
*McClure's—80 Lafayette St., New York.
*McLean's Magazine—143 University Ave., Toronto, Ont.
*Metropolitan Magazine—452 Fourth Ave., New York.
*Modern Priscilla—85 Broad St., Boston.
Munsey—280 Broadway, New York.
*People's Story Magazine—79 Seventh Ave., New York.
*People's Home Journal—28 Lafayette St, New York.
*People's Popular Monthly—Des Moines, Iowa.
*Photoplay Magazine—23 W. 45th St., New York.
*Pictorial Review—200 W. 39th St., New York.
*Popular Magazine—79 Seventh Ave., New York.
*Red Book—36 S. State St., Chicago.
*Saturday Evening Post—Independence Square, Philadelphia.
*Saucy Stories—25 W. 35th St., New York.
Sea Stories—79 Seventh Ave., New York.
Short Stories—Garden City, Long Island, N. Y.
Smart Set, The—25 W. 45th St., New York.
Snappy Stories—9 E. 40th St., New York.
*Success—1133 Broadway, New York.
*Sunset Magazine—San Francisco, Calif.
*Telling Tales—80 E. 11th St., New York.
Top Notch—79 Seventh Ave., New York.
True Story Magazine—119 W. 40th St., New York.
Western Story Magazine—79 Seventh Ave., Ne w York.
*Woman's Home Companion—381 Fourth Ave., New York.
*Woman's World—107 So. Clinton St., Chicago.

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Photoplay Markets

BELOW is list of studios which furnish a general and fairly steady market for various types of photoplays. In each case, please address your manuscript to the Scenario Editor and enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope for return. It is especially important in submitting photoplays to keep a copy of your work, since motion picture companies, although endeavoring to return all material, are not required to do so by law and your manuscript may be lost.

Fox Studios—1401 No. Western Ave., Hollywood, Calif.—Comedy dramas, melodramas and Western dramas for the following stars: Shirley Mason, Charles Jones, Wm. Russell, Wm. Farnum and Tom Mix.
Garson Studios—1845 Glendale Blvd., Los Angeles, Calif.—Feminine lead dramas for Clara Kimball Young.
Goldwyn Studios—Culver City, Calif.—Strong modern dramas and comedy dramas for male or female leads.
Ince Studios—Culver City, Calif.—Strong dramas or comedy dramas for male or female leads.
Lasky Studios—1530 Vine St., Hollywood, Calif.—Dramas with unusually big themes or comedy dramas for the following stars: Walter Hiers, Jack Holt, Betty Compson, Gloria Swanson, Pola Negri, Bebe Daniels, Thomas Meighan, Elise Ferguson and Alice Brady; or for all-star casts.
Long Beach Studios—Long Beach, Calif.—Western dramas for male leads or for all-star casts.
Mayer-Schulberg Studios—800 Mission Road, Los Angeles, Calif.—Strong modern dramas for male or female leads, or for all-star casts.
Metro Studios—Romaine & Cahuenga Ave., Hollywood, Calif.—Comedy dramas for Viola Dana, or strong dramas for all-star casts.
R.C. Studios—780 Gower St., Hollywood, Calif.—Dramas or comedy dramas for the following stars: Ethel Clayton, Harry Carey, Jane Novak and Carter de Haven.
Selznick Productions—care of United Studios, 5341 Melrose Ave., Hollywood, Calif.—Dramas or comedy dramas for male or female leads.
Tigerhut Studios—1708 Talmadge Ave., Hollywood, Calif.—Melodramas or romantic comedy dramas for Earl Williams or for all-star casts.
Graf Productions, Inc.—care of Pacific Studios, San Mateo, Calif.—Strong dramas for male or female leads, or for all-star casts.
Orca Studios—55th & 10th St., New York City—Strong dramas or melodramas for male or female leads, or for all-star casts.

Prize Contests

The Forest Theatre of Carmel, California, offers a prize of $100 for an original play suitable for presentation on its outdoor stage during the summer of 1923. No limitation as to subject, but should be of medium length. Closes February 1st. Address Mrs. V. M. Porter, Forest Theatre, Carmel, California.

The SUN, Northampton, Mass., offers a $10 prize for the best monthly contribution on the subject promoting open-minded consideration of all theories and practices of art and combating influences hostile to such consideration.

San Diego Players, San Diego, California, offers prizes of $100 for the best full-length play (to cover two hours’ performance) and $50 for a one-act play (not to exceed 45 minutes). Approximate playing time must be indicated on manuscript. Contestants must be residents of the United States. Manuscripts must reach Francis P. Buckley, 3523 Albatross St., before February 15, 1923.

The Missouri Writers’ Guild, Kansas City Chapter, offers cash prizes of $100 for the best short story and $25 for the best poem written by residents of the state of Missouri. For particulars write to Contest Secretary, 2802 E. 35th St., Kansas City.

The Haversack and the Torchbearer, boys’ and girls’ magazines, published at Nashville, Tenn., announce prize contests as follows:

Best story of 2500 to 3000 words for the Haversacks First prize, $100; second prize, $90; third prize, $50. Best story, same length, for the Torchbearer. First prize, $100; second prize, $90; third prize, $50. Stories to be confined to the age group for which the periodicals are intended—ten to seventeen years. Eliminate such things as dances, slang, killings and cruelty to animals. Manuscripts to be in the hands of Contest Editor, Haversack or Torchbearer, 810 Broadway, Nashville, Tennessee, by January 10, 1923.

Gloom, Los Angeles, Calif., offers prizes of $500 each month for a period of ten months to writers of jokes and stories. Jokes must be good and must not exceed 100 words; stories must be humorous and not exceed 1000 words. $200, $100, $75 and $25 will be paid for the best four stories, and $50, $25, $15 and $10 for the best four jokes printed each month in the magazine.

Films and the Church

(Continued from Page 6)

that this new contraption is also a gift of God and meant to be put to the service of the church, same as the old printing-press.

True, there are several thousand churches already equipped with projection apparatus or contracting with movie houses for exhibition of church stories. But where are the stories?

In the first place, what is a church story?

Technically, it is the same as a theater story. If a story is dramatically weak, dull, slow, wordy, preachy, uninteresting, it is just as unsuitable to the church public as to the theatre public. Some of the early Life of Christ and other biblical or historic pictures, often shown in churches, are viewed with more veneration and appreciation than they would be in the theater, but the technical defects such as lack of close-ups, etc., are felt just the same. An ordinary story, no matter how good and wholesome and important the "moral" has no place in the church unless it is technically up to the standard. Some of the stuff handed to the churches by unscrupulous or ignorant distributors is an insult and an outrage. Some of it is of the highest caliber, however.

In regard to the material of the story, there is again but little difference between a church story and a theater story, generally speaking. A church story does not necessarily deal directly with church affairs. The hero need not be a minister, nor the heroine an officer of the Ladies’ Aid. I have seen crook plays, underworld stories, Western dramas, rollicking comedies that could have served as better church stories than some of the so-called religious plays on the market.

The thing that makes the church story is the theme and the spirit in which the theme is treated. In other words, it is primarily the personality of the writer. Secondly, of course, it depends on what the continuity writer, the subtitle writer and the director are going to do with the original story. One word in a subtitle will sometimes make or mar the character of the entire story. But with the growing demand for better stories the real creator of the story, the original writer, is coming into his own more and more. After all, the author’s conception of life, the spirit that animates his creative work, gives the story its life and character.

Should there not be a few hundred or a few thousand potential screen writers among the clergy, their wives, sons, daughters, friends, church members, just as capable as the majority of those that are now supplying the stories?

Why not? Why not sit down to try it?

The masterpieces of architecture, painting, sculpture, music, many of them created by devout Christians, proclaim the glory of God and serve the greatest of all causes, the spreading of the Gospel. And if you look at some of the masterpieces of the screen art and think of the man or woman who first conceived the idea of the play and worked for weeks and months to bring it into concrete being, you will say that this profession is as serious, dignified and as worthy of man’s best aspirations and efforts as any other.
THE VALUE OF TRAINING

(Continued from Page 12)

to solve the Sphinx-riddle of existence will not entitle to membership.

It is a hand of workers, not drones—of those like the one I quoted at the beginning of this article, who has held down her job of wife and mother and grandmother, and yet demands that her brain be further fed and trained and ready for the always new demands of ever new days, and so is again going to school.

In sharp contrast is the wife-parasite—the automaton who allows her brain to "jell" and wonders, in lachrymose self-pity, why her man grew tired of her. She has forgotten that life is fluid, not static. Bridal emotionalism fizzles out. The adoring swain grows into a critical man who belongs to a man's world of effort and construction. And if her mind does not keep step with his, she will soon find an abyss of her own digging between them, deep and wide as the Styx.

But the woman who keeps shoulder to shoulder with her man has the double joy of effort for its own sake and of companionship. And it is worth while, because the harvest is a wealth of friendships that count.

An incident to illustrate:

She had been leading woman, he playwright and star. I knew them through many years of stern work and joyful vagabondage up and down the earth, of success, of joyous hail and farewell for those who laughed and wept when their art willed it so, and who watched for their return eagerly.

Clay Clement, best remembered for his "Southern Gentleman" and "New Dominion," and his beautiful wife, Karra Kenwyn, and both now passed behind the green curtain.

He went first. Then Karra continued the pilgrimage alone. And so one night we talked it over in her dressing room while she made up for her role in "Peg o' My Heart."

They had been colorful years, glorious years—

"And now—?" I asked. She dropped her hands among the litter of little pots on the dressing table and leaned back and stared at me.

"And now—it's all over. He's gone. The Old Guard have scattered. The lights are out. I am—tired. But, oh, it was worth while!"

The whip and spur of creating things—of being one of that splendid chariot race of those who, win or lose, still strive. And striving, live!

It was all told in that—it was "worth while."

And that is why the standard of values is changing and a restless generation is turning from its flesh-pots, hungry, and seeking the something they have missed, that is worthwhile. The brassy sun of commercialism is setting, and vaporous tapestries of wondrous dyes are weaving on Imagination's aerial looms. Materialism has been tried and found wanting. The world has been on a Bacchanalian debauch, where Appetite ruled, and Intelligence shrank and veiled its face.

And a morning after of aching head and sated senses has discovered the truism that those who feed grossly pay—the "worth while" is not for them. And a very sick world that is rolling groggily in a morass of stupidities and mistakes, is beginning to see at last the Michael with a flaming sword who stands guard before the one gate that Midas may not pass, and who plants his shining heel on the painted face of Ignorance.

Call it Buddha, God or Spirit—what you will. But it is the divine spark that is in the brain of the dully trudging ploughboy who lifts his eyes to the far song of the lark. It is in the brain of the fabbed shop girl who foregoes her lunch to buy a sheaf of lilies. It is in the brain of the woman Richard the woman slaving in the hot kitchen, and of the woman staring with dreary eyes from her costly sedan, who both cry from hearts that hunger, that old and dreadful cry—"Eli! Eli! Lama sabachthanl!"—Why hast thou forsaken me, thou god of the meaning of it all?

And it is that spark that now gives the new day of the dreamer, the visionist, the impractical seeker of the clouds. It is the day of those who venture to think, and who want to know how. Imagination has risen from the welter of brutal years and is calling again to her own. And without imagination, the woman in the kitchen and she of the costly sedan were alike paupers.

The "silver sheet" has called to them, and the printed page has opened wide in invitation, and as the new day grows, the "worth while" will wash clean the old horrors, and the boy and the shop girl, the woman and the man, who yesterday walked their weary treadmill round, will turn eagerly to the vast and beautiful world of imagery that opens to them on every side.

When Lincoln crouched to the light of the fire and fed his restless brain from the little handful of tattered books, he was building himself into a something that would be ready for whatever summons might come. He did not wait for a better or easier time to study—he knew the value of today. And he very humbly sought men of thought and erudition, to learn of them.

And the written words of that calloused hand are now treasures among the classics. The simple phrases of the farm-boy are today as true in tone as is a perfect violin. The hand has been carved again and again in stone. Of it has been written much—a fragment read years ago comes back to me indistinctly—

"Along each knotted cord and vein, I trace the varying chart of years, The long, long striving, and the pain—The weight of Atlas—and the tears!"

And the man looms great in history because he never found himself too great to learn just a little more.

THE BUSINESS OF WRITING

By Robert Cortes Holliday and Alexander Van Rensselaer

A practical guide for authors on all the important points of successful writing from the preparation of the right manuscript to contracts and royalties. At all Bookshops $2.00
We Offer $1000 and Royalties
For New and Better Screen Stories Acceptable for Our Productions

UNDER the new Palmer Photoplay Production Plan—just inaugurated—we offer to those who can create scenarios acceptable for our own productions a minimum of $1000 and royalties.

This is the first time that new writers and photoplaywrights have ever had the opportunity to share in the success of screen stories of their own creation, and thus to capitalize on their powers of creative imagination.

In addition, one hundred and sixty producing companies in Los Angeles alone, whom we also serve as the greatest clearing house for screen stories, offer from $100 to $2000 for photoplays. And in spite of these rewards, the demands for new and better stories are not filled—stories of new life and vigor that the public wants today. A prominent director in one of the greatest studios emphasized this fact recently by offering $1000 for an idea from which he might construct a story.

New Writers Needed

EXPERIENCE has proved that these opportunities will not be filled by well-known authors, playwrights or short story writers. Most of them have failed in the past to write the most successful photodramas.

But these rich rewards will go to new writers, such as those whom we have discovered and developed in the past—men and women in every walk of life who perhaps do not now dream that they are qualified for this work.

Recently a California school teacher, a New York society matron, a Pennsylvania newspaper man, an underpaid office man in Utah and many others developed under our guidance the powers which we helped them to discover. Not only are we selling their stories to the great producers but also are we ready to purchase them ourselves on the royalty basis outlined above.

Test Yourself
—without cost or obligation

THOUGH perhaps unknown to you now, you may be endowed with this power, Creative Imagination, which makes a scenario writing career possible. Many have it who do not know that they possess it.

Because we know how many potential photodramatists are still undiscovered and because the demand for new and better screen writers is so great, we conduct this systematic search for hidden talent.

We open to men and women in every walk of life the chance to test themselves by our Palmer Test Questionnaire, sent free on request. Your answers to this novel questionnaire will indicate to us whether or not you have natural story-telling ability. If you have, you will receive further information relative to the Palmer Course and Service. If you have not, we will tell you so courteously and frankly.

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For they know that Creative Imagination, properly developed, is the power which lifts men and women to lofty heights in every field of endeavor; that builds great dams, factories and universities; that produces X-rays and radio; that writes masterpieces.

Is It You?

IF you are naturally endowed with creative imagination, it is worth while to develop it regardless of the use to which you wish to put this extraordinary power.

There is immense profit in it in any line of work or profession. Napoleon, Shakespeare, Edison, Marconi, De Forrest, Harriet Beecher Stowe—all great creators accomplished their wonders through this tremendous power.

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Palmer Photoplay Corporation, a Division of the Department of Education, Sec. 25, 1921

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CITY

STATE
have found favor with the young Sultan, where-
for he hath given them the Keys of the City that
they may freely come and go.” Mayhap I drowsed
in the warming light of the gaseous stove; for twi-
light had fallen and I was still without. Then it
appeared that the young Sultan had departed
by an inner door, forgetting that I awaited his plea-
sure. I was exceeding wroth and in my bitterness
did paraphrase the 107th quatrain:

“Better not submit your precious scroll
To Universal, oh you luckless soul,
Than drop by drop enlarge the flood that rolls
Hoarser with anguish as the films unroll.”

But as I turned to depart, came the keeper of the
Palace grounds, one named Julius Bernheim. He
spake me softly and led me through the vast esti-
tates of the Sultan. And I asked of him many
questions—such as how many Eunuchs within the
palace gates and he did answer, “Twenty-two.”**

SUCH was my eagerness to meet the young Sul-
tan, I did journey once again to his City. But
with the wisdom of experience this time I did
fetch with me some dried figs and a skin of goat’s
milk lest I be enhangered with long waiting. By
good fortune I had to wait but a few hours when I
was summoned into audience. The young Sultan
was most gracious and did cast a rapid eye over
what had cost me half a century of toil, and very
gently did point how that there was much yet to
do before my Rubaiyat could reach the high stand-
ard of the Universal Pictures, and further he did
affirm there was therein too much of wine and gin
but not enough of punch. Then too the tale ends
too somberly to please the Western World. “An
Empty Glass” he deemeth a most depressing last
thought. Then he did pace the chamber for a time,
talking the while, till before mine eyes grew a tale
as unlike mine as day to night—with floods and
fires and raving mobs—till naught was left but
mine title The Rubaiyat. And even as I pondered,
dazed, on the strange workings of The Land of
Magic Pictures, the Sultan’s eyes did glow with
exaltation of a burning thought. Quoth he, “Our
subjects know not the meaning of The Rubaiyat.
But I have a title that will ‘clean up.’” So there
was not left even the name! Sadly I asked him
how he would call it—this strange new story—and
he answered, “Omar of Omaha.”

When I did ask him what had this to do with the
work that I had writ, he answered with cheeriness
that to those who show pictures it matters not
at all so that the title “pulls them in.” And when
I reminded him that Omaha was a long, long way
from Persia, he explained very gently that from far
New York had come the word that there should be
no more costume pictures, and he told me how that
he would so change the story that he would split
the scene of my story to the New World and all
would be well.

*Translator’s note: An evident error. Mr. Moos unques-
tionably thought that Omar was referring to “Units,” mean-
ing producing units.

But for all his youthful wisdom, I could not
bring myself to have so altered what I had writ
and I did roll up my scroll of script and sighing
deeperly went away from there.

With the coming of the next moon, I shall relate the
strange ways of those who sell cars and of strange men
who would sell me plots in cemeteries, and further of my journey
to a City of burnished Goldwyn where I did have audience
with Prince Rupert of Many Hughes.

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SELLING YOUR PICTURE

(Continued from Page 10)

ing such brutal vengeance when the unprotected girl was menaced?" That one scene sold the story to the producer and sold the picture to the public.

At a certain Southern California studio, a plant typical of all of them, there's an individual who calls himself "the linkman." He's the link between the producing department of the company and the selling organization in New York. He watches the individual units at work, sees their film in the projection room from day to day, and finally helps pass judgment on the completed pictures. His job is to inform the New York office of the salient features in each picture; to analyze its potential box office value; pick out the selling points. Were he to overlook a vitally important feature by which public interest could be aroused in some great production, he would probably become the "missing link," for it might cost the company dearly.

"The Miracle Man," released as a so-called "program picture," probably wouldn't have caused more than a ripple in the sea of public interest, as excellent as it was. But with the intensive exploitation given it, this picture became the shibboleth of whole crews of glib promoters trying to entrap wary capital in cinematic investments. Even today it's a queer salesman who, in trying to sell film promotion stock, doesn't tell of the profits "The Miracle Man" made.

The reason for this phenomenal success was that the picture was different. It was easily exploited because there was a lot in it to talk about. It had an exceptionally good title. After the picture had run its course in the principal cities, it was brought back whenever some faith healer, either through seemingly miraculous cures or interference by the police, attained undue prominence in the press.

Other pictures of far less merit have earned big profits because they were skillfully exploited. It is a known fact that people have been lured to see some of the most inane pictures imaginable by clever advertising. Of course this deception is a boomerang for the producer and exhibitor eventually, because the public resents being hoodwinked. Some men have cried "Wolf!" too often and consequently can't get an audience when they start to shout about a forthcoming film.

A certain picture not long ago was named for a popular song. It was a great idea for the producers and the music publishers, because each benefited by the other's advertising of the title. There were innumerable "tie-ups," as the exploitation men call them. The artistic success of the picture is a moot question, but the one who thought of it evolved a bright idea from an advertising standpoint.

This instance is a good example of why the main titles of pictures are so frequently changed. To be a good investment a picture must be easy to sell, and nothing is a greater help to the salesmen than a catchy title. Were Dickens writing today, it is unlikely that many of his works would be filmed with their original titles. "Martin Chuzzlewitt," "Barnaby Rudge," "A Tale of Two Cities"—these titles meant nothing when the books were written. Of course succeeding generations have come to know the stories for their literary excellence and thus the names have attained a definite "box-office" value. But if Dickens had written "A Tale of Two Cities" directly for the screen within the past few years, the story would probably have been given to the world under a title suggesting the supreme sacrifice Sydney Carton made for the woman he loved.

Every feature production today has its press book. This is a collection of advance stories, feature articles, short news notes and reviews, sent to the exhibitor before he is to show the picture. The material is prepared by former newspaper men who know what is most likely to find its way into print. The exhibitor is also given advertisements of different sizes and styles, with cuts. He is given suggestions on exploiting the picture in his territory. In most cases if he will follow instructions in the press book, he can have moderate success with his booking without the least wear and tear on his own brain. Some exhibitors frequently evolve ideas superior to those in the press books. But this exploitation material is prepared to aid both classes.

In addition to this printed matter, the books contain lithographic samples of billboard posters of various sizes that may be had from the nearest film manager. Some of these approach real art in their composition and design. They are prepared by high class commercial artists and are a great help in arousing public interest. There is so much going on all the time that the average person must be shown some good reason why he should see a picture. He must be convinced of its entertainment value before he will slide his money through the wicket to the queen of the cash register there enthroned. Even the best of pictures need this exploitation service. The poor ones get more of it, but it is getting more and more difficult to palm off shoddy amusement goods through the tub-thumping methods of the early cinematic days.

Preparing a press book requires ingenuity if it is to be both worthwhile. All the studio men from the publicity department is assigned to each production. He is in constant touch with the director and the players. He follows them about the studio and on location, listens to all off-stage gossip, keeps track of little interesting incidents in production that are never registered by the camera. When the picture is completed he sees it in the studio projection room.

All the stories in the press book are briefly written. They seldom exceed 300 words. Many are but short paragraphs. But when the work is finished it gives a concise idea of what it's all about. The real work of the book lies in the advertising analysis of the picture, its "tips" to the exhibitor on the selling points of the film. The author, the cast or the star, the director—these are frequently the magnets that will draw people into the theatre. But occasionally none of these names is big enough in itself. The story must have an unusual human touch that places it above the ordinary. For exploitation purposes this must be epitomized—expressed in a line that can be used in all posters, advertisements and news stories.
**Bring the Studios to your elbow as you work on that screen story**

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**Viewpoint of the Studio Writer**

Staff writers look out an adjacent window or take up the studio telephone to check on some important detail that will improve the story before it goes to press. Other writers just as prominent, but removed from the studio, reach for "Opportunities in the Motion Picture Industry" and glean this advice to strengthen their stories.

You'll want these books at your elbow. You will consult them continually as you write your photoplays. They are to the writer what the builder's assistant is to the designer. They keep the flights of fancy within bounds of practical production methods and open up new plot fields by showing how easily "impossible" things can be achieved.

Remember the producer judges the story by his facilities for producing it. The writer who writes his tales with consideration for his ultimate market, the producer, is the writer whose stories reach the screen. "Opportunities in the Motion Picture Industry" gives you 320 pages of this valuable information and furnishes you with an up-to-date technical reference book on all phases of picture making.

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I have just read "Opportunities in the Motion Picture Industry." These books, besides providing most fascinating reading, are filled with information that will prove of great value not only to persons who aspire to studio positions but to anyone who is attempting to create stories for the screen.

If I were beginning a career as a scenario writer, I would not hesitate to pay fifty times the price asked for these books if they were not obtainable for a lesser amount.

They are the first authoritative work of their kind that I have ever seen. The Photoplay Research Society is to be commended for making it possible to secure this hitherto unavailable information at such a low price.

**DOUGLAS Z. DOTY.**

Mr. Doty, formerly editor Century and Cosmopolitan Magazines and Fiction editor at Universal Film Company, is now Associate Editor of the Palmer Photoplay Corporation.

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WITH PRODUCERS

(Continued from Page 39)

Wallace Worseley is directing from the adaptation by Perley Poore Sheehan and E. F. Lowe, Jr. Lon Chaney will be the star; his support includes Raymond Hatton, Patsy Ruth Miller and Kate Lester. Lois Weber resumes activity as the director of "Jewel," by Clara Louise Burnham; while Rupert Julian strives manfully to film "The Merry-Go-Round," which Von Stroheim commenced—incidentally, Von is now a Goldwynner.

At the Goldwyn Studios, all the talk—it isn't much more yet—is of "Ben Hur;" the clan is gathering from all the points of the compass to talk over this production. Hugo Ballin is nearing completion on "Vanity Fair," in which Mabel Ballin will star and Rupert Hughes has just commenced actual work on "Souls for Sale." This is the Major's most recent contribution to magazine fiction, but it was undoubtedly written with the screen in view. The author-director has selected Richard Dix, Mae Busch, Lew Cody and Barbara La Marr for the leading roles.

Having gotten "Rupert of Hentzau" well under way—Claire Windsor, Irving Cummings and Gertrude Astor having been added to the cast announced here last month—Selznick signed up Corinne Griffith for the leading role in a re-filming of "The Common Law." George Archainbaud will direct, from Ed Montaine's adaptation, and Conway Tearle will play the male lead. And the enterprising Warner Brothers have begun on Sinclair Lewis' "Main Street," which Julian Josephson has adapted and on which Harry Beaumont will direct Monte Blue and Helen Ferguson.

Fundamentally, in the arts as in politics, "the voice of the peepul" rules, despite the sophisticated negation of the "intelligentsia." And, just as fundamentally, that voice proclaims for the more worth-while things; it may be a little slow in the proclamation, sometimes it is a little muddled, but in the long run, it is right, praise be. Therein lies the greatest hope for the serious photodramatist, because that voice has spoken for better stories—and that voice is law. Amen!

REVIEWS STAND

(Continued from Page 14)

tions, The Sin Flood, The Eternal Flame and Oliver Twist, all ranked remarkably high. Rupert Hughes, assuming directorial duties for the first time, brought forth Remembrance, his best picture to date.

Penrhyn Stanlaws made one beautiful photoplay, The Little Minister, and then settled down to a program of mediocrity. Marshall Neilan failed to prove much of anything, although Fools First was intermittently good.

Von Stroheim presented his supreme effort, Foolish Wives, and then subsided. George Fitzmaurice made one fine picture, but John S. Robertson did nothing that is worthy of note. Allen Dwan and Robert Vignola established themselves definitely in the circles of the elect.

Leatrice Joy proved her genuine ability in Manslaughter, and is legitimately a star. So is Alice Terry. Pola Negri, however, was not heard from. Neither, except in one instance, was Lillian Gish.

Wallace Reid went back. Charles Ray came back. Thomas Meighan stood still.

So it goes. The heroes of yesteryear are the goats of today. Every star should mark his fame with the label, "Fragile—Handle With Care."

The Annual List

THESE are the outstanding photoplays of the year:

Robin Hood.
Tall'able David.
Grandma's Boy.
When Knighthood Was In Flower.
Oliver Twist.
Nanook of the North.
Orphans of the Storm.
The Eternal Flame.
Blood and Sand.
The Prisoner of Zenda.
One Glorious Day.

Those careful readers who take the trouble to check up on this list will be pained to observe that it includes eleven pictures, thereby violating all the accepted laws and standards.

However, it is my choice—and I intend to stick to it.

HUMAN INTEREST

(Continued from Page 7)

it and start it into growth—there's the real purpose of story-telling. And right there is the story-teller's great human responsibility—to make his stuff live by putting into it clean motives, staunch ideals, high integrity—but such motives and ideals and integrity as are the common property of all mankind. I have faith to believe that we're all trying to be as decent as we handily can from day to day; but that isn't enough. To set a fair standard of decency for a lifetime—that's more like it. And then to fight loyally to maintain the standard set—that's the stuff! That's the stuff great stories are made of; that's drama; that's human interest.

Maybe there wasn't any real drama in the life of Eden before the Fall; but in this business of striving to win back to Eden again—there's material for all the story-tellers who will come along from now till the final crack of doom.

LITERARY VENEER

(Continued from Page 26)

write them into sentences. This will fix them in your mind, make them real for you. And it will not be a bore; you will find it distinctly entertaining. Best of all it will teach you intellectual honesty.

Perhaps you are getting tired of this word honest in connection with the study of English; you wish I would not harp so tediously upon one string. But stop to think. If your desire is to write are you not first of all a craftsman? An artist in embryo, mayhap, but first and foremost a laborer, a mechanic. And you will never be anything else unless you are entirely honest with regard to three things: your tools, your product and your public.

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They are the first authoritative work of their kind that I have ever seen. The Photoplay Research Society is to be commended for making it possible to secure this hitherto unavailable information at such a low price. . . .

DOUGLAS Z. DOTY.

Mr. Doty, formerly editor Century and Cosmopolitan Magazines and fiction editor at Universal Film Company, is now Associate Editor of the Photoplay Corporation.

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4
Background

By Sheldon Krag Johnson

Down the many echoed aisles of experiences, now long past, come a hundred thousand impulses and reactions, come winds that impel violently, soft perfumes that gently lead, whisperings of all the wordless Things of Nature bidding us harken to this or that.

Many and various are these streams of thought that steadily play upon us. Race thought, heredity and immediate environment; education and economic pressure and all the messages of history and of literature make their contributions to that portion in each of us for which we have but recently found a name—the background.

What is your background? We see plainly the you in the foreground, we see the frame of the ever shifting setting. But what is in the background? What have you behind your attention when you bring it to a focus upon the problem before you. What is the pressure and the volume of the living stream you bring into play upon that which confronts you?

Within that unrestricted district of the subconsciousness what clusters of ideas, what appraisements and values are subtly influencing you from behind the threshold of your objective consciousness as you look out upon life’s busy street?

Do you know that it is the special privilege, nay duty, of that objective part of you, that part which says “I do this,” or “I think that,” to make positive selection of the material that is ever flowing into your own peculiar background? Do you know that for all the uncounted influences that are now bearing upon you, you are responsible, either by tacit acceptance or by active endorsement? That it is for you to say whether you shall be the helpless, hapless chip at the mercy of undirected currents or whether you shall ride the Infinite Waters a full manned ship with stable keel, bellied sails of power and a living helm of purpose?

Seek your background, control that background and be master of the hosts, dark and light, that arise therefrom.

Seek that training and education which makes you participate in principles, which does not stop at the mere acquisition of facts. Learn to make your own deductions. Do not accept them machine made from others.

Genius has been defined as mostly perspiration. Maybe it is in the acquisition of data, but if this were all there is to genius one would need but to memorize the encyclopedia. It is not all. Genius is the power of correlation. It is the power of propagation in the realm of thought.

Think from the plane of principles and let old seeds combine to bring forth new plants in the Garden of the World.
From Pen to Silversheet

By Melvin M. Riddle

XIV—THE FILM LABORATORY

WHAT is the next step in the treatment of motion picture film after it passes through the motion picture camera, with an exposed record of the scenes filmed during the day? This is a question which very few could thoroughly answer, because the laboratory, the last great department of studio production, is a place to which very few people are admitted. The average studio visitor never gets a glimpse into this complex and highly interesting department.

The necessity for absolute perfection of organization and efficiency in the various phases of laboratory work was recently emphasized by a Lasky Studio expert when he remarked:

"AFTER all the expense and work and genius involved in the making of a motion picture, the only thing that a film company has to sell is a series of little pictures on a strip of film. If the laboratory is inefficient in its final treatment of this film, then the work of all other departments is injured and if the laboratory workers, through accident or mistake should destroy the precious celluloid, then all the efforts of other departments, all the time and money involved, have been for naught and nothing remains to show for such expense of time, genius and money."

In describing the modern motion picture laboratory, its operations, the various processes which the film undergoes therein, we shall take the plant in which the Lasky laboratory work is done as an example. This plant is housed in a large concrete, fireproof building consisting of many rooms and branches and several vaults in which the film is stored. It is operated continuously, night and day, three hundred and sixty-five days in the year and two distinct shifts are kept constantly employed.

Before we proceed further, an explanation of the two kinds of film used in motion picture photography is essential. These two types are negative film and positive film. Negative film is the kind that is run through the motion picture camera and corresponds to the photographer's plate or the kodak film in still photography. Positive film is the type that is run through the projection machine and exhibited on the screen and corresponds to the finished paper print in still photography, except that in this case, transparent film is used, so that the light may reflect it on the silversheet. The negative, after being exposed by the cameraman, through his camera, is developed in the laboratory and from this finished negative the positive is printed by being placed in direct contact with the negative and exposed to strong light, and afterwards developed and fixed in chemical solutions. Any number of positive prints can be struck from this basic negative film, which is the only record of the picture and is carefully guarded and preserved.

THE average output of Lasky film is eight hundred seventy-five thousand feet of positive film a week and from fifteen to twenty-five thousand feet of negative film each day. The negative film is sent into the laboratory by the cameraman at intervals during the day. Every time he has used up a four hundred foot roll of film he sends it in to the laboratory for development and printing and at the end of the day's work, the directors, cameramen and players assemble in the projection room in a corner of the building and look at a sample positive print of the day's takes. The negative, if okeyed by the director, is then stored in a vault reserved for that particular picture.

Few Writers Realize

the great importance of the laboratory expert in the preparation of films. Although the story is the foundation of any good photoplay, and the director, actors and cameramen play a vital part in motion picture production, the fact remains that the best screen drama ever conceived would fail of success, were it improperly developed and printed. Mr. Riddle, in his usual interesting manner, gives you a clear insight into the functions of this essential phase of the picture industry.

The negative rolls may be identified at any time by a key plate, containing the numbers of the picture, the name of the director and the color which the positive is to be tinted, which key plate is photographed on to the finished of each scene filmed during the day. After the sample positive film has all been assembled, cut and is in its final, perfect state, the negative is cut in like manner, after this sample print. Then, from this completed, assembled negative strip, the many positive prints needed for general distribution throughout the country, are struck. The key numbers on the negative are also printed right on to each roll of positive film in the earlier stages of preparation and identify the positive and enable the director in assembling the various short scenes into one, continuous, coherent strip, which constitutes the picture.

(Continued on Page 38)
Fictionizing Modern Business
Story Material Plentiful in Everyday Life

By Wilbur Hall

As an authority on business, I am probably the most successful teacher of voice culture in the known world.

I confess—at times I boast—that I cannot add a double column of figures nine times without getting ten distinctly different answers, and if I had to take over and operate a small gent’s furnishings store, the Board of Trade would be sitting in the front door chanting the Misérere by the end of the third day.

And yet I have written and sold a considerable number of business stories to the magazines; I have even had a letter from a flourishing concern (to judge from its letter-head) somewhere in New England, asking me at what figure I would come to its shibang and make a survey of the plant with a view to cutting down the overhead and taking a tuck in the bills payable. Apparently and on the face of things I have fooled somebody badly.

Being a conscientious young man I pause to ask myself at this point: Have I? And sober consideration of the subject compels the answer: No.

When I was a newspaper reporter in Los Angeles, not so long ago, the managing editor had a feeling that the musical columns of his sheet were not written to make them of any interest to the ordinary man-on-the-street; he called me in one day and asked if I knew anything about music. I replied that I played the Victrola fluently and knew when the tenor in a barber shop quartette was singing off key, but that otherwise my musical mind was a blank.

“I guessed as much,” he said. “Beginning now you are the musical critic of The Tribune.”

And I was. For a year I went to concerts, grand opera, chamber programs, symphonies, coloratura seances and quintette afternoons and reported for my paper what happened there. Exactly as though it had been a dog-fight or a diocesan convention. The musical gentry had fits. They said I didn’t discern the difference between a concerto and an arpeggio, and I agreed with them. They tried to get me hanged and the newspaper office burned.

But months afterwards Len Behymer, the impresario of Los An-

That Drama Exists

Even in so-called cold-blooded modern American business life, is the contention of Mr. Hall. The writer who complains that lack of opportunity to travel reduces his chance to secure appropriate atmosphere is in error. Romance abounds on all sides. After all, the basis of any good story is ‘conflict.’ Where may conflict be found more readily than in the marts of commerce? Mr. Hall is one of the few American authors who have appreciated this fact and who have succeeded in the field of writing the ‘business story.’ But, he maintains, no matter what your setting, you must always observe the rules governing story construction.

The pearl of thought in this oyster of words is here: I was a reporter, writing of what I saw, heard and felt. Being without a musical education (or much of any other kind, when you come to that) I wrote in terms of the street. Being interested and having a dramatic sense, perhaps, I saw things in those musical events that the very high foreheads gentlemen on the other papers either did not see and hear or else scorned to notice. It seems barely possible to me that, as a matter of fact, I wrote better musical reviews or reports than my classical and erudite brethren.

And can it be possible that my business stories have a flavor and a new angle because I am, if ever there was one, a complete ignoramus, out-sider, layman, amateur and ass when it comes to the theory and practice of the commercial life? I think it can.

It does not need saying that there is material for the writer of fiction (for example) everywhere. And this our life. . . .

Finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks, Sermons in stones, . . . and material in everything! O. Henry wrote our first business romances, but he was so much more interested in people than he was in his mise-en-scene that very few people realize the fact. The Saturday Evening Post and the American Magazine first developed writers of modern business romances, and Edna Ferber was our first great and very successful fictionalist to open up the property and find the ledge. In the past ten years or so the modern American business story has come from many writers and from many parts of the country and now no one has any copyright on the idea, nor on the formula.

I MYSELF do not pretend to be an authority, but it may be helpful—at least may pass ten minutes for you—if I write what seems to me true of the technique of the business short story. The chances are eight to one that I will be wrong, because I doubt if anyone knows much about this elusive business of writing short tales, but my guess is as good as another’s, at any rate, and I have had some little experience.

In the first place, it is not sufficient to use business as a background and hope thus to write, necessarily, a good business story. As is true of all writing of fiction, despite the modern tendency towards photographic representations of life or towards clinical reports

(Continued on Page 36)
PERCY MACKAYE, the poet and playwright, is the latest recruit to the movies. His play, "The Scarecrow," is being picturized by the Film Guild, with Glenn Hunter in the leading role, and his services have been enlisted by James Ashmore Creelman, the adapter, and Frank Tuttle, the director of the Guild's productions. He will take an active part in the preparation of the picture.

This announcement, and the description of Mr. Mackaye as a poet and playwright, may cause some of those who inhabit the movie world to remark, "Oh, yes, another of those literary fellows is coming in to uplift us with some of his highbrow stuff. They come and go, but the movies go on forever without being bothered by them very much."

Which, it must be confessed, is pretty apt in most cases. The literary gentlemen who, from time to time, have married the movies to reform them haven't been amazingly successful. But the remark doesn't seem to fit Mr. Mackaye. It's just because he believes that the movies will go on forever, and just because he expects them to be the amusement of the people at large rather than the special fare of sequestered groups that he is interested in the screen—keenly interested, if one may judge from the earnestness and enthusiasm with which he talks. He says that motion pictures should be popular entertainment; that they should be made to appeal to the exalted, or the despised, if you feel that way about them, movie fan; that their stories must be the elemental and straightforward dramas loved by ninety out of every hundred people you pass on the street, but that—yet, here is the "but" you've undoubtedly been expecting—but that they should be given a significance, a truth, a character of genuineness, they do not as a rule possess at present.

"Why is 'Where Is My Wandering Boy Tonight?' popular?" says Mr. Mackaye. "Because it's elemental. It deals with human emotions. Now, suppose that we have such an elemental story, and by treatment, by imagination, raise it out of the rut of conventionality and obvious theatricality; suppose we go beneath the surface of its hackneyed plot and show human beings in its situations, people who will be more real and interesting to spectators than the real people they know because they will be more clearly and completely revealed; suppose, in our settings, in our continuity, in every department of production, the perceiving imagination of artists is put to work to bring out the fundamental truth of the story, wouldn't we then have a picture which every movie fan would enjoy as much as he enjoys the most superficial film of today, and at the same time wouldn't we have a picture which would mean something to every one, more or less in the case of any individual according to his or her capacity, but something to every one?"

"It's imagination that makes the difference, imagination in the treatment of the subject. That determines whether the story goes beneath the surface and brings up underlying truth or is merely a cold and meaningless recital of facts alleged to have occurred. Some one might have gone to a movie producer, for instance, and said, 'Why don't you make a statue of General Sherman on horseback?' And the producer might have been struck with the suggestion. 'Fine, that's a great idea. We'll make a statue of Sherman on horseback,' he might have exclaimed. And he would have considered the biggest part of the job already done. 'Who's to make the statue? Oh! There won't be any trouble about that. We'll find somebody, Saint Gaudens? Never heard of him. We'd better get somebody who's better known.'"

It might never occur to the producer, says Mr. Mackaye, that the idea of making a statue of Sherman is nothing at all, only a beginning, just as the bare plot of a story is only a starting point, but that the treatment of the statue, the imagination and ability at execution that goes into the actual production of the work, means the difference between Saint Gauden's Sherman and merely a statue of a man on a horse. What he had in mind, he went on, might be conveyed by the comparison of a Sargent portrait with a harshly lighted photograph of the same subject. The photograph might be a good likeness, but it would reproduce only the physical appearance of the man's face, whereas the portrait, while it would also be a likeness, would reveal the man himself. It would be a likeness of his true character as well as of his face.

From all of which it appears that Mr. Mackaye would not deprive the screen of its elemental stories, he would not even take from these stories the pretty girls, handsome heroes and smiling villains that the movie fans love, but he would have the elemental stories vivified by imaginative treatment, he would have the pretty girls, handsome heroes and smiling villains act their roles, interpret their characters, and not just pose conventionally before a camera. He would make each picture a portrait of life instead of a snapshot of physical people and settings.

RICHARD A. ROWLAND, General Manager of Associated First National, rises to remark: "To my way of thinking, while the director is a tremendous force in good picture making, the continuity writer is, in some respects, even more important, because it is he who must visualize and
then construct the story. If the story—or play—is poorly put together, the continuity writer is to blame.

"The earlier screen productions were experiments. Gradually we improved in photography, etc. We intrigued the interest of the public, then profited by that interest and led the public to expect much of us. We now have reached that stage in our development when we must live up to what the public expects. And what does the public expect? Good stories, told in a logical and convincing manner. Who is primarily responsible for turning out stories of that kind? The scenarist, or continuity writer. The producer gets an outline for a great play. It has big dramatic situations. He talks it over with his director, his star. Then the story is turned over to the continuity writer. Too often the continuity writer is let us say 'careless.' The situations are not made logical. The picture is shown to the public which, in these times, is discriminating; and often it insults their intelligence; and this is our danger.

"If every producer would bear in mind that his picture is 60 percent made in the scenario department, there would be more Big Time pictures. The picture should never be made worse than the story. It is for the continuity writer to see that the story is developed logically before it reaches the camera, and for the director to see that the picture lives up to the strength of story and continuity. We are facing a big danger in finding out how we are going to satisfy the public in motion pictures. The remedy is better scenario writing. The stories must be made more logical. We have improved from the stand-point of direction. Scenario writing as it now is being turned out seems to me, the weak spot in the making of pictures to-day. Weak not only in the continuity, the arrangement of situations, but in its seeming lack of knowledge as to what actually pleases or displeases the entertainment-loving public. The scenario writer of to-day is too inclined to 'hacknayism' in writing. He will get away from that by studying the effect of plays on audiences.

"Our producers have much to learn from this season's offerings, and if they are wise they will apply the remedies which they know are needed. It is only by facing a situation squarely that a fight is won—and our biggest fight right now is to give the public stories with entertaining value, developed logically by scenario writers, and directed with great respect for tempo and characterization."

Photography and direction have made great strides, to the benefit of the artistic nature of the production, but there is something still so terribly wrong that even this development does not satisfy us. And the big trouble is in the continuity. In this one respect pictures have almost stood still for years.

If there is a scene or subtitle in a finished photoplay that is not called for in the scenario, or continuity, of that photoplay, there is something wrong with the photoplay or continuity. Either the scene or subtitle should not be where it is or the continuity failed to make provision for its proper inclusion. And, in either case, nine times out of ten, the photoplay suffers, for anything put into a picture as an afterthought, during the actual process of picturization, is likely to be out of harmony with other things in the picture. It is almost certain to disturb the emphasis or tempo of the photoplay, and even if it is necessary, it will usually have the lack of finish characteristic of the makeshift. This is no academic conclusion. It stands to reason that a photoplay composed, to any considerable extent, of scenes and subtitles put in at different times and at different places after the camera has started grinding will not have the logical development and unity of a completely thought-out production. And yet, despite this truth, it is a fact that most of the photoplays made, ninety-nine if not absolutely one hundred per cent of them, surely include numerous scenes and subtitles not called for in their continuities. Which is one way of indicating one thing that's the matter with us. And the fault is primarily with continuity-writing. Directors, of course, have the pernicious habit of making up their pictures as they go along. They often stick in scenes that have no place in the photoplays they take charge of and title writers more frequently insert subtitles that are not only unnecessary but actually destroy scenes sufficient in themselves. But the excuse for all this is that continuities are incomplete. The directors and title writers, being compelled to make additions, take photoplays entirely into their own hands and reconstruct them to suit themselves. If, however, continuities were complete, if continuity writers were real photoplay authors, or cinema composers, and thought out their scenarios in terms of beautiful and expressive motion pictures, it would be possible to curb those who wish to reconstruct them.

It is apparent, then, that the continuity is of first importance, and that most of the photoplays you see would be a great deal better than they are if they had been made according to the specifications of complete, pictorially constructed continuities.

It often happens that a photoplay is a poor piece of work as a cinematographic composition, hop-skip-and-jumpy in continuity, dramatically illogical and unconvincing, stupid or inane in development, with a plot that cracks and creaks in a dozen different places, and this same photoplay may show one or more characters so accurately impersonated, so clear and compelling in separate scenes, that the spectator is interested in spite of himself, or, at any rate, in spite of the photoplay. For the duration of each of the separately vivified scenes he enjoys a genuine illusion. But how shall such a photoplay be judged? Is the whole worth sitting through for the sake of its better parts? It's impossible to answer the question categorically. So much depends on the photoplay itself, the number and excellence of the good scenes in it, and the badness of the bad. One good characterization cannot save a picture that is otherwise all wrong, but two true characters may make a pretty poor production worth seeing. But a good deal depends on the spectator, too—his attitude toward the movies in general, his expectations, his patience, his attentiveness.
A Practical Filing System for Authors

‘Storehouse’ for Ideas of Great Help to Busy Writers

By L. Hervey Parker

“T HE things you enjoy the most are the things you give away,” said a departed philosopher, in slightly different words, and this somehow corroborated my conviction that if we have something which has proved good we should pass it around. Hence I am setting before you some filing suggestions which are the outgrowth of a few years of those “growing pains” which the inspiration and information files of every aspiring and persistent writer experience. I am excluding all heads except those bearing on photodrama and have in mind that I am to serve fellow-students whose circumstances range from those of embryo Sullivans and Mac Phersons, who snatch off for their writing short minutes and hours out of busy routine days, to those few who are millionaires in the possession of time.

To these latter, however, the saving of minutes is not such an item and they have had leisure to develop systems of their own. However the outlining of a minute-clipping system that will conserve your writing and creative time is not my sole purpose. I include some practical aids in the stimulating of those genuinely individual screen creations which are, or will be, struggling for expression in the depths of each of you.

The essential step, before you stir up too many ideas or clip too many clippings, is to make an adequate home for them from which you can draw rapidly and without confusion when those golden hours arrive for you to weld and fashion them into dramatic screen plots. I am assuming that each of you is an aspirant emmeshed in a web of duties, yet determined that the bludgeonings of Circumstance will never keep you from the goal.

You are all convinced, that for embryo screen writers, at least, those flashes of plot, theme, and action are safer on paper and in the care of a proper filing system than if dropped into the deep and untrustworthy file of Memory behind the one tab Photodrama. In the early days, if we read books on Photoplay Plots and Plot Sources, we drew our themes and plot ideas from those sources which seemed to “hit” us the strongest. The “writing” drawer of the Bureau had, perhaps, a place for Photodramatists and other “Movie” magazines, for a motley assortment of newspaper and other clippings and suggestive “notes,” and a special corner for “dope” to be welded into that screen-gem which was to draw a flock of producers begging for our signature beneath a five year contract. Later we added a place for “brain children” who had come back to “the old home” with rejections or criticisms attached.

We shall say, there has arrived a time when it is imperative that you reduce the space these magazines are taking, and take time to glean and classify more aptly those priceless notes and clippings which were for you because there was an urge which induced you to save them or to write them “out of your own head.”

Now is the time to buy, build, or “dedicate” to this work at least one drawer capable of taking 8½ x 11 (or 13) paper on edge.

An orderly arrangement of story material is as essential to the progressive writer as any office filing system is to the modern business man. Mr. Parker illustrates, in the above drawing, a practical method of storing data, which may be adopted by anyone. If you are one of those who depend upon memory, try out this system and note the saving in time and mental energy.

(Continued on Page 31)
Above are shown a few of the dumb Thespians that have appeared in motion pictures. Upper left, Draco, a remarkably intelligent dog, Upper right, Nell Shipman, petting the tame bear that has appeared often in her films, while the company’s star Malamute takes a nap at her feet. Lower right, a wolf that is not nearly so ferocious as he looks. At the lower left is shown the “ark” that carried an entire “cast” of animals to location for a recent picture.

Speechless Actors of Filmland

By Sheldon Krag Johnson

There are many ways of shooting wild animals, but no way is quite so satisfactory to all concerned as that of doing it with a motion picture camera. It takes one into the outdoors and it calls for more assorted kinds of resourcefulness than any other sport, indoor or out. Furthermore it is much more pleasant for the animals.

We all know whose seed has multiplied into the nations that are inheriting the earth, we know who was the Father of His Country, and likewise, any one who can watch a flickering screen, knows who populated The Great Northwest with his chosen offspring of millions of globe-girdling Mounted Policeman, fairly innocent Damsels, and lusty villains. But it will be news to many that this vast standard population so affrighted (or disgusted) the animals who were native to the region that they left it flat. Now when any inspired producer wants to put on an honest-to-goodness outdoor picture he has to ship his zoo in with him.

Talk about pioneer days, crossing the plains, with Stanley in Africa, or little-hikes with Peary through the cool white North! These are mere fireside dreamings alongside of the job of moving a zoo into the great outdoors that the animals may be photographed in their erstwhile native haunts.

The account of the journey north of Nell Shipman’s zoo, in the recent filming of The Grub Stake, reads like a Burke Jenkin’s script of a Pathé serial. Desperate all night struggles to get huge cages loaded into freight cars built for Kansas corn, train wrecks with escaped bears and bunnies, porcupines and panthers, deers, cats (bob and pole) to tag and re-cage; wash-outs and delays far from cafeterias, with super-human efforts to get food in, that the animals might ultimately arrive stuffed with grub instead of cotton; problems of transportation through country never under bondage to rails, where trucks run just far enough to pick out soft spots and die in them, where one thing and another would make a re-incarnated Hannibal think that his famous Tour of the Alps had been laid out on the Lincoln Highway! Such
was the trek engineered by Burt Van Tuyle, the Noah of this latest model motion picture Ark.

The "Mount Ararat" for these voyagers lay at the far end of a finger shaped lake, some sixty miles in length, along the borders of which no roads ran. Had Hannibal been doing it, he would have waited until winter had brought the ice and then skidded his outfit to its destination, but invading Italy is a leisurely process compared with trying to live up to your own picture shooting schedule, so our people did not wait. They built two barges and rigged up a tow-boat and pressed merrily on.

One of these barges was loaded with cages with animals and animals without cages. On top of these two-story loads some sixty sled dog huskies were tied. The other barge carried fodder. When at last, everything was ready, in the dusk of a still evening the wild assortment of wild animals, now all extra wild, started up the lake.

A MOONLIT night on a river of silver water fringed with dark silent pines. The full moon stirred the souls of the wolf-dogs. They tuned up singly and in chorus. Each verity of caged animal contributed his opinion of the whole affair. Thus throughout the long night, the strange procession made its way, to the accompaniment of the queerest assortment of yells, cries, moans, grunts and groans ever heard this side of the Seven Hells.

With this little item of getting there off their minds the real work of making pictures began for these Twentieth Century Argonauts. Perhaps it is only fitting that in the "Silent Drama" the "Dumb" actors should be the best type-troopers in the business. For it is a fact that under the proper conditions, these four legged Thespians give less trouble and take up less footage, getting over a given scene, than do their two legged brothers.

But let it be noted that this statement is subject to two important qualifications. In the first place they are actors only in the type sense of the word. Given the proper handling they will do with utter naturalness that which is perfectly natural for them to do. Secondly this matter of "proper handling" is absolutely essential in getting them to do anything at all.

This handling is always provided under Nell Shipman's direction. For she is the Good Angel of Wild Things, loves them with a really deep understanding and permits no acts of cruelty or undue coercion to be exercised upon the animals in working with them. No wires, hypodermic needles, periods of starvation or other tricks and devices are used to get results. Only a keen understanding and a monumental patience are resorted to.

W H E R E I N Miss Shipman shows not only a humanitarian spirit but a fine sense of artistic values as well. The results speak for themselves, for she invests each of her pictures with the Spirit of the Wilderness and secures a simple naturalness of action that is the delight of all lovers of animals and the outdoors.

Spectators of these feature films, in their comfortable seats after a routine day in systematized work, little dream of the efforts put forth, of the trials and tribulations that are smiled away, that the effects may be had, which they see.

All wild animals are temperamental, especially bears. Any sudden motions, running about, loud noises or shouts, are liable to throw them off for hours. Sometimes the bear lead (censors notice the spelling) will climb to the highest tip of the tallest tree with the straightest, smoothest trunk and repose there for the rest of the day. The company may be under a three thousand dollar-a-day overhead but this means nothing to Miss Bear. Seductive and alluring terms of endearment float up to her, but she gazes into the far distance. The members of the company, deployed about the foot of the tree, acquire stiff arms throwing small rocks aloft, but the only result is to occasionally crown some other actor on the other side of the tree. The assistant director, who, with a company using animals in some far location has to add animal-trainer to his other required qualifications of emergency-director, call-boy, bell-hop, casting-director, chaser of props, scenario, location scout, chauffeur, caterer, paymaster and general all around goat, undertakes to skinny up and escort the lady down.

S O M E T I M E S he will get within touching distance of the perturbed Bruin. In which case he will get a clout on the ear which he can not ward off by reason of being busy embracing the tree. But more often he ascends only far enough to tear his clothes, and drops back defeated, never having had training as a telegraph lineman or a coconut hunter in the South Seas. Whereupon the rest of the company regard him with tolerant pity, realizing how hard it is to secure the services of a really all around assistant-director!

After the sun light has turned too yellow to be of any use to the cameraman the lady Bear will slide and slip, wriggle and shimm to lower levels, finally plumping to the ground and innocently submitting to capture as if she had not just spoiled an expensive day.

On occasions, however, this same bear can be, by all odds, the most willing worker of them all. One scene required a sunrise shot by the shore of an inaccessible lake, at which Brownie, which is this particular bear's name, was to come down to feed and so be photographed.

The base camp was some twelve miles away. For several reasons it was not feasible to move in to the lake the night before and so the call was set for three in the morning. Of all that sleepy crowd that turned out in the cold cutting blackness, director, cameraman and actors, Brownie was the most cheerful of them all.

She ambled along those twelve difficult miles of trail, did her little stunt by the water's edge with never a need of a retake, and waddled back to an early morning breakfast, by far the least grouchy of any one in the crowd.

(Continued on Page 38)
THERE is nothing particularly pretentious about "Shadows". It doesn't look like a very costly production, nor is there any splurge attached to the names of the directors or stars who are connected with it.

In fact, it is a distinctly average picture—in all but one respect. That one respect is the story. There is the big catch.

"Shadows," in its original form, was known as "Ching, Ching, Chinaman," a short story by Wilbur Daniel Steele, first published in the Pictorial Review and later included in O'Brian's anthology. It was converted into a photoplay by Eve Unsell and Hope Loring, directed by Tom Forman and played by Lon Chaney, Harrison Ford, Marguerite de la Motte, John Sainpolis and Walter Long.

These are the statistics and, as such, prove nothing. The fact remains, however, that this group worked together to make "Shadows" stand out as a genuine motion picture. Mr. Steele's story was excellent to start with. It was original, it was logical and it possessed an underlying significance which made for real drama. Miss Unsell and Miss Loring realized these qualities, and developed them so skillfully that they are all evident on the screen.

The theme is this: A Chinaman is shipwrecked and washed ashore near a little fishing village in Maine. Guided by the unflinching instinct of all his countrymen who have migrated to this republic, he founds a laundry. The local parson, a vigorous, sensible young man of God, tries to convert the genial Chinaman but the latter learns of dirty work afoot in the supposedly virtuous village—and that most of it is aimed at the unsuspecting head of his friend, the parson. So he starts out to do a little soul saving on his own account.

It is beautifully worked out, and deserves the attention of everyone who believes, or who would like to believe, that motion picture stories can be written with something more pliable than a rubber stamp.

Consequently, I recommend "Shadows" to every reader of this magazine.

"The Beautiful and Damned"

WHEN F. Scott Fitzgerald wrote "The Beautiful and Damned," he had no fixed purpose in mind other than the desire to tell a story. He did not design his book as a preaching against the artificial excitement of the jazz age. He was not attempting to hold high the flaming torch of reform.

He took for his central characters two weak young people, Anthony Patch and his wife, Gloria, and endeavored to trace the processes of their gradual degradation. They slid downward—always downward—following almost parallel courses as they went. At the end of the novel they were rescued from poverty by a sudden acquisition of wealth, but Fitzgerald showed quite conclusively that they had lost their greatest asset—Beauty—and that this they never could regain. Outwardly and inwardly, Anthony and Gloria turned out to be unhealthy, repulsively ugly.

This was the big punch of the story—and it is the one feature which has been studiously avoided in the screen version of "The Beautiful and Damned."

As a result, the picture is weak. It attempts the moralizing which Fitzgerald himself shunned, but proves nothing by it because it can never bring it to an effective conclusion. Anthony and Gloria sink to the depths of depravity right enough, but when they are rewarded by an unexpected fortune, they immediately reform. And they are none the worse off for their experience in the gutter.

There is certainly no moral lesson in this highly immoral story. If some anonymous relative should die tomorrow and leave me $100,000,000 in Liberty Bonds, I might promise to go straight and never write another movie review. But would I really be any the better for my sudden wealth? I'm afraid not.

"Hungry Hearts"

THE immigrant's struggle on alien soil is ever an interesting theme—and one that is fraught with dramatic possibilities.

In "Hungry Hearts", this theme has been developed intelligently and sympathetically. The photoplay is a composite of several short stories by Anna Zyierska and deals with the tribulation of a family of Russian Jews. In their native land, they were subjected to the tyranny of those despotic servants of the Tsar, who were known as Cossacks. These Cossacks beat the poor people with knouts and made their lives miserable.

So the family migrated to that great country across the water which is known slantly as "the land of the free," and in which a poor boy can grow up to be President, or even Chairman of the Anti-Saloon League, if he works hard and minds his P's and Q's.

But when the liberated family reached New York, they found plenty of Cossacks, and also plenty of Tsars; and they were just about as unhappy and as completely oppressed as they had been in the old home town in Russia.

This is a rather depressing theme, it must be admitted. But it has been treated with much humor, and it is enlivened with many flashes of wit from the glittering pen of Montague Glass.

"Tess of the Storm Country"

THE propriety of revivals is always debatable. Indeed, there are a few plays or movies which can stand the test of resurrection after they have been buried.

It may be argued in contradiction that Shakespeare is being revived every year. But "revived" is not quite the right word in Shakespeare's case. His works have never
died. Indeed, they have never even been unconscious for any period of time. They are immortal, and therefore need no revival.

Shakespeare, however, is somewhat of an exception. He is not by any means typical.

About eight years ago, Mary Pickford produced a picture called "Tess of the Storm Country." It was enormously successful, and did much to promote the fame which has made her the first lady of the silent drama.

For sentimental reasons (with, doubtless, a bit of sound business mixed in) Miss Pickford revived "Tess" this year, expending on its production all the talent, directorial, photographic and journalistic, that she could secure. The result is thoroughly worthy of all the distinguished effort that was concentrated upon it.

But the story of "Tess" is old-fashioned and out of date. Every dramatic trick in it has been used so many times since it was first presented that it appears stale and obvious. Many of these tricks have been used by Miss Pickford herself, and many more by her legions of imitators. The fact remains, that they look old and foolish, especially when developed with all the technical skill and artistry that the motion pictures can now offer.

"Brothers Under the Skin"

It has been proved, over and over again, that the women's vote is all-important in determining the quality of motion pictures—that the female element among the fans is the dominant one.

In spite of this acknowledged condition, the producers of "Brothers Under the Skin" have had the effrontery to suggest that there is something to be said for husbands. They have intimated that the wife may sometimes be wrong—a dangerous argument, indeed, in this feminist era. However, the idea has been presented with so much good humor that the lady who takes offense at it is sadly lacking in poise.

"Brothers Under the Skin" is excellent fun. It is easy, light and graceful, and it never yields to the temptation to indulge in platitudinous moralizing or banal sophistry.

"One Week of Love"

The box-office formula is so obvious and stereotyped that I often wonder why any film producers ever try to depart from it and take a chance with something new.

In "One Week of Love" they have stuck to the formula so closely that one doesn't really have to see the picture to know what it is all about. Just tell the average movie fan that it is a Co-Star Plot number 18, serial M, and he will be able to construct the whole thing in his mind's eye without looking at the screen.

The heroine is a society girl—reckless and untamed. She is courted by a couch cootie, who advances his unwelcome proposals inexorably. Finally she pulls an Atlantic on him, saying that if he can best her in an aeroplane race, she is his.

Now what happens? Consult the files and you will learn that the girl crashes to earth in a lonely place, "fifty miles from nowhere," and meets there a strong, silent man of the open. First she hates him, then tolerates him, then loves him. And he? The records will show that he has not always been like this—that he is a graduate of Boston Tech who went into voluntary exile because he was disappointed in love. His faith in women is of course restored by the girl who drops so unexpectedly into his mountain abode.

"One Week of Love" possesses about as much individuality and distinction as a hair-pin. And it will make a great deal of money, while such outstanding bursts of originality as "One Glorious Day" and "Salome" are starving.

"Dr. Jack"

Harold Lloyd is going in for ideas these days, with the result that his comedies possess more back-bone than ever.

"Grandma's Boy" had a strong underlying theme—the psychology of cowardice—and could therefore develop a current of drama that ran through the slap-stick wit. "Dr. Jack" is a similar case. Lloyd seeks to point out here that auto-suggestion is more effective than all the medicine in the world—a most timely argument in these days when Dr. Coue monopolizes a large portion of every front page.

"Dr. Jack" is a dashing young physician who believes that laughter and sunshine are more potent than tonics and pills. He puts this theory into practice in all sorts of cases with phenomenal but perfectly logical success.

It is uproariously funny and, at the same time, profoundly wise.

Are You a Capable Critic?

Do you know why one photoplay is better than another? Can you express this knowledge in writing?

Photodramatist would like to find out; for nothing is of more benefit to a writer than the ability to analyze correctly pictures that have already been produced; and the practice of putting upon paper the results of such an analysis is a tremendous aid in one's chosen work.

Consequently, to bring out the latent critical talent of our readers, we offer cash prizes of $25.00, $15.00 and $10.00 for the best critical essays of not more than 250 words in length on the subject: "The Best Original Photoplay I Have Seen Since January 1st, 1923." The contest begins with this issue, and closes at midnight, March 30th. All manuscripts must be typewritten on one sheet of 8½x11 paper. Name and address of author must appear in upper left corner, and number of words in upper right corner. No manuscripts will be returned, keep a copy of your work. Anyone may compete.

Since Photodramatist is a staunch advocate of photoplays written directly for the screen, and opposed to pictures adapted from stage plays or printed works, we impose the restriction on contestants that all motion pictures commented upon in this contest must be from "original" stories. Otherwise, those submitting manuscripts may select their own subjects, and review them in any manner desired.

In addition to awarding the three prizes, Photodramatist will also keep a record of the photoplays mentioned, in order of popularity, and will announce the result of this "straw vote" in tabulated form when the contest is concluded.

Now is the time for you to find out just how well you rank as a critic. Oil up your typewriter, attend your favorite theater, and send your opinion to

The Contest Editor,
The Point of View

By Carl Clausen

After the selection of your plot and characters, comes the question,—from which angle shall I tell this story? Some writers hold that one angle is as good as another, or that a story may be told by switching the viewpoint from one character to the other as the story progresses, and still be a good story.

This switching of the viewpoint is much the easiest way if you have mastered transition and other mechanics. But your finished product will lack the unity of impression that marks the difference between the artistic story and the mediocre story, unless you are a Joseph Conrad.

I cannot over-emphasize the importance of definitely selecting your angle of telling and of sticking to it to the last paragraph, as nearly as possible. At first you will find this hard. But you will also find that it will help to speed up your action.

Tell your story from the viewpoint of your leading character. He or she is the one in whom your reader is interested to the exclusion of all others. The constant switching of the point of view from one character to another weakens your story.

Let me give you an illustration of what I mean. You are witnessing a street fight between two evenly matched men, both of whom are strangers to you. Your interest having been aroused by the combat, you will begin unconsciously to take sides with one of them. You will rejoice with his success, grieve with his defeat.

By looking at the combat from his angle, entirely, you have made a common street brawl a drama of absorbing interest to yourself. Then, if suddenly a policeman is projected into the scene and the fight is stopped, your interest is switched, immediately, to this new arrival.

The arrest of the two men now becomes the paramount issue. Drama is once more a common street brawl. You lose interest because your viewpoint has been changed by transferring the center of action to the officer.

Therefore, once selected, stick to your viewpoint. Even in writing a book-length novel it is well to observe this rule. And here I hear a chorus of dissent. In answer, let me point to the "Red Badge of Courage" by Stephen Crane. No finer piece of imaginative fiction has been written by an American than this book. It has absolutely no plot—in the generally accepted sense of the term—yet it holds you breathless to the last paragraph. This is due, in a great measure, to the fact that never for a single moment does Mr. Crane leave his principal character. Everything that transpires is conveyed to the reader through the senses or the emotions of this man.

In using this method you will find yourself confronted by many problems. Since your leading character is not omnipresent, certain limitations will be put upon your scenes of action. You will find it necessary to adjust your plot somewhat as the story progresses. Also that you will have to cut out a few scenes, and bits of action, here and there, and convey them to the reader by suggestion or by direct statements.

But do not think for a moment that your story will suffer because of these limitations. Quite the opposite. Your ingenuity will be put to it hard, but you will discover in your finished product a certain compactness and coherence, that cannot be attained the other way.

Further, your story will not be so apt to lag in interest. You will not find any need of padding. The story will move logically by its own momentum and you will eliminate the unavoidable slowing digressions, incidental to the establishing of locale and action through several characters at once.

In stories of from twenty-five hundred to five or six thousand words or shorter, this rule should be adhered to, strictly. Stories of this length should
be based and hung on one incident. That is the reason for their being short. There is, however, another type of story, which is preferred by certain of the large magazines, notably the Saturday Evening Post. The ten to fourteen thousand word story, or even longer.

A yarn of this length is, of course, outside the one-incident class, therefore not technically a short story. Yet it may easily be made a one impression story, by adhering to the single viewpoint as much as possible.

"Always Audacious," by Ben Ames Williams, Saturday Evening Post, January 1920, was an excellent example of this. The story was in the neighborhood of thirty-five thousand words, yet after the introduction of the crook, it followed the leading character, except for two or three minor scene shifting, to the end. From an editor's standpoint, this story was an eminently desirable one. It held your interest. It was packed full of action, logically developed via the leading character. In the entire length of its three installments there was not a moment where the interest lagged.

A WRITER friend discussing this story, said to me in a shocked tone: "You don't call that a work of art? Why, it's a dime thriller, pure and simple!"

To this I reply now as I did to him, then:

"When Shakespeare wrote his melodramas and farce comedies, he was classified by his contemporaries as a sort of combination Nick Carter and Charlie Chaplin."

This argument is not a very original one, but its very triteness carries conviction. It has been used so often that it has become axiomatic and it drives home the law of eternal change. Things that are, were, will be tomorrow. Art, the slowest of all human forms of expression to change, is no less sharply radical than other forms, once this change has been effected.

Putting yourself on record as a dissembler of any certain piece of art, is a dangerous thing for an artist to do, no matter how prominent he may be. You might find yourself in the humiliating position of a certain very well known woman writer, who ridiculed O. Henry before fame had come to him. This woman would give a good deal now I think if she could retrace those words, written in a moment of superficial judgment.

But to get back to the Short Story single viewpoint.

Did you ever examine Maupassant's best stories, to see what made them great? If you didn't, I'd advise you to read "The Necklace" with this in view. Of course if you are trying to be a writer, you have read it, already. Read it once more. Watch how strictly Maupassant has adhered to the single viewpoint. The story is the heroine's story. He opens and closes it with the heroine, and every moment as the story progresses, she is there. When you have finished reading it, there is one picture in your mind—the punishment of vanity. You see only a broken down woman, the heroine. Her husband and the friend who loaned her the necklace are forgotten.

The French master rarely departed from the single viewpoint method. "A Piece of String" is an excellent example of how a story by observing this rule may be totally devoid of plot and still be a great story. In this tale Maupassant achieved the ultimate in single view point effect—namely, making his hero so interesting that the man himself and his sufferings became plot matter. Had the author switched his view-point for one instance, the story would have been lost to posterity among his more mediocre tales.

At this point I hear the question: Are writers conscious of their art, or do they intuitively produce technically correct stories?

To this question I will reply: The original genius is guided, more or less intuitively, into the proper balance which makes his stories better than the average, but after years of practice he will also more or less consciously follow a certain pattern devised by himself. And the sooner he discovers that his own intuition has given him a definite pattern, the better for him.

The more conscious he becomes of a specific skeleton upon which to hang his tale, the better stories he will produce. There will be no fumbling for angle. With the incident which gives him the inspiration for the story, clear in mind, he will find it ever easier to visualize his story step by step, by the practice acquired in preceding stories.

With me, personally, the single incident story brings itself, naturally and logically, to a close at between 3500 to 4000 words. Habit has something to do with this, and what is habit but the repetition of a certain mode of conduct?

A writer's technique, then, in combination with his style, might be called his literary habit. It has been said that rules of technique hamper a writer: That any cut and dried rule will kill originality. I think this is quite absurd. It is true that you often read stories that are technically perfect and nothing else. But this is not the fault of the consciousness of technique. It is because of the lack of inspiration in the writer. All things being equal, a definite plan will produce the better story. Your pattern is before you at all times. You can throw yourself with abandon into the mood of the story, and put all your efforts into spontaneity.

In reading the last sentence you'll pause. Spontaneity does not come through effort, you'll say—spontaneity is the antonym of effort. To this I answer: Spontaneity is achieved only through painstaking effort. This is not as paradoxical as it may sound.

Spontaneity is the result of inspiration, but, to produce it in the written word, requires a nicety of discrimination between phrases, between pathos and bathos, sentiment and sentimentality. This discrimination is only intuitive to the writer's intellect as a thinker. It bears no relation to the written word, which is—with speech—merely a device by which humans convey thoughts to each other.

Spontaneity in this medium, therefore, is a matter of conscious and deliberate striving to convey the thing you wish to convey in the clearest and most pleasing manner.

(Continued on Page 33)
Why Does Your Script Come Back?

Pertinent Facts Regarding the Fiction Story

By Frances Harmer

Let there be no misconception of the above title! The writer proposes to add but little to the bulk of advice and suggestions already showered, in many a text book article and essay, upon the head of the seeker after magazine laurels. But that little is, according to her judgment, re one or two points not covered in any treatise it has been her good fortune to read.

"Why does my script come back?"

It is to answer this despairing cry, uttered so many times, that the following words are offered:

A. Your story may lack many things that no one can teach you how to put in—style, characterization, emotion, plot, drama, movement, action, interest. But it probably lacks:

1. _Shape._
2. _Proportion._

By shape I mean an outlined form, such as the skeleton is to the body—the _shape_, on which the whole is poured, or to which it is attached, in the form of covering. After years of study, of practice, of illumination in the form of rejection slips, the kinder rejection letter, pointing out demerits, and in the more cheering form of checks, I am convinced that the _shape_ is the thing most frequently wrong. And that the best way to construct that shape may be learned from dramatic structural axioms. Following the directions, then, of Freytag—the father, one may say, of the many books on dramatic technique which succeeded his—we get this indication of form:

I. _Conditions Precedent._
II. _First inciting movement_ (cause of action)
III. _Development of same._
IV. _Crisis, highest light, moment of greatest peril, etc._
V. _Beginning of "downward movement," disentangling, inclining towards the denouement, Resolution of problem._
VI. _Climax, completion, denouement, end._

Now notice one most important point. Six must differ from One! The end must have advanced from the beginning to something other than that beginning. Characters must have developed, changed (for better or for worse!) but they must not return to their _Status Quo_! They must not have moved in a circle. (For the full comprehension of this, nothing better than the Greek tragedies can be studied. Try "Antigone.")

Just a little in the way of enlargement of these points:

I. _Conditions Precedent._

Before your story began, things, characters, their relation to each other, and conditions, were in a certain _state!_ So and so was either rich or poor; some one loved or hated someone—or, did not! To use a most homely simile, the ingredients for your pudding were on the table.

In a play, these conditions precedent, the knowledge of which is essential to the audience for the right understanding of the action to follow, must be "put over" in what one character says to another. We all know that antique form (so aptly ridiculed in Sheridan's "Critic: a Tragedy Rehearsed") in which two persons tell each other what each knows, that the audience may know it too! Dramatists are more skillful now. Shakespeare was always more skillful! Note the establishing of the feud between the Montagues and Capulets in "Romeo and Juliet." The servants do not _tell_ each other that their masters are at odds! They prove it, by themselves fighting!

In a short story, the utmost _economy_ must be observed in getting over the conditions precedent. No "Once upon a Time" business. None of the usual beginning, either, of the more leisureed novel. For this purpose, take three good fiction magazines, and read the beginnings of the short stories. Some writers "begin in the middle," so to speak.

The technical term for the beginning of your story is "Point of Departure." Let us consider this a moment. Take the classic story of "Little Red Riding Hood." We know the "Point of Departure" of the story as it stands. Little Red Riding Hood is about to go forth, carrying sustenance to her grandmother. But it might have been begun from the point of view of that lady herself! She might have been wondering why no news from Daughter had yet reached her? Or, the author (?) might have started out from the viewpoint of the Wolf, speculating on the

(Continued on Page 40)
Rupert Hughes, the well known linguist, snapped in the act of reading The Rubaiyat in the original Persian.
Omar Khayyam in Hollywood

Freely Translated from the Persian

By Douglas Z. Doty

Editor's Note: This is the third in series of articles giving Omar's quaint impression of life in Hollywood, both in and out of the studios.

III.

NOW that I have learned the ways of Hollywood I take much pleasure in many new and strange aspects of life.

I like much the meeting-places that those of this Western World call "clubs." There is one named The Studio Club with a white pillowed portico, wherein reside certain young damsels of the screen, safe from the pursuit of realtors and motor car salesmen and the gay visitor from far-off Gotham who thinketh that all in Magic Pictures are not above price.

One sweet damsel of this club, whose black eyes and red lips spelled "Lure," did hold me in her spell, as in the picture-taking she laughed and loved and then betrayed the honest kalif who did choose her for his Favorite. I quite forgot 'twas merely play and groaned to see her stab him through the back. Such perfidy in one so fair did bruise mine heart; I groaned aloud. Whereat they all did laugh—all but him called Director, and he did scowl at me and called out "Close Up!" Which I took to mean that I must not speak, and I turned to go.

Then the Fair One smiling ran to me and grasping my silk robes in her slim fingers, she bade me dine with her that I might discover she was not as wicked as the part she played. I bowed low and thanked her, kissing her hand.

Then to the club that night I went; and as the great door opened wide I heard sweet laughter and the swish-swish of filmy garments as many damsels scampered up and down the stairs and through the seraglio. Verily 'twas like a royal harem—but alas no sultan ruled therein!

And the Black-Eyed One (whom they called "the Vamp") did make me sit beside her near the fire. And now her eyes were luminous and soft, her smooth cheeks pink without the artifice of rouge, her hair in braids coiled over her little ears, as she spoke of her home far off in Cheyenne—of her mother there she did support, and of the sweetheart that rode the range; and how they were to be married when she had laid by enough of worldly goods.

THEN did I caution her not to wait too long lest she lose the Priceless Thing she doth now possess—Youth's Love. And I did quote to her from my Rubaiyat:

"The Worldly Hope men set their Hearts upon
Turns Ashes—or it prospers; and anon,
Like Snow upon the Desert's dusty Face,
Lighting a little hour or two—was gone."

She smiled tenderly and promised soon to wed with him who was her Heart's Desire—but first she needs must possess a ten room bungalow and a car of wondrous beauty and elegance, which here are ever the symbols of caste; then I sighed to contemplate how in this fabulous land both gold and silver grow thick as leaves, and then like leaves upon the tree are scattered in the Autumn winds.

Methinks I ne'er beheld more winsome charm and loveliness than is garnered in this stately edifice—such high hopes, such radiance of Spirit! And those that prosper ever share their bounty with those that have come upon evil times; and all dwell happily in this sweet oasis that has been provided for them by the Mystic Order of the Yucca.*

'Twas the same evening, after midnight, that I found myself in an all-night Tavern where congregate the lately b bulous for their matutinal ham-and-eggs, a strange dish that I have come to relish; and I was straightway gathered in by several roisterous and cheerful strangers, one of whom called out "Good morning, Santa Claus!" And as I liked not his pleasantry I did retort, "Good morning to you Mister Earnest Belcher." Though my humor was broad, at least the name did fit. But the man was enraged and did raise his arm to strike me. Then others made him desist whilst I did gently chide him for his intemperance and I did recite in paraphrase my LVII Quatrain, as follows:

"I see, my Friend, how bravely in your House
For a new Marriage you did make Carouse;
Divorced old barren Reason from your bed,
And took the Daughter of the Vine to Spouse."

Yet him I addressed heard me not, for by now he was deep in his vocal slumber.

THEN when I did tactfully lead talk to other channels and spake eloquently of a fair young virgin I had met in Hollywood, one named Bennie did retort, "Then it must have been Baby Peggy."

I know not what he meant but I liked not their ribald laughter and went away from there.

It so happened that the next day I was a guest at The Writers' Club, a spacious and luxurious meeting-place for both men and women. Yet I was glad to find one spot wherein women did not venture—the gaming room, with its long green tables wherein gaily colored balls are poked about with long thin sticks. And with several of my new friends I played the New World game of kelly-pool—but of its intricacies I am not yet acquainted, nor do I know who won. And each player had a strange expletive if the ball he poked dropped not into the pocket as he wished. There was one named Louis Sherwin who ever exclaimed meaninglessly, "Globules!" said the duchess" And there was a large Persian-looking fellow named Waldemar Young who ever mumbled of "the blood-stained prairies." And there was Charles the Chaplin who could say naught but "Fancy that!" And also a tall plump pale youth with sad blue eyes and with a lisping name, methinks 'twas Thew, who even and anon would mutter in his wrath, "Tis the cat's whiskers!"

*Translator's Note: Undoubtedly Omar has mistaken Yucca for Y. W. C. A., which organization is overlord of the Hollywood Studio Club.
Of the last only could I see the glimmer of meaning; for as I entered the game they demanded of me a piece of silver for the cat*—which showed a kindliness toward animals that touched me.

Out of a leathern bottle they gave me a pill marked "thirteen." Then presently a stalwart youth with a kindling eye called Douglas of the Fair Banks did poke into a pocket a ball bearing the same mystic number; whereat some one told me I was "dead"—and my demise did cost me another piece of silver. Yet as it was all for some poor dumb animal I was not loath to pay. **

Then drawing apart I did watch my fellows, speculating on the swiftness of Friendship in this curious place—how that with the draining of the hour glass a stranger becomes Brother. And in that hour from "Mister Omar" I became "Khay" and even "Yam"—which I liketh not for it maketh a sound like a succulent vegetable not pleasing to one of my years and dignity.

Yet with such good fellowship offered I was constrained to take all in good part, save only to be called "Yammie"—that I must needs frown upon.

Such hospitality as this town affords! I have never known the like. I well remember that with the first week of my new bungalowlife there waited upon me several excellent fellows of slave manners, each eager to present me with one of those wondrous cars that are driven forward by an evil odor called Gas. When I did explain to them one and all how that I had always dwelt in poverty and cared not for rich living, each one seemed eager to present me with a car if I would but sign upon the dotted line, and thereafter with the coming of each moon there would be a small payment until with the passing of the years that which they would give me would be mine own. I was sore tempted by their generosity, but mine eyes are not as young as once they were, nor my hand too steady. No. I shall continue in my simple way of living, for well I know that the Race of Life is not always to the Swift.

And I have been greatly touched by the warm yearning of certain sombre-conted men that I should find my last resting-place in this new land, and they did offer me plots in rival cemeteries each eager for my patronage and each eloquent over the beauties of his special City of the Dead. Each deemed it a great honor to be the guardian of my bones. Though touched by their hospitable offers, having for centuries acquired the habit of living, I had no thought but to go on, and downcast they went away.

Truth to tell, though living here be pleasant, this prohibition land is not the spot wherein a True Believer should find his final resting place. "T'would be strangely ironic if such a thing should come to pass, and smiling I did paraphrase to myself the hundredth quatrain of the Rubaiyat.

"Then ev'n my buried Ashes such a snare
Of Vintage shall fling up into the Air,
As not a Prohibitionist passing by
But shall be overtaken unaware."

*Translator's Note: Omar evidently refers to the "kitty" or pot which is a feature of Kelly pool.

**The winner of this historic game was Chaplin, who, of course, needed the money.

Through all my Hollywood days of good cheer and merriment, my delight in its raw youth and crude strength, there is ever the thought that no one has yet bartered for my Rubaiyat to put in the Magic Pictures.

But lately, through the kind offices of a new found friend, was it arranged that I should meet, within his palace walls, the Prince Rupert of Many Hughes—so called it seems because in his day he plays so many parts. Gracious he was, and friendly; yet in his appearance and demeanor he hath more the look of one who runs a railroad or a bank than a dreamer of dreams.

He hath many firm beliefs, even more opinions. Quickly he read my script and it seemed that each stanza did release from him a fresh opinion. So that by the end I had full a volume of New World Wisdom for my whirling brain to ponder on.

He preached of Love, Divorce and Wine—of Music the Art of Scribes; this poet was a fool and that a fraud; this story-writer knew not English as it should be writ and that one Mr. H—— was a blatant egotist,* yet not one word of Magic Pictures did he speak or of his part in it.

He praised my work but he saith benignantly how that there is a fashion in words as in clothes—that what I had writ was out of style; that it touched no problem of today—that it had no power to please some strange damsel named Lizzie,* who, it appeareth, is the one that maketh the pictures to pay. Moreover Prince Rupert makes pictures only of his own creations. And so versatile is he that in the one man we have Rupert Hughes, the novelist; Ruperti, the composer: Hughesani, the sculptor; Rupe, the director, and Pert, the scenarist, and last but not least Prof. R. Hughes, A. M. and P. M., the lexicographer.

But though I listened with full respect to one that hath held the ear and eye of millions and whose coffers are heavy with a golden tribute, yet warmly did I differ on one great work, "Figures of Earth,"** that for beauteous satire and profoundest wisdom is matchless in this day.

After a bounteous feast in the dining hall of the Palace, Prince Rupert amiable sauntered with me through the grounds till he was summoned by a menial back to the taking of Pictures. With a twinkle in his dark brown eyes he told me of his troubles that day. How that he was trying to get tears from a young damsel who was "all cried out." Then as he left me he bade me see Charles the Chaplin, who is a preacher of the Gospel of Mirth, and he much heartened me, saying that Charles might like to do my Rubaiyat, yet warning me that many changes might be made—but what should I care if it brought in the golden harvest.

So we shook hands and I went away with pleasant memories of my visit with him who has both Wit and Wisdom—sometimes right and sometimes wrong, yet always of a fine sincerity.

*Translator's Note: Mr. Hughes refused to be quoted on names. But we can't believe he referred either to Joseph Hergesheimer, or to Frank Harris.

**Translator's Note: "Lizzie" is the generic name for the great middle class.

***"Figures of Earth," by James Branch Cabell.
Solving Your Photoplay Puzzles
Research Director Is 'Human Encyclopedia' of Screenland

By G. Harrison Wiley

What inscription appears carved on the face of the Blarney stone? What is the guiltiness victim of a first of April joke called in France? How did that vehicle in common use by the police come to be called a "Black Maria?" Is it true that in certain places in America, in the early days, women were compelled by law to wear bobbed hair? Is it true that the practice of hanging gifts on a tree the last week in December, originated in Egypt, many years before the time of Christ? What uniform would the New York State militia wear, and what equipment in the way of arms, camp accessories, et cetera, would they carry if called out to quell a riot? What does the periscope of a German submarine look like? Are they just the same today as they were at the beginning of the war? Do you know where to find a picture of a periscope of the year 1917 so that it could be duplicated? Is it true that King James the First, at a banquet in Lancashire, England, playfully Knighted a loin of beef, which part has since been called "Sir-Loin?"

What object, or figure, is symbolic of avarice? Of chastity? What is the marriage ceremony among the natives of the Samoan Islands? How would the bride be dressed? The groom? What does an East Indian Nautch dancer wear on her head? What does the living room of a Persian house contain in the way of furniture? What is an Ikon? Can you find a picture of the facade of an old Boston home within a half an hour? What does the chief steward of an ocean liner of the White Star line wear during the dinner hour? Are the buttons on his coat gold or silver or bone?

What do the other stewards on the same boat wear at that time? Can you find a picture of a davit like those used on the steamer H. F. Alexander, before noon today, so that they can be duplicated ready to shoot tomorrow morning?

No, dear reader, not an effort to emulate the estimable Mr. T. A. Edison. It is not, be assured, the purpose of the writer to encourage or engage in a controversy as to what the educated man should know. His purpose is, rather, to direct the spotlight of your attention upon an often obscure, yet vital division of motion picture production, the division of Research.

The Department of Research must be prepared to answer with a celerity that is often beyond belief or reason, any question that the human mind may conceive, to produce with equal celerity, and it must be said without the assistance of legerdemain, the picture of any object the human mind has either conceived or known.

Naturally he or she who undertakes a task of this measure, as Director of Research at a motion picture studio, must be possessed of a superlative education. As a newspaper reporter, to be successful, it is said, must be possessed of a "nose for news," so must he or she be possessed as well of a "nose for facts," a sense that might be called "detective" that will ferret out from obscure, unexpected and many times almost inaccessible sources, truths, statements, descriptions, rules, laws, rituals and illustrations.

No industry known to the world is concerned with a greater variety of subjects and means than
are involved in the making of photoplays. Science, art, manufacturing methods, share in the responsibility of production, while to name an industry, a locale, an event or a person, that some ingenious writer has not woven into the plot of a pictured tale, would be, if not impossible, difficult.

The sources of information about these many subjects most applicable to the making of pictures, are obviously, pictured. The writer, it is true can often glean enough from a written description of a place, a ceremony, custom or thing, for his purpose; that he may write intelligently of it or of its use. He who reproduces it does so with accuracy only after he has seen it, or a picture of it.

The libraries of those studios maintaining Research departments are extensive, materially and categorically. There are many shelves of books, old books, new books, pamphlets and tomes, books that are common and cheap and books that are rare and costly, most of them, and preferably so, profusely illustrated. Those books that predominate are books of travel. Next in extent are the books devoted to classified subjects, such as: Art, Architecture, Design, Decoration, Horticulture, Shipbuilding and Marine Engineering, Zoology, and so on. Encyclopedias of many sorts, dictionaries in every tongue, catalogues, school and other texts on science are here, and in addition, there is maintained a most elaborate index or clipping file. Many current magazines are subscribed, magazines generally of a pictorial nature, such as the National Geographic, Asia, Travel, the London Illustrated News, The New York Times Pictorial, Architectural Record and Architectural Review, L'Illustration and many others. These are carefully digested, cut and filed, or indexed, with thought both to their subject and possible future use.

The Public Library, with its vastly greater content of books, and many other local bureaus, supplement this material. Foreign consuls and representatives located near the studios are generally very liberal with their knowledge of their own and other countries with which they are familiar. Law libraries and attorneys willing to settle questions that have to do with legal or court procedure as it concerns a motion picture story, industrial chiefs glad to open their plants to the seeker of information and pictures, abound.

There have, also, in Hollywood appeared certain so called “technical experts,” travelers of many years, most of them, who are ready, for a consideration of course, to open the store-houses of their experience and memory to the studio. Of certain of these, the less said the better. A man’s memory is a poor place to seek detail and absolute fact, unless he has acquired, as few casual travellers have, the ability to photograph indelibly on his mind the most minute detail of a scene, an event or an object, and has withal, a like ability to describe or picture with as exact detail the object, event or scene.
The work of the Director of Research in collecting sources and actual information is infinite, without beginning or obvious end. The practical application of this work to the filming of a photoplay begins with the preparation of the continuity, or, more properly, when the story is an "original" written by either a staff writer or another to whom the department is available, with the conception of the story. It continues through the designing and execution of the settings, the costumes, the dressing or decoration of the settings, the making of special properties, the direction of scenes, the cutting of the film and the making of the subtitles.

Those stories dealing with modern life, life with which the writer, director and actor may be in intimate acquaintance, require, obviously less study, less "diligent inquiry or examination after facts" than those dealing with a period long past or a land far distant. Yet even in the modern story, there are, in general, three large questions that must be answered before each scene may be shot. They are briefly: "Are the settings correct? Are the costumes either typical of the locale or correct according to the mandates of fashion? Would the action be probable, possible, or correct in the surroundings shown or the circumstances mentioned?"

COMMON sense, or the every day knowledge of every man may answer one or all of these for the producer or the director. Yet it is the close attention to just such questions that makes the work of the masters. Inaccuracy of detail in settings, action or dress will mar an otherwise meritorious production much as a "blue note" the rendition of an otherwise pleasing musical composition. The motion picture of several years ago, before the advent of Research departments might be likened in this respect to the offerings of certain small town or amateur bands!

At hand is the script of a recently produced picture, of the middle class, or "program" sort. Turning at random through the script, there appears a scene supposedly occurring in the home of a wealthy New York broker. A dinner is being given, a very formal dinner in honor of a distinguished foreign diplomat. A subtitle has informed that the foreigner is a man of keen perception, of polish and breeding. The host is endeavoring to impress this man favorably, and a situation vital to the story hinges upon his reaction to the effort of the host.

The writer of the continuity, it chanced, had never been in New York, and while he was a man of splendid education, from a fine family, he had never cared for "Society" in the ultra sense, and so, had not been a frequent guest at affairs of the sort. He therefore turned to the Research department for information and assistance. First, that he might better visualize his characters in it, he desired to "see" a dining room in a New York home of this class. Pictures, clipped from Architectural magazines, and filed under the classification: "Residences—Dining Rooms—New York" were handed him. Finding a room that pleased him, he studied it briefly until the arrangement of the room and its appearance were well fixed in his mind.
are involved in the making of photoplays. Science, art, manufacturing methods, share in the responsibility of production, while to name an industry, a locale, an event or a PEOPLE, that some ingenious writer has not woven into the plot of a pictured tale, would be, if not impossible, difficult.

The sources of information about these many subjects most applicable to the making of pictures, are obviously, pictured. The writer, it is true, can often glean enough from a written description of a place, a ceremony, custom or thing, for his purpose; but he may write intelligently of it or of its use. He who reproduces it does so with accuracy only after he has seen it, or a picture of it.

THE libraries of those studios maintaining Research departments are extensive, materially and categorically. There are many shelves of books, old books, new books, pamphlets and tomes, books that are common and cheap and books that are rare and costly, most of them, and preferably so, profusely illustrated. Those books that predominate are books of travel. Next in extent are the books devoted to classified subjects, such as: Art, Architecture, Design, Decoration, Horticulture, Shipbuilding and Marine Engineering, Zoology, and so on. Encyclopedias of many sorts, dictionaries in every tongue, catalogues, school and other texts on science are here, and in addition, there is maintained a most elaborate index or clipping file. Many current magazines are subscribed, magazines generally of a pictorial nature, such as the National Geographic, Asia, Travel, the London Illustrated News, The New York Times Pictorial, Architectural Record and Architectural Review, L'Illustration and many others. These are carefully digested, cut and filed, or indexed, with thought both to the subject and possible future use.

The Ueblic Library, with its vastly greater content of books, and many other local bureaus, supplement this material. Foreign consular and representative located near the studios are generally the liberal with their knowledge of their own and other countries with which they are familiar. Law libraries and attorneys willing to settle questions that have to do with legal or court procedure as it concerns a motion picture story, industrial chiefs glad to open their plants to the seeker of information and pictures, abound.

THERE have, also, in Hollywood appeared certain so-called "technical experts," travelers of many years, most of them, who are ready, for a consideration of course, to open the store-houses of their experience and memory to the studio. Of certain of these, the less said the better. A man's mind is a poor place to seek detail and absolute fact, unless he has acquired, as few casual travelers have, the ability to photograph indelibly on his mind the most minute detail of a scene, an event or an object, and has withal, a like ability to describe or picture with as exact detail the object, event or scene.

The work of the Director of Research in collecting sources and actual information is infinite, without beginning or obvious end. The practical application of this work to the filming of a photoplay begins with the preparation of the continuity, or, more properly, when the story is an "original" written by either a staff writer or another to whom the department is available, with the conception of the story. It continues through the designing and execution of the setting, the costumes, the dressing or decoration of the settings, the making of special properties, the direction of scenes, the cutting of the film and the making of the subtitles.

Those stories dealing with modern life, life with which the writer, director and actor may be in intimate acquaintance, require, obviously less study, less "diligent inquiry or examination after facts" than those dealing with a period long past or a land far distant. Yet even in the modern story, there are, in general, three large questions that must be answered before each scene may be shot. They are briefly: "Are the settings correct? Are the costumes either typical of the locale or correct according to the mandates of fashion? Would the action be probable, possible, or correct in the surrounding shown or the circumstances mentioned?"

COMMON sense, or the every day knowledge of every man may answer one of all these for the producer or the director. Yet it is the close attention to just such questions that makes the work of the masters. Inaccuracy of detail in setting, action or dress will mar an otherwise meritorious production much as a "blue note" the rendition of an otherwise pleasing musical composition. The motion picture of several years ago, before the advent of Research departments might be likened in this respect to the offerings of certain small town or amateur bands.

At hand is the script of a recently produced picture, of the middle class, or "program" sort. Turning at random through the script, there appears a scene supposedly occurring in the home of a wealthy New York broker. A dinner is being given, a very formal dinner in honor of a distinguished foreign diplomat. A subtle has informed that the foreigner is a man of keen perception of public and breeding. The host is endeavoring to impress this man favorably, and a situation vital to the story hinges upon his reaction to the effort of the host.

The writer of the continuity, it chanced, had never been in New York, and while he was a man of splendid education, from a fine family, he had never cared for "Society" in the ultra sense, and so, had not been a frequent guest at affairs of the sort. He therefore turned to the Research department for information and assistance. First, that he might better visualize his characters in it, he desired to "see" a dining room in a New York home of this class. Pictures, clipped from Architectural magazines, and filed under the classification: "Residences—Dining Rooms—New York," were handed him. Finding a room that pleased him, he studied it briefly until the arrangement of the room and its appearance were well fixed in his mind.
EXT, the matter of deportment of the guests and host at the announcement of dinner, in seating themselves and during the service. The service also interested him. What serving persons present, and the manner in which the viands and liquors would be offered.

The latter information was gleaned from a late edition of a book of social etiquette, and was studied by the writer very earnestly. That he did not, assuming as some might have in his position that he knew all that he needed to know of these things, proceed without careful study of detail, is a tribute to the perspicacity, and may I say it, genius of this man.

Whatever the minor action, as well as that with plot significance, that he might write into this scene, he intended to be correct, that released, the audience might not, more than the diplomat, be offended and disgusted by a glaring faux pas.

The Art Director is the next in order who uses the work of the Director of Research. Where an actually existing structure, called for or mentioned in the story and not available as a "location" must be duplicated, it is necessary for the Research department to supply him with many photographs. Pictures of the structure as a whole, or of that portion to be built, and all procurable "close ups" of the Architectural or other detail, are essential for accuracy in this.

In the case of purely imaginative settings, or settings that might, yet do not actually exist, the Art Director again is dependent to a large extent upon drawings and photographs of places and structures similar to those required, and of the decorations and ornament used in and on them, for ideas and inspiration in his design.

FROM each of the half dozen or more photographs of existing New York dining rooms that were shown the continuity writer in the previously mentioned scene, the Art Director may have culled a suggestion. The design of a door or a window in this, the trim and mouldings of that one, a well proportioned mantel in another, perhaps appealed to him as susceptible of harmonious combination in one room. His design then incorporated each of them, varied slightly perhaps to meet a condition of size or a particular business, or to lend accent to a proportion, line, or balance sought.

The "dressing," or furnishing of the set, brings a question to the Research Director, as well. The set dresser, or decorator, in procuring the furniture, the napery, silver, china and glassware for the same dinner, had reference in turn to the book of social etiquette, in which he found described carefully the table and other service for such an occasion, with pictures, showing, as set, the placing of each item.

In foreign, or "costume" stories, the task of the set dresser is even more difficult, and his questions more frequent. "Was this or that bit of furniture common in a certain country at a certain period? Are there any items of furniture, or decorative pieces peculiar to this or that period or country that may help to establish time or place if prominently displayed? Have you a picture of this or that piece of furniture? It cannot be rented or purchased, and must be built at the studio. Have you a picture of a room of the use called for in the story in that country of which the story is told? I haven't the slightest idea how it should be furnished!"

T HE costumer too, wants pictures. Current style books supply the Wardrobe department with all the necessary data for a modern dress or suit, but the dress of a hundred years ago is another matter. Bound volumes of fashion magazines, dating back a hundred years or more, may perhaps be found on the studio library shelves, and perhaps, if not there, may be picked up for a song at some second hand book shop, though the dress of a peasant of France in 1512 may be harder to find in pictures.

The title writer wants to know, it chances, how the Hindu says "I love you," or how the Esquimaux will swear. Or perhaps, he wants a background for a briefly worded sentence that will accentuate its meaning. A recently released story had as a subtitle: "Alone, through the silent watches of the night, she waited." A dim, grey hooded figure with a scythe in hand, only half seen through the words, told, better than words might have, that one whom she awaited.

The title artist, had asked for a picture of something symbolic of death, and had been handed a print of a very famous painting, clipped from an art magazine and filed under the general heading of "Symbolic Art." This he had used as a suggestion, posing and drawing the figure in his own manner.

As to the Director's use of Research, it is infinite. Suffice it to say that the thinking and thorough Director, (there are a few, really!) before the story is brought to a close has asked, if not the same questions, like questions and as many, as all of the other persons involved in making the picture. If he is to direct the action, edit the story, and in general be responsible for the accuracy and truth as well as the pleasure and profit bringing power of the photoplay, he must know everything about it.
The Incompetent Critic

By Hazel W. Spencer

W e were driving home from a performance of "Robin Hood" when one of my young companions turned to me with a slanging question, "Did you hear that high-powered bunch behind us discussing the merits of the play with such an air of authority? They probably wanted to create an impression of super-intelligence and education. All of a sudden, one of them, who was evidently seeing Fairbanks for the first time, exclaimed in a loud whisper: 'Is that him? Couldn't even use her pronouns correctly but setting up for a dramatic and literary critic!"

The scorn of the young voice was impressive. I thought: 'How I wish that incompetent critic could see herself thus pictured."

Do you see the connection between what I have just quoted and the importance of correct English in the writing of photoplays? It is there. Correct English is the first essential in all cultivated speech or writing. It is particularly so when the person employing it assumes the attitude of a critic.

It is very easy to criticise. It is less so to analyse and to appreciate. But certainly no one has a right to find fault with others while his own language remains crude and inaccurate.

"I suppose Mr. Fairbanks made every effort to present a faithful picture of the times," said a woman beside me, during the progress of the play. "But it is ridiculous to pretend that they used those kind of straps as long ago as the twelfth century."

Perhaps I should have regarded her opinion more favorably had it not been for that expression "those kind." But that was enough to convince me that her history was probably no more reliable than her English.

How very unfortunate it is that such people are so often the ones who speak with most emphasis, conveying an impression of deep intelligence to the ignorant and unvarying. Iconoclasts, who, because of their very lack of true culture, their superficial refinement, will denounce a play because it is not ridiculous, or a character because it is not tawdy, are the most vociferous in denouncing the methods of successful men, the person with a superficial education is generally the first one to find fault with the speech of conduct of superiors. If you live in a glass house, do not cast stones. The only true criticism is that which comes from one who knows; and such criticism is invariably constructive.

"It is very easy to criticise. It is less so to analyse and to appreciate," says Mrs. Spencer. The failures who lounge around the stove in the corner grocery store are the most vociferous in denouncing the methods of successful men, the person with a superficial education is generally the first one to find fault with the speech of conduct of superiors. If you live in a glass house, do not cast stones. The only true criticism is that which comes from one who knows; and such criticism is invariably constructive.

I n general, photoplays are not well written, and short-story writing will do well to mark the accuracy and beauty of the play's subtitles. They are written, of course, with particular fidelity to the language of the Twelfth Century, but this in no way conflicts with our best English of today.

Quaint as some of the speech may seem it is never of dubious origin or discolored by inaccuracies of construction, and it shows a painstaking, almost pedantic, conformity to early usage that is nothing short of an artistic triumph.

This may seem to you a small matter, but it is the very key-note of the play's success. Any drama, written as this was undoubtedly written throughout, is certain to rivet the attention of an Editor. We can imagine with what a glow at his heart an Editor would receive such a manuscript for the first time. The fact that Mr. Fairbanks himself wrote the story and that it was not dependent upon the judgment of an outsider for its success does not alter its significance for us as students of English construction.

O nly a perfectly written scenario could have furnished the ground-work for a play of such magnitude and such artistic finish. In a scenario of this character there would not be a word wasted nor one of which the meaning could be questioned. Every sentence would fit into the general structure with architectural precision. An editor reading such a manuscript for the first time would experience the same emotions as those of a traveller emerging into the sunlight from a dense forest. Think of the jungles of mere words through which an editor must
fight his way during the course of his reading. If he ever finds himself free of the entangling underbrush and overhanging foliage it is small wonder that he is tempted to loiter. The amazing thing is that he ever has courage to proceed.

An editor's heart is mistakenly supposed to resemble the consistency of flint. As a matter of fact, and necessarily, his heart is extremely sensitive to impression and very quick to beat in sympathy with another's point of view. He is looking eagerly, almost wistfully, for good material, and his faith and hope are perennial. It is not his fault that so many young writers receive rejection slips; it is their own. A truly good story will find a market, and the stories failing to do this are weak in some essential particular.

Not all editors are seeking the same sort of material, nor is the manuscript of interest to one certain to hold the attention of another; but if your story is really worth while some editor is sooner or later bound to accept it. Your patience may become exhausted before this happy conclusion is arrived at but somewhere the editor is waiting to whom your story will make inevitable appeal. Only continue sending it forth, as Noah did the dove, and some day it will return to you with an olive branch.

The fact is that there is only one royal road to success and that is the road of incessant effort and unflagging courage. Such effort and such courage are not easy in the face of continued discouragement but they are the only positive guarantee of ultimate reward. If you are not succeeding it is for a reason. And probably the reason is that you are allowing yourself to be satisfied with something less than perfection.

Now every successful story must approach perfection in at least one particular. This particular may be plot, or it may be character, or it may be literary style. It is very, very rarely all three. But if it is any one of these it will reach a market in each case, but still a market.

SOME editors are interested in plot to the exclusion of all else. Others lay stress on literary style. Still others judge everything from the standpoint of characterization.

If you have made a study of these different classes of editors you will know which is most likely to be favorable to your particular capabilities and you will not make the mistake of submitting your clever plot to the editor who thinks only of style or your charming narrative to the editor demanding novelty of plot.

On the other hand you will quickly come to realize that there is not an editor of them all who does not prefer that your manuscript be written in correct English. He may not be a scholar himself but he is enough of a craftsman to appreciate accuracy and finish; and, scholar or not, he despises mediocrity.

Not long ago a certain young man presented himself to the managing editor of a string of newspapers and suggested that he would like a place on the staff. The editor asked the young man if he had any previous experience in journalism and the latter replied naively: "I have wrote some for the papers.

Not even the editor who cares nothing for style and everything for plot will tolerate such English as this and if you feel yourself in danger of such inaccuracies you are a long way from being ready to enter the ranks of playwrights or authors.

We know many amateurs and even some professionals who believe that material is everything and one's English a matter of quite secondary importance. But this is the fact, that those magazines and studios of which such is the true standard are the cheapest and poorest from an artistic standpoint. The editors under whose banners all writers long sooner or later to range themselves put as high premium upon literary merit as upon any other feature.

A noble theme is worthy of a noble setting and a beautiful body is the appropriate accomplishment of a beautiful soul; so also a story that is worth telling is worth telling as carefully and artistically as it can be done. If your story succeeds without this sort of telling it does so in spite of it, not because of it: and no story was ever the worse for beautiful and accurate English.

If you are the possessor of a good vocabulary and know how to use it, either in speech or writing, (Continued on Page 34)
Your Magazine Grows

THE growth of your magazine continues! Six months ago the publishers of Photodramatist, in response to the demand of our many subscribers, added one third to the size of the publication and improved it in every way. At that time we believed that we had reached the highest possible standard for magazines devoted to creative writing, and the rapid increase in circulation thereafter gave evidence that our progressive policies were appreciated by the reading public. However, it is our firm belief that nothing can stand still and succeed. There is always room for improvement, no matter what heights of achievement may have been reached. Accordingly, despite the phenomenal popularity of Photodramatist in its present form, we have decided to make it even better.

Beginning with the March issue Photodramatist will be enlarged to 100 pages, standard size, similar in mechanical appearance and makeup to the best magazines of America. This new size will enable us to print fully 50% more material of interest and inspiration to those interested in photoplay or fiction writing. Consequently, the scope of our editorial policy will be extended. In addition to the many popular departments now being conducted, we shall offer our readers each month departments that will cover thoroughly the latest stage plays, novels and significant events in the world of creative writing. In other words, your magazine, starting with the next number, will be a comprehensive, authoritative compendium of the literary, dramatic and photoplay professions. There will be no other magazine like it.

Owing to the diversity of subjects that will be covered, the editors feel that the present title, "Photodramatist", should be changed as befits its broader policies. Hereafter the publication will be known as "The Story World." In other words, we shall offer to those interested in creative thought all available information pertaining to the world of "stories"—whether they be stories told in magazines, books, on the screen or on the legitimate stage.

In its new makeup The Story World will entail an expense to the publishers much greater than that of the magazine in its present form. However, there will be no increase in the cost to our subscribers. Increase in circulation during the past few months enables us to secure more advantageous rates from our printers, and this saving will be passed on to our readers. We sincerely believe that we shall be doing a greater service to the writers of America by issuing a larger number of copies of a magazine on which we shall make a small percentage of profit in the months to come, than by adopting the short-sighted method—so common to the ordinary publications in the writing field—of restricting our scope to the usual, narrow limitations.

One of the distinctive features of The Story World will be the publication each month of stories which embody not only the best fiction technique but which also will possess unusual dramatic screen qualities. In other words, Photodramatist believes that the best stories are those which are capable of presentation through the medium of the screen as well as on the printed page. Some of these stories, through the courtesy of the Sales Department of the Palmer Photoplay Corporation, will be fictionalized versions of exceptional photoplays submitted to them by members of the student body of that institution. Others will be stories written by the best writers of America directly for magazine publication, with screen possibilities as a secondary consideration. However, they will all be real, powerful, dramatic stories; and it is our desire to show the public, by concrete examples, that stories correctly constructed invariably embody certain fundamental principles and entertain or instruct, no matter in what form they are offered.

If you are already a subscriber to this magazine, we know that you will welcome The Story World as a living, pulsating adviser in your chosen work. If you are not a subscriber but are desirous of obtaining accurate information and real inspiration in the realm of creative art, you will be doing yourself an injustice if you do not obtain at least a copy of this, the world's best publication for literary workers. In view of the great demand for copies of Photodramatist in the past few months, we anticipate that our large March edition will be sold out within a few days after it appears. We advise those who are interested to reserve their copies now.

Producers Awakening

The story—especially the original story written directly for the screen—continues to gain in favor as the corner stone upon which all real film drama is constructed. Producer, star and director have each had their day. They are still important, we admit, but those who are best informed are rapidly being converted to the belief that without a real story no production can succeed. These same persons likewise concede that adaptations of books and plays cannot be successful unless vital changes are made before they are offered to the public, which is, in effect, conceding that such stories when finished are nothing more nor less than originals in which have been incorporated, for advertising purposes, the names and themes of well known literary or stage offerings.

The editors of Photodramatist, having for nearly four years encountered strong opposition among some of the "film factories" when we have maintained that the story is the most important factor in picture production, are pleased to note that in a national advertising campaign just inaugurated, Mr. Carl Laemmle, President of the Universal Film Company, announces
that the story is all-important and that it will be given first consideration in the selection of future Universal productions. Director and star are placed in the background in these announcements. This is indeed significant. We wish to congratulate Mr. Laemmle upon his keenness of perception. Universal pictures in the past have had but varying success, largely because of the fact that directors and stars persistently placed themselves above the scenario department. But we feel assured that with Mr. Laemmle strongly behind those who select the stories, Universal is due for an era of prosperity.

We are also informed that with the retirement of a number of the "old guard" from the Lasky ranks, the original story for the first time in years will be accorded full and careful consideration. Indeed, rumor has it that this large producing organization, carrying out the suggestions made by Mr. Douglas Z. Doty in a recent number of Photodramatist, will lean strongly toward the policy of hiring directors who possess trained creative imaginations and who themselves have been, or are, writers. Among those who will direct for Lasky in the near future, we are told, will be Mr. Rob Wagner, author of many original stories for the screen. This new policy should do much towards raising the standard of Lasky productions.

Another film producing organization that has embraced the idea that the story is all-important is the B. F. Schulberg Company. This far-sighted concern, although comparatively new in the film world, will make a strong bid for popularity if plans that have been announced are carried through. Miss Olga Printz, strong advocate of original stories, has been appointed head of the scenario department with full power to select suitable screen material. Assisting her will be Eve Unsell, herself a pioneer endorser of stories written directly for screen production. In fact, a veritable revolution has taken place in the Hollywood film colony. "Who is the director and who will be the star?" was the question invariably asked a few months ago when a new production was announced. Now the query is, "Have you a story?" This query comes not only from the professionals but is the paramount issue raised by those who are asked to finance new films. There are many capable stars "at liberty." There are any number of efficient directors; but there are few good stories to be found. As an example of this, we might mention the predicament in which the Constance Talmadge unit recently found itself, according to press notices. With two directors already on the payroll and with Constance herself eager to start work, production was held up for a considerable period because of the lack of a good story. Others have been through the same experiences.

Opportunity is not only knocking on the door of writers of original stories for the screen. She is, as a matter of fact, forcing her way across his threshold. And if you have lurking within your mind the germ of a really big story, get busy. Study the peculiar technique of the photoplay, write your story and submit it to the studios. The chances are strongly in favor of its finding a producer. But, of course, it must be a story!

Petty Criticism

STUDENTS of photoplay writing would do well to view as many produced pictures as possible. By witnessing on the screen, stories that have been built according to correct technique, ambitious writers are bound to obtain a deeper understanding of their subject. However, although it is advisable to analyze each picture as it is unfolded before your eyes, it is also essential that you do not become unduly critical of minor details. The motion pictures of the present day, we must admit, have many faults. But these faults cannot be remedied by petty and destructive criticism. Only by taking a picture as a whole—as a complete drama—may one gather therefrom any real assistance.

A tree is no less beautiful because of the fact that a reccant bird may have eaten a leaf or two from its branches. A battered violin oftimes produces the most melody. A Persian rug with a few defects is more highly prized than the mechanically perfect product of an American factory. A motion picture is not merely a photographic reproduction of life; it is more than that. It is a photographic "painting" of certain phases of life. Nothing could be more accurate and technically perfect than a photograph; yet the impressionistic work of a master artist—apparently a crude thing when viewed at close quarters, and, indeed, oftimes laughed at by those who are looking for faults rather than for good qualities—is in every way superior to the image imprinted on a chemically treated film by the camera lens.

What do you see when you visit your favorite picture theatre? What is the state of your mind as the lights are lowered and the film story begins to show upon the screen before you? Have you come to find minor faults or are you in a receptive mood, desirous of analyzing only in the broader sense, of obtaining inspiration as well as technical aid? Do you see a story in which real persons fight their way to achievement, love, cry, or laugh; or do you forget these vital things in attempting to find flaws that, after all, are of little or no importance? Do you overlook a big scene and the artistry of the man who conceived it in noting that the heroine's dress is of a style not worn in the particular period in which the play is laid? Do you fail entirely to grasp the significance of a certain dramatic incident because you, at the moment, are cogitating upon the fact that Desert cigarettes were not in existence in the year 1895? Is the emotional effect of a brilliant subtitle lost upon you because of a misplaced comma? If so, viewing motion pictures will do you no good. Small minds look for small errors. The "big" person overlooks minor defects in contemplation of any real merit that may exist. If you are a small-minded person, inclined to petty criticism, you must change your mode of thinking; else you will never succeed.
The condition of affairs outlined in my article in the January Photodramatist proceeds to improve steadily. More and more people are coming back to the box offices of the theatres because they realize that the motion pictures have apparently adopted Doctor Cooke’s slogan—“every day in every way they are getting better and better.” And the actual production at studios today gives promise of even greater improvement in the quality of the pictures which the public will see henceforth.

Confirmation of this continuous betterment is fine news for the photodramatist because it puts him on his metal and must also inevitably lead to more worthwhile recognition of his place in the production program, and with that increased recognition will come the monetary recompense which he so richly deserves. I am convinced that it is only a matter of time now when the authors of playplays will receive royalties, commencing with an initial guaranty payment, just as the playwrights for the stage. There will be the greatest possible incentive to the photodramatist.

First National Studios Tooting

COINCIDENT with the news that Associated First National Pictures has secured the distribution rights to Charles Chaplin’s latest starring effort, “The Pilgrim,” and that it has also consummated the deal to release both of Jackie Coogan’s latest pictures, “Tobey Tyler” and “Daddy,” comes the realization of its promise to increase its program. It will be recalled that general manager Richard A. Rowland and the Executive Committee of this organization during their stay here, announced the increased scope of First National’s plans. The two latest additions to the ranks of its producers are Edwin Carewe and James Young. The former has just come on from the East to make pictures for First National at United Studios; his first will be an adaptation of “The Girl of the Golden West,” already famous as a novel, a stage play and a grand opera. Adelaide Heilbron is Carewe’s scenario writer, L. F. Jerome is business manager; Sol Polito is cinematographer and Wallace Fox, chief assistant director. Mildred Earley will script girl on the set. James Young, one of the outstanding figures in filmland for many years who has recently added brilliance to his laurels by directing Guy Bate’s Post in Richard Walton Tully’s production of “Omar the Tentmaker,” has also joined the ranks of producers. In association with Sam Rork he will make pictures for First National release, the first of which is tentatively titled “Wandering Daughters” and is an original story—of which more anon. George Benoit will be at the camera and James Ewens will again assist Young. These two were both associated with Young on the Tully productions.

Norma Talmadge has come back to film “Within the Law,” on which she made some scenes in the East. It is a big production and the studio grounds house many sets including The Tombs, the Mulberry Street police station, a large department store and numerous interiors representing the homes of the people in the story. Frank Lloyd will direct again and the cast includes such celebrities as Lew Cody, Jack Mulhall, Eileen Percy, Helen Ferguson, Arthur S. Hall, Joseph Kilgore, Lincoln Plummer, Thomas Ricketts, Catherine Murphy and DeWitt Jennings. Constance Talmadge has not yet started shooting but her next will be an Emerson-Loos story, as was announced here last month.

Maurice Tourneur is rapidly completing his work on “The Isle of Dead Ships.” So is Allen Holubar, who is directing Dorothy Phillips in “The White Frontier”; recent additions to this cast include Rosemary Theby, Cyril Chadwick, Richard Headrick, Eric Mayne and Brinsley Shaw. Both of these productions have been building large, interesting sets that will not only serve to make the picture more costly but will visualize the story; in that respect they are important to us here. Katherine MacDonald, having completed “Refuge,” is starting on “Chastity,” produced by B. P. Schulberg for First National; and Richard Walton Tully has wired his Los Angeles offices that he sailed from France on January fourth and will return here soon to film “Trilby.” He has already shot a number of atmospheric scenes abroad for this production.

Metro’s Big Pictures.

FOLLOWING the lead taken by First National, Metro has announced its discontinuance of the regulation “program” pictures; even such stars as Viola Dana will hereafter appear in special productions, and it is promised that her first picture under the new regime will be an adaptation from the musical comedy success “Sally.” Robert Leonard has just started on the next Mae Murray production, written by Ray Goetz and adapted by Frances Marion. Its present title is “The French Doll.” Harry Garson’s next for Metro will again star Clara Kimball Young; it was written by Leroy Scott and adapted by Frank Beresford. It is now known as “Cordella, the Magnificent.” Louis B. Berenson, who re-established himself with “Forget-Me-Not,” has purchased an original story by Henry Symonds and John B. Clymer, entitled “Desire.” Rowland V. Lee is directing and the cast includes Estelle Taylor, Marguerite de la Motte, John Bowers and David Butler.

Goldwyn’s Big Directors.

AT Goldwyn’s Culver City plant are assembling some of the finest directors in motion pictures.
Eric von Stroheim is at present in San Francisco adapting Frank Norris's "McTeague." King Vidor, who crowned his glory with "Peg o' My Heart," has also been signed by Goldwyn for a number of pictures, the first of which will be "Three Wise Fools," adapted by the director and June Mathis, the present editorial chief for Goldwyn. Claude Gillingwater will probably play the same role in the film version as he did on the stage.

Marshall Neilan is working on "The Ingrate," his own original story adapted by Carey Wilson, and "dedicated to the physicians of the world," the cast will include Claire Windsor, Hobart Bosworth, Besie Love and Raymond Griffith. Rupert Hughes is directing his own adaptation of his own magazine serial, "Sons Por Sale," a story of Hollywood in which the principal parts are being played by Eleanor Boardman, Richard Dix, Roy Atwill and Barbara La Marr. Clarence Badger has returned to the Culver City plant and is working on Carey Wilson's adaptation of "The Rear Car," which will be known as "Red Lights."

Lasky Active.

ONE of the most interesting productions at the Famous Players-Lasky Studios is "The Law of the Lawless," an original Tar-tar story by Conrad Bercevici, adapted by E. Lloyd Sheldon; for it Victor Fleming is directing Dorothy Dalton, Theodore Kosloff and Charles de Roche, Lasky's recent French importation. William de Mille is filming Clara Beranger's adaptation of "Grump" with Theodore Roberts and Bernice Frank in the principal roles. George Fitzmaurice's last production under his present contract—he has just been signed by Samuel Goldwyn—will be a reissue of "The Cheat," newly adapted by Ouida Bergere and starring Pola Negri, supported by de Roche and Jack Holt. The present Sam Wood-Gloria Swanson opus is entitled "Prodigal Daughters:" it was written by Joseph Hocking and adapted by Monte Katterjohn.

At Universal City.

HERE "The merry-Go-Round" continues apace; also "The Hunchback of Notre Dame;" recent additions to its cast include Norman Kerry, Nick de Ruiz and Winifred Bryson. We understand that Universal threatens to take from eight months to a year to complete the production; certainly it is being made on a mammoth scale. Tod Browning is about one-third through Priscilla Dean's latest, entitle "Drifting," a Chinese story in which Alice Brady appeared successfully on the New York stage. Miss Dean's cast includes Matt Moore, William V. Mong, Wallace Beery, Rose Diane and Anna May Wong. King Baggot is at work on "The Chicken That Came Home To Roost," an original story by Fred Arnold Kummer, adapted by Hugh Hoffman. It is a light comedy-drama starring Gladys Walton, supported by Edward Hearn, Billy Franey and other comedians. Herbert Blache has just finished directing Herbert Rawlinson in "Nobody's Bride:" Nat Ross is working on "The Poor Worm" with Edward "Hoot" Gibson, Helen Ferguson and Betty Francisco.

Universal's latest serial contribution is a business story entitled "The Phantom Fortune," adapted by Anthony Coldway, Robert Hill; directing and the leading parts are played by William Desmond, Esther Ralston and Lewis Sargent.

Most important to the readers of Photodramatist, perhaps, is the news that Paul Bern has come over from Goldwyn's scenario department to be editorial chief at Universal.

Other Studios.

On the Robertson-Cole lot Val Paul is directing a Western melodrama entitled "The Man From the Desert." This is a combined adaptation of Wurdham Martin's story of this title and Eugene Manlove Rhodes' "Zee-Gee." Harry Carey is the star. Paul Schofield has adapted H. C. Witwer's "The Fourth Musketeer"; William Kerrigan Howard is directing Johnny Walker in it. "The Fighting Blood" series of two-reelers, adapted from Witwer's stories in Colliers Weekly, is being directed by Mal St. Clari from Beatrice Van's scripts, with George O'Hara and Clara Horton in the leading roles. Mr. and Mrs. Carter de Haven continue on their two-reel comedies for R-C; their latest, the ninth of the series, is entitled "No Trespassing," an original story and continuity by Monte Brice.

Selznick Busy.

SELZNICK'S activities on the United Studios lot are two in number and both important. "Rupert of Hentzau" continues to employ most of the extras in Hollywood for its elaborate scenes. "The Common Law," which was adapted also by Edw. J. Montaigne and whose leading parts have been announced as assigned to Corinne Griffith and Conway Tearle, has just received the following players for the supporting cast: Elliott Dexter, Hobart Bosworth, Harry Meyers, Bryant Washburn, Wally Van, Phyllis Haver, Doris May, and Miss DuPont.

Independents Active.

A T. B. P. Schulberg's studios Tom Forman has just finished "The Girl Who Came Back," adapted by Evelyn Campbell, and is about to start on "April Showers," written by Hope Loring and William R. Lighton, and adapted by Eve Unsell. Under the same roof Louis Gasnier will direct "Mothers-In-Law" an original by Frank Dazey and Agnes Christine Johnstone, adapted by Olga Printzian.

Warner Brothers continue their important activity. "Main Street" announced here last month is well under way; additions to the cast include Florence Vidor, Louise Fazenda, Robert Gordon, Noah Beery and Harry Myers. The next big production—one of the last to be made in the present studio since work has already been started on the new Warner plant—will be an adaptation of "David Copperfield," in which William Beaudine will direct Wesley Barry.

At the Fine Arts studio, which seems to have taken on a new lease of life as a rental plant, Sacramento Pictures Corporation, newly organized by William Jobelson, is making its first production entitled "The Present Generation." The author's name is not given but the adaptation was made by the director, Lambert Hillyer, and the cast includes Mildred Davis, Myrtle Stedman, Kenneth Harlan and Tully Marshall. Doubleday Productions' present activity is concentrated on "The Zero Hour," the last of Harry McCarty's series starring Lester Cuneo. For Phil Goldstone, Reeves Eason is directing Robert McKim, Snowy Baker and Tully Marshall in an original story as yet unnamed.

(Continued from Page 36)
A PRACTICAL FILING SYSTEM

(Continued from Page 10)

catch-all for "screen dope." This must be emptied at weekly intervals by filing its contents under their proper heads. With some it will be more practical to file each day. All of the things we pick up or write down during the day will, when we get home at leisure with our file before us, be seen to "fit" with this or the other story or reference subhead.

The six general divisions, under which all of your Photodramatic material will fall, are these. (A) Drama Building (active) (B) Drama Building (passive) (C) Finished Work. (D) Reference. (E.) General File. (F.) Correspondence. Some of the subheads mentioned under these may not have come into your present range of interest. Others you may need to add to suit your special hobbies. It is the advantage of the vertical roomy drawer system and proper general heads, that they provide us with means for indefinite expansion without re-classifying all matter.

SUPPOSE that a week has elapsed and that you have been working at "high pressure" on some particular story during every spare minute. At the same time, during the day, your mind, alert for screen values, has seen twenty or thirty such "items" as, "that old woman who got on the car yesterday" or "the theme suggested by that tragic trial now dragging on to weary weeks" or, "that catchy title in which a whole story lay wrapped," that popped into my head this morning. Along with the clippings of the week they lie in that catch-all drawer where you dropped them from your pockets and your "loose-leaf" the instant you got home, so as to lose no minute from that story with which you were wrestling all week. Possibly all of this is beside the mark. You may have such a "single track mind" that you can think of nothing aside from your daily duties and the one story or theme in hand. Just the same, when you get that one on its way you need to spend a week relaxing from too much tension and just taking down "brain food" in the "li'l loose-leaf."

Now comes Sunday morning and you've got that drawer to weed out and all its priceless contents to put in order. You rise early, pull out the drawer and the file and "hop to it." Under A.—Drama Building (active) (or Stories Under-Way)—you'll need from five to twenty tabs, each bearing the working title of a story, some of them still nebulous, others well along toward that point where you lay hold of them for the final effort to weld each into the best "finished product" that you have it in you to create and set aside "to cool" like the Devil with his "branded souls" in "Tomlinson."

UNDER B. Drama Building (passive)—Will be found most of the heads which will swallow up your week's collection. Back of it we have these sub-heads—

1. Themes to develop (social, philosophical, moral, religious, individual.)
2. Plot bits, (these will "fit" in some future story in the most surprising way.) They are little "bits" suggested to your mind out of your reading or observation, or which rise out of your subconscious at some moment of imagination.)
3. Titles which suggest stories. (These will flash into mind and have the "feel" of a lot of good plot attached to them which only needs the fire of imagination to expand.)
4. Comedy "bits" or plots. (These are little touches of daily life seen anywhere and they either fit or suggest fitting touches to relieve and balance your heavier dramas.)
5. Characters (Interesting and suggestive ones seen or read about.) With a Theme in mind, glance over a list of these short sketches and set your imagination to work. A cast and a conflict will ensue.
6. Themes of successful screen dramas I have seen. (A brief outline which will recall the story and suggest new theme and plot angles.)
7. Suggestions of symbolic touches. (Trite Examples.) The candle flickering out coincident with death. The broken blossom as the heroine's love is crushed by circumstance. (These may not all be used by the director but some of them may be so vivid and original that he will seize them eagerly.)
8. Lists to stimulate individual thought and imagination.

HERE is a practical writer's aid equally valuable to the embryo scribe, who needs to accumulate a stock of photoplay material within his own range of thought and experience, or to the jaded professional who needs a new stimulant to give him new vision. Take five sheets of paper and head them thus. (1.) Interesting mental states. (2.) Words suggesting dramatic action. (3.) Callings and states of being. (4.) Suggestive locales. (5.) Suggestive words of plot value.

Open your dictionary and scan it analytically for words which fall into these classifications. As you proceed you will find both vague and sharp memories waking into consciousness. Some of these are of experiences, some of things read or seen, some of your friends' experiences.

The significant thing about this systematic prod- ding of Memory for material for your good servant Imagination is that no two minds will give the same reaction to a given list. Starting at C the first we hit is CAB. What do I see? Instantly two of Dickens' stories and vivid scenes therein spring to mind. This is probably because these particular images are nearest the "top" having been recently re-read. To you different angles of cabs and cabmen will arise after a moment's concentration. The next is a cabal. Ah! Here we have drama and the core of situations numberless! Gather two or three characters from your character file and let them simmer in the company of this word and its magic synonyms, which call up courts and palaces, huddled figures and furtive evil glances.

Test each word to see how much "juice" it has for you. For instance; to you "cliff" may stir up nothing of dramatic import but to me it was a grappling hook which dragged out of a hidden re- cess, eighteen years obscure, the vivid picture of a 200 foot cliff on whose cave-dotted face I was "stuck" and unable to get either up or down. You (Continued on Page 41)
Research Expert is Added to Staff of Photodramatist Service Bureau

ALTHOUGH announcement of Photodramatist's new Service Bureau for writers was made but thirty days ago, already hundreds of our readers have taken advantage of this opportunity to obtain authoritative information regarding their problems. Inquiries have been received both by mail and by telegram and have been promptly answered.

The editors of Photodramatist naturally assumed that this service, different from that given by any other writers' publication in the world, would prove to be popular, but anticipated no such avalanche of inquiries. However, they are far from being dismayed. Indeed, despite the fact that it has added to the labors of the staff, they are well pleased, inasmuch as it proves that readers of Photodramatist are vitally interested in the magazine and in the assistance it gives to its subscribers. No inquiry, however inconsequential, has been neglected, and the editors sincerely trust that those who have written to the Service Bureau have been satisfied with the efforts taken to give them information that may be of value in their work.

Many of our correspondents, however, have wasted time and stamps in asking questions impossible of reply. Fully one-fourth of the letters received have contained the following question: "I have just finished a story. Where can I sell it?" Obviously this is a query no one could answer without more definite information. Were one to insert an advertisement in a daily paper, "House for Sale," one certainly could not expect to obtain advice as to its sale without furnishing information as to the size and architectural design of the house as well as its location. Similarly, in asking the Service Bureau for information regarding markets for your photoplays, do not expect to receive authentic reply unless you have given us brief details regarding the theme, characterization and general nature of your work. No two companies have the same requirements and the editors of the Service Bureau cannot undertake to offer marketing advice without proper information.

SINCE the inauguration of the Service Bureau, Photodramatist has discovered that there is a popular demand for technical information aside from that pertaining to marketing problems. Accordingly, we desire to announce that, beginning with this issue, G. Harrison Wiley, former Research Director for the Metro studios and one of the best-informed technical men in motion pictures, has been added to the staff. Mr. Wiley will be glad to answer any questions that have to deal with the technical phase of motion picture production. If you are in doubt as to whether a certain effect may be achieved in your latest photoplay, whether the cost of some particular scene would be prohibitive, or whether you have placed your characters in predicaments that would be physically impossible of solution, write to Mr. Wiley in care of Photodramatist. He will answer you by return mail. Oftimes situations seemingly impossible may be filmed by trick photography, or the great expense of traveling on the part of a company may be eliminated by the construction of miniatures, the use of transparencies, etc. If this is the case, Mr. Wiley, as our research expert, will so inform you. On the other hand, if you have offered a problem in your play that cannot be solved by the "modern magicians" of filmland, Mr. Wiley may save you the disappointment of rejection by pointing out the facts in the case before you have submitted your manuscript.

It must be remembered that all inquiries to the Service Bureau should be accompanied by stamped, self-addressed envelopes; and in case of telegraphed inquiries, that reply by us will be made at your expense.

Fiction Markets

THE following list of fiction markets includes only magazines that pay for fiction upon acceptance at a rate of one cent per word, or better. Magazines which ordinarily pay over two cents are marked with an asterisk. A double asterisk indicates those paying highest rates. There are, of course, other technical and class magazines which also deal fairly with writers, but which do not consider original, creative work. In submitting work to these markets, writers should enclose stamped, self-addressed envelopes, to insure the return of their manuscripts.

Action Stories—41 Union Square, New York.
Adventure—Spring & Macdougal Sts., New York.
Argosy All-Story Magazine—230 Broadway, New York.
Asia—627 Lexington Ave., New York.
*Atlantic Monthly's—8 Arlington St., Boston.
Black Mask—25 W. 45th St., New York.
Blue Book—36 S. State St., Chicago.
Bookman—244 Madison Ave., New York.
Breezy Stories—377 Fourth Ave., New York.
*Century Magazine—353 Fourth Ave., New York.
**Cosmopolitan Magazine—119 W. 40th St., New York.
Country Life—Garden City, L. I., N. Y.
*Designer—12 Vandam St., New York.
Detective Stories Magazine—79 Seventh Ave., N. Y.
*Dial, The—152 W. 33rd St., New York.
Everybody's—Spring & Macdougal's Sts., New York.
Farm and Fireside—381 Fourth Ave., New York.
*Good Housekeeping—119 W. 40th St., New York.
Holland's Magazine—Dallas, Texas.
*Live Stories—9 E. 40th St., New York.
Love Story Magazine—79 Seventh Ave., New York.
*McCall's Magazine—236 W. 37th St., New York.
*McClure's—80 Lafayette St., New York.
*Metropolitan Magazine—12 Fourth Ave., New York.
*McLean's Magazine—143 University Ave., Toronto, Ont.
*Modern Priscilla—85 Broad St., Boston.
*Munsey—290 Broadway, New York.
People's Story Magazine—79 Seventh Ave., New York.
*Pop c's Home Journal—78 Lafayette St., New York.
People's Popular Monthly—Des Moines, Iowa.
Photoplay—25 W. 45th St., New York.
**Pictorial Review—200 W. 39th St., New York.
*Popular Magazine—79 Seventh Ave., New York.
**Red Book—36 S. State St., Chicago.
*Saturday Evening Post—Independence Sq., Philadelphia.
Sancty Stories—25 W. 45th St., New York.
Sea Stories—79 Seventh Ave., New York.
Short Stories—Garden City, Long Island, N. Y.
Smart Set, The—25 W. 45th St., New York.
Snappy Stories—9 E. 40th St., New York.
*Success—1133 Broadway, New York.
*Sunset Magazine—San Francisco, Calif.
Telling Stories—80 E. 11th St., New York.
Top Notch—79 Seventh Ave., New York.
True Story Magazine—119 W. 40th St., New York.
Western Story Magazine—79 Seventh Ave., New York.
*Women's Home Companion—381 Fourth Ave., N. Y.
Women's World—107 S. Clinton St., Chicago.
Young's Magazine—374 Fourth Ave., New York.

Photoplay Markets

BELOW is list of studios which furnish a general and fairly steady market for various types of photoplays. In each case, please address your manuscript to the Section Editor and enclose a stamped self-addressed envelope for return. It is especially important in submitting photoplays to keep a copy of your work, since motion picture companies, although endeavoring to return all material, are not.

Fox Studios—1401 No. Western Ave., Hollywood, Calif.—Comedy dramas, melodramas and Western dramas for the following stars: Shirley Mason, Charles Jones, Wm. Russell, Wm. Farnum and Tom Mix.

Fox Comly Studios—1945 Glendale Blvd., Los Angeles, Calif.—Feminine lead dramas for Clara Kimball Young.

Goldwyn Studios—Culver City, Calif.—Strong modern dramas and comedy dramas for male or female leads.

Ince Studios—Culver City, Calif.—Strong dramas or comedy dramas for male or female leads.

Lazy Studios—1520 Vine St., Hollywood, Calif.—Dramas with unusually big themes or comedy dramas for the following stars: Walter Hiers, Jack Holt, Betty Compson, Gloria Swanson, Pola Negri, Bebe Daniels, Thomas Meighan, Esie Ferguson and A'ice Brady; or for all-star casts.

Long Beach Studios—Long Beach, Calif.—Western dramas for male leads or for all-star casts.

Mayer-Schulberg Studios—3800 Mission Road, Los Angeles, Calif.—Strong Modern dramas for male or female leads, all-star casts, or for Clara Kimball Young.

Metro Studios—Romaine & Cahuenga Ave., Hollywood, Calif.—Comedy dramas for Vio's Dana, or strong dramas for all-star casts.

R-C Studios—780 Gower St., Hollywood, Calif.—Dramas or comedy dramas for the following stars: Ethen Clayton, Harry Carey, Jane Novak and Carter de Haven.

Selznick Productions—care of United Studios, 3341 Melrose Ave., Hollywood, Calif.—Dramas or comedy dramas for male or female leads.

Viograph Studios—1708 Talmadge Ave., Hollywood, Calif.—melodramas or romantic comedy dramas for Earle Williams or Alice Ca'houn.

Grof Productions, Inc.—care of Pacific Studios, San Mateo, Calif.—Strong dramas for male or female leads, or for all-star casts.

Fox Studios—55th & 10th St., New York City—Strong dramas or melodramas for male or female leads, or for all-star casts.

Prize Contests

Betsy Earle, Plainville, Kansas, desires clear-cut, exquisite poems of striking simplicity for the anthology, "Shells". For the best poem, published or unpublished, submitted before May 1, 1923, $15.00 is offered. If prize poem is a clipped poem submitted by more than one contributor, the prize will be awarded to the person whose contribution is first received. All manuscripts to be accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope. If poem is previously published, name of author, publisher, magazine, date, etc. should be given.

The Pulitzer Prizes, offered each year by Columbia University, New York City: $2,000 for the best book of the year, in the history of the United States; $1,000 for the best American biography teaching patriotic and unselfish services to the people, illustrated by a notable example, Washington and Lincoln excepted; $1,000 for the best book of verse published during the year which best portrays who'some American life; $1,000 for the original American play performed in New York which represents the educational power of the stage in promoting good morals, good taste and good manners. Of special interest to those in the newspaper field: $1,000 for the best history of the services rendered the public by the American press during the past year; $500 for the best editorial article written during the year, the test of merit being clearness of style, moral purpose, sound reasoning and power to influence public opinion in the right direction; $1,000 for the best example of reporter's work during the past year, the test being accuracy, terseness and accomplishment of some public good attracting public attention and admiration.

Christian Herald, 6 Tudor St., London E. C. 4, England, is in the market for short stories of from 2,000 to 3,000 words each. The editor states that these must be "bright, crisp, complete and suitable for a religious journal."

The Lyric West, 1139 West 27th St., Los Angeles, Calif., announces two prizes: $100 for the best long poem or group of poems, and $50 for the best lyric. These to be offered in 1923.

THE POINT OF VIEW

(Continued from Page 16)

As an illustration let me cite the following facts. I had written a certain under-sea story to which I had no title at the time of writing the last paragraph. I am very particular about titles. They must reflect the dominant mood of the story, or by some happy turn of phrasing, give the key-note of the yarn.

After a whole day of thinking and of juggling back and forth some fifty combinations of words related to sea-faring life, the title came to me with the blessed suddenness of inspiration. Intuitively, you will say, I knew this title all along, that it was there stored up in the back of my head from the beginning. True, nevertheless without the conscious effort at selection, the story would have gone off to the editors with a very mediocre title. As it was, the editor who bought the story, complimented me, particularly, upon the aptness of the title.

WHEN you read this title you will agree with the editor, that it reflects the spirit of the story to a nicety. It has all the effects of spontaneity. Yet it took me no less than six or seven hours to find it.

Cramer in his "Talks to Students" says: "We accomplish less by rule than by observation and imitation."

I don't want to appear dogmatic in my regard for rules or mechanics, but this statement seems rather

(Continued on Page 42)
What Filmland’s University Thinks About

SCREENLAND
Magazine
Palmer Photoplay Corporation

It is just as essential that Screenland’s leading magazine be published within rifle-shot of the great studios as it is practical for Filmland’s great educational institution to keep in close, daily contact with the producers who buy the stories of its trained students. That is why the letter reproduced above is so highly prized by us. Read it; then send the coupon below with $1.00 and receive SCREENLAND every month for six months and keep informed.

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Hollywood, Cal.

INCOMPETENT CRITICS

(Continued from Page 26)

you have a sense of security, of power for which the unlettered man of wealth would frequently barter his entire property. There are many such men, kings of finance, leaders of the world of commerce, masters in their own narrow domain, who are so ill at ease, so awkward, so incompetent when it comes to making a speech or writing even the simplest business letter that it is distressing to observe them. Such men would double and treble their power by the possession of a good vocabulary, an easy style of expression. And after all it is but a matter of training; and a matter of self training before all else.

I KNOW a rich man, quite wholly self educated, for whom the study of words has been something of a passion. To hear him talk or to read his letters you would suppose him to be the possessor of a University degree. Instead, he possesses the love of language, and if a career in the world of finance had not already usurped his noblest powers he might have made his mark as a writer of charming prose. So might any one of us who really cares to do so.

The field is unlimited and there are no favors. But by all means master your own language first and be content to pose later as an authority in a foreign tongue. It is very desirable that we should have at least a slight understanding of European languages but if we imagine that this alone will give us an enviable prestige while our own English is mutilated and unlovely, we are lacking in perspective. It is of vastly more importance that you speak and write your own language correctly than that you have at your tongues end half the languages of Europe. And do not imagine that the insertion of foreign phrases in your conversation or your manuscript will obscure mistakes in grammar and pronunciation when it comes to your native English.

Far better that you should know one language well than a dozen imperfectly; and knowledge of your own language should come before all others.

Many intelligent and educated
persons have a habit of inaccurate pronunciation which arises solely from careless reading. These same persons would be aghast if you questioned their pronunciation of French; they are very proud of that; but they plunge blithely into sentences in English of which half the words may be misused or mispronounced. From mispronunciation they proceed to mistakes in spelling and all these things are the outgrowth of carelessness.

A very intelligent young woman made use in my hearing of the word “Anti-climatic” meaning anti-climactic. When I called her attention to the missing letter “C” she was amazed. “Why I never noticed that before!” she exclaimed contritely. “I have pronounced it that way for twenty-five years. What abominable carelessness.”

Carelessness indeed, and positively fatal to anything like literature. Another young woman, really intelligent, astounded me recently by the word “non-ch-a-ha-lent-ly”. She meant nonchalantly and should no more have made such a mistake than she would have committed a breach of good manners. She had seen that word in her reading a thousand times but she has never observed it.

Do we all of us observe the words in our daily reading? Shall we recognize them another time and know, not alone what they mean, but how they are to be pronounced? “Beware of the man of one book”. Beware, also, of the man who knows any one thing accurately. Do not be a dabbler in knowledge, know what you do know as well as you possibly can.

Be careful about prefixes. If a word begins with the prefix “in” do not say “un”; it is inexcusable, for example, not inexcusable; it is imperturbable, not unperturbable, inexact, not inexact. If you have never stopped to think whether you are using words rightly or wrongly get yourself into a habit of stopping to think whenever you begin a new sentence. This habit of sitting in judgment upon yourself is one of the first essentials for success in any field whatsoever.

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With The Producers

(Continued from Page 30)

Many Comedies Coming.

COMPREHENSIVE production programs or reports cannot neglect altogether the two reel comedies which are seemingly an essential in the present motion picture theatre program. Of the producers concentrating on this activity Jack White is perhaps the most active, with three companies working at the present time. Louise Fazenda is working under Bob Kerr in a travesty entitled "Pest of the Storm Country," her supporting cast including Harry Gribbon, Jack Ackroyd and Jack Lloyd. Lige Conley, White's star comedian, is also busy, and the most recent addition to the group is Roy del Rath, famous for many years on the Mack Sennett lot. Lloyd Hamilton is being directed by Lloyd Bacon and Noel Smith on the fifth of a series of six feature comedies for Educational.

ELIZABETH G. BLACK

A recognized successful composer, will write melody to your words, and harmonize, making the same ready to submit to the market. By appointment or by mail.

95 Rutland Road, Brooklyn, N.Y.

Fiction in Business

(Continued from Page 7)

difference between profit and loss for a month's business, where the expiring of an option may mean ruin, or the signing of a contract success, and you will find the monotony gone and the enterprise on which he is launched a high and adventurous one. I do not mean that your business man will see this—not at all. Why should he? But you should, else you have no call to be writing anything, unless it be boiler-plate material for stuffing the inside of country newspapers!

In the third place, know what you are talking about before you write of business—any business in particular or the world of business in the abstract. The state of our civil courts will indicate to you that there are many complications to business; there is hardly a house so small or a firm so insignificant that is does not, perform, today transact a great deal of its more important negotiations with the advice of a lawyer or else some executive trained in the ramifications of commercial law. This means that you cannot sit down and dash off airmly a cute little drama in which a mortgage is foreclosed unless you know how it is foreclosed, what happened then, how long the ousted owner has in which to redeem, and so on. This means that you cannot tear off a gripping melodrama built on the purchase of a cargo of copra unless you know whence copra comes, for what it is used, how it is handled, what its current market price is, and so on.

DO NOT forget that you are entering into a realm which eighty per cent of your readers, even including women, are nowadays more or less familiar, and that a slip here is infinitely worse than one relating to life in the South Sea Islands, for example, where not one-eight-hundredth of one per cent of your readers have ever been or ever will be. (I don't condone slips under any circumstances, as some of our literary manufacturers do, and boast of it, too! But I call your attention to the fact that you may get away with murder in an exotic-atmosphere story and be hanged for petty larceny in one about the corner grocer.)

In the fourth place (which is a check on and corollary to the third) do not be technical, unless you are

(Continued on Page 39)
MOTION picture producers pay as high as $2000 and rarely offer less than $500 for original screen stories. And yet their demands for acceptable stories cannot be supplied.

In the last few months newspapers and film companies have offered more than $50,000 in scenario contest prizes, all to secure new stories and encourage new screen writers.

And your life probably holds many incidents which would form the basis for stories worth telling—and selling.

These People Did

A CALIFORNIA school teacher; a Chicago society matron; a Pennsylvania newspaper reporter; an underpaid office man in Utah; a prisoner in the Arizona State Penitentiary are a few of the many who have sold their stories at handsome prices, become studio staff writers, or won big sums on scenario contests.

They studied screen writing to get away from routine work. Not one was a recognized author. Not one was a master of literary skill.

All were discovered by a photoplay corporation which searched for undeveloped screen writing talent through a novel questionnaire test. You have the same opportunity that they had, and grasped.

The Palmer Questionnaire
No Cost—No Obligation

H. V. MINCHIN, the well-known scenario writer, is responsible for the invention of the novel questionnaire which has and is uncovering hidden photodramatists in all walks of life.

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All correspondence strictly confidential.
FROM PEN TO SILVER SHEET

(Continued from Page 6)

The first process in the treatment of film is the perforation. Anyone who has ever seen a piece of film has noticed the little sprocket holes along each outer edge of the strip. These sprocket holes are necessary to hold the film in place as it runs through the projection machine. The raw film enters the laboratory without these perforations and is run through a very delicate and intricate machine which makes the perforations. This machine has to be very exact because if the sprocket holes are not absolutely perfect and evenly cut, the film will be thrown out of frame in the camera and projection machine. The most skilled tool and die makers in the country are engaged to make and fit the tiny punches of this machine. There are four holes or perforations on each side of the film to each picture and sixteen pictures to each foot of film.

The positive is printed from the negative by running the exposed, developed negative film, in contact with a strip of unexposed positive film, through a printing machine which exposes each little picture, times it perfectly and sends it on through. The exposed positive is then taken to the positive dark room and wound on racks of two hundred feet capacity. These racks with the film, are submerged first in a solution of developer, then washed, then in a solution of hypo or fixing bath, then washed again for a half hour in running water; It is then tinted with the appropriate color called for on the key at the end of each scene. These tints are highly effective in accentuating effects. For instance if it is a night shot, the scene is tinted dark blue. If the scene shows a fire, the film is tinted red. This enhances the general effect. Several other colors of tints are used for various effects.

After tinting the film is taken into the drying room and wound on large drying drums. These are then revolved until the film is entirely dry. A half hour is the average time consumed in the drying process. The film is then wound into rolls and taken into the assembling room where it is assembled into reels, then highly polished. After this it is projected on a tiny screen by a girl operator who inspects the magnified print carefully, marking all flaws, scratches, cloudy or foggy pictures, etc. Many of these flaws would not be observed on the film itself, but as magnified on the projection screen they are easily detected. Another girl operator then goes over the film, takes out the marked scenes and substitutes fresh prints which have subsequently been struck from the negative. The film is then repolished, when it is ready to be packed and shipped.

Two hours is the average time consumed to put a roll of film through the laboratory processes and deliver it to the director for projection; but in an emergency, the film can be rushed through in an hour, thanks to the clockwork organization of the department. An average of a hundred and fifty men and girls are employed in this one studio department. Every positive print for every completed picture is turned out in this laboratory. This means that hundreds of thousands of feet of film must be handled on each picture produced. This complex plant represents an investment of several hundred thousand dollars. The majority of the men and girls employed in the laboratory are trained right in the plant, coming in as raw recruits. Most of them, however, have had college or high school training in chemistry, this being necessary as laboratory work involves an intimate working knowledge of several important chemical processes used in the development and printing of the film.

SPEECHLESS ACTORS

(Continued from Page 38)

out and wade or swim. There was much grumbling and apprehension of colds from the wetting. It fell to the assistant-director, naturally, to move the bear. He expected grief but as a matter of fact that cub probably saved that assistant. He started out carrying her, but stepped into a deep hole. Fortunately there was a chain fast to the bear. The A-D, being unable to swim, hung onto the chain and the bear hauled him into shallow water. Of all that crowd the bear was the only one who did not need a drink to allay fears of rheumatism and other things.

It is Miss Shipman’s custom, when using Brownie, to keep the bear in the touring car beside her. Here the big rollypoly will sit upright, riding for miles with one big arm affectionately about her mistress’ neck. One night, returning from location, the car stopped to pick up a man who wanted a lift.

He had climbed in and was about to sit down, vociferous in his thanks, when, in the half light, he happened to see the strange sight of a beautiful young woman being casually embraced by a large bear.

“What th— Hey,” he yelled, “wait a minute—I forgot something”—and so saying he vanished backward into the night.

Sometimes the actors get the unexpected thrills. One of the cute little pets to be found around the set any working day is a full grown porcupine.

In the scene the girl comes in, throws herself on the cabin bunk and the porcupine crawls up beside her to show his sympathy. Here she is discovered by a darkey prospector, who when not working as an actor, acts as company cook.

This darkey had not been watching the scene, but had been following his race’s pastime, off set. Finally he was called.

“Now Sam,” said Director Van Tuyle, “you come on, discover the girl on the bed, go over to her, believe she is dead, register all the fear you’ve got in you and run out.”

Sam followed directions until, while bending over the star, his hand happened to rest on the head of the porcupine. In truth he registered fear in
Fiction In Business

(Continued from Page 36)

a master at it. Know what you are talking about—and then don’t talk about it. Know, when you are writing of the law of principal and agent what the law is, but don’t in Heaven’s name, tell your reader all of it. He doesn’t care—or if he does, he will go to a lawyer on his own hook and account. There are some very pretty possibilities in stories relating to the responsibility a principal assumes when he sends an agent out, for instance, to sign a contract. But if you are fool enough to enter into wearisome details concerning that law,—well, the more fool you!

In the fifth place make your characters real. You can picture a mooncalf of a poet in a love-story and get away with it; you can give a detective pre-knowledge and an omniscience that rivals that of Providence itself; you can make gentlemen-adventurers who are a combination of the lads pictured in the Cluett shirt ads, Bill Hart at his wooliest, Samson, Hercules, Deerslayer and the late G. Washington, and be admired and revered. But when you write of business men and women you have to make them at least faintly like people in business.

I will confess that some of our characters in business stories tax the imagination a bit, but an analysis of their characters and actions will prove to you that what they do and say would be possible, if not highly probable. As a matter of fact there is no need for a business story hero of super-human intelligence; God knows he can get into trouble enough if he is as ordinary as the first stock broker you think of, or as imaginative as the man who takes your check at the teller’s window in your bank. The truth is that modern American business is so full of traps, tricks, catches, pitfalls, chances, speculations, risks, ventures, deadfalls, faults, flaws, virtues, practices and necessities that it requires no imagination at all to conceive of a very commonplace guy indeed going over the bumps in a small business way and giving your reader a catch in the breath every other paragraph. So stick to human beings, and let business itself provide you with the thrills.

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chance of a stray traveller affording him a meal, and with his setting forth on that eventful trip. Consider then, your most effective, most economical, most satisfactory "Point of Departure," and now with its aid you can get over your conditions precedent. What can be "slipped over," in a descriptive phrase, should be so "slipped over."

"Tired, dear?" asked Mrs. Jarvis, of her husband, as they faced each other at dinner.

"Not more so than at any other of the three hundred times per annum, for thirteen years on end, that I have made my damned daily trip to and from this place and the city," replied her husband, savagely attacking the chicken. "Breast?"

NOW, this would be an extravagant, not economical, way of telling the reader that monotony was getting on friend husband's nerves, unless the fact so established were important to the story. But if he is, in the next paragraph, to abandon home and wife, after the manner of the hero of "The Moon and Sixpence" it is just long enough, and impressive enough to make the reader know that he had some justification in being tired of it! Better than beginning:

"Mr. and Mrs. Dash had lived in a somewhat inconvenient suburb for thirteen years. During that time, Mr. Dash had made the usual commuter's trip for three hundred days of each year, this sum being the residue left when fifty-two Sundays and a fortnight's vacation had been subtracted. Mr. Dash was getting a little tired of it all."

Now, to enlarge a little on the second feature of our "shape."

II. First Inciting Movement.

This is the throwing into the pond of the stone that starts the ripples. It is (to go back to our homeliest smile) the first mixing of the ingredients in the bowl, or perhaps, the putting of the ingredients into the bowl!

In "Little Red Riding Hood" of course the meeting of the heroine and the heavy is the first inciting movement. (Though a pupil and a bright one!—of mine disputed this, affirming that the first inciting movement was the the first step on that fateful journey.) I, for my part, believe that Little Red Riding Hood was so much in the habit of taking baskets to Grandma that I feel inclined to include the beginning of the trip in the Conditions Precedent. Let the Reader decide that for himself!

I AM assuming (perhaps mistakenly) that I am right. May we all be saved from dogmatism! With the appearance of that strange form, so like a large friendly dog in appearance, yet so disquietingly different, comes the first downward step for our heroine. Not that a mere maidenly reticence would have saved her—indeed, it might have precipitated her end and the satisfaction of the wolf's appetite. At all events, as recorded, she went walking along by the side of the wolf for some little time.

The choice of the First Inciting Movement is hardly ours, after we have begun to conceive our story. That is to say, a coherent story, with a theme of some kind as its soul, dominates us to a certain extent. There is a best way of starting our story and probably that best way will force itself upon us. But do not concede this too easily. Think over just what proves the straw too much, the last ounce of weight, that makes the necessity for the beginning of the change—the movement, the departure from conditions precedent. That will probably give you your "First Inciting Movement."

III. Development of Same.

HAVING started the ball rolling, we must now follow its slow or rapid progress, and this ball will go, structurally, up hill towards the Crisis. It must be the result of the First Inciting Movement, of course. (Do not make the mistake of using a Second Inciting Movement, independent of the first—if you do, you will get incidents strung like beads on a string, and not an organic growth!)

In our model, the development of the first movement is the walking with the Wolf, so mistakenly done by the heroine. And the result of that walk is the determination of the Wolf to have her (for his dinner) with the least danger to himself. The end of the second stage is his departure, and her now more hurried progress toward what she thinks safety, but what we know to be her doom.

IV. Crisis.

(Some dramaturgs use "Crisis" and "Climax" almost interchangeably. I prefer to keep Climax for the end.)

The crisis, the high light, the moment of keenest dramatic suspense before the catastrophe, occurs during that brief scene preceding Red Riding Hood's end. The author (?) plays with it, "squeezes" it, wrings from it every value. I refer, of course, to the dialogue, in which the ill-fated maiden questions her supposed relative concerning the extraordinary changes in her physical appearance. The end of this situation is the abandoning of all pretense by the Heavy, and the consummation of his villainy in the accomplishing of Red Riding Hood's destruction. In any story, whether this high light be tragic, dramatic merely, or comic, there should come after it, a sense of hush, of pause, of the close of a phrase or movement.

V. Disentangling, downward movement, beginning of the denouement or Climax.

IN this instance, of course, we apparently start almost a new story, owing to the death of the main character and the impossibility of carrying on the story from her viewpoint. We therefore return to her home, and show the anxiety of her parents at her protracted absence. We show the father, with neighbors, armed, starting off for the destination known to have been the heroine's, to find out, if possible, what has happened.

VI. Denouement, Climax, End.

HIS should, as far as possible, combine what is expected with what is not expected, though the unexpectedness must partake of a difficult quality, the "what-ought-to-be-expected!" By that, I mean, that, while the reader is surprised, he should also feel that he ought to have foreseen what has just happened.

(Continued on Page 42)
A PRACTICAL FILING SYSTEM

(Continued from Page 31)

who aspire to "Westerns" might put friend hero in this fix. Within his range of vision his best beloved falls into—deadly peril.

Your Division C (finished work) should contain tabs for—
1. Returned synopses to be altered—criticisms attached.
2. Carbon copies of synopses sent out.
3. Card forms to record mailing, return, and sale of stories.

D. (references).

Though most of these will repose in your bookcase or the public library, it is well to have a place in your file for—
1. Photodrama booklets.
2. Clipped interviews with stars, directors, and other technicians of photodrama.
3. Lists of books, plays, etc., which are of value to the photodramatist.

You will have in the Stimulative Lists, when you have developed them, what might be classified as Sources of Ideas for Individual Reaction. Here is a brief list of the principal Plot and Theme sources. (File under D)

Plot Sources.

1. Fairy Tales, Classic Myths and Literature, Modern Legends and Daily News, Biography and Historical Episodes, The Bible, and Life around you.

Theme Sources. (File under D)

Philosophical and religious literature, Biography and Historical Episodes, your own convictions and creative thought power.

E. (General file)

1. Carbon papers.
2. Envelopes, all kinds.
3. Clips and stamps.
4. Cover stock for Mss.
5. Your own additions for Miscellany.

F. (Correspondence)

Complete alphabetical sub-ta-bles for letters received and another for carbons of important letters sent out. You may find in time that you have worked up quite a list of persons on your correspondence who are interested in photodrama.

SPEECHLESS ACTORS

(Continued from Page 33)

one wild agonized look and left on the run. In the "rushes" it was wonderful, except that his exit looked like a black cloud, blurred and storm driven, across the screen. It is recorded that some one else cooked the dinner that night.

Another member of the animal troupe was the unwitting cause of great suffering and mental anguish to the human members. This was a handsome pole-cat.

When a company is miles from anywhere, with a limited crew, every man is invaluable and can hardly be spared. So it was that that they had to continue to use the man who handled him. They made him eat and sleep alone, very much alone, but while shooting they perforce bore with him, between fainting spells. But the next time they picked their crew one of the questions submitted to applicants for jobs was whether or not they were addicted to skunks.

In case any one is desirous of undertaking the production of pictures, making extensive use of wild animals, the following advice is freely given.

In the first place you must really want to. Then you must have available an organization capable of making good pictures—without animals. Then you must invest a fortune in the animals, cages, equipment, quarters, keepers and food. You must be very fond of animals.

In addition to the ordinary grief attending the making of any picture you must be eager to bear with delays, losses, maulings, accidents to members, yellow streaks in unreplaceable principals which develop only after you are well into the picture. You must love animals very much.

You must be prepared to meet transportation problems that would have stumped the German General Staff. Your leads must be eager to risk life and limb in the good cause with never a comeback, for the average animal represents much more of an investment than the average actor and can never be killed, while the latter often should be, even if there are laws against it. You must be able to find, and keep, a staff of assistants who can do anything and you should have an assistant director who can do twice that of whom who was acquired under some Slavery Act. You must be passionately fond of animals, their noises, their smells and their cute little ways.

You must have three times the resourcefulness of a Robinson Crusoe, ten times the enthusiasm of an ingénue at her first dance, fifty times the stoicism of a stoic and a hundred times the patience of a job. Ah yes indeed, you must dearly love animals.

With the above you have a fair chance of competing in the field. It can be done. It is being done. But you had best let those who are doing it, do it, and take up something easy such as conquering the world or inaugurating a jitney service to Mars.
This surprise is essential to comedies. Tragedy has less need of it, and in this story, it is missing. We get just what we expect and hope—the just execution of justice upon the villain.

Now, note the difference between "I" and "VI." There we had happiness, family affection, peace. A chain of circumstances, that have, moreover, an underlying tragic truth, (since, after all, the Wolf did but gratify a natural appetite, and was not, in any real sense a Heavy!) has brought about the destruction of that happiness, that peace. It is not for nothing that Red Riding Hood dallied with the Wolf, disregarding, in all probability both oft-repeated instructions, and the secret warnings of her conscience and her good sense!

B. We now come to the second reason (there are probably more than two!) why your script comes home.

This second lesson concerns itself with the other. "How" which I have been some time in learning.

A story has two main elements. Its own being, its main incidents, which, told barely, with no "trimming" resolve themselves into what may be called the "Major Movement." Secondly, the method by which those incidents are made to occur, called "Mechanics."

Here I pause to stress that word "made." If the author merely narrates what he sees, invents, or has in mind, giving incident upon incident, succeeding each other (I use the same simile) as beads in a necklace, he is merely a recorder, in the one case, and perhaps a skilled inventor in the other. A writer falls naturally into purpose and purpose is akin to drama. A simple illustration may make this clear.

A. Narrative of the Purse and the Honest Lady

A policeman is standing at his post, regulating traffic. A lady sees a purse lying on the ground. She picks it up, and gives it to the policeman, that he may return it to any enquiring owner.

This is narrative!

B. Narrative of the Purse and the Dishonest Lady.

A policeman is standing at his post, regulating traffic. A lady sees a purse lying on the ground. She picks it up, and, after a hasty glance round, to make sure that she has not been observed, she slips it into her hand bag and goes her way.

Still narrative—to this point.

C. Drama of the Purse, the Rogue and the Lady.

A policeman is standing at his post, regulating traffic. A man (the Rogue) steals out and lays a purse on the ground. He retires a few steps. A lady appears, and picks up the purse. Before we can know which of the two courses already outlined she will pursue, the Rogue leaps out, clutches the wrist of the hand still holding the purse, and yells to the policeman: "Hi, there! This woman stole my purse from my pocket!"

Here we have drama! Because here is purpose, intention, compulsion.

My last word is a warning. Never, oh, never, employ a "Duke of York" situation! That is my own name for pointless happenings, in play or story. You can tell what kind of a situation that would be?

The Duke of York, with twenty thousand men, Marched up a hill, and then marched down again—And nothing came of it!

THE POINT OF VIEW

(Continued from Page 33)

Superficial. Imitation is the result of observation, and observation is the conscious mathematical process of dividing knowledge gleaned through the senses, and stowing it away in our brain. We cannot use this knowledge, successfully until we apply it to some definite rule. Therefore, rule is at the bottom of all things—or if you prefer—mathematics.

Music is a mathematical arrangement of sounds. When we find a melody especially beautiful, it means that the divisions of sound—the tune of the melody—is mathematically perfect.

A piece of sculpture is great because of its symmetry, and who will deny that symmetry is mathematics. Why then exclude literature from the general scheme of mathematics.
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