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# CINEMA PROGRESS

A BI-MONTHLY MAGAZINE OF THE

## Cinema Appreciation League

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# CONTENTS

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Editorial: CINEMA PROGRESS .....	DR. BORIS V. MORKOVIN
Ways and Means .....	Cinema Appreciation League
CINEMA APPRECIATION AND RESEARCH—	
Motion Picture Appreciation.....	DR. EDGAR DALE
Motion Pictures and Social Science Teaching.....	DR. FREDERICK THRASHER
Reactions to Cinema Appreciation Movement	
Cinema Appreciation Research	
Humanizing and Socializing Education Through Films.....	MARIAN EVANS
Behind the Screen	
Experimenting With Motion Picture Appreciation.....	Florence Sprenger
Libraries and Motion Pictures	
Fundamentals of Motion Picture Production	
Television and Motion Pictures.....	STANLEY L. COMBS
A Unit of Study for High Schools	
Film Production in Schools .....	ALLEN K. DALLAS
Motion Picture Appreciation in the Elementary School.....	BERNARD J. LONSDALE
Chicago University and Talkies	
Pope Pius XI on New Trend	
Cine-Drama Technique.....	JULIA B. KNOWLTON
Photographic History Service	
Sources of Educational Films and Equipment	
EDUCATIONAL AND DOCUMENTARY CINEMATOGRAPHY—	
Visual Education .....	DR. ROBERT KISSACK
The Administration of Visual Education.....	REVIEW
Local Educational Films.....	FRED W. ORTH
Teacher Training	
Pre-Convention Notes	
National Convention	

## CINEMA PROGRESS

BORIS V. MORKOVIN\*

The motion picture, this prodigious child of the 20th century, has within two decades become a powerful young giant, whose power has expanded beyond his own field—the commercial entertainment.

School, home and church have found that they are challenged by this giant in their own domain—education. Lured by the glamour of the wide unknown world opened to them by the movies, children have become movie fans; their desires, attitudes, manners of conduct being moulded by motion pictures.

It has become clear that this new and powerful agent of mental control cannot be ignored. But purely negative and prohibitive attempts to keep children away from movies have proved to be ineffective. Condemnation and forbiddance served only to make the fruit seem sweeter and more alluring. The negative attitude of some parents and teachers often created only confusion and mental conflict in the child, who was not a ways able, himself, to reconcile the ideas suggested by movies with those taught in school, church, or home.

As a way out of this blind alley, a new movement, called "Cinema Appreciation" has been started with the determination to meet the movie giant in his own field. Two methods of accomplishing this have been suggested.

First, to smooth out the possible discrepancy between the two sets of ideas in the mind of the child, by means of interpretation, criticism, and discussion of movies in schools, homes, churches, and communities; and to encourage children to shop for better pictures in order to develop discrimination and higher standards of taste and appreciation. This will create a growing audience with a demand for a new and higher type of picture.

Second, to utilize some of the splendid materials in good pictures for children's information and enjoyment.

In order to use these methods successfully, teachers, parents, ministers, and civic leaders should take pains to study and understand the nature of motion pictures as a new and distinct art of the 20th century, different from all other arts, including the stage and literature, with which it is most closely allied. Only on the basis of such study can the criteria of excellence and

standards of better taste and appreciation be established. Appreciation of motion pictures should be taught in the public schools, just as the appreciation of literature, drama, art, and music is taught. In that way the movie enthusiasm of youth can be harnessed and changed into a powerful instrument of education. Modern educators who join this movement are vitalizing their class work by motion pictures. As Dr. Robert Kissack of the University of Minnesota put it, they are "catching up with the tools of civilization." They realize that in the age of airplanes, radio, and imminent television, we cannot follow horse and buggy methods in our education.

\* \* \*

Education has not been the only domain the young movie giant has invaded. His precocious growth has vitally affected other regions of national life and creative endeavor. Some faithful creators of fiction, stage-drama, art, music, opera, vaudeville, ballet, have been bitterly complaining of the encroachment and ravages of this new Frankenstein monster; movies have been taking and "distorting" their stories and have snatched at their talents. On the other hand, such writers as Booth Tarkington proclaim the insufficiency of old arts and techniques in the face of the new art of the movies. It is their belief that prose, fiction, drama and opera are doomed and can be vitalized only as contributors to motion pictures. Recently H. G. Wells proudly announced, "I have entered the motion picture field and leave things to come, pestilence and famine, to others." On his way back to England from Hollywood, he told an interviewer from the N. Y. Times, "I have learned the lesson and I am most enthusiastic about the result."

The power and influence of motion pictures upon the social and creative life of the nation can neither be destroyed nor disregarded. It demands serious attention, study, and research. The frontiers of creative arts and their relationships should be re-defined and consciously adjusted in view of the powerful newcomer. Cinema has become a great factor in modern art and literature. It is developing a new form of expression of human thought and emotions, and as such it has to be an outgrowth of the national genius, crystallized and influenced by the national institutions of science and culture. It

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is not merely a shallow entertainment, but a rapidly growing art of the masses, capable of expression of the dynamic spirit of modern man. Thence cinema progress is an important and organic part of the progress of national culture.

\* \* \*

What is the attitude of the motion picture industry toward the new movement and the new audience? Can the directors and producers afford to disregard social responsibility, and to ignore the effort of thousands of educators, cultural and civic leaders when they have once become motion picture conscious and started to work on elevation of standards of appreciation of motion pictures among the millions of young people and adults in our schools and communities?

The artists and producers of motion pictures by the nature of their position as caterers to public taste, certainly cannot shirk social responsibility and overlook the demand for a new type of picture. The best witness to this is Irving Thalberg, Vice President of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Corporation who said in a letter to the Cinema Appreciation League: "I think the newly-awakened interest in motion pictures on the part of teachers in this country and abroad is a most hopeful sign for the future of the industry."

In the past when the taste in motion pictures was completely chaotic,

producers met some very disagreeable surprises and disillusion. At a time when the industry thought it had found the formula of what the public wanted, suddenly the public turned against this formula, and the industry was forced to produce a better type of picture. The danger for the industry lies in the chaotic state of the public taste rather than in any process of clarifying and crystallizing standards of appreciation of better pictures. When this new audience becomes articulate, and will cooperate with the industry in demanding a higher type of picture, then a steady and lasting "cinema progress" will be secured.

This belief has also been expressed very fitly by Mr. Thalberg: "If the growing generation will understand motion pictures, it will become increasingly interested in our better efforts and thereby stimulate interest in them and the natural consequence of this will be to bring out better pictures all the time." The students from high schools have been graduated at the rate of 2,000,000 a year and they have an entirely new perception of the finer things. From them and from the college students of today will be found the future creative artists. "These men and women," says Mr. Thalberg, "having grown up with an understanding of the technique of pictures, will not be circumscribed by the limitation of other art forms, such as the stage and literature."

## WAYS AND MEANS

### CINEMA APPRECIATION LEAGUE

Under the auspices of the American Institute of Cinematography, Inc.  
3551 University Ave.

The Cinema Appreciation League will develop its program practically in view of definite purposes: to study the motion picture medium and techniques as an educational tool and for the elevation of standards of community appreciation.

In order to carry on a more systematic work toward these objectives, the program is divided into twelve cinema research and workshop divisions:

#### 1. General Division.

The study of fundamentals of aesthetics and psychology of cinema. The ways and means of fusion of all arts and sciences which enter in cinema to obtain a motion picture illusion. The vocabulary, grammar and syntax of cinematic language.

#### 2. Story and Continuity Division.

Study in motion picture story and picture research techniques. Compara-

tive study of methods of fiction and cinema. (Teachers will be interested in the work of this division in connection with the teaching of English.)

#### 3. Dramatics Division.

Comparative study of cinema and stage dramaturgy; directing, acting make-up.

#### 4. Social Studies Division.

The motion picture as an agent of social control. Influence upon children and adults. Source of information on modern history, geography, international relations, and social problems.

#### 5. Art Division.

Art in appreciation of motion pictures; painting, sculpture, and architecture as ingredients of motion pictures. Set designing and construction, costumes, property, color, used in motion pictures. Animated cartoon. Relationship of art to drama and music.

## 6. Music Division.

Appreciation of music in motion pictures. Its relation to the dramatic and technical aspects.

## 7. Dance Division.

Dance and rhythm in motion pictures. Their appreciation with special regard to teaching physical education.

## 8. Educational Cinematography Division.

Classroom, scientific, documentary and industrial film. The methods of production of 16mm film and its use.

## 9. Cinema Technique and Science Division

Light, sound, photography, television, optics, acoustics, sensitometry, and other aspects of physics, chemistry, and

engineering as applied to motion pictures in their studio production.

## 10. Library Division.

Motion picture bibliography, scripts, and film library. Library book references in connection with the released films.

## 11. Journalism Division.

Motion picture criticism. The function and technique of motion picture publicity departments.

## 12. Motion Picture Theatres Division.

Distribution and exhibition of motion pictures. Community influence upon theatre managers and theatre chain executives as to improvements and programs.

# *Motion Picture Appreciation*

By EDGAR DALE

The aim in teaching motion picture discrimination is to educate children to choose their movies wisely and to evaluate them with understanding. To achieve this goal, three things are necessary.

1. Motion pictures must be produced which are excellent from an artistic and social point of view.

2. There must be discriminating persons who are sufficiently sensitive to fine things to appreciate what they see on the screen.

3. There must be an honest and accurate source of information whereby the consumer can discover the nature and quality of motion pictures before he attends.

May I briefly discuss these three statements?

### 1. Motion pictures must be produced which are excellent from an artistic and social point of view.

When is a picture excellent from the artistic and social point of view? We test the excellence of a motion picture by the emotional and intellectual effect it has upon the viewer not only when he sees it at the theater, but afterwards.

This gives rise to two questions: Why do we go to the motion picture theater? What effect does the motion picture have upon us?

We go to the motion picture theater for varying reasons. The majority of persons go there because they want something different. They want to forget about their troubles. They want to be thrilled. They want to experience the pleasure that comes from the emotional excitement aroused by drama.

A smaller—but nevertheless a significant—number demand something

more. They, too, want to be lifted out of the petty routines and cares of the day, but they want more than emotional excitement. They want insight into the many problems that face us today. They don't go, of course, to hear a sermon preached, or to be bored with long, uninteresting speeches. Instead, they ask that the motion picture inform them sincerely, honestly, and dramatically about the major personal and social problems of the day.

### 2. There must be discriminating persons who are sufficiently sensitive to fine things to appreciate what they see on the screen.

Many persons do not really see what is in the film, nor do they really hear with discernment the skillful way in which dialog and sound effects and music are sometimes presented. Your problem, then, as parents and teachers, is to develop in children the seeing eye and the hearing ear. We must remember that we get out of a motion picture only what we put into it. To many, going to the movies is a very narrow experience. They see something of the acting, only a little of the beauty of the settings; it is the story primarily that draws their attention. And yet this is not a complete experience as far as the films are concerned.

Truly to experience films we need not only the richness that comes from an understanding of acting and story but also that which relates to photography and settings, to dialog and sound effects, to direction. To gain this experience requires study, for, as Ruskin once said: "... the amount of pleasure that you can receive from any great work depends wholly on the



quantity of attention and energy of mind you can bring to bear upon it."

It is impossible in this short space to indicate to the reader just how the film can be experienced in this broader, deeper, richer, and more fundamental way. The writer has attempted to do that in his textbook, *How to Appreciate Motion Pictures*, one of the series of Payne Fund monographs dealing with motion pictures and youth.

3. There must be an honest and accurate source of information whereby the consumer can discover the nature and quality of motion pictures before he attends.

One of the most common complaints that high school students and parents make about motion pictures is that they cannot find out about them before they go.

I believe that for younger children the community must take the responsibility, financial and educational, for most recreational activities. When we come to the motion pictures for the adolescent, however, we face a more difficult problem.

Here we must be much less inclined to restrict completely the films which these high school students attend. Their job is that of growing up. They need guidance, but they also need to have an opportunity to make decisions. If properly trained, they have learned a great deal about what constitutes good taste in a variety of fields. High school youth who really have the ideals we

desire are the ones whose parents have been continuously educating for responsibility and initiative.

We may expect that commercial theaters catering to youth and adults will be with us a long time. Therefore youth must be trained to select critically the motion pictures which he now attends. In large measure this is a matter of reading capable reviews and being able to distinguish between an honest one and a "blur." Through their motion picture appreciation courses, high school classes in English are learning to be immune to such reviews.

More positively, they must be brought into touch with the reviews by a few really capable reviewers in this country. I refer here to such men as W. Ward Marsh, of the Cleveland Plain Dealer; Richard Watts, Jr., of the New York Herald-Tribune; William Troy, of the Nation; and Evelyn Gerstein, of the New Theater Magazine; and Wood Soames, of the Oakland Tribune.

The school and the community cannot ignore the influence of screen drama on the life of the community. Books can describe experience and give the reader some feeling of that experience. However, through drama we get the best method of communicating experiences indirectly. Educational agencies (and this includes the home as well as the school and the church) should make this method their own and realize the full extent of its possibilities.

## *Motion Pictures and Social Science Teaching*

By FREDERIC M. THRASHER\*

The potentialities of the motion picture as an instrument of education have never been realized either by educators or by laymen. The well-made motion picture is one of the most effective of all educational devices, not stimulating the emotions and changing only in imparting information but in social attitudes, which are the very dynamics of social action.

In no other place on the globe can the motion picture serve a more useful purpose as an instrument of education than in America where social changes have been too rapid and too pronounced to enable social institutions to keep pace with them. In spite of some significant exceptions here and there, social disorganization is prevalent and outstanding in the United States. We are finally beginning to

realize that some of our social problems such as crime and juvenile delinquency threaten the very fabric and structure of a democracy with the danger that they may even undermine the basic elements in our civilization.

Effective teaching in the social sciences demands that these problems be presented fully and impartially and that school children be given a thorough knowledge of the issues involved so that these children as adults may be prepared to participate intelligently in the solution of these problems. Adult education in the social sciences is also necessary if these serious social maladjustments are to be overcome. In both instances there is no more potent instrument of education than the motion picture.

Social science teaching needs to be rejuvenated, and there is no single teaching device which can make it come to life so effectively as the motion picture. Democracy can be made

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to live on the screen, to live ideally and practically in a vivid way that will leave indelible impressions upon the plastic mind of youth. Citizenship does not depend upon information alone, but upon the habits of feeling and acting which are deeply rooted in our sentiments and attitudes.

It is here that the motion picture has a prime function to perform because it has demonstrated that it can create sentiments, that it can change attitudes. Motion pictures can make us hate the Negro or can create in us attitudes of tolerance and co-operation. They can make us love our parents and show consideration for them. They can make us hate war or love it. They can make us friendly and tolerant of diverse nationalities and economic and social strata in the population, or they can create in us disdain, fear and distrust. They can make us appreciate the contributions of science to human progress and generate attitudes of respect for and support of scientific research. A good example of this very thing is "The Life of Louis Pasteur," one of the greatest pictures ever made in Hollywood, and I predict that it will

be rated as the best picture of 1936.

The use of the motion picture as an instrument of education in the social science fields raises the question as to whether there is a difference between propaganda in the movies and education for social efficiency.

Propaganda is that type of education through which selfish interests attempt to put across some particular idea or program without the public being fully aware of its implications. Legitimate education in the social science field means thorough and impartial understanding of social issues grounded in clear comprehension of social structures and social processes.

The important social science scenarios are yet to be written. The important social science films are yet to be made. Those which are successful and effective either in single features or in separate films will present the clear exposition of the principles of social science and will stimulate the development of emotional drives and social attitudes, which will create good citizenship, reinforce our democratic social fabric, and promote social progress.

### *Teaching Appreciation of Motion Pictures*

(Quoted from letters received by Cinema Appreciation League)

Dr. Edgar Dale, College of Education, Ohio State University.

"I received your bulletin today. I enjoyed reading it. It is simple and interesting. . . .

"Publications such as yours are especially valuable in giving guidance to teachers who wish to begin work in motion picture appreciation."

\*\*\*\*\*

C. M. Koon, Senior Specialist in Radio and Visual Education, United States Department of the Interior, Office of Education, Washington, D. C.

"We shall be happy to cooperate with you in your plans for a national convention for teachers of motion picture appreciation in so far as it is possible for us to do so. When you have prepared a tentative outline of topics for discussion and people to take part, we shall be pleased to supplement it with any suggestions as to subject matter or personnel which we may have."

\*\*\*\*\*

Dr. C. C. Trillingham, Assistant Superintendent of Schools, Los Angeles County Schools.

"Permit me to state that teachers should increasingly recognize the influence of motion pictures and should provide pupils opportunity through the

school program to develop ability to evaluate what they see on the screen. I, personally, feel that motion picture discrimination is more important than appreciation. It should be possible to give pupils a list of positive elements, such as scenes depicting heroism, bravery, honesty, happy family life, and so forth, along with certain negative elements, such as killing, stealing, drinking, gambling, lowering the sanctity of marriage, and the like. In observing pictures over a period of time, pupils could check the number of scenes depicting positive elements against those depicting negative elements, and in thus weighing one set of values against the other should acquire tact and power in appraising what they see. I have carried on this above notion through simple pupil research, and I feel certain that it gets results."

\*\*\*\*\*

Jack Conway, M. G. M. Studio, Director of "Tale of Two Cities."

"The purposes of the Institute are most commendable, and in my opinion the organization should receive all possible cooperation from the motion picture industry."

\*\*\*\*

Mr. Leonard Hacker, noted author of the book, "Cinematic Design,"

says: "I am very much interested in your organization and the work that you are doing to foster the appreciation and production of cultural and education films. It is only natural that such sincere efforts to improve the motion picture in all its aspects will bear fruit."

\*\*\*\*

Frances M. Foster, Managing Editor of the Progressive Education Association, says: "I enjoyed "Cinema Progress" very much. You covered many points, each of which could well form the basis of a separate article. I

am particularly interested in two phases of the movie problem: the possibilities for cooperation between the movie industry and education and the technique for accomplishing this, and the technique for raising the level of appreciation."

\*\*\*\*

Dr. Vierling Kersey, Superintendent of Public Instruction, State of California, writes: "You know of my very definite support of your program and of my desire to assist in every way. Any manner in which my name can be of help you are authorized to make use of it."

## Cinema Appreciation Research

### Taking Liberties With History

Many subjects of intense interest were discussed during the winter and spring forums which were a part of the Cinema Appreciation League's program for the past year. One of the subjects which proved most interesting was the Problem of Story Adaptation in reference to taking liberties with history.

Mrs. Thomas Winter, Motion Picture Producers and Distributors, said that after seeing "The Crusades," she immediately consulted her history to determine if she had been mistaken about some facts in history, but found that she was correct and that Cecil B. DeMille had taken liberties in his picture. She decided, however, despite the liberties that he had taken with history, "The Crusades" was a wonderful picture.

Dr. Rufus B. Von KleinSmid, president of the University of Southern California, pleaded for a more rigid adherence to truth and history when making a purely historical film. He said "Cleopatra" was a failure because it distorted real facts of history, and that probably "The Crusades" would also be considered a failure, in spite of its being a magnificent spectacle, because of its wrong presentation of historical facts.

Howard Estabrook, Producer, Paramount, also agreed that teachers have every right to be indignant and should bombard the studios for authenticity in their rendering of historical pictures. However, in making a picture, certain liberties have to be taken in order to make a scene interesting, according to Mr. Estabrook. For instance, in one picture, in a court scene, the camera set-up had to infringe on one of the rules of a New York court to permit a prisoner to walk inside the railing, and thus give him an opportunity to

face the court (and picture audiences). Few people would notice this irregularity of court rules.

To show the "influence" of motion pictures on the youth of today, Mr. Estabrook told the following story:

History teacher: Who was it that bought in the majority of shares of the Suez Canal for England?

Small Boy: George Arliss.

#### "MUTILATING" THE STORY

"The Informer," which universally was proclaimed the best picture of the year was not recognized by producers as being a suitable story for production at first, because they did not see in it the promise of a box office success. They were afraid of doing what had not been done before.

Dudley Nichols who adapted the story of "The Informer" which was made into a picture by John Ford, in telling about this experience, said, "It took John Ford and me two years before we could find anyone who would produce "The Informer" because nothing like it had ever been done. Finally R. K. O. agreed to put up \$200,000 which is a small amount as pictures go, and we had to cut expenses at every point, including our own salaries. The producers were very nice after they decided to produce the picture and eventually advanced \$266,000."

In answering the charge that stories are often "mutilated" by the time they reach the screen, Mr. Nichols replied:

"Writers are often forced to make radical changes in original stories. Take, for instance, "The Informer."

"As there was no woman in the original story we were at once required to introduce a love interest. We were not allowed to use the communist characters which were in the story, but instead had to use a revolutionary setting in Ireland. When the picture was



finally completed everyone said that it wouldn't make a dime.

Everyone knows the story of the success of this film, for the adaptation of which Mr. Nichols won the award of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences.

Mr. Nichols stated further:

"At the present time, writing for the screen is a new field and is accordingly in the experimental stage. None of us knows anything definite and final about screen-writing. Each is trying to find his way and is hampered on every side by taboos of every sort; by things that can't be done or by things that must be done because they have always been done.

"The motion picture is be-devilled by the fact that it is half art and half industry, and there seems no way around the difficulty. As industry it must make money; as art it should make life understandable, but the cinema is doing very little of this, and everybody is working blindly, without help. We have no definitions; we must discover the fundamental principles of the cinema before we can make a real contribution.

"The stage and the screen are very different. The stage projects human emotions, thought, conflicts, by the voice, while the screen projects them by means of visual images. In cinema, you have to tie up your images so that the mind gets the idea from them as they are thrown upon the screen. It must, however, be without conscious effort, as the moment the audience realizes that it is being told a tale, the story is lost.

"The Cinema Appreciation League is doing the research work along these lines which the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences should be doing."

### CHANGING SHAKESPEARE

Talbot Jennings, screen writer for M. G. M. studio, spoke of his work in adapting "Mutiny on the Bounty," and "Romeo and Juliet" for the screen.

"Mutiny on the Bounty" was adapted from three books. There were many problems. Since mutiny has always been a crime, it was necessary to make the character of Fletcher Christian understandable and his action seem justifiable, and at the same time have the sympathy of the audience with him. One of the methods to accomplish this was to over-emphasize the cruelty of Captain Bligh and show him as being unreasonable and unjustifiably severe in his punishment of the men.

In discussing "Romeo and Juliet," Mr. Jennings was asked if the studio had changed Shakespeare, and if not, how it was possible to bring it to the screen.

"The answer is," Mr. Jennings said, "that we did not change a single line; as a matter of fact, the Elizabethan stage plays were written much like our motion picture scripts, and none of the plays had long runs, rarely over two days, so it was necessary to write fast, and usually several persons collaborated.

"In adapting Shakespeare to the screen, the first problem was that of 'cutting,' as what is obsolete must be left out, as well as what is not necessary to characterization or plot. Many of the jokes and puns have lost much of their meaning and must be eliminated.

"The second problem was to expand the scenes that are suggested or described by Shakespeare as happening off-stage. Pantomime was used to accomplish this. Other problems were concerned with sword play, duelling, dancing, background, etc. The technical information needed was furnished by the research department. Then songs were added which contributed to the mood. In adapting Shakespeare to the screen the real burden falls upon the players, directors, and producers. It is not a question of what the screen can do for Shakespeare, but rather what Shakespeare can do for the screen."

To collaborate in bringing "Romeo and Juliet" to the screen, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer engaged Prof. John Murray of Harvard University, an authority on the Elizabethan stage, and Prof. William Strunk of Cornell University, a Shakespearean scholar.

### PROBLEMS OF RESEARCH

Another important contributor to the spring Forum was Mrs. Nathalie Bucknall, head of the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer studio research department.

"The research department," said Mrs. Bucknall, "is comparatively new. In the early days there were only a few people in the department, and for the most part they merely answered questions when they were asked. Now it is a part of the production department, and it carries many more responsibilities, which fact gives it more prestige and more rights.

"The routing in connection with a new picture is somewhat as follows: the producer gets an idea for a story and then calls in a writer. They get the material for the locale, songs, char-

acterizations, etc., for the story. When the script comes to the research department, comments and suggestions are made. It is much better when the writer consults the department before he begins the story, as it is much more difficult to correct things which have been done wrong than to prevent the mistakes in the first place.

"When we receive a temporary script we go through it and make a break-down of sets, properties, architecture, costumes, etc., and then make production files in which are placed all materials which may be needed in the story. The perfect writer is one who will come to the research department and make use of this material before he completes his story. All sorts of questions are asked, often at a moment's notice, such as the kind of fans, games, dress, funeral processions, table manners, that were used in a particular period.

"The correct period for the setting for 'Romeo and Juliet,' according to Mrs. Bucknall, "was 1460." However the costumes and the architecture used, range from 1400 to 1500. In connection with this picture it was necessary for us to cable Verona, Italy, to instruct the photographers at what angles to take pictures of the streets. We now have over one thousand pictures.

"In the days of Romeo and Juliet, many of the aristocratic ladies had the front part of the hair shaved, so this head dress is being used on some of the characters. The costumes are very lavishly made of beautiful brocaded materials, with lovely embroidery in different colors. There is a tremendous amount of work in compiling materials for a picture of this type."

#### Music and Motion Pictures

Max Steiner, director of music at R. K. O. studios, in speaking before a Forum devoted to the subject of music and sound, revealed a problem he had encountered recently in "Follow the Fleet," as an example of the difficulties with which musical directors must cope.

"As a usual thing," Mr. Steiner said, "the musical director and the director of the picture in conference, plan everything out on paper before a scene is shot, but in this instance, the director had a sudden inspiration, shot some of the picture at night while I was on another lot. When I was shown the scene, I found there were several different tempi—that of the leader directing the orchestra before the curtain, Astaire and his group at the gambling table in the Monte Carlo

scene, his walk onto the dance platform, his stepping on his cigarette, the second man walking across the set, three girls strolling in and out, each one different from the others. Then Ginger Rogers appears and attempts to jump off the balcony. My problem was to write a musical score which would synchronize the tempi of all the actors as well as the orchestra leader out in front, which was a most difficult task. It was made still more so by the fact that Irving Berlin had a contract which required that no music except his could be used in the picture, so I was prevented from composing my own, and was obliged to adapt his music. Furthermore, I was required to complete the score within a period of three hours, since the recording work was to be done in the morning.

"With the tempo track we started in the middle of the film, working to the end and back to the beginning, punching out the tempo of Astaire's walk, then the walk of the others, then the tempo of the orchestra leader out in front. We next divided the tempi into frames, then made a chart of all these actions, a prescore, then an orchestra score, and then after, a score of Astaire singing had been mapped out, he put the orchestra track over that of Astaire's voice."

#### THE ART OF STAGE AND SCREEN

At another Forum Rouben Mamoulian, Pioneer studio, director of Porgy—Queen Christina — Becky Sharpe, was asked the question, "What is the theater, what is the screen, and what are their differences?"

In replying Mr. Mamoulian said: "These are difficult questions to answer as it is so much a matter of individual taste and feeling over which no one can argue. I have great admiration for scientific achievement, it is so definite and fixed. In art, however, nothing is proved or ever can be proved. Any great and true thing is practically impossible to prove.

"The art of the theater is its own and yet it combines many arts, painting, literature, drama, acting, and others. Suppose, for illustration, one selects Othello, and has all the actors seated and reading their parts. Is that the theater? No, as there is no actual movement, and movement is the very essence of stage art. Again, in pantomime, where there is movement but no speaking, there is theater. Nor is scenery necessary to the theater, witness Shakespeare's time. There can even be the theater without any living actors at all, where pantomime in done



through puppets. Thus, the essence of theater art is dramatic movement through which the company of actors express certain feelings.

"It has been said many times that the screen is not an art but an industry, and only a reflection of the stage. There is some basis for this statement as when talking pictures first came out, they were merely photographs of stage plays. There has been so great a development since then that the screen should now be considered as an independent art in its own right. On the stage we have the collective acting of the characters as the essential thing, but on the screen, the essential element is the succession of visual images of motion, in some of which no actors need to appear. Another point of difference between stage and screen relates to scenery and background. Stage plays use few sets or backgrounds, and sometimes only one. In one O'Neill play thirteen sets were used which was considered terrific. Their total cost, \$35,000, was no more than the cost of a single set for the screen which has sometimes required as many as forty sets. Again, on the stage, the point of view of the audience never changes, while with the screen play the camera shows action from innumerable points of view.

The thing which makes the theater such a glamorous place is the audience which is allowed to sit and witness the very creation of the play which lives as long as the actors are acting and then is over. While the process of creation is going on anything can happen, and thus one may enjoy seeing a play many times. On the screen, however, instead of flesh-and-blood actors we have two dimensional images, and instead of the process of creation, we see the completion of the act which is fixed and cannot be changed. Thus, since there is no uncertainty as to what will happen next, with suspense absent, one does not care to see the same film play more than a few times."

These are the basic differences which Mr. Mamoulian brought out at this interesting meeting.

### JEAN MUIR'S WORKSHOP

The fascinating Jean Muir, Warner Brothers Studio, gave an interesting talk on the Workshop Theater which she has founded in an attempt to teach and train people for the movies.

Miss Muir told how she and some friends, recognizing the need for a training school for the young people who are interested in the movies, planned a Workshop along the idea of the

Moscow Art Theater. The great Moscow Art Theater is the only institution of its kind which survived through the Soviet Republic and Revolution of 1917 and has continued its old plays of former days.

"In other words," to quote Miss Muir, "the most rapid form of government, the most communistic form of government which is the wildest that we know, did not throw out an organization which appeals to the emotions of mankind.

"The theaters are a place for a release of emotions. It is their goal to bring more of these moments of beauty and emotion to the people, and anything they can do to create more enthusiasm for the audience, they are glad to do."

### SOUND IN MOTION PICTURES

Mr. Ralph Townsend, Sound Engineer R. K. O Studio, gave some enlightening information in the following:

"The advent of talking pictures brought about some intensive study of ways and means of correlating existing data in such manner as would best serve a new industry.

"Telephone engineers and recording engineers recruited from phonograph recording laboratories worked strenuously and diligently to reconcile their data and experience to the requirements of a new art.

One outstanding question seemed to demand a satisfactory answer before the listening and seeing audiences felt that the figures on the screen were really talking to them. This question was, and still is: what should be the relation of frequency characteristic of reproduced sounds to the loudness of those sounds in an ordinary theatre? This question is still somewhat unsettled, not only because of improvements in recording and reproducing equipment, but also because recording engineers are gradually combining a knowledge of the action and limitations of the human ear with exact technical data derived from physical and chemical laboratories.

"Dr. Harvey Fletcher in his 'Speech and Hearing' has presented perhaps the most comprehensive treatise on the relation of sound perception and the sense of feeling. Audible sounds cover a frequency range of from 16 cycles per second to about 18,000 cycles per second when measured with a normal human ear. The ear, however, does not respond linearly to the application of sounds and a very low pitched sound, say, 50 cycles per second of a given intensity does not affect the ear to the

same extent that a sound of 1,000 cycles per second would do. In other words, a normal ear is capable of hearing a sound of much lower intensity in the range of 1,000 to 2,000 cycles per second (which is about the range between the first and second octave above middle C on a piano scale) than a low pitched sound, or a very high pitched sound. This characteristic of the human ear plays a very important part in determining how much distortion must be introduced into the recording and reproducing circuits in order that sounds reproduced in a theater will preserve an illusion of reality.

"The sensation of loudness is, to a large extent, most influenced by frequencies which lie in the middle range with the result that if the reproduced sounds of a man's voice were increased, say four fold over the original volume by a reproducer designed to give a uniform response at all frequencies, the resulting sound would impress the listener as being 'boomy,' or 'over based.' On the other hand, if the reproduction of sound is made over a flat channel at a lower level than that of the original sound, then the listener would feel that the voice was unnaturally 'thin' and lacking in low tones.

It is because of these phenomena that recordings for use in theaters are not made to be reproduced with equal intensity at all frequencies. Compensation in the form of attenuation which varies inversely with frequency is introduced into an otherwise flat system in order that the record may be reproduced at sufficient volume to fill a theater and without losing too much of the character of the original."

## MAKEUP AND MOTION PICTURES

At one of the Forums Mr. Shore from the Max Factor Studio developed many interesting points on the subject of make-up. To quote Mr. Shore, "When one works with make-up, naturally, he ought to become familiar with the human face because it has a thousand possibilities. A good director or producer usually selects such types of faces that lend themselves easily to the characterizations.

"Motion picture make-up is interesting from many points of view and we must remember that everything in a picture is reduced to black and white, but in order to get the proper shades of black and white a series of colors known universally as **Panchromatic**, are used. They are shades of tans and

contain so much red that the picture is made darker and darker according to the intensity of the red. Of course pictures can be taken without make-up but make-up helps to beautify and give the actors a screen personality. Of course, all depends upon the individual.

The art of make-up means this. The make-up artist when applying the make-up defines the features, the eye-brows, and the lips. The artist must depend upon his instinct for his senses of proportion. He must understand the proper arrangement of the hair, the proper shape of the eye-brows, and the lip line. The eye-brows change and alter the expression of the individual. For instance, by treating the eyes and adding false eye-lashes, one can get a very languid expression; and by adding make-up to the lips, one can get a very voluptuous expression.

"It is necessary for the artists to read the scripts and make up characters through their make-up; must learn how to transform youth into matured characters. What is good on the stage would not be good on the screen because of the perspective. The make-up artist must put on make-up in such a way that when it is reproduced it does not give any effect that he has done any work to improve the looks unless it is a **characterization**.

Make-up today is entering into a new era—that is, for colored pictures. The color camera is far more sensitive than the most sensitive of the black and white cameras. The make-up artist must understand the intensity of the light of the color. The colors today are entirely different than any heretofore used.

"The human skin is sallow and the cameras pick it up so it is necessary to add color to change this effect. For each colored picture a 'batch of soup' is made up for the tests and if they are satisfactory then they use this for the whole picture. The colored pictures are a long way from perfection even yet. The same make-up cannot be used for interior and exterior scenes. Exterior make-up fades out in the interior and interior make-up is too bright for outside, hence realism would be lost. When powder is used it absorbs the light, but when it is not used it reflects.

"Colored pictures will probably be a great success in the future because people like to see things as realistic as possible."



# Humanizing and Socializing Education Through Schools

MARIAN EVANS\*

Current and dramatic screen classics such as "The Plow That Broke the Plains," and "The Iron Duke," which are now appearing on the horizon of the educational field for the first time promise the dawn of a new day for motion picture appreciation study and throw light upon a new way of approach to all learning experiences in the secondary schools.

There is little doubt that if the sweeping, powerful, dynamic film, "The Plow That Broke the Plains" with its timely theme of soil erosion could be shown to students and teachers in every high school in the land, it would plow across the old time-worn ruts of entrenched history instruction and cut new furrows in a curriculum field in which the seeds of vital, growing, useful problems of present-day life could be planted and developed. The modernistic and artistic camera treatment, the unique musical synchronization and the dramatic flow of the story of this film produced by the Federal Resettlement Division will challenge the intellect of high school and adult students as well as stimulate a constructive emotional appeal for its purposeful message of conservation.

The news that this first government produced, social-economic, dramatically constructed motion picture is to be followed by a series of other themes such as, "The Tennessee Valley Project," is being enthusiastically received by social science teachers. Such films will fill a distinct need in progressive high schools which are accepting the challenge of Glenn Frank that, "The education that does not make a man an efficient producer of wealth, a lover of justice in its distribution, and a practitioner of wisdom in its consumption is ill-adapted to the needs of American democracy."

Other news flashes of progress in making more up-to-date films available to schools include the welcome announcements that recent British-Gaumont Productions on 16mm sound-film are to be released to the non-theatrical field and that Universal Productions are offering a parallel release of subjects such as, "Great Expectations." Besides these and other American production companies which are making recent films available many foreign made pictures are now being sold and rented to educational institu-

tions. As an example of this type of film which will offer students a deeper understanding of, and appreciation for the cultures of other nations, we might cite the beautiful oriental screen drama, "Song of China." This picture which was acted, edited and produced entirely by Chinese people was built around the central theme of ancestral worship and parental authority which is the law of the orient. The titles which were translated from Chinese idioms preserved the oriental mood and poetic appeal of the story while the weird, sad, Chinese music was so perfectly synchronized that it leaves the audience with the feeling that the cinematic story has been sung rather than told. A study of this picture as compared with the American produced "Good Earth" should prove of interest in contrasting and paralleling the oriental and occidental expression and interpretation of life in China today.

Schools will profit educationally by keeping in touch with foreign film developments as many countries such as Mexico, Czechoslovakia, Russia, Greece, and the Latin American countries have announced extensive film production plans which will embrace unique and authentic educational subjects during the coming year. The significance of the introduction of these current American and foreign films into the high schools is two-fold. First, it will afford an opportunity for instructors to teach photoplay appreciation by means of photoplays themselves by bringing the films into the class-rooms or auditoriums to correlate already existing curriculum courses. Secondly, these films will offer an opportunity to further integrate high school life by utilizing the most integrated medium of communication which we have today, namely, the sound motion picture film—in which may be found the elements of art, drama, music, speech, history, literature, representing practically all subjects of the curriculum.

Coupled with this ever increasing number of film subjects is the fact that the latest models of 16mm sound film apparatus with powerful light globes may now project pictures with theatre quality in school auditoriums and that amplifiers may be adapted so as to be used also for public address and radio hook-up. This economical and practical equipment should now bring into much wider use such mod-

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ern educational instruments as the radio and the sound film.

Radio and film programs for auditorium group showings could be selected according to current interests and to cover a wide range of subjects based upon the great common needs of all students for social, health, vocational, and aesthetic experience—regardless of the elective courses or extra-curricula activities which they have chosen. Such dramatic auditorium programs would not in any way interfere with the present use of short classroom teaching films which are designed to illustrate a specific lesson unit.

### *Behind the Screen*

Three pictures in two years is the new goal of Charlie Chaplin, and that will be record-breaking for the comedian, as he has only made one feature every three or four years for the past decade. He divulged his plan for greater activity the past week, following his return from a trip to the Orient.

\* \* \*

The walls of Acre, built by Cecil B. DeMille for "The Crusades," and one of the impressive sights on the Paramount lot, are coming down to make room for a replica of the city of St. Louis as it was right after the Civil War. The set will be used in another DeMille picture, "The Plainsman," in which Gary Cooper plays Wild Bill Hickock.

\* \* \*

Not even the elaborate and expensive sound-deadening equipment of the motion picture studios can compare with that offered by nature, it was found while the Samuel Goldwyn Company was on location in Northern Idaho filming Edna Ferber's "Come and Get It." Here the sound technicians, operating in a fourteen foot depth of snow, discovered that the white blanket caused their instruments to pick up perfect tonal qualities, without any reverberation whatever.

\* \* \*

A year was taken for making the sets of "Romeo and Juliet." There was never a period in history so gorgeous and vital as the Renaissance. Life bubbled over in it and blood ran hot and swift. These squares and streets teem with the life of their times—and then the sudden privacy of the garden. Only the screen could do it on the magni-

ficent scale that matches the time—not twenty or thirty, but a thousand Veronese.

If, however, the screening of "Romeo and Juliet" meant only this painstaking translation of the outer splendor of the time, we would be left untouched. All this background is merely the setting. The drama—the loveliness and charm of the young lovers, the hate and passion and the twists of fate that are embodied in the acting—is the main thing. You are invited to the ancient city, for an hour or two to live its life and feel its pulse through some very rare acting by very rare actors.

\* \* \*

The naivete of Green Pastures is charmingly beautiful and for those who come to scoff, it is quite likely that they will remain to pray. It is the dramatization of the Southern negro's all-encompassing religious faith. It is natural, then, that Heaven should be broad, pleasant, tree-shaded meadowland where a fish-fry is held every day.

\* \* \*

Armed with camera and notebooks, the first motion picture "research expedition" in filmland's history hopped off by plane for Hannibal, Missouri, the haunts of Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn, are to be photographed in preparation for the picture planned by David O. Selznick, "The Adventures of Tom Sawyer."

One of the main objects of the research expedition is to find and describe articles of historic value, relative to Twain's book. Statues of Tom and Huck, the only statues of literary characters ever erected, stand in Hannibal.

# Experimenting With Motion Picture Appreciation

By FLORENCE SPRENGER

Manuel Arts High School, Los Angeles

Education must keep up with the times. It was enough to stress the reading of literature when that was the only means of obtaining vicarious experience of other lands and times, but modern life has brought us so many additional fields of art that we dare not ignore them if we would make our education adequate.

Outstanding among the new arts that clamor for our attention is the motion picture. The possibilities for the teacher in this field are enormous, but equally significant are the educational responsibilities. Understandings need to be made possible, tastes should be formed, and constructive interests should be encouraged. Yet we must avoid any suggestion of formal didactic moralizing here as in all efforts at developing appreciation. It must be a sincere, informal effort together to understand the art.

With the consideration of all this as a basis, we have sought this last year to make a beginning toward educating modern youth in the world of the cinema. Two definite problems faced us: "How can we enlarge the enjoyment of the best that movies have to offer?" and "How can the picture field be drawn upon to enrich our curriculum?"

The first problem led us to form a movie appreciation club for upper grade students. The membership was limited during the first semester, and its charter members were all ignorant of technics but eager to learn how others judged pictures. The first few meetings of the club were devoted to an investigation of rating lists. We studied the lists of starred pictures, the PTA and Parent Magazine estimates, and familiarized ourselves with what authorities thought about films. Then we studied certain rating charts to see what elements of any picture experts considered in appraising it.

Then came the best fun of all. We chose a picture which had been rated as worthwhile. One Saturday afternoon we attended it in a body, then adjourned to the sponsor's home for refreshments and a friendly discussion. We used a rating chart and took that picture to pieces, bit by bit, but because we were chatting informally in a home, we expressed our sincere opinions and began to gain honest convictions from one another's viewpoints. Later these trips to the films were taken after school and we compared

ideas over the table at a waffle supper. These waffle suppers became quite an institution, and certainly robbed the discussions of any hint of schoolroom atmosphere.

Another interesting part of the club program was the custom of asking speakers from the Department of Cinematography at the University to tell the club members something of their experiences in the field. One young man explained the problem of "shots," illustrating his talk with film taken by students at the University. At another meeting a graduate student making a special study of the subject told the young people of the director's responsibility toward a picture. Again, there was a talk upon the motion picture's particular contribution to art through the use of suggestion instead of words, this talk illustrated by a delightful amateur film, "Lullaby," that had been given an Allied Arts prize award. A trip to one of the studios was the high light in the club's experience and gave fresh insight into the art involved in picture making.

From the many group discussions and other informal conversations, there is no doubt that a new respect for worthwhile pictures and an increasing impatience with shoddy or undesirable films were the results of this natural, real life quest together in the cinema field. The secret lay in the fact that we were all exploring together; no one posed as an authority on what to like or dislike.

But passive appreciation is not the only fruit of motion picture study. An A-10 class, last semester, was engaged in a unit of reading that had carried them into far places. Some were reading stories and travel books on Hawaii, others on China, still others on France. In all, about ten countries were being explored in books. The usual summarization of talks or even dramatizations held no appeal, but when a movie was suggested, the class eagerly accepted the idea.

At first a very melodramatic theme was decided upon that would involve trailing a criminal through many countries. Several problems presented themselves in organizing the scenario, and the questions that were raised led the class to ask if they might not work out a unit on Movie Appreciation as preparation for making their film.

Committees of investigation set to work. One group studied the way in



which pictures were appraised and evaluated. They asked every one in the class to find the rating of pictures showing in Los Angeles for the current month. From the contributions brought in they made a large wall chart, showing the different opinions on each picture. Conclusions were then drawn in class discussion as to whether pictures depending upon artistry or excitement for their main appeal seemed to arouse the more favorable comment. The results of this class investigation were written up by the committee and published in the school paper, and the rating chart was exhibited at the meeting of one of the large school clubs and then posted for all to examine. Many times as the semester advanced the teacher would overhear individuals discussing pictures they had seen or hoped to see, and the query, "How is it rated?" was always asked. They seemed to have been made conscious of a new viewpoint and to give it serious consideration.

Then the problem of telling one another about pictures without spoiling the story or boring the listener was discussed. A committee on reviews analyzed good magazine write-ups and suggested a simple outline for the class members to follow in summing up pictures. Other research committees spent hours in the library reading material to bring to class about famous actors, studio technic of all kinds, the value of short subjects, and the history of pictures. The silent film, of the "Covered Wagon" was presented to the school by the class and served as an interesting subject for discussion in comparing the old and new motion picture art.

When suggestion as an element in good pictures was presented, the film "Lullaby" was shown to this group. As a result the whole basic plan for their own movie was changed. A simpler plot with no captions but with the suggestion of joy in one's possessions was evolved.

A young bridal couple, dashing through a shower of rice, leave for a honeymoon in the mountains. There, amid a beautiful setting of trees and flowers, they settle down with their book to read. The first page opens with the words:

"On wings of thought  
We fly away,  
To visit far  
This summer day."

Then comes a picture of Hawaii, where the book disappears and a scene from the islands takes its place. Nine

times the leaves are turned to present a picture and title, which is followed by some action from that country. Then comes the last page and they read:

"And yet at last  
You hear us say,  
'The world is ours;  
Why should we stray!'"

And the young folks, with their treasure of happiness, climb the rocks and look out from their mountain top to the world spread before them until the light fades into the sunset.

Satisfied at last with our story, we started "shooting," and what fun it was to find settings that caught the spirit of each country. One had to read thoughtfully to catch the idea of some simple activity that would suggest a nation to the audience, and to discover enough about the geography of the land that an appropriate setting might be selected. We learned much about the possibilities of our community. We found China at Huntington Library, Palestine at the well in Hollywood Bowl, Italy at Exposition Park, Hawaii at Santa Monica, Spain on Olvera Street, and several localities on our own school campus. The business of finding costumes and settings brought out much latent originality, to say nothing of the aid from some of the shy oriental students. Evolving bits of dances for certain episodes revealed some nice creative talent. Staging our ideas in the right light and being definite in our plans offered excellent real life training to the different committees.

We could hardly wait for our rolls of film to be developed that we might see our dream come alive. And oh the thrill when our last roll with the mountain and sunset scenes in color came back from the developer! Motion Pictures will always mean to that little group something more than gangster thrills, for they helped to make a film that depended upon suggestion and charm, not action, for its interest, and they loved it because it was theirs.

And in closing, to be perfectly practical, may I suggest that the cost of our three hundred feet of film was much less than the rental of a half dozen costumes for a class play, and the photographer had never taken a foot of film before. We all experimented together. Hence you see that we can bring our education up-to-date and allow the motion picture to pay its heavy dividends in joy and increased appreciation for very little outlay of training or money, if we are only awake to its possibilities.

## LIBRARIES AND MOTION PICTURE APPRECIATION

It seems that even the library and the motion picture have become the staunchest of allies. For example, witness the plan of the Cleveland Public Library, one of the first of its kind to deal with "Books to Be Seen on the Screen."

It does, of course, limit itself to worthy pictures which have been made from worthy books. The books cover a wide range of good literature; many of them are the old loved favorites of each succeeding generation. In matter they are varied, going from plays, such as, *Petrified Forest*, to Kipling's *Kim*, Dickens' *Oliver Twist*, and *Tale of Two Cities*, Parker Morell's biography portraying the life of *Diamond Jim Brady*, *The Last of the Mohicans* and *Romona* which combine Indians and adventure, *Ivanhoe*, *The Last Days of Pompeii*, *Peter Ibbetsen*, *Sutter's Gold*, *Jalna*, *Mutiny on the Bounty*.

The screen versions of Shakespeare have brought people to the library to borrow Shakespeare books because they want to read him and not merely because they are obliged to do so because of required school reading—what more could any library ask?

The Cleveland Library was also the originator of the book mark which is now used generally all over the country by civic organizations, individuals, and religious groups.

The Head Librarian says: "Briefly, our vision actualized itself back in 1924, beginning with a quiet conversation between our publicity representative and the publicity agent for Loew's Cleveland theaters. It was their decision that the best tie-up between library and theater would be a book-mark listing books which would carry the reader further in the time or territory covered by the picture. . . . That marked the beginning of a new kind of co-operation for us. We saw in it a new opportunity to reach new readers. It enabled us to answer readily questions regarding what books the films were made from and who the stars were in these pictures. We felt that this new interest in books and people would lead us to new avenues."

Their method of co-operation includes careful previewing of the pictures to be shown, especially those likely to have book connections, displays throughout the library and its branches of stills from accepted films, together with colorful jackets of related books, and especially the bookmarks bearing brief lists of fiction, history, biography, of

interest in connection with some notable current film.

## FUNDAMENTALS OF MOTION PICTURE PRODUCTION

Valuable source material and a text book which gives a solid, scientific basis for the study of *Fundamentals of Motion Picture Production* and the *Appreciation of Motion Pictures*, is published in the form of a mimeographed syllabus by Dr. Boris V. Morkovin, chairman of the Department of Cinematography, entitled "Fundamentals of Motion Picture Production."

This syllabus is used by students of the course given by Dr. Morkovin, of the Department of Cinematography of the University of Southern California, a required course for the degree of B. A. and M. A. in Cinematography. The syllabus and the course "Fundamentals of Motion Picture Production" aims to give the student an insight into the nature and working of cinema as a new medium of dramatic expression by presenting the survey of principles on which the production is built. The ultimate purpose of this survey is to give the student an understanding of the production as a whole, and a guidepost for elementary techniques in experimental work with the production of pictures. It is illustrated by thirty-three sketches and diagrams.

The contents of the syllabus are divided into two parts; one of which is the photography in the field of motion pictures; the other is the effect, process, and techniques used to create the filmic illusion. In the first part photography is defined; there is a brief history of photography and its development, absolute essentials of a motion picture camera, the function of light, an introduction to motion picture film with key words and suggested readings, and color in motion pictures. The second part includes such specific studies as the technical-cinematic devices used in obtaining the filmic illusion, make-up in the cinema and the evolution of make-up in cinema history, actors and acting, costumes and designing, directors and directing, properties and sets in the cinema, sound and writing for the cinema, as well as the personnel and production and a general bibliography.

A limited number of copies is available to members of the Cinema Appreciation League for \$1.75, at the University Book Store at the University of Southern California, Los Angeles.



## Television and Motion Pictures

STANLEY L. COMBS

Hollywood, the center of the nation's cinematic industry, is not to be caught napping again. The transition to sound after the silent film had been doomed was one of chaos and confusion; now instead of disbelief, the motion picture people have, in the case of television, excessive credulity. Both the picture people and the public are firmly convinced of the inevitability of television.

There has been a new transmitting station installed in the tower of the Empire State building for experimental service to 150 selected observers. This television service is to begin this fall, so although billions will be necessary for investment, and the fact that even upon a quantity production basis the receivers will cost \$300.00, the day cannot be far off when we shall see in our homes plays produced by great actors, football games, baseball games, horse races.

The radio-television machine is very similar in appearance to the radio set, but it is a much more complicated 'power house.' There is, however, only one control for the actual tuning; the sound-sight travels on the same ultra-short wave, generally about six meters in length. Once the sound is properly tuned, the picture also bobs into sight. There are, of course, various knobs to turn for the clarification of the picture: by turning the control 'high' the screen is flooded with brilliancy; when turned the other way, the picture darkens and instead of sunlight, there is dusk, twilight, or moonlight. The picture is only 6 by 8 inches, and although the engineers can 'blow' it up, clarity is preferred to size. The distracting flicker on the television screen

has been practically eliminated and as the pictures are clear, there can be no doubt of their entertainment value.

The television camera is a magic device, which will eventually be poking its eye into everything just as the microphone eavesdrops on the world. The camera's 'eye,' or iconoscope, an invention of Dr. V. K. Zworykin, is comparatively simple, comprising a 10-inch glass 'eyeball' in which is a magic 'retina.' This 'retina' is covered on one side with millions of globules of a light-sensitive silver substance; the back is lined with platinum. Whatever the 'retina' sees, as light falls upon it, is electrified and broadcast just as the 'mike' handles a whisper or a symphony. The 'eyeball' of the receiver is the kinescope — what the iconoscope sees the kinescope reproduces. The iconoscope might be called the microphone of sight and the kinescope the loud-speaker.

The study made by the scientific committee of the Research Council of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, under the chairmanship of Carl Dreher, concludes its report: "There appears to be no danger that television will burst unexpectedly on an unprepared motion picture industry." The committee has been studying the progress of television and possesses a general bibliography of all available literature and it is being kept up to date.

Perhaps the motion picture industry will simply evolve into a television organization which will concern itself with the transmission of images. Doubtless they are preparing to enter the field, whether alone or affiliated with radio companies, we cannot tell.

### *A Unit of Study of Motion Picture Appreciation for High School\**

The purpose of this study, a unit of work for Sophomore English, as prepared by the teachers of Whittier Union High School, Whittier, California, is to aid the student in obtaining a greater knowledge and understanding of what is contained in the motion pictures, that he may develop a standard of his own for judging what he sees on the screen. The study is an attempt to raise the pupil's standards and to develop in him a critical atti-

tude, and not to encourage his attendance at the movies.

After the preliminary questionnaires have been completed by the students, followed by a discussion of the purposes of studying motion picture appreciation, the students will be divided into committees. Each of these groups will study a certain phase of the motion picture production which appeals to them. They will give oral reports, keep notebooks, and lists of each motion picture seen during the previous months, giving their impressions and reactions.

\*From the office of C. C. Trillingham, Assistant Supt. of Schools, Los Angeles County.

## Film Production in Schools

By ALLEN K. DALLAS

Fellow in Cinematography, University of Southern California

Film making technique in schools! Immediately one thinks of the production of sixteen millimeter pictures, for the sixteen millimeter camera is the most suitable for college use. The majority of students who come to university classes know little or nothing of how to use the motion picture camera, and yet wish to produce a picture of professional quality. The instructor who takes advantage of such enthusiasm can easily satisfy the wishes of the students and the aims of such experience of making films plus obtaining an understanding of the theory of camera, light, cutting, editing, etc.

At the first meeting of the student group, determine the main interests of each of the students. This can easily be done by having them fill out previously prepared cards which indicate the person's amateur experience with camera, cutting, editing, props, etc. or with amateur stage, photography, and so on. A second step is then to divide the class into shooting teams: three teams of five or six persons in each serves the purpose well. If the class is large, more groups may be established. It has been found best to keep the size of the teams small, for this permits more freedom in shooting, and a better spirit of cooperation between the members of the class. The next important point is for the students to elect a group leader—a person who knows camera—who notifies his team of shooting dates, time, place, etc. This establishes each group as a separate production unit working under the main supervisor. If by chance there is a student capable of undertaking this giant task of supervision in unifying all the activities of the various groups, it is well to have him do so. If not, the instructor should remain in charge. In any event, the instructor is the final authority.

In order that success is assured, the main purpose of the shooting should be clearly and carefully stated to the entire group. The desire to "make a picture" must NOT overcome teaching the students how to use the camera. The most practical way has been found to establish a specific main topic for shooting; for example, the topic of **Transportation**. This permits a unifying thread to be maintained in the minds of the entire group, and yet can easily be broken down into smaller more suitable units for actual cine-

photography. Group A might shoot automobiles, Group B will take boats, Group C will photograph airplanes, Group D will consider some other means of transportation. Each of these groups shoot an element of the main topic "Transportation." In reality each team produces a small picture of some 75 or 100 feet in length. This in finality is combined into a large central reel. Once each section has its topic for shooting, every member of this division should bring to the next meeting ideas pertaining to their topic for shooting. At this meeting the ideas may be discussed, and since the group is small, working script can be devised. This procedure should be done for each group. The next step is the actual photography of every team's working script. It will probably be found advisable for the instructor to take a full period to discuss the motion picture camera, its operation, mechanics, technique, and other like problems. This will provide the necessary "shooting knowledge" for the teams. After the picture of each group has been shot, the film should be turned over to the editor—a student—who, under the supervision of an editing group, edits the picture to as near perfection as possible. In finality, the four or five films of the teams will be ready for combination into one main reel.

From the entire class-group should be chosen some person who has had experience editing his own films and preferably who owns his amateur motion picture camera. An editing staff of selected students, one from each shooting team, will make a convenient organization suitable for working together to produce best editing results. At the same time the editing organization is working, a titling section should be discussing and making the titles for the picture. They will produce the main titles, the sub-titles, credit titles, and so on. The final combination of the films with the titles should then receive a final editing. This will produce a pleasingly well-done picture. Such procedure has the added advantage of having had EVERY student participated in the production of the picture.

Careful planning of the organization will save much time and energy. If the film for shooting is not already purchased, a student treasurer for the class may be elected.



# Motion Picture Appreciation in the Elementary School

BERNARD J. LONSDALE\*

Motion pictures are a prominent and, it would seem, a permanent feature of the American "scene." Children and young people of school age attend the theater in large and perhaps increasing numbers, and there are valid reasons to believe, are influenced in attitudes, in points of view, in tastes, and probably in conduct and character. This being true, school authorities must widen the scope of their programs and utilize, in all feasible ways, this new and potentially promising agency for education.

The motion picture in its present stage is recognized as one of the most powerful influences now known in molding public opinion and thought. As its use increases and its field of operation develops, its power to influence the public will increase accordingly. This tremendous industry, wielding great influence throughout the world, has, undoubtedly come to stay. It will be interesting to see what part the public school is to play in directing the influences of this powerful factor on our national and international life.

Too frequently the motion picture is regarded primarily as an agency for amusement, a mere distraction from cares, a means of vicariously sharing adventure and excitement. A long time was required to reveal the educational possibilities of this magnificent mechanical instrument.

About two thirds of the motion pictures of the world are made in the United States. The World War in 1914 halted the European production and gave America opportunity to gain control of the film world just as the feature drama was introduced. This was the period of greatest development and American producers made the most of their opportunities.

What a power for education of young and old alike is present in the motion picture! The philosophy of the modern school recognizes that education goes on wherever a learning situation exists, in the streets, on the playground, in the art gallery, in the theater, as well as within the four walls of the class room. The out of school influences on children should be the concern of teachers as well as parents. The schools are too often aloof to these educational activities in which children engage. Many

teachers rarely attend the movies. They gather their knowledge concerning the film industry from hearsay. If the influence of the motion picture is to be one for the betterment of society, intelligent men and women must be informed about it. They must be ready to combat everything that is false and pretentious in it and be alert to the possibilities for good inherent in the commercial motion picture.

In elementary schools it is hardly advisable to burden children with technical details which will handicap them in their enjoyment of motion pictures. We must remember that their chief interest in motion pictures is entertainment. However, we can help them to appreciate what is good in the picture and leave what is tawdry and valueless. The wholesome aspects of the pictures may be emphasized through discussions in the Social Studies and conversations in the English classes. The children delight in sharing their experiences and the pictures give them a basis for a common background.

It is suggested that the following points be emphasized in the discussion and conversation periods:

1. Story.
2. Acting.
3. Directing.
4. Art.
5. Technics.

## Story:

Just as we evaluate the books which the children read in literature to lead them to discriminating tastes in reading, we can evaluate pictures with the same objective in mind. The criteria we use for evaluating a good book may be used in evaluating the story of a picture. This criteria which I am giving has been set up by my own classes as their criteria for a good book:

1. Does it have an interesting plot?
2. Is it about an interesting subject?
3. Does it have strong, quick action?
4. Are the descriptions interesting?
5. Does it have good clean humor?
6. Is the subject treated cleverly?
7. Does the book give you information about different people, different places, and different times in the history of the world?
8. Does the book give you information on nature, science, or some occupation in which men engage?
9. Does the book inspire you to broaden or improve yourself in some way?

\*Teacher of English, Richard Garvey School, Los Angeles County.



10. Has your imagination been stirred by the characters enough to want to make them your friends?

**Acting:**

Children of the elementary level are not ready for the technics of acting. They have strong likes and dislikes as regards certain actors but their reasons are undefinable. They are especially impressed by mannerisms of certain actors which through repetition create a familiarity. At least an effort can be made to make children conscious of what the standards of good acting are. Edgar Dale gives the following standards for good acting:

1. The actors and actresses should give the audience the feeling that they are real persons; they should seem natural.
2. The acting should give evidence that the part is well understood and is intelligently developed by the character.
3. A characterization should be carried out consistently throughout a picture.
4. A good story should be given a strong supporting cast, in addition to the one or two outstanding stars.
5. There should be no attempt to substitute good looking heroes and heroines for actors of proved ability.
6. The make-up of a character should be such as to make him appear to be a real person.
7. Good acting gives evidence of skillful timing.
8. The effectiveness of the acting depends in large measure on the degree to which the settings, the plot, the photography, and other elements aid in creating the illusion of reality.

**Directing:**

This is another subject which is too highly technical to be emphasized to any great extent. If the story is told to their understanding the direction is satisfactory. Some of the few simpler technics in direction may be em-

phasized such as methods of starting the story, ways of introducing the characters, and means of showing lapses of time.

**Art:**

Hardly more than the awakening of a consciousness in the art aspects of a motion picture can be hoped to be achieved on the elementary level. If the children have a rich art background, it will be easier to proceed. This may be done by emphasizing the following points:

1. Composition, balance of sets, and location.
2. Music.
3. Costumes.

**Technics:**

The children will enjoy some of the terminology which is applicable to the technics of a picture. However, it would stilt their appreciation and enjoyment if you should become too technical. It is interesting to learn what technical terminology they have already acquired. Some of the common technics with which they are familiar are Fade In — Fade Out — Dissolve — Superimpose — Pan — Track — Insert.

Few teachers will deny the importance of the interest of their pupils in motion pictures. It is for teachers to find a place for the development of appreciation of the motion picture in the curriculum. Music takes a new meaning for us when we learn a new bit of harmony, melody, theme. Pictures become entirely different before our eyes when we are told just a little bit about color, line, and perspective. So does a new love for music consume us when we learn to play our first piece, or sing our first song. Art becomes a new and fascinating thing when we have painted our first picture. We teach children to sing, we teach them to draw very early in the grades, but, nowhere in our curriculum, ordinarily, do we ever give them an opportunity for participation in the art form which is the combination of all the others, the CINEMA.

### *Chicago University and Talkies*

The importance of motion pictures as a teaching tool has been recognized by the University of Chicago, not only by incorporating sound pictures into the new education plan of the University, but also by the actual production of scientific motion picture for world distribution. President Robert Maynard Hutchins maintains "We are not trying to jazz up education. We have conceived the value of this sort of teaching, and we plan to ex-

periment with the talking motion picture. It will not be a substitute for other work; rather it will be an important addition to the educational scheme."

Dr. Harvey B. Lemon, professor of physics, believes that the experiments in motion pictures could be produced with better clarity than in the classroom experiments, such as "the dance of the molecules" which must now be demonstrated to each student through an ultra-microscope.

## *Pope Pius XI on New Trend*

In a very recent letter by His Holiness Pope Pius XI concerning Motion Pictures, he praises the splendid work that has been done by The Legion of Decency toward purifying screen productions.

His Eminence is highly gratified by the strides that have been taken by the Legion "As a holy crusade against the abuses of motion pictures." In the opinion of Pope Pius XI the cinema is one of the most valuable auxiliaries in the field of higher instruction and education and should maintain this enviable plane rather than degenerating into a detrimental human force. He

is also strong in his conviction that this movement, contrary to certain beliefs of members of the motion picture industry, has raised the cinema standard to a far more artistic level. And furthermore the United States is chief beneficiary to these complimentary statements of approval. A summation of the achievements in his own words are to the effect that: "The Motion Picture has shown improvement from the moral standpoint; crime and vice are portrayed less frequently; sin no longer is so openly approved or acclaimed; false ideals of life no longer are presented in so flagrant a manner to the impressionable minds of youth.

## *Cine-Drama Technique*

JULIA B. KNOWLTON

Extension Division San Diego State College.

Featured during the convention of the Cinema Appreciation League at U. S. C. will be the presentation of "The Five Marys," an unfiled film written and directed by Miss Viola Vivian, who has an international reputation as an actress, playwright, and dramatic reader.

Cine-Drama as a new technique of dramatic presentation has grown from the class assignments in Dr. Boris V. Morkovin's classes in Cinematography. Because of the actual expense connected with actual shooting of pictures, the cine-drama was devised as an "unfiled film," a kind of cinematic rehearsal without shooting. In his classes of Scenario Writing and Modern Continental Drama the cinematic method was used as an exercise in writing scenarios for the purpose of testing the cinematic qualities of the scenario. It was produced by students on the little stage in the so-called "Cellar Theater" of the University of Southern California.

The first public recognition was given to this cine-dramatic form when Miss Frances Fintel, student of Cinematography, received the first prize of the Allied Arts Contest in 1934 for her adaptation and direction of "The Barretts of Wimpole Street." The jury having been selected from leading motion picture artists, writers, and directors. This year the best adaptation was made by Jack Warner, Jr., son of the head of Warner Brothers Studio.

The "unfiled film" is the stage presentation of a play using cinematic technique. Instead of the long acts with much dialogue and often little

movement characteristic of the stage production, the cinematic presentation is broken up into short scenes. It is not the intent to show the whole story in detail, we glimpse a high point in the lives of the characters; the movement is swift, climatic . . . another scene flashes before us, another setting, another time, and we, the audience, fill in the gap with our own imagination.

The technique tends toward the impressionistic. A subjective mood is built up through lights, music, setting; indirect suggestion and symbolism play a part in arousing audience participation. There must be movement, something happening, in each short scene. In five to seven minutes the actors must arouse the sympathy of the audience, appeal to them mentally, grip them emotionally and physically by empathy. There is no time to build slowly and carefully to a climax, no time to develop character through conversation, or plot through the introduction of anti-facts as the act slowly progresses. We are precipitated into a dramatic situation and the blending of the efforts of actors, the lights, musical effects, and the setting give us briefly the essence of the drama.

The teacher of drama or cinematography will find this technique of great value as experience for high school or college students. It was even tried out with eighth grade children in one San Diego school, and though they did not produce the play publicly they had practice in planning it to the final details. The experience in writing the scenario was considered to have been worth all the time spent, even though



not produced. In adopting a story or play for an "unfilmed film" it is, of course, necessary to choose scenes with strong dramatic moments and situations. There must be possibilities for pantomime, pictorial and scenic effects, sound atmosphere, and musical accompaniment planned to fill in gaps between scenes and heighten the dramatic effect. The story chosen for the eighth grade mentioned above was "The Man Without a Country"; the scenes were decided upon and adapted by the children.

There would be more opportunity for valuable experience in the high school and college levels. The practice not only in breaking up a script into scenes, but the development of the supporting atmosphere by extraneous technical devices would lead the student into many fields of research. There are no curtains used in this type of performance; there is no intermission; light is used cinematically to fade in and fade out the scenes on a darkened stage. Interludes with the characters spotlighted may be used to help tie the scenes together, and to fill gaps while sets are rearranged on the darkened stage. The use of light plays a very important part in the successful

staging of the unfilmed film and by changing the angles and intensities can alter the character of the simple suggestive setting used.

The problem of sound and music synchronization would be another field for student participation. Exits and entrances, all action must be timed to harmonize with the musical background. The selection of suitable music to fit in with the action, the development of sound effects, and efficient technique in changing records and fading from one to another would constitute part of the sound directors problem.

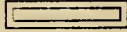
Costume, make-up and properties are, of course, necessary as in any stage production, and would provide work for students not interested in the other angles of production.

The goal of the production should be team-work demanding close co-operation between writer, director, art director, sound and light directors, and all their assistants. The actors should not be given individual emphasis, but should blend into the whole if cinematic art is to be different from the stage. Neither can lines be paramount when climatic action is the essence of the technique.

### *Photographic History Service*

The Photographic History Service, 5537 Hollywood Boulevard, Hollywood, California, has issued photographic lantern slide units for visual aid in classes of history, social science, English, dramatics, art, home economics, and foreign languages of elementary and secondary schools and libraries. Photographs were made during the

filming of notable historical motion pictures. Because of the Historical accuracy and the excellence of photography, lighting, and composition, these photographs are true to the period recreated, interesting, and beautiful. Through their use as visual aids, attention is immediately challenged and interest readily awakened.



The United States Office of Education in cooperation with the American Council of Education has been making a nationwide survey to determine the nature and use of audio-visual aids in the primary and secondary schools. This office has ready for printing at the present time a National Directory and Inventory of Visual Education, by George F. Zook. This volume will be compiled alphabetically by states and will give the name of the school system, the director, and the actual equipment represented.

From Akron, Ohio, a city with a

population of 250,000 persons and encompassing and supporting fifty grade schools and ten high schools, we have the amazing report of progress that has been brought about during the past year through the efforts of Mr. Orval E. Sellers. Director Sellers was appointed a year ago as head of the Visual Department in the public schools and finding the field completely barren set about to develop an entire system in a very short time. The demands, so hard to create, have grown so fast that the department can scarcely fill them and the future of the movement seems assured.

# *Educational and Documentary Cinematography*

DR. ROBERT KISSACK\*

## **VISUAL EDUCATION**

Members of the Cinema Appreciation League who are especially interested in Visual Education were unusually fortunate in having Dr. Robert Kissack from the University of Minnesota as their guest at a banquet held at the Student Union, University of Southern California, March 31.

At this meeting pertinent facts regarding the progress made in visual education departments in our country and abroad were discussed. An apparent need was felt of awakening among teachers an interest in visual education and the recognition of its use as a potent factor in modern education. Teachers expressed the feeling that their efforts toward a more effective visual education department was like working up a blind alley. The way out would be through the acquisition of modern equipment, projectors, a film laboratory, and a production department. The funds for these needs could be procured if the boards would become interested and divert the funds from some other project.

## **VISUAL EDUCATION ABROAD**

In discussing the work done in visual education abroad many interesting and effective procedures were disclosed. The situation in Germany is an educational film distribution organization run by the government with a central office in Berlin and twenty-three substations throughout the country. There are 800 training schools and every teacher goes to a training center to learn what films are available and how to operate equipment. Each one of the 55,000 schools is taxed something like eight cents a month. From the proceeds of this tax the German government collects enough money to produce a number of films each year. Some of the big companies like UFA make these films for them on a professional scale, in collaboration with the teacher and specialists. When teachers from 55,000 schools say what they want, the German government knows exactly what to make. At the present time 20,000 schools are being equipped with projectors and 15,000 separate reels are being distributed throughout the schools.

In England the Gaumont-British is making a series of instructional films. These are recorded with lectures for

school purposes. Many eminent teachers and specialists have been working with Gaumont-British in producing these films. There is a commercial company also which makes films in collaboration with the teachers.

Comparable to this work which is being done abroad is the work which is being carried on in Pennsylvania. There is now a course in visual education in the state of Pennsylvania that is required of every teacher who is graduated from Teachers College. It looks now as if more and more universities and schools of education will not only offer courses in visual instruction, but will require that as part of the teacher's certificate.

## **VISUAL EDUCATION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA**

Perhaps the most progressive work in visual education in this country is being done at the University of Minnesota under Dr. Kissack. In describing this work Dr. Kissack said:

"Four years ago the department was established at the General College of the University of Minnesota and Dean McLean wanted to have as many illustrations and movies of every type of modern tool of education as possible. We have been experimenting for the past four years with visual education trying to learn what to do. In brief the general scope of the work has been:

Daily previewing.

Classroom showings.

Maintenance and servicing, storing films.

Editorial work—slicing—and equipment.

Newsreel Theater.

Showing foreign films.

Course on motion picture appreciation.

Visual education.

Program.

Production.

### **Major Problems:**

We have discovered a lot of things through practice; but there are still a great many situations that puzzle us.

The unevenness of level — the fact that there has rarely been any good educational level started out with, was one of the biggest draw-backs. Of the many hundreds of films we previewed, very few were good for general college or university purposes.

We found most of the so-called educational films were not very good for education; they were either badly done

\*Dr. Robert Kissack, Director of Visual Education, University of Minnesota.



technically, sound was not good, and silent ones were out of date not only in cutting, but in the whole presentation. Worst of all, we found these films were not designed for any particular audience. A film would start off for a course in an elementary school and in the middle of the film would jump to calculus.

### Selection, Editing, Cataloging:

Teachers preview films, put down their comments, and find out what they would like to use in their departments, and try to arrange for the purchase of the film. However, if material would be used only sporadically now and then, it might be better to book it and rent it occasionally.

At these previews, such things as technical quality, actual projection print, quality, sound quality of the print, original recording, if duplicates were available, etc., were noted with the instructor's comment.

### Library of Films:

We have been building up a library of films, putting down our comments and the teachers' comments. All these notes and comments are transferred to cards similar to questionnaires prepared by the American Film Institute.

The general extension division of the university has a large film library which they rent out. We keep those films in the vault and handle their shipping and care. If we could work out an exchange, a national exchange, it would be a fine thing. The American Film Institute is hoping to arrive at that solution, a national exchange of films among universities and schools.

Recently at Illinois, an interesting project has been started; the building up of a co-operative library, made up entirely of contributions from every school.

## THE ADMINISTRATION OF VISUAL EDUCATION\*

By Fannie W. Dunn and Etta Schneider. (Reviewed by Fred W. Orth)

Two instructors of Columbia University have collaborated in bringing together for the student of visual instruction a summary of all pertinent literature on the subject of the Administration of Visual Aids. By so doing they have saved research workers countless hours of work in threading through theses, pamphlets, monographs, magazine articles, books and mimeographed reports.

We have long felt that the vast body of information on the administration of visual education should be assembled and coordinated. This summary

In a few months H. W. Wilson Co. will publish a catalog of educational films that purports to be the most complete catalog of educational films ever made, more complete than the little "1001 Booklet." It will include comments on all films listed, for the use of teachers, and not designed to sell the film. For our own purposes we found it necessary to compile a practical catalog, using a Kardex system, with all the essential information on a master card, with a cross index system of cards.

### Booking and Classroom Use

An instructor gives us the list of films he wants and the dates on which he desires to use them and we have a booking schedule in advance. In many courses we have now established the practice of arranging for film showings two or three times every week, the film fitting in with the discussion at a specific period in the course.

With the equipment we now have, we are able to take the equipment to any classroom. We must have portable equipment as well as established equipment. That means quite a few projectionists must be available. We use some of our electrical engineering students who want part time jobs. Some have had experience in theatrical projection and photography. We have been able to train the students who were good projectionists, and as a result, I have about thirty students to call on for projection of different types.

Dr. Kissack spoke of other activities in which they are engaged at the University of Minnesota along experimental lines. The problems discussed by Dr. Kissack and the suggestions which he made were a source of inspiration to all those interested in visual education.

represents the efforts of Miss Dunn and Miss Schneider in presenting the first of a series intended to meet this need. An excess of fifty publications dealing with the administration of visual aids were reviewed. This contribution of 215 pages includes valuable records of personal experience and significant generalizations as well as a great deal of important factual data. It is unconventional in treatment, very readable, and will provide good collateral reading for any course in the general field of Visual Education.

In compiling the material presented, readers interested in specific visual education problems were constantly

\*Published by The American Council of Education, Washington, D. C.

held in mind. Being plain, practical, and helpful, the book is worthy of careful study on the part of every forward looking educator. It represents an excellent guide to the meaning and purposes of visual education and contains valuable sections on:

1. Administration within a school building.
2. Systems for filing and cataloguing.
3. Administration for a city.
4. Administration for a state.

### *Local Educational Films*

By FRED W. ORTH\*

Efforts of educators to have commercial motion picture producers adequately supply our schools and colleges with films for use in conjunction with our ever changing curriculum have been futile for many reasons. Our school film libraries are now being supplemented with original educational films for specific purposes, produced by teachers, supervisors, administrators, professors, and visual education departments.

Many of the locally produced motion pictures are of a technical nature, designed to interpret the newer educational procedures to students and teachers; others to interpret modern education to the public, while perhaps a minority are made for motion picture appreciation. A few are produced for the purpose of bringing to the students various activities concerning which the pupils could gather little or no information save for the magic of the motion picture.

When a serious need for a film is felt, it is produced if it is within the power of the educator or department to produce it. For reasons which will not be enumerated because of lack of space, the locally produced picture is better for educational purposes than the subject could be produced commercially.

Our educational organizations and individual educators have produced numerous pre-primary and primary films such as the following titles indicate:

1. A Visit to a Modern School Nursery, Dr. Elizabeth Woods.

\*Fred W. Orth, Faculty, University of Southern California, Department of Cinematography, University of California, Los Angeles, Summer Session.

5. National Plans.

The form of this report deserves comment. The authors concluded that mere bibliographical information, even with short annotations, would not serve the purposes of visual educators adequately since there is usually no access to the articles themselves. They decided, therefore, to digest the articles briefly and report on their salient points. Digests in the numerous other areas of visual instruction are planned.

2. Dramatic Play in the Kindergarten, Marie H. Thornquist.
3. A Study of the Engine, Fred W. Orth.
4. Activity, Guidance, and Growth, Los Angeles City Teachers' Club.
5. A Study of Japan, Fred W. Orth.

For the upper grades, the films such as the following have been produced:

1. Cross-Section of Progressive School Activities, Corinne Seeds.
2. A Study of the Desert, Louise Corcoran.
3. Creative Rhythms, Corinne Seeds.
4. A Study of Egypt, Los Angeles Visual Education Department.

Several films produced for Junior and Senior High Schools are:

1. A Little Lesson in Courtesy, Ivalou Samis.
2. We Discover China, Dr. Helen M. Bailey.
3. A Student Film of David Coppenfield, Louise K. Whitehead.
4. The Magic Carpet, Florence Sprenger.
5. Christmas in Many Lands, Florence Sprenger.
6. Chronicle, University College, Frances Christiansen.
7. On Your Mark, Bernard J. Lonsdale.

Mischief, (animals and pets) Mr. Van de Sickler.  
 Spunky, (animals and birds) Mr. Van de Sickler.

Numerous films of a general nature have been produced for a variety of purposes. Some of these are:

1. Queer Farms (In fourteen reels), Fred W. Orth.
2. Indian Rhythms (Full color) Fred W. Orth.
3. Profitable Use of Leisure Time, Fred W. Orth.



## Teacher Training

Dr. John W. Studebaker, the United States Commissioner of Education, has sent out some letters of inquiry to teacher training institutions in order to ascertain the number of institutions that were offering or planning to offer some instruction in radio program or motion picture appreciation. The purpose of this study is to make available to these institutions and interested national agencies information about the present and contemplated teacher training activities in schools of higher learning.

The study discloses that a total of 309 institutions are offering or planning to offer some instruction in radio program and photoplay appreciation. Eight report that they are offering regular courses in photoplay appreciation, six indicate that they are giving both, and fifty-three are considering offering regular courses. The majority are of the opinion that instruction in these lines should be units in other courses rather than new courses. Some of the respondents point out that appreciation is a by-product or end-point of an intelligent understanding. President L. B. McMullen of Eastern Montana Normal School expresses himself on this point as follows:

"In general, appreciation can be taught only by participation. Let me illustrate what I mean in the field of Music.

"We have a lot of half-baked young women waving their arms about and exclaiming, 'Don't you love that' when beautiful music is played upon a phonograph. They call that teaching music appreciation. On the contrary, I think the way to teach music appreciation is to teach the child to play some musical instrument. I think the same thing is true in regard to radio and motion pictures."

The consensus of opinion of the majority of those replying is that prospective teachers as well as those in service should have some special instruction in radio program and motion picture appreciation if they are to teach pupils to develop discriminating

tastes in these fields. The following comments show the nature of these opinions:

"Personally, I am of the opinion that this problem is one of the most pressing in the field of education today."—E. M. Hosman, Director of Extension Division, the Municipal University of Omaha, Omaha, Nebraska.

\* \* \*

"The value of films in influencing attitudes toward war and crime, has been rather clearly shown by Peterson and Thurstone of the University of Chicago. I feel sure that films could be produced to develop scientific attitudes or habits of scientific thinking."—Victor H. Noll, Professor of Education, Rhode Island State College, Kingston, Rhode Island.

\* \* \*

"The techniques of the teaching of the uses of the radio and the photoplay as mediums of the various arts can be learned, along with the other important techniques that a secondary school teacher must acquire."—E. J. Gergely, Head of Department of Education, Mount Saint Joseph College, Chestnut Hill, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

\* \* \*

"In view of the permanent impressions made by the radio and photoplay on young people, I believe that specific training for desirable outcomes should be one of the next steps in educational progress."—George C. Grant, Morgan College, Baltimore, Maryland.

\* \* \*

Perhaps existing courses in education or in special methods are used more than any other to touch upon the various phases of critical analysis, interpretation, and appreciation of motion picture and radio programs. Next in importance are courses in visual education, which touch upon appreciation as one phase of the work. English courses occupy a third position in importance. Art appreciation, music appreciation, or play production are still other courses into which work along this line may be incorporated.

## Pre-Convention Notes

Mr. Fred Orth, Miss Marian Evans, and Mr. Bernard J. Lonsdale led the discussions which were a feature of the Cinema Appreciation League's Pre-Convention which was opened by Dr. Boris V. Morkovin July 6. Contributors to the discussions were leaders in

the fields of visual education and the teaching of motion picture appreciation.

After a dinner in the Elizabeth von KleinSmid Hall, the pre-convention was officially opened by Dr. Rufus B. von KleinSmid, President of the University



of Southern California, who spoke upon the importance of the motion picture in the field of education.

"There is now one automobile," said Dr. von KleinSmid, "to every five people. These are merely of use to take people to shows and to bring them home again. New achievements in chemistry and electricity are only to make pictures more interesting. Bigger and better universities exist only to make people better able to understand motion pictures. These statements are probably more true than they first appear, and they should be true. More of us are visual-minded than oral-minded."

\* \* \*

"The art of the motion picture is based upon well organized science or upon the combination of several sciences. To make a motion picture scientifically good, artistically true, and wholesomely enjoyable is real art.

I feel sure that we all need instruction in this field and such meetings as this one are very encouraging. When you come to the convention we hope that we shall march seven times around the walls of the city and hear its towers fall."

\* \* \*

Dwight Cummins, from Twentieth Century Studios, spoke on the progress of the story in the motion picture development. By way of a few historical facts about motion pictures, he pointed out that probably the earliest idea for "shooting" a story came through Edward S. Porter, a railroad advertising man and a "camera fiend." This idea of his resulted in the GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY, followed by the BOLD BANK ROBBERY. This was our first "crime wave" in motion pictures.

According to Mr. Cummins, story development passes thru the era of "chases," wherein the villain and the hero clash, to pantomime and title-writers. Now the story must under-

go three steps: the original, the adaptation, and the dialogue. Today, the man who writes not only must create a story which is timely and make this story have human interest but he must create the dialogue as well.

\* \* \*

Commodore J. Stuart Blackton, pioneer producer in the motion picture field, gave an interesting review of his career which paralleled the development of the motion picture industry. He told how his interest in motion pictures began with his interview with Thomas Edison in 1896. Two years later, Commodore Blackton and Albert Smith took pictures of Spanish-American war troops as they marched thru the streets of New York. This was the birth of the news reel.

During the transitional period to sound, action and technique were totally neglected for sound only. Commodore Blackton stressed the need for pictures that young people can see and remember without harm.

"With the coming of portable sound equipment," said Commodore Blackton, "we will see a new day in educational pictures—a day of visual education. A group of 5000 children were taught for three months by visual pictures; 3000 other children were taught by the traditional text-book method. At the end of the week the results of an examination showed that those children who had seen the pictures retained 95% of the material and the others only from 35 to 40%. One year later the first group remembered 75 to 80% and the second group less than 25%. If our children remember so well what they can see, it is important that they see good pictures."

Commodore Blackton further stated that something will have to be done in the field of educational movies, and that in the vocational field, THE HISTORY OF AVIATION heads the list of demands. Commodore Blackton is working on this picture at the present time.

### *National Convention*

The Cinema Appreciation League is holding its Second Annual Convention on the campus of the University of Southern California from July 24 to 28, inclusive, under the directorship of Dr. Boris V. Morkovin, Chairman Cinematography Department, University of Southern California. University of California at Los Angeles is actively participating in the convention under the leadership of its summer school instructor, Mr. Fred W. Orth. This will

be one more step towards bringing about a better public appreciation of the motion picture which has become such a dominant factor in modern life.

The theme of the convention is not only the raising of the general standards of motion picture appreciation, but the teacher-training aspect is to receive more special emphasis. The convention is planned to train leaders who will go out into various parts of the country to meet the needs which

have arisen, due to the growing realization of thousands of teachers in the significance of the motion picture in the lives of children.

All beginners in this vast field of visual education and motion picture appreciation are to receive a variety of valuable material from the many competent and authoritative speakers who are to lead the discussions of the various panels, dealing with English, Social Studies, Visual Education, and Dramatics. The co-operation and interest of the creative artists is not to be outdone by the enthusiasm shown by the educators themselves.

By means of the studio contacts and due to the fact that Hollywood is the primary source of all information regarding the development of motion pictures, delegates to the convention are assured of securing instruction and information by "doing."

On Friday, July 24, the creative laboratory workshop will present the "un-filmed film," an adaptation, written and directed by Miss Viola Vivian. The detailed program of the convention is as follows:

Friday, July 24

I. Registration, 1:30 - 2:00 Third Floor Law Bldg., U. S. C. In charge of Mrs. Glen A. Gerken, and Miss Nan Pearl Chaney.

English Round Table - 2:00 - 3:00 - Room 300 Law Bldg., U. S. C. Chairman: Dr. John D. Cooke, Chairman, Department of English, University of Southern California.

Speakers: Dr. Mildred Strubie, Chairman, Department of Comparative Literature, University of Southern California.

Mrs. Thomas G. Winter, Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America, Inc.

Discussion: Dr. Garland Greever, English Department, University of Southern California.

1. Social Studies Round Table - 3:00 - 4:00 - Room 300 Law Bldg., U. S. C.

Chairman: Dr. Melvin J. Vincent, Sociology Department, University of Southern California.

Speakers: Mr. Syud Hossain, History Department, University of Southern California.

Mr. John C. Shapps, Boys' Supervisor in Juvenile Division of the Probation Department, City of Los Angeles.

III. Cine-Art Banquet - 6:30 P. M.

Foyer of Town and Gown, 669 West Thirty - Sixth Place.

Chairman: Dr. Vierling Kersey, State

Superintendent of Public Instruction, State of California.

Honoring the Abbey Theatre Players, Dublin, Ireland, who are now working under the direction of John Ford at R. K. O. studios in the picture, "The Plow and the Stars:" Denis O'Dea, Eileen Crowe, F. J. McCormick, also Una O'Connor, and Neil Fitzgerald. The other members of the motion picture industry present will be: William Dieterle, Director of "Midsummer Night's Dream" and "Louis Pasteur," Jean Muir, star in Warner Brothers production, "White Fang," John Carradine, noted actor in "Prisoner of Shark Island" and also "White Fang," Louise Fazenda and her husband, Hal Wallis, production manager at Warner Brothers Studios.

The reception committee will include: Misses Florence Sprenger, Marian Evans, Aileen Dallwig, and Ella Marie White, Mrs. Carolina Samuelson, and Messrs. Fred Orth, Bernard J. Lonsdale, Horace Burr, Jr., and Stanley L. Combs.

IV. Cine-Art Performance, "The Five Marys" - Touchstone Theatre, Old College at 7:30 and 9:00 P. M.

Saturday, July 25

1. Visual Education Round Table - 9:30 - 11:00 A. M. - Room 300 Law Bldg., U. S. C.

Chairman: Dr. Paul Fisher, Research Assistant, Los Angeles City Schools.

Speakers: Dr. Edward W. Hauck, President of the Secretarial Training School, Los Angeles.

Mr. Proctor, American Optical Company.

Panel: Misses Marian Evans, Lorraine Noble, and Florence Sprenger and Mr. Fred Orth.

Reception: Miss Denya Burnham and Elizabeth Cockle.

II. Dramatics Round Table - 11:00 - 12:00 M. Room 300 Law Bldg., U. S. C.

Chairman: Dean Immel, School of Speech, University of Southern California.

Speaker: Dr. Kurt von Weisingen, School of Speech, University of Southern California.

III. Screen and Stage Make-up Round Table and Demonstration 2:00 - 3:00. 214 Bridge Hall, U. S. C. Mr. A. B. Shore from the Max Factor Studio will give a demonstration. Max Factor Studio Excursion - 3:00 1663 North Highland Avenue, Hollywood.

Guides: Misses Mildred Berry, Edith Frost, Christine Steinmetz and Mr. Dermot Morgan.

Monday, July 27

- I. Warner Brothers Studio Excursion  
9:00 - 12:00 M. Burbank, California.  
Preview of "Green Pastures."

Guides: Misses Hazel Leder, Clarion

Model, Lillian Mohr, Amy Allen, Mrs. Pauline Tolman and Messrs. Fred Orth and Francis Drake.

Tuesday, July 28

- I. Business Meeting and Election of Officers - 3:00 P. M. Room 100  
Law Bldg., U. S. C. Mr. Bernard J. Lonsdale presiding.

*You Are Invited to Join*

# The Cinema Appreciation League

An organization furthering the progress in cinema as an organic part of national culture. Under the auspices of the American Institute of Cinematography, Inc.

3551 University Ave., Los Angeles, Calif. RI. 4111, Sta. 302.

The purposes of this organization:

1. The research and experimentation in cinema.
2. The exchange of experience and knowledge in cinema appreciation and methods of its teaching.
3. The utilization of cinema for the purposes of education and general progress in culture.
4. The promoting of higher standards of taste and appreciation of motion pictures in schools and communities, and the creation of a mass demand for higher types of pictures as to their content as well as their artistic and technical form.
5. The cooperation of educators, civic and cultural leaders with creative and socially responsible members of the motion picture industry, in promoting the progress in cinema.

Membership in the League will bring:

1. Yearly subscription to "CINEMA PROGRESS"—a monthly magazine of appreciation, research and experimentation in creative cinema, and educational and documentary cinematography, published five times during the academic year.
2. Advice on any problem concerning appreciation of motion pictures and methods of teaching, research and experimentation in cinema.
3. Technical advice in the production, necessary equipment, material, and use of educational, documentary and fictional films.
4. Bibliographies on all aspects of general and educational cinema, syllabi, outlines, study guides, etc., for a nominal price.
5. Advice to members as to the catalogue and sources of worthwhile films for school or home use.
6. Attendance of cinema appreciation and research forums.
7. Assistance to members in organizing cinema workshop in stories and research, cine-dramatics, art, music, dance, technique, science, educational cinema, social studies, history, etc.

Other activities of the League include an annual Summer Convention (this year on July 24-28 in Los Angeles), bringing speakers from the field of motion picture arts and sciences, appreciation, educational and documentary cinematography, excursions to local motion picture studios; monthly gatherings of members in various centers for discussion of common problems and the furthering of the best methods of Creative Cinema.



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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
EDITORIAL	
Finding New Paths .....	3
LIFE AND MOTION PICTURES	
Motion Pictures A Social Factor.....	5
Cinematography and the Movie Fan.....	8
Youth in the Film Industry.....	11
MOTION PICTURE ART AND TECHNIQUE	
Symbol and Cinema .....	12
The Scenic Artist .....	15
Animating the Cartoon .....	17
Technicolor Simplified .....	19
THE SCHOOL AND CINEMA	
The College Theater and Cinema .....	21
New Impetus to Visual Education.....	24
Appreciation in the Social Studies Classroom.....	26
The Teaching Film .....	28
The Social Studies Consumer and Motion Pictures.....	29
ORGANIZATIONS .....	31
BOOK REVIEWS .....	Page 3 Cover

## To Irving Thalberg

In Irving Thalberg the enthusiasts of cinema progress have lost a leader. Thalberg believed, as he said in his letter to the *Cinema Progress*, that the artistic growth of industry is conditioned by the growth of the audience who understands pictures. He welcomed the establishment of the Cinema Appreciation League in its inception because he did not believe that "the motion picture industry is something that will go on only for today," and he had a vision of the future. In the League he welcomed the leaders of the growing audience whose demand for better motion pictures will stimulate the continuous progress of the industry. The college youth, whose intelligent interest in motion pictures he appreciated and welcomed, has lost in him a great friend and believer.

"Among the college students of today," said Irving Thalberg, "will be found the future creative artists. These men and women having grown up with an understanding of the technique of pictures, will not be circumscribed by the limitations of other art forms, such as the stage and literature." Thalberg is gone, but his ideas will live. They will find and they are finding, as you will read in the article, "Youth in Film Industry," new supporters and continuers. The memory and deep appreciation of the work of Thalberg will live with millions of the younger generation, teachers and enthusiasts of the cinema progress.

## Finding New Paths

It would seem that the law of balance works in the social and mental life of nations, just as it does in nature. In transitional epochs, such as the present one, when the unity of national life is endangered, new regenerative forces emerge, and new paths to the mind and heart of the masses are found; by a great organized effort, social and economic distress is overcome, and nations rise to a higher plateau of moral and cultural life.

There is a general feeling, also, that new, vital forces are bound to develop; the postwar indifference and blasé attitude of society, especially of youth, is passing; constructive values and ideals characterized by a new moral strength have begun to assert themselves.

As if to provide the creative genius of the nation with new powers and means of communicating of the new vision to the masses, an art of immense potentialities was born during the Great War in D. W. Griffith's "*Birth of a Nation*." With sound, color, and now with television on the way, to express emotional experience of the widest range and depth, this new art is rapidly growing into a major factor in the mental life of the masses.

Society and the motion picture industry have begun to realize that the new giant which grew out of Edison's plaything has become too great a potential and actual power in modern life to be treated as a plaything, or as a mere transmission station of childish, silly, or shallow emotions. The motion picture industry, especially since the advent of sound, not only is becoming a gathering place for technical wizards, but is attracting more and more leading creative geniuses of the nation. Under the pressure of the new taste for better pictures that has recently developed in the public, motion pictures turn more than ever to vital realities of cultural and social life.

Just as in Athens, where the drama was a vital expression of the very essence of artistic, religious, and national life, so in modern times, the cinema—the mass art of the twentieth century—will become more and more instrumental in revealing the mental life of society. Into the homes and lives of individuals everywhere, a window of fuller life will be opened through the media of motion pictures and television.

Since the depression, motion pictures in America have grown in their influence, especially upon children and the younger generation, to such a degree that civic and educational leaders have become movie-conscious and have assumed the role of leaders of the new audience. They are demanding better type of pictures.

The activity of civic leaders and educators, in the matter of motion pictures, constructive as it is on the whole, may have some undesirable effects. A national genius the genius of the new art, should not be curbed and forced into the narrow limits of group policy which may easily lead to dogmatism. It is true that the audiences and their leaders should be cocreators in this mass art, and should prompt artists and producers with underlying ideas and feelings that deeply move the soul of the nation; but they should not assume a close, dictatorial control of this art and its message.

Another danger lies in the lack of preparation and training in motion picture sciences and arts, on the part of teachers and leaders of the new audience. It should be



remembered that motion picture production is based on a most precise science, which has devised instruments for minute control of sound and light to be used as an expression of the subtler emotions and thoughts of human beings. With all the existing arts blended into one, with the visual and auditory stimuli organized into a dramatic and artistic pattern that transfers the vision of artists to the masses, motion pictures are the most complicated and intricate of all the arts. Therefore, it is a tragedy that teachers in many thousands of schools today, who are endeavoring to teach appreciation of motion pictures, are, lacking for the most part in any training in this subject, and are badly in need of textbooks or dependable source material relating to the motion picture.

In order to become an important factor in national life, the teaching of appreciation of motion pictures must have a good basis and be organized on sound educational principles. For this purpose, all persons from universities, colleges, secondary and elementary schools, and boards of education, who are interested, should join in formulating a program for teaching appreciation of motion pictures.

The American Institute of Cinematography and its teachers' division, the American Appreciation League, have established a Research Bureau for the purpose of unifying and co-ordinating research work in the teaching of appreciation of motion pictures. The American Institute of Cinematography invites all those educators and civic leaders who are interested in its aim to establish research committees in connection with the teaching of motion picture appreciation. These committees will state their problems, based upon their experiences or upon questions regarding points on which they are in doubt, and will send their projects and suggestions to the Research Bureau. This Bureau will tabulate all this material and present it to the Research Conference of interested groups to be held on December 18 and 19 at the Mission Inn, Riverside, California. The survey of this field, scientifically formulated, together with the material collected and the suggestions, will be published in separate syllabi and sent to all organizations and individuals who intend to participate either in the research or in the conferences.

AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF CINEMATOGRAPHY, INC.

DR. RUFUS B. VON KLEINSMID, *President*

DR. BORIS V. MORKOVIN, *Vice-President*

DR. J. EUGENE HARLEY, *Secretary*.

## Motion Pictures

### A Social Factor

MRS. THOMAS G. WINTER \*

It is exactly twenty-one years since the motion picture was transformed from a clever toy into a new art, a new medium of expression. This was the contribution made by David Wark Griffith in his *BIRTH OF A NATION* through a technique which transformed the cinema by the use of new forms into a thing by itself, using all the arts, yet to be identified with none of them separately. It is neither literature nor stage play. The picture of today definitely uses drama, architecture, dance, speech, music, painting and sculpture in a combination of all the arts. Perhaps the most important thing about it is that it carries this blending of many mediums of expression to a vast public which up to this time has had no previous intimate contacts with drama, fine music, exquisite dancing.

What of the extent of that public? The total enrollment of church membership plus the enrollment of our public schools is given in the last United States Almanac as eighty million. The motion picture audience at present is eighty-five million a week. Considering the great advantage the church and school have in the matter of time, these figures are startling. How did it come about that so young an art has leaped into such enormous significance? I think that until recently we have been stupidly oblivious of the tremendous importance of emotional reactions and emotional training in relation to education. We have thought of our schools and our churches chiefly in terms of truth. We have, perhaps, not realized that love and joy must be linked with truth in any normal education. After all, the first thing every child desires is knowledge of other people and of the world about him. Our educational system is the reply the state has set up to this universal questioning. Why is it then that children largely dislike the school room and are eager to escape from their desks into the outside world where they build up out of their own experience their own answers to the questions regarding the meaning of life and nature?

I think we have put too wide a gulf between our ideas of education and entertainment. Entertainment deals with the emotional phase of our inner life. Each of us has a personal standard of entertainment. To the athletic, to the scientific man, and to the artist, the most gripping and absorbing entertainment may come through self-discipline. By and large education and entertainment are twin sisters. Together they cover the greater range of our interests. The thing that stimulates the mind entertains it. The thing that trains the mind educates it. At the end of these twenty-one years, when the motion picture has been growing up, it finds itself

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\*Association Motion Picture Producers.

facing a responsibility toward education. It is no wonder that the educational institutions are beginning to realize how largely they may be used to reinforce abstract fact by implanting delight in the truth. We are beginning to think of the motion picture in terms of art. Art is chiefly the endeavor of men of wider vision to translate their understanding of nature and of mankind as well as things—things of the spirit so that myriads of us lesser people may get the thrill of them and widen our horizons. As Browning said, "God uses us to help each other—so lending our minds out." Every art has its mechanical tools. Music must have its instruments, architecture its stone and marble. The cinema has both its mechanical and artistic sides. Until recently the mechanics and the business have over-weighed the art and the spirit of motion pictures, but now the best of the product is showing us how art and spirit can prevail over the tools. When one studies such pictures as ANTHONY ADVERSE, ROMEO AND JULIET, THE STORY OF LOUIS PASTEUR, one has a deep feeling of reverence for the patient, loving scholarship that lies behind the film and a great desire to make it true. But, after all, this research work is only the body while the thing that captures audiences is the spirit and nerve which makes use of these tools. No longer do we think of the camera as the servant of the literal. We have long since learned that the camera sees only what the human imagination behind it bids it see.

Remembering that the picture is not primarily an illustrated book is a new form of art, a flow of action which uses words and color and music as subservient elements, we shall see how it must translate its stories according to its own genius. When the cinema uses a play or novel as a foundation, it must make the story over to meet its own peculiar needs. "It aims at new effects through the use of wholly new technical devices." Here are two very interesting analyses of this difference, one American, one English. Pitkin and Marston in "The Art of Sound Pictures" say "The talkies are the only art that would attract Leonardo da Vinci if he were alive today. It is the only art that excites a scientist's curiosity; the only art that challenges an engineer; the only art that offers the great artists a medium capable of expressing every human thought and emotion, as well as the pure aesthetic effects of color and music." In "The Film Till Now," Paul Rotha says, "Since its beginning, the film has grown, retraced its steps, sprung in different directions at the same time, been hampered and impeded on all sides, in the most remarkable way, without any real stock being taken of its properties and processions. Its very nature of light revealed by moving forms defies systematic cataloguing of its capabilities. . . . No medium of expression calls for such a wide range of technical accomplishment as does the film. . . . This dynamic mental pictorialism is, I claim, the most powerful form of expression available today to the creative artists." This wide range of accomplishment is answerable for the fact that Hollywood is steadily gathering outstanding figures in the finer arts, authors, artists, musicians, sculptors, dancers, people of every race and land; and last, in hangers-on and little specialists of every form of entertainment. One enjoys getting the point of view of keen-minded outsiders. So again, to quote Katherine Fullerton Gerould, "One of the greatest assets of the movie, considered



as an artistic medium, is precisely that it does not demand the artificial compression, and foreshortening of the drama; it can be more natural and in a sense truer to life—and what a chance the movie gives for beauty! The stage play in comparison gives very little. Not only for literal beauty—landscape, setting, dress, plastic beauty of human beings—but also for that sense of liberation which is deeply implicit in aesthetic enjoyment. The play compels. The picture lets you wander on a long, long leash. The things you can suggest are not only more numerous, but more appealing even than the things you can define. Therefore the movie always has a better chance than the play of touching the heart of man.” A very interesting illustration of the wide range is to be noted in connection with the film version of *ROMEO AND JULIET*. Shakespeare painted on a tremendous canvas. He had no hesitation about leaping over wide ranges of geography and dealing with heroic sized crowds. Because no scenery was used on the stage in his time, he demanded that his audiences’ imagination should fill in all these gaps. Just as soon, however, as the stage began to develop elaborate scenery, it began also to modify Shakespearean texts to meet its particular needs, and we have version after version of every one of the great Shakespearean plays. Now we come to today. The cinema has no time and space restrictions because it also can leap as far as it pleases, but it gives you the actual picture. Therefore, in making the cinema version of *ROMEO AND JULIET*, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer has reverted to the original Shakespearean text which suits its needs better than any of the modifications which lie between us and the Elizabethan era. The studio gave a year’s study to the architecture and costumes, the musical instruments, the dances, and the habits of Verona during the Renaissance in order to make *ROMEO AND JULIET*. For the creation of *ANTHONY ADVERSE*, months of the same kind of careful study were given to France and Italy, to Cuba, and to Africa of the Napoleonic time. Research workers for *THE LAST OF THE MOHICANS* were true to that great period of Anglo-French wars “down to the last button.” The germ slides in *THE STORY OF LOUIS PASTEUR*, which you saw in a flash of the eye, took days in the making. These things were not art, but truth. Nevertheless, they are so used in the pictures that they become part of the art just as a lovely landscape might form the background of a great painting.

Not least among the contributions to the changing cinema is the moulding of our ideals with regard to English pronunciation and voice culture, the beauty of which is certainly a fine art.

## Cinematography and the Movie Fan

KATHARINE ANNE OMMANNEY \*

Inspiring the average movie fan to "go to shows" intelligently in order that he may experience the greatest enjoyment from this universal means of entertainment is, of course, one of the major purposes of cinematographic activity. Classes in our public schools and universities, lectures before all types of organizations, and printed material in every form of magazine should all be pointed to that particular end if they are to be of any practical value in developing a public taste which can be really effective at the box office. The average person does not want to feel he is being uplifted or educated when he is being entertained. He must, therefore, be coaxed into knowing why the best pictures afford him keener pleasure than poor ones. Let us consider the simplest principles of motion picture appreciation toward which his attention should be directed.

In the first place, we must remember that the screen play is a distinct development in the art of the theatre. It should never be merely a photographed play taken over from the legitimate stage, but it should utilize, as it is doing more and more, all the unlimited powers of scientific photography and sound production. All the realms of earth, air and water, all the mental processes, and all types and numbers of human beings can be realistically or fantastically brought before us on the screen in the presentation of thrilling events unhampered by the limits of time, place, and ordinary humanity.

The movie fan should be led, therefore, to appreciate the work of the cameraman and technical staff, for they create the atmosphere, glorify the actors, and focus the attention of the audience in order that the proper emotional response may be emphasized. The marvelous mechanical powers of the studio should be utilized to create the proper atmosphere, present the scene accurately and correctly; they should always be subordinated to the spiritual and emotional needs of the story. Thus, the settings, costuming, and makeup should primarily present the characters with reality and with effectiveness; these should never be played up for their own sake. In the past, far too much effort and expense has been expended in glorifying the charms of the stars—especially the ladies—with the result of inexcusable sensationalism of dress and undress, grotesqueness of design, and emphasis on eccentricities of make-up and coiffure. The fine pictures of today are showing a distinct improvement in using technical effects effectively and sanely.

The development of the talking picture revolutionized the screen drama. Mechanical equipment for years produced silent drama most effectively; then speech and sound effects came in, and for a time threatened to wreck the art of film produc-

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\*Teacher of Dramatics—North High School, Denver, Colorado. Author of "The Stage and The School."

tion by destroying its beauty and illusion. On the screen there should be only as much speaking as it necessary to produce the story; therefore, the dialogue should be brilliantly written—the utter stupidity and inanity of the lines film actors are at times forced to speak offer handicaps that the greatest of them cannot surmount. Screen dialogue should be simple, natural, and pointed; only that speech which the character would use under the circumstances being portrayed should be spoken. It should be as entertaining or emotional as the situation demands, and at the same time should characterize the individual, advance the plot, and motivate the action.

Speech is always a means of expressing ideas—there is no other excuse for speaking at any time. Thus the speaking of lines is one of the greatest problems the actor has to face, and it demands a trained voice—flexible, vibrant, and correctly placed. Speech must be clear, fluent, and correct. In dialect parts, actors must use colloquial diction and inflections, never the less, they must always be understood. This is why sound effects should never obscure words and should be reduced to those which will be heard by the person in the situation being presented, either with his actual ears or in his imagination. Of course, sound effects are used rightly to create atmosphere and arouse emotion. Unfortunately, directors have overused these new playthings, dragging in sweet strains of music at deathbeds, inserting irrelevant songs because an actor can sing, and distracting the attention from the plot by much “sound and fury.” Music can artistically furnish a background or underlying motif, but it should ordinarily come from some possible source, and except in strictly musical shows, it should be used with the greatest discretion.

We have been considering some of the phases of the screen art, now let us decide why we should go to the theatre and what we should look for when there.

Undoubtedly the average person goes “to see a show” to be amused, entertained, and to be released for a short time from the dull routine of daily life. This need not, however, be the only end served by motion picture attendance, for the person who chooses with care the pictures he sees should receive other satisfactions. For example, he should learn how to really enjoy the work of fine dramatists producers and actors. He should also develop the power to analyze a play intelligently, and enjoy its aesthetic values. In addition, he can gain an increasing appreciation of humanity, as he sees all types facing their problems wisely or foolishly, and as a result he should learn to distinguish between the false standards of life frequently depicted on the screen. This same type of experience should also enable him to evaluate his own daily experiences and ambitions more satisfactorily.

What are some of the standards by which an average playgoer may judge a picture and its production? In the first place, a good picture tells a plausible, interesting story in a series of related events which rise to a gripping climax, and then work toward a logical conclusion. It interprets problems, serious or otherwise, which people meet in real life, and it shows the consequences of their methods of facing them in such a way



that constructive ideas of conduct are presented which should enrich spiritual concepts and inspire admirable conduct. Even in broad comedy, people should react consistently throughout the picture and get themselves out of crucial situations by their own best efforts or go down in defeat as a result of dishonorable action.

In the second place, the playgoer should consider the interpretation of character. A good actor creates a living personality which arouses a definite emotional response, so that we suffer or laugh with him because he has used his body, voice, and talent effectively and artistically in depicting the role he has assumed. He cooperates with the director and other actors in presenting the play and its meaning by always focussing the attention upon the immediate center of interest, and not upon himself. He should possess a screen personality, flexible voice, and an intelligent understanding of all types of people, so that he never exploits himself, but always creates a convincing person other than himself.

In the third place, the playgoer should consider the work of the producer, who usually receives but little of his deserved glory, for he adapts, selects and casts the picture, and he must inspire his actors, combined in a well-balanced group, to create vital characters by means of drawing out their ability and assisting them with effective costumes and make-up. In addition he must employ every technical device to create a perfect coordination of technicians, actors, settings, and effects which correctly and sympathetically present the play and its message to the best advantage.

Thus we see that a good movie fan is more than just a playgoer. He gradually learns to select his pictures fare with taste and with discrimination, refusing to be lured by false advertising and unintelligent judgment of other people. He follows the critical reviews and classifications of films in reputable magazines, but he doesn't let himself be influenced too much by them. He loses himself in the enjoyment of a fine play, beautiful sets, or great acting without allowing his critical judgment of unimportant details spoil the real art of the whole production for him. On the other hand, he does not accept sentimental drivel, unethical conduct, and false standards of life just because other people do. In the end he follows the activities and achievements of the best producers, dramatists, and actors, comparing and analyzing their methods, and in the end he encourages their best effort by contributing to the box office returns of the best pictures and refusing to patronize the poor ones. It is the ultimate purpose of Cinematography to create such movie fans!

## Youth In Film Industry

Motion pictures are becoming a "people's university, a highway of mental life of the masses today." This conviction of the followers of the Cinema Progress movement has been recently supported by one of the leading pioneers and creative producers of the industry, Samuel Goldwyn. He has definitely tied together the progress of industry with the cinematic education of the growing generation. "I believe that each generation brings with it new and fresh ideas." American industry is confronted with the growing competition of other countries, with rapidly developing discrimination, and a demand for better pictures by the American audience. To meet this growing responsibility, the industry has to find more young geniuses like Irving Thalberg, who will combine business with vision.

It will be possible only if more executives will share with Samuel Goldwyn his conviction: "In every other business, young men are being taken out of college and from other fields, and are being apprenticed to learn how to step into the shoes of present leaders."

The magazine, *Cinema Progress*, welcomes the splendid vision and sagacity of Samuel Goldwyn, and it expects him to find in industry supporters who will make possible the development of a school of cinematography where the younger generation can study motion picture production, art, and technique as well as business; a school which will give to the most talented and creative students, the chance of apprenticeship in major studios. And further, "Unless the motion picture industry starts thinking of the future and begins training its next generation of producers and directors, disaster will be waiting within a very few years."

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## Research Note

The "Research News," a publication of the Graduate School of The University of Southern California, states our work cogently in these terms: "Research in cinematography, therefore, involves investigation based on (1) the physical sciences, motion picture technique and engineering; (2) the component arts involved, their blending and dramatic unification; (3) social and psychological aspect, the interrelation of pictures and audiences, and problems of social control, influence upon children; (4) scientific and educational values including production and use for the classroom, scientific records, establishment of criteria of judgment and criticism, problems of teacher training, and audio-visual education through pictures in the public schools."

## Symbol and Cinema

LEONARD HACKER \*

A symbol is a language reduced to a single sign. This sign is at once charged with intellect and emotion. To see it and to know it is to think and to feel a complete system of ideas and emotions which is proportionate to one's capacity to know and understand its meaning. Some symbols are shallow and easily grasped. Others are so profound as to penetrate unfathomable depths. The symbol speaks directly to the unconscious, but at the same time approximates the highest goals of conscious thinking. In the realm of symbol the simple mind and the advanced mind meet in a common understanding equal in meaning if not intensity.

Everyone is familiar with the visual aspect of many primitive symbols, the totems, the squares, the wheels, the swastikas and the zigzags, but only the advanced psychologist understands the complete meanings underlying them. Despite the apparent simplicity of such signs they imply an extremely complicated mental life. They are expressions in various forms of the activities of the hidden unconscious processes which is peculiar to all of us, primitive and civilized alike.

Until the development of motion pictures the only symbols people knew were the static and frozen ones consisting of three kinds: religious, military and political. These are represented by flags and banners, posters, coins and medals, coats of arms, bearing crosses, stars, swastikas, stripes, hammers and scythes, heads of warriors, kings and politicians, and every conceivable representation of religious figures both false and true.

Besides the frozen symbols known by all and the secret ones kept only by esoteric circles, we have, since the development of motion pictures, cinema symbol. Cinema symbol is not fixed and static, but it is living symbol—symbols that may grow, evolve, change and transform themselves one into another, contrasting and revealing their meanings thereby, symbols in evolution. Where previously people were content with fixed signs representing religious, military or political powers, we now have the means to convert all objects and forms into symbols in any way we wish, to express meanings both old and new. Everyone is acquainted with symbols as used in film narrative first developed by D. W. Griffith in the close-up. The most vital use of the close-up in films which made cinema a distinct art was not the presentation of an actress' charms or the villain's teeth, but the presenting of ordinary objects in such ways as to give them symbolic intent. Ordinary objects—a chair, a flower, a wave, a stone, a wheel, a gesture, movements, reversed, retarded or speeded, light itself—have been used in infinite ways to express special meanings. The same object transposed differently means something else, changing a light intensity or a shadow's strength does the same. Very few films have used symbology as a complete method in the development of the

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\*Author of "Cinema Design."



narrative. One thinks immediately of Mr. Griffith's films. It is the symbolic development of his stories that gives them their greatness, that transformed mere stories into concentrated pictorial drama. One thinks of "The Last Laugh" of Murnau's or "The Tower of Lies" by Seastrom. All used symbol exclusively in contrast, growth and evolution to express great ideas and great themes. Those were silent films, original screen creations which had to use symbol in image to express the greatest possible content within a given space of time.

Today in sound and speech cinema there is being developed, however slowly, a sound-image symbology which will be the correct use of sound and speech with image by presenting all three, image, speech and sound, in symbolic synchronism and variety. The first talkies were a great setback to film art, replacing previously highly developed image methods with rambling talk. The pictures were merely incidental to the talk. The new talkie is learning to make speech and sound serve symbolic purposes. That film is a perfect cinema that throughout its length utilizes every shot as a symbol as well as a step in the narrative or theme, and that in the end spells one all inclusive symbol encompassing the whole. Symbol is synonymous with unity and no matter how diverse or complicated a theme, if told symbolically, it will always spell "Unity" to the audience. By means of cinema we come to learn the processes of our own minds which in nature and operation are identical with cinema processes, but only rarely so well ordered into perfect defined patterns. The cinema helps us concentrate and "tighten up" our own thinking even apart from what we have seen. To think cinematically on any subject is to clarify it.

One thinks now of the future social film guided by psychiatrists which deals with imperative themes by means of unconscious and conscious symbol made intelligible to every one. This will go far toward enabling us to know ourselves, to find always the Center of Balance in an ever increasingly complicated world. Naturally, such films will be simpler dealing with mass themes and mass psychologies, but individual treatments will come in for their large share as well. It is obvious that the old frozen symbols are at war with one another. Some though outgrown have been strangely revived to wreck havoc on mind and matter; human behavior is suddenly thrown back hundreds of years. In other aspects we have not even approached the wisdom of ancient times, so that very much will have to be learned, ferreted out, analyzed, synthesized, and balanced in the future. The film obviously will play no small part in this rejuvenation. Certain religious symbols still hold true. Essential mystic symbols never change, but demand new interpretations down through the ages. But the powerful destructive symbols of military and political dominance must go. Cinema symbol is fast dissolving these static forces. What has been good will be preserved and transmuted into this great medium. It is not necessary here to enter the ramifications of scenario construction and directorial achievement in the making of symbolical films for social benefit. But the producers of film must be guided by educators and psychologists who from intense experience know what is best for the mass mind. That symbolism speaks at once to

educated and uneducated alike bears up the once uncertain wisdom of catering to the mass mind. Today, educated and uneducated must both be further educated to close the great divide that lies between them, the gap between ignorance and knowledge, between knowledge and wisdom, between wisdom and life well lived; symbol, cinema symbol, is that bridge.

Producers have complained of the falling off of attendance at film theatres. This may not be an indication of bad films, but perhaps an indication of films growing better and better. *A good film stimulates an indolent public to reading more about what they have seen, to think more about important themes, whether contemporary or historical, and to discuss what they have seen and read.* Discussion stimulates action toward social betterment. Social improvement in turn demands a higher type of film, thus continually raising standards until a sufficiently substantial balance has been reached from which there can be no sliding back into previous undeveloped states. Stimulating films are conducive to reading of good books, and librarians report that such is the case. The two go hand in hand and will continue to join forces. Therefore, attendance at the movies will be lessened because fewer and better pictures will be produced, there will be no economic losses since a certain film standard of quality will guarantee attendance and monetary returns with a continuing security on both sides. The mass mind will improve as will social conditions as a result. The social film then has already arrived, due to the combined genius of symbol and cinema. The film by means of symbol can play a great part in the social transformation necessary today. Because of its vast audience it is a duty and an honor for the motion picture to become a great social force. It will prove to be more an important force than politics, the army or the church by preserving the good and eliminating the bad. Its present advancement is due to the social improvement which it has created in the past by films that will go down permanently in history as among the great works of all time.

## The Scenic Artist

LEWIS W. PHYSIOC \*

*Banished, For Many Years, By Popularity of the Silent Pictures, the Scenic Artist is Again Called to Service By the Modern "Talkies."*

"Who and what is a scenic artist?"

This question was asked by a young art student who, by his enthusiasm for all things artistic, had been lured to a recent exhibit of local scenic artists.

Such a question was natural, coming from one of the younger generation who had grown up with the "movies" and knew nothing of that beautiful art that nearly became the proverbial "Lost Art" during the rise of the silent pictures.

That question might largely have been answered by the very nature of the exhibit—the versatility, for that is what distinguishes the scenic artist. There was diversity of technique; variety of subject matter; various mediums; and the widest range of scale. There was every size, from the "thumbnail sketch" to the large drop curtain. There were pastels, wash drawings, oils, pencil and charcoal, along with the scenic artist's pet medium—*distemper*.

But there is a little more romantic idea to that question. Away back in the year 1605 A. D., an ancient dramatist started something of importance. Instead of being satisfied with performing upon an empty stage where placards informed the audience that "This is a wall," "This is a doorway," etc., he played in front of a painted drop.

Then in 1777, we are told, the first stage setting was built and painted. Since those ancient times scene painting has flourished as a highly specialized art.

The scenic artist enjoyed what was probably the pinnacle of his art about three decades ago, just prior to the coming of motion pictures. The English startled the lovers of the drama with those magnificent spectacles of the London Hippodrome; the Germans with their Wagnerian operas; the Russians, the French, the Italians and others, with their splendid contributions; and the Americans with such productions as "Quo Vadis," "The Ninety and Nine," and the many grand and comic operas.

The medium of the scenic artist is known as distemper—a flat-drying water color set with gelatine size. It probably is one of the most difficult of all mediums of painting, but one of the most beautiful. A great authority was once asked what he thought of distemper. He answered: "A splendid medium, distemper!... For atmosphere, unequalled; for strength, as powerful as oil, and in half an hour you can do with it that which in wash or oil would take one or two days."

Another great critic said: "The position of the Scenic Artist is particularly difficult, in as much as while artistic temperament and a thorough knowledge of art

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are essential for the practice of his vocation, it is equally essential that he should be thoroughly practical and to a considerable extent an engineer."

While there has been a tendency among some artists to depreciate the work of the scenic artist, there have been instances of such commanding merit as to receive the applause of all. Many of this great profession have been enrolled among the most exclusive academies of the world.

Leon Bakst, a French scenic artist, was a Noble Prize winner.

After many years of almost tragic inactivity, due to the decline of the stage and the ultra realism of the silent pictures, the Scenic Artist is again being sought. The introduction of sound has entailed many restrictions in picture production. The sensitiveness of the microphone has made some features of the work (particularly exterior settings) expensive and inconvenient. In the new development of technique, the Scenic Artist serves without question. His peculiar training in realistic painting is a great aid to art director and cameraman. When carefully planned and well executed, painted drops and backings form convenient and economic adjuncts to the actual, built parts of a setting. Along with such features as "glass shots," "matte shots," "montage" effects, special decorations, the Scenic Artists contribute noticeably to such modern production as "The Petrified Forest," "Captain Blood," and "Green Pastures;" and such effects as the burning city in "San Francisco;" and in the current production "Born to Dance," where three huge backings two hundred feet long and fifty feet high were painted in exact replicas, representing three different times of the day—night, dawn, and midday.

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## Sight, Sound, and Thought

The advantages and disadvantages of sound films center around this psychological factor, ear-attention is more practiced in giving quick conscious response while eye-attention is prone to become vague; each to some extent tends to inhibit the other, if the film is to be successful. It is very necessary that these stimuli be synchronous, for if they are not the attention will be divided. With the sound-film the major stimulus should always be that of sight, and the sound stimulus should reenforce or recall the attention to sight.

Properly combined, sight with sound will secure a more vivid impression than either would separately. This combination includes another factor, namely, silence. An overloaded commentary defeats attention and finally destroys the very activity of mind it was intended to reenforce.

## Animating the Cartoon

WILLIAM GARITY \*

The production of a cartoon involves the following through of many minute details and the system we have developed here has attempted to eliminate the personal equation of the individual. Detailed records are maintained at all times to prevent errors and overlapping of work. When you realize that some 12,000 drawings are necessary to produce a single cartoon, and that each of these drawings must be handled several times and must be photographed in their proper sequence, and further, that it requires about six months to produce a cartoon, you may well realize the importance of maintaining adequate and complete control of the production at all times.

Our most serious problem is that of the creation of new stories, and in this our problem differs very slightly from that of the live-action producers.

Our story department is divided into three units. The first unit develops new ideas, the treatments of those ideas, and prepares a rough draft of the proposed story. The second unit takes the rough draft and works on it to develop the situation introducing gags, and finally produces a rather complete adaptation. This adaptation is then taken by a third unit and it is reduced to a working script for the cartoon director.

When the cartoon director receives the script he works with his musical director to reduce the individual scenes to their proper length, and at the same time compose a suitable musical accompaniment to be played as an accompaniment to the action. The cartoon director completes a working blue-print of the entire picture as it will appear on the screen. The length of each scene, the cuts, gags, and the business are worked out in complete detail. When this is completed the animator is called in, and assigned to his particular sequence in the picture.

When the animator leaves the director he becomes in effect the director of his individual sequence; it is his problem to produce a series of drawings which will express the action or the idea set forth by the cartoon director.

The animator's first problem is to rough in, in a very sketchy manner, the general mass and movement of the characters in his sequence, without regard to any detail. When he has completed his series of drawings in the rough, the drawings are sent to the test camera department where they are photographed, and the film is returned to the animator with his drawings. The animator runs this test-film and when he is satisfied that he has satisfactorily completed his rough drawings, he presents it to the director for approval. If and when the director approves the rough tests the animator proceeds, with the aid of his assistant, to complete the series of drawings in full detail.

As soon as possible after the animator starts work, the musical director completes a rough draft of his musical score, and immediately proceeds to record a complete

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\*Production Manager Walt Disney Studio.

score, using either the piano or organ. As the animation tests are completed, they are fitted into a separate reel in proper-timed relationship with the recorded organ, and each week every director in the plant looks at each one of the pictures which is going through his unit in this test form.

When the action is finally approved and the drawings are completed, they are turned over to the inking department, which proceeds by using black India ink to trace the drawings on the celluloid sheets used for the outlines. When this operation has been completed the celluloid sheets, with the outlines of the characters traced on them, are turned over to the painting group; then the colors are applied as indicated by model sheets.

The purpose of transferring these drawings to celluloid sheets is to enable us to superimpose these sheets on a painted background so as to form a composite picture. The backgrounds are in effect the stage settings in which the characters work. When the backgrounds have been completed and the celluloids painted, they are turned over to the production camera department where they are photographed by means of the three-color Technicolor process. By the time the drawings reach the production camera department, we have recorded the orchestra.

The synchronizing of the picture in the action with the music has been reduced to a mathematical problem. As most of you know all talking motion pictures are run through the projection machines at the rate of 24 frames per second, which is the equivalent of 90 feet of film per minute. We have taken this 24 frames per second, as a basis of establishing our musical tempos, so that when we refer to a 6 beat for the music we mean each beat of the music is the equivalent of 6 frames of film or a quarter of a second. From that point we use a 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 16 and a 20 beat. This is worked out as follows: a scene calls for Mickey running across the stage. Let us suppose that the director figures that he should take 3 steps in 1 second, and if there are 24 frames of film per second, then each step should require 8 frames to complete. This establishes the 8 beat tempo. The animator produces a series of drawings of Mickey running, so that for the 8th frame Mickey's foot contacts the ground. If Mickey takes 12 steps the animator must produce 96 drawings and at every 8th drawing in the series Mickey's foot will be on the ground. When we come to record the music for this particular scene the musicians wear head-phones in which they hear a metronomic beat at the rate of 3 per second. They proceed to play their music in accordance with this tempo so that we have an action film of 8 frames for every step; we have a music track of 8 frames long for every beat of the music so that when the two are superimposed or synchronized there is complete harmony and rhythm between the action and the music. The sound effects used in the pictures are produced in the same manner. Nothing in the synchronizing system is left to chance, and any time anything is out of synchronism in our pictures it is a result of an error and not a fault of the system.



## Technicolor Process Simplified

JAMES H. LOVE \*

You all know how a black-and-white negative film is made. If we are using panchromatic film, and expose it through the lens of a camera, we get a negative image; that is, the picture is blackest where the light striking it was brightest. A white shirt would register black, and a black tie would register more or less clear white. Printing photographically gives the original picture back in natural shades of black and white.

The light which struck parts of our negative and turned these parts dark upon development was white light from a white shirt. That means it had every color of the rainbow in it. Suppose, now, we took three pictures of three colored shirts, red, green and blue. With panchromatic film (film sensitive to all colors), all three negatives would give us black shirts. If we now put a piece of red gelatin in front of our film and tried to photograph all three shirts at once, only the red one would be black; the others would not show at all because blue light and green light cannot pass through a red gelatin "filter."

This is what happens in a Technicolor movie-camera, except that all three color records are taken simultaneously on three filmstrips, each of which gets a portion of the light entering the lens, and each protected by proper filters from all light but one of the three primary colors. You might expect to see the light split up into three separate beams, one for each film; actually the "blue" and "red" films are run through the same slot in contact with each other so that the light need be split by the use of a half-silvered mirror into only two beams with a green filter in front of the "green" film and a magenta filter (allowing only red and blue to pass) in front of the twin "red" and "blue" films. Now, you ask, why doesn't the red light affect the "blue" film and the blue the "red" one? The answer is that it would, only the "blue" film chosen is not panchromatic; that is, filter or no filter, it will not register red. The blue light is kept from reaching the "red" panchromatic film in back by coating its back with yellow dye, which will not pass blue light.

After taking these three films out and developing them in the ordinary way, we have three records—three black-and-white images differing in that each represents one of the three primary colors. The "red" film, for example, is blackest where the "red" light was strongest et cetera, the quotation marks indicate only the *kind* of color image record, though through light, no actual color is to be seen or even will be seen on any of them.

Technicolor is a "subtractive" process, which means that when you see a red shirt on the screen, it is because the white light from the projection lamp has been

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shorn of its green and blue components, leaving only red light a free path thru the film at that point. We get any particular color by *subtracting* the right quantity of the other two colors by placing their *complementary colors* or transparent dyes in the way of the light of the projection beam. The complement of red is blue-green, the complement of green is magenta, and the complement of blue is yellow.

Looking at our red shirt on the screen, we must have gotten rid of the green and blue. We did this by dyeing the shirt area magenta, which stopped the green, and yellow which stopped the blue. So only red shows through on the screen because only red can pass through both these dyes. All colors are obtained by this subtraction method.

How did the magenta and yellow dye get there? They were printed onto our exhibition film by actual contact from two of the three *matrices*. From each of the original three color records a "*matrix*" is made, which is a print made in relief on another film. This is a process wherein the hardening of a coating of gelatin is proportional to the amount of light which gets through from the negative superimposed on it; that is, as our red shirt recorded very black on the "red" color record, that area stops the light from getting through and hardening the gelatin just under it. After the unhardened gelatin is washed away from this particular matrix, we should expect to find a valley wherever there was a red area in the original scene (or wherever a black area on the "red" record). We should also expect to find, as we do, hills everywhere else on our matrix. There would be a "shirt-valley" on the "red" matrix, and "shirt-hills" on both the other two matrices because the other two let the light through in that area to build up hills. These three matrices are still colorless; they lack even the black silver images of the three original color records.

We proceed to dye each matrix in its complementary color, the "red" matrix is given a blue-green dye, the "green" a magenta, and the "blue" a yellow dye. Each matrix is pressed for several minutes against the film intended for exhibition, in turn. Care is taken to align the three so that all pictures originally exposed at the same instant come together in exact register. This is called an "imbibation" process because the final print "drinks up" the three dyes in turn. On the red matrix we remember that there was only a "shirt-valley," so there is no gelatin there to pick up blue-green dye and deposit it on the final print. But there were "shirt-mountains" on the other two matrices, and these give their full quota of dyes, magenta and yellow, to the shirt area. Holding our final print up to the light, we see the original red shirt in its original red color because the magenta and the yellow, dyes stop the other two primary colors, green and blue, respectively.

The other colors will develop their natural tones through the same general process, and our technicolor film is ready for projection.

## College Theater and Cinema

DR. KURT VON WEISLINGEN \*

The influence of the motion pictures on college and university dramatics during the past ten years has been far deeper and more widespread than it appears to be at first glance. Most of us who have worked in the university theatres have wondered at the decline of the audiences at our performances, but this decline is readily understood when we examine the situation more closely. It is true that the motion pictures have taken away our audiences, but on the other hand, we must investigate this change and see whether the Universities have done anything to meet the situation.

The most significant change in the dramatics of the college or university has come about in its function. When the universities first began presenting plays they had a definite place in the community. They afforded the opportunity of seeing the non-profitable, or non-commercial plays which by virtue of their literary merit were worthy of presentation, but failed to find a satisfactory producer.

What was the cause of the decline of the college theatre? I believe the whole point lay in the attitude of the public, insofar as it was asked to pay admission to see these plays. The public rightly felt that it had some say about the nature and the manner in which the plays were presented. One might say it is not the function of the university to train actors, screen, stage or otherwise, and to compete with professionals, but that the function of the university is to train students in character understanding through vicarious experience. Why should the college foster these productions and put them on and charge admission to them? Throughout much of the early period there was a lack of trained directors as well as the lack of imagination in not realizing that the production clinched or completed the point they were attempting to put over—character training in students. For a long time the public felt that all this was for a good cause and they endured it. The character forming elements in these University plays were ideal in one sense, but if the director makes this alone his particular aim, he does not have a play.

In contrast, the films have the advantages of all the best material and although they are not perfect by any means, the same can be said of plays. The whole attitude of the people has changed. They demand better plays, cleaner-cut action, and better scenery.

Another all-important point is that when you go to a motion picture you see perhaps a lot of "claptrap" in the form of short subjects and the like, but you do not have any intermissions during which there is a lot of thumping on the stage while the scenery is being changed. There are never any waits.

The shift from the stage to the films was slow to start but it is now definitely holding the audiences. What are the college theatres doing about it? They accept the fact that the improvement of the motion picture in the last six or seven years has

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\*Professor of the University of Southern California. This article was presented as a speech at the summer meeting of the Cinema Appreciation League.



been so great that they do not look down on them, but rather copy them, just as the films were copied from the Little Theatres in the beginning. The college theatre has something of vital importance which no film can have, and that is the social contacts produced by college and community dramatics. The whole life of the Little Theatre groups depends upon that socializing factor. People go to the University theatres for this reason. It gives them a sense of belonging and pride, and how powerful this emotion is, sociologists know. No matter how many effects the films may get through their unlimited resources, they can never have the personal contact that the college theatre offers. This social aspect is very important in college dramatics. They do not overdo it, but the audience feels as if it is part of the community, that it is *their* school, and they *want* to support it.

Some of the means which college theatres are using to combat lack of attendance is the cutting and adapting of scripts for the plays. You cannot do old plays in the original manner. They must be lifted out of the literal, musty, book-shelf interpretation. There is a great difference between the production and the reading of a classic play. Some cuts are perhaps too bold, and others not bold enough, but that is the first thing the director must do to adapt the plays to bring them down to the more concise dialogue of our time.

We now blend some of our scenes. There is no reason why this should not be done and it cuts the time necessary for changing scenes.

We now have in most college theatres only one intermission during the play. The intermission should be long enough so that you have the parents and students meet in a social gathering. If the intermission is broken up into short periods throughout the performance you lose the continuity of the play and the mood is broken. But changes of scene there must be. Everything cannot be played in two scenes, the production must be well planned. These things the films with their variety are forcing the college theatre to do.

Then there is the choice of the play material to consider. There is a great change in the choice of plays done in university theatres in the last ten years. They are far more contemporary than they ever were. Frequently they do go back to the old plays. They are good for classroom study and to demonstrate the methods of production used, but for the most part their value remains in the classroom. We choose plays that are more contemporary, dealing with current situations. However, it does not mean that all the classics should be forgotten and shelved. Nazimova in the recent revival of "Ghosts" gave a new approach to the play, giving it a contemporary interpretation. Many of Shakespeare's plays deal with current situations in that they deal with basic emotions as alive today as they were when they were written. So we take these plays and adapt them and combine their scenes and give them new life.

This new approach, and the new plays have brought about a change in the type of students we have in the drama. We used to have about three types of students: first, those who were really sincere and interested in drama as their life work; second, those who took part in the plays for a pastime; and third, those who had mild cases

of exhibitionism. The last two are dropping away and we have a new, more sincere type of student who understands the character he is trying to portray, and he then understands drama in its truest sense.

We come to another point with reference to the motion picture—the change in scene. The Little Theatre certainly has been the start of all our contemporary stagecraft, but it was slow in getting a foothold. Very seldom if ever, in a film do you see a picture where the scene of action does not change. “The Petrified Forest” and “Double Door” are two exceptions where most of the action took place in one locality. On the whole, the films have unlimited chances for variety in scenery, which you cannot do on the stage. How then, give the audience variety and yet keep down the playing time? Directors must use their imagination a little more. Motion pictures can represent, but the stage can only suggest. The director must study the play and adapt these situations to his needs. The easiest way to do a play is to do it realistically, but to make the scene changes with no intermission, and to make each scene convincing is something different.

A further point of interest is the noticeable change in the tempo of the plays. The very nature of the films has created a sort of rapid speech considerably different from our ordinary speech. In order to adapt this change to another medium, the actor needs to do a great deal of intensive work, and there he is put on his mettle. So we change our dialogue. It is now more rapid and clean-cut, and we have smoother, better productions. No longer are our plays mere reciting of lines, the work is more polished, keen in its insight into contemporary manners.

You have much more alert work on the part of the students in university dramatics, as well as a more intensive type of work.

We should remember that it is not the function of the university to train the actor commercially, but to point the way by the judicious selection of plays and intense study of character, so the student will learn to understand life in its many phases. No matter what he wants to do after graduation he will be the better for having learned how to cope with current situations which we find in contemporary plays, hence the value of studying the truly living drama. It is true that the time has come when we have to take cognizance of those facts. If the talent is there, the stage or the pictures will find it. College drama is a sort of spring board for it.

In conclusion, I will mention a few of the general results. We have much more experimentation in our college theatres. We do new types of plays. Plays that are unsuited to the films can be done in the university theatres. Little Theatre audiences are more limited, while the audience for films is national and even international. The college and university theatre is now making use of new, untried plays. They do plays by new writers so that no one can standardize their method of doing them. This tasks the ingenuity of the director as well as the actors. Looking through theatre magazines you may see the development in the choice of plays, the manner of production, the settings, and the type of characterization. There is a very apparent change. When we show that we are not competing with the motion picture, but running parallel with it, our audience problem is solved.

The university and college theatre still teaches but does not preach. I think in summing up the entire matter, it is the old problem of stimulating interest in the dramatic field in general and giving an opportunity for valuable vicarious experiences which permit youth to enter mentally and spiritually into situations that try its strength.

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### New Impetus To Visual Education

MISS LORAINÉ NOBLE \*

Miss Noble is a member of the American Film Institute of the American Council on Education. This group is financed by the general education board of the United States Office of Education.

Last year this group listed over 6000 so-called educational films. All of these were made in last ten years. There were over 2500 sources of these films. The next task is to evaluate them for they are not all good. One little High School near New York used 500 free educational films last year alone. These have been evaluated by teachers and the material sent to other schools.

The projectors are still too expensive for many schools. In the entire United States there are only 10,000 projectors available for this purpose. There are 3000 silent 16 mm. projectors, 300 sound 16 mm. projectors, some 200 sound projectors in universities and 200 more in C.C.C. camps.

The National Congress of Parent-Teacher Associations agreed to band together with the Progressive Education Association, the American Council of the United States Office of Education and two other organizations for the exploitation of projectors. They have managed to get the price down to \$250 on wholesale purchases. The Electric Farm and Home Bureau are hoping to finance these on the installment plan, with \$8 down and \$8 a month; which might be raised by charging admission unless school has restriction upon the number of pay programs a year. The Parent-Teachers don't want to use this makeshift method but the school-boards are very slow in being converted. We need 10,000 new machines next year.

The intense interest of the major industry is encouraging. Probably stimulated by the foreign films that were being imported and the competition of the independent companies. One major company is entering into the major field next week with the announcement of all film it makes to be available in 16 mm. as well as 35 mm. They will charge \$1 a reel for shorts and \$10 for a feature.

The Teachers College at Columbia compiled a bibliography of over 5000 items on visual education. This will be published in ten volumes, three of which are already completed.

The American Film Institute hopes to incorporate. Its five objectives are:

1. The Collection and distribution of motion pictures in education.

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\*This article is a digest of the remarks made by Miss Noble at the summer meeting of the Cinema Appreciation League.



2. To stimulate the use of motion pictures in education.
3. To promote the cooperation of the motion picture industry.
4. To promote research in visual education.
5. To develop a national appreciation of the potential contribution of motion pictures to American life.

Tests show that group of children trained for three months by motion pictures retained 95% of material after two weeks and 65-70% after a year. A like group taught the same material the usual way remembered 70-80 for two weeks and 25% at end of year! The possibilities are enormous.

The largest problem of visual education is the distribution of film. The industry itself has a net-work which handles over 28,000 miles of film per day! There are 28 universities libraries in existence already and four state libraries for film. State wide-coordination of services is desirable. Things could then be ordered in wholesale lots. Films should go into teachers colleges first of all. Only 10% of the teachers in the United States have ever seen an educational film—much less know how to use them. The National Education Association is going to show film after this whenever a few teachers gather together.

The motion pictures are the greatest medium of education in the world.

The problem of competition of schools with neighborhood theatres naturally arises. If the pictures are run during the afternoon when the children are normally in school it isn't so bad. In one school in Ohio two cents was charged for a noon-day picture and over \$1000 was made in one year! The school appears to be going into the theatre business. The local theatre might as well cooperate for it will come out of their pocket anyhow. The line of demarkation between educational and entertainment films is hard to make. Same situation arose with legitimate stage and the high school drama productions but it died a natural death.

Many such excellent films as "Pasteur" are destroyed because of lack of money-making on reshowing. Their education value would be great. They would get a better price from schools than from third run houses. The government has copyrighted over 50,000 films since 1911 and haven't kept one! In fact they haven't even a projector. And yet by law they are entitled to keep a copy! The loss to the future is enormous. The American Society of Archives is now attempting to remedy this. If they continue to develop in this line the motion picture industry may let the National Archives keep their films in future.

There is another field for motion pictures in the copying of books and documents to be stored in the Archives files. A new line of work.

A listing of films for educational use may be obtained from the H. W. Wilson Co. of New York, called "Educational Film Catalogue." They have listed 1100 and it is used on a supplement basis. They are given Dewey numbers the same as library books.

## Appreciation in the Social Studies Classroom

EDITH BOWLES FROST \*

The commercial motion picture can be used successfully to vitalize and to make real the pages of fiction or history and to promote a better understanding of the present through a more complete knowledge of the past. Because you are a cinema-minded group it is sufficient merely to mention in passing such thrilling pictures as M-G-M's "Tale of Two Cities" and the more recent pictures "Nine Days A Queen," a fitting sequel for "Henry VIII," "Mary of Scotland," "Last of the Mohicans,"—incidentally eleven months of intensive research was spent before that picture went into production to insure the accuracy of its historical detail—"Gorgeous Hussey" and "Ramona."

Interest in the commercial picture leads individual research to check the authenticity of stage properties, sets, and costumes as well as correct diction for the period pictured. It gives renewed interest to biographical study. It may even inspire a class to write their own script, do the necessary research, and in lieu of actually filming a picture, draw the stage properties and costumes. A committee from the class may be delegated to suggest appropriate music of the period to go with it. This provides not only a living experience in the past for the class, but also it affords them the opportunity for creative work along the line of their special talents

By a study of the motives actuating the characters, a teacher may motivate right attitudes and so promote good citizenship.

A picture which I think all social studies teachers should acquaint themselves with is "The Plow That Broke The Plains," made by Pare Lorentz at the suggestion of Rex Tugwell to visualize for congress the need for resettlement work in the great plain area of our country. Quoting from a radio review given by Colin D. Shanks, Executive Assistant to the Regional Director, Region Nine, Berkeley, California, as follows:

"In the beginning you see the great plains, the virgin land of the frontier days—a limitless expanse of rolling country awaiting the coming of the pioneer. The pioneer comes and goes, followed by the cattlemen whose great herds grow fat and sleek on the rich grasses that once fed the buffalo. Homesteaders begin to plow the soil; small homesteads expand into seemingly boundless wheat farms. A land of plenty is the great plains area in this chapter of its history.

"With dramatic suddenness the tempo changes. A newspaper press is seen grinding out extras. Headlines flash. 'War Declared.' 'Wheat Prices Soar.' To the prairies come the machines. Large scale farming such as the world has never before witnessed brings bumper crops. Two dollar wheat!

"Again the scene changes. You see a stock ticker with its long ribbon of tape. You wait for some one to appear, but no one does. Instead the ticker suddenly crashes

\*Teacher Social Studies, Eagle Rock High School, Eagle Rock, California.

to the floor, a broken mass of glass and metal." We, in motion picture appreciation classes teach our students to recognize different types of shots and to be aware of symbolism. I know of no better example than in this scene.

Thus this picture provides a pictorial history of the land and its settlers, material for a more technical appreciation of motion pictures, and excellent subject matter for courses in consumer education. For during this period land has been selling at high prices, stimulated by sales campaigns in which promises were as plentiful, and as worthless, as the chaff from the wheat. "Your down payment buys the land!" "Pay for the land with your first crop," shriek the posters. So is born the war-time Westward-Ho! In '49 it was gold. Now it is wheat, but the wheat is as good as the gold. You could reassure yourself by reading the market quotations.

The wind rises in an ominous whine, sweeping across the barren fields. A handful of dust rises in an eddy that suddenly blends with a dark cloud. You are watching the beginning of a dust storm, a black blizzard. Homesteaders scurry for their homes. Cattle and horses race madly across the prairie seeking sanctuary, but there is no sanctuary. Tomorrow the blowing top-soil will have filled the water holes. The remaining feed will have disappeared beneath the drifting dust.

"Now you are standing in the abandoned house of a homesteader—one of the victims, perhaps, of high pressure salesmanship. Dust is sifting through broken window panes and drifting in dismal heaps upon the floor. Out-of-doors again, a farmer gazes despairingly at the sky, knowing that he will see no rain cloud on the horizon. Only dust clouds!

"The last sequences of the film show how man, who with the help of the drought, has ruined wide stretches of the productive great plains is now undertaking with the aid of his scientific knowledge to undo the wrongs he has committed in his war-time frenzy for wealth."

This picture is a decided departure from the usual motion picture story technique in that the usual commercial film dramatizes the problems of one or several persons against a background of natural phenomenon, thus developing the so-called "star system." But in the "Plow That Broke The Plains" the land itself is dramatized with the human characters acting as background. So superb is the photography, so perfect are the musical scores, this story of the land becomes an emotional drama of people against the land.

Perhaps the greatest contribution that either the commercial or educational film can give the social studies classroom is the realization that history is the story of people and that life is no different in its essential qualities throughout history.



## The Teaching Film

FRED ORTH \*

In the modernization of education, the motion picture has become our newest tool in the art of expression, and it offers the most complete and swiftest tool yet devised by man. Recent scientific investigations indicate that we not only learn more rapidly from motion pictures, but retain the information longer. Impressions gained are lasting and sometimes increase with time. The motion picture offers an exposition that is so full and so complete that one remembers it without any conscious effort to do so. We have reason to believe that because of its seeming reality, the successful teaching film not only makes an excellent substitute for the demonstration, but in some instances might even surpass it.

It is not the purpose here to underemphasize the distinct value of books. We must, however, have the short-cut of books in the form of motion pictures which will make it possible for our students and teachers to acquire in a few hours or days what it has taken years or a whole life-time to learn. The motion picture can do this vividly. Millions of words would be required to do the same.

Visual education departments and administrators are producing films which give pictorial representation of activities from their points of inception to their completed forms. Such contributions are made available for all grade levels from kindergarten to high school. These films, some of which are in full natural color, present in fifteen minutes much of the actual work of the pupils over a period of weeks, showing natural correlation and integration of all subjects of study involved.

Each film is supplemented with an outline and a descriptive narrative; in some instances with "stills," slides and objects of construction for analytical purposes. A listing of a number of these films appeared in the last issue of *Cinema Progress*.

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\*Faculty, University of Southern California, Department of Cinematography.

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## Palo Alto Experiment

An interesting experiment in motion picture appreciation for Grades 7 to 12 was conducted at Palo Alto during the past school year. The experiment was planned to teach standards for judging motion pictures, definite criteria for such, and thereby improving tastes. All of the students were expected to attend during school time seven selected motion pictures, with an interval between pictures of at least one month. A summary of the results of this experiment, which is to be tried again this year, showed the teachers, as well as the students, overwhelming in favor of the movies both as educational aids for social studies, English, science, arts, physical education, and commercial subjects, and the teaching of better standards of judging.

## The Social Studies Consumer and Motion Pictures

MARGORIE DOWLING BROWN \*

"'The Last of the Mohicans' was sure a keen picture!" remarked fifteen-year-old Henry as he entered the classroom Monday morning. "It had thrills!"

"Did you see it Saturday?" I asked. An affirmative nod encouraged me. "How did you happen to see the picture?"

"Oh, I had fifteen cents and nothing to do and that was the picture at the theater I was near."

"Are you ever disappointed when you go to a show that way?" I continued.

"Sure, they can't all be good!"

"Have you ever tried to shop for your movies in the same way that you might shop for a bicycle?"

"You mean read the reviews of pictures in magazines?" As I nodded, he exploded. "They don't know what we like! Those pictures aren't even exciting. I'd never go to any of those!"

By this time the bell had rung so the discussion continued with the entire class. With a brief explanation of our personal conversation I asked the class if they considered the reviewers at fault or the individual's taste. This launched us off on a lengthy discussion of taste, choice, judgment, privileges, and duties in a democracy, and even problems concerning criminals and juvenile cases.

Again, I realized that here was another new group of young people who resented and questioned a selected list of anything; not because it might be propaganda, but because they were skeptical of adult control. This meant reversing the order of things. Instead of learning to select pictures first we began analyzing pictures seen with a view to developing critical attitudes, both positive and negative. This, it was hoped, would improve cultural and social tastes.

Motion pictures play an important part in the lives and experiences of our high school boys and girls. Ninety million tickets are sold weekly to the people of the United States. A large share of these are sold to boys and girls. Invariably young people say they attend, at least, two pictures a week. Then, shouldn't we, as teachers, utilize this vast power or medium for growth and advancement toward a thinking, cultured, and discriminating personality?

This is done through separate units of study or correlated with various fields of subject matter. In social studies the emphasis is on the development of good citizens. This is being carried out through class and individual activities, problem solving, and

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\*Social Studies, English Teacher, Garfield High School, Los Angeles, Calif.; Critic Teacher, U. S. C., Summer, 1936.

real or vicarious experiences. The results desired are socially efficient citizens who will assume responsibility, be able to think independently and clearly, have a keen sense of right and wrong, to know how to select, to judge, and to use knowledge and skills, and to have a sympathetic regard for the rights of others.

It is a truism that man learns to do by doing—to investigate, imitate and create. The motion picture offers the individual an opportunity to carry out these three things if he is first oriented in the classroom and allowed to carry back his thoughts, emotions, and creative ability into the classroom.

Take for example a picture we all remember, "The Covered Wagon." Here was history that we could live mentally and emotionally. Here were concrete experiences of the pioneers amid adverse surroundings; man fought and suffered for great ideals; true living conditions and great stretches of country were revealed. Isn't this history and geography and economics? History deals with the experiences and activities of man; geographic and economic conditions largely regulate and control his activities. And one of the greatest values of social studies is an appreciation of the social forces operating in human life. It is in such a picture that we were led to see, to feel, and to think deeply.

Then how can the consumer be brought into action in the classroom and at the movie? A free reading period (the consumer is helped to select his reading wisely and intelligently) is used more freely. Books dealing with forthcoming films are urged for the movie-minded pupil. They may be history, biography, literature, or drama. Small index cards are given him for recording realistic scenes or action, details of furniture, dress, language, manners, effect of music in creating atmosphere, types of shots, and artistry, movie reviews are encouraged instead of book reports. A personal evaluation is encouraged, class report on discussion, and creative work in the form of critical analysis.

Especially valuable have been historical and literary pictures such as "Romeo and Juliet," "Mary of Scotland," "The Charge of the Light Brigade," "The Bard of Avon," and "The Life of Louis Pasteur." They pass the tests for suggested readings, discussions before seeing the picture, what to look for while at the movie, evaluations after seeing the picture and testing the appreciations and attitudes of the consumer.

The purpose of any film is to create an illusion of reality in the mind of the spectator. If the consumer can be encouraged to shop, and buy more intelligently as a result of his cultural development the illusion of reality will become reality. What he will choose and appreciate is largely a habit bred of environment.



## Cinema Appreciation League Meeting

The expressions of enthusiasm and interest shown at the first membership meeting of the Cinema Appreciation League on Monday evening, October 12, in Science Hall at the University of Southern California presaged well for the success of the activities which the league has planned for the ensuing year. The general thought expressed was that intimate membership meetings are the core of the organization both in enthusiasm, in friendship, in contribution to research and progress in methods of teaching, the studying of motion picture appreciation, motion picture production, and every phase of motion picture activity. The fact was stressed that cooperation is greatly needed, not only in thought but in activity.

The plans for the work to be done in the research groups were outlined. Each of the phases of motion picture appreciation is to be worked upon by a research group with a chairman, a secretary, and three assistants. The research findings of each group will be given to the members through the monthly membership meetings. Through the establishment of a library of the research findings in the Department of Cinematography, Old College 120, University of Southern California, it is hoped that the League will be able to furnish all members with the materials they need and desire in order to carry on their work.

Dr. William Campbell, from the University of Southern California, acted as chairman at the meeting. His experience in the field of teaching motion picture appreciation has made him keenly aware of the problems confronting teachers. His contagious enthusiasm for the subject was a stimulus to everyone at the meeting. In introducing Dr. Helen Miller Bailey from Manual Arts High School who was the first speaker on the program, Dr. Campbell emphasized the fact that the talks which were to follow were based on the practical every day experiences and that they would be of value to teachers in their everyday experiences.

Travel-minded Dr. Bailey who has done many interesting things to enhance her own background has contributed markedly to the development of motion picture appreciation among the students at Manual Arts High School in Los Angeles. She made her talk practical by showing a film which her students had made. Don Richardson, John Schmieter, Shizemi Mazawa, and Richard Irwin, from her classes gave the procedure which was followed in making the film "Cycling Through France." In an enthusiastic way the boys outlined the work that was carried on by each department as they were divided for the production of the picture. It was felt that the boys had enjoyed a worthwhile experience which had far reaching outcomes. The questions that their reports evoked showed an intense interest on the part of the audience.

The next speaker was Mrs. Marjorie Dowling Brown from Garfield High School who spoke on "Appreciation of Commercial Motion Pictures as a Phase of Social Studies." The success with which Mrs. Brown has conducted her classes in social studies places her in a position to express ably her ideas in this field. Mrs. Brown expressed the fact that it was necessary to create interest in the commercial motion

picture and to learn why it is well to select them carefully with some purpose in view. Thus the patron will be able to discuss the pictures with some intelligence after seeing them. She gave plans for developing these points through general discussion and later through committees working on definite details or interests. Mrs. Brown feels that if pupils can be taught to use the knowledge they should be acquiring in school, and if pictures have high morals and good technique, the motion pictures can be made not an illusion of reality but a reality.

The last speaker of the evening, Miss Edith Bowles Frost, from Eagle Rock High School where she has done outstanding work in the teaching of motion picture appreciation, gave some practical ideas in the procedures for teaching motion picture appreciation. To illustrate her procedures, Miss Frost reviewed several current pictures selecting the points which she stressed in her classes.

The success of the meeting may be attributed to the careful preparation and organization of Miss Florence Sprenger, a pioneer in the teaching of motion picture appreciation. Miss Sprenger divided the audience into groups according to their major interests. She discussed with them plans for the work to be done by the research group during the ensuing year.

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### New York University

Dr. Frederic M. Thrasher, Associate Professor of Education of New York University offers a course in the Motion Picture: Its Artistic, Educational, and Social Aspects. The course includes open forums and lectures, presentation of documentary and other films in cooperation with the National Board of Review of Motion Pictures.

# Teacher Preparation In Visual Education

By FANNIE W. DUNN AND ETTA SCHNEIDER,  
Teacher's College, Columbia University

Just off the press is the second of a series of digests on a summary of literature in the field of Visual Education relating to teacher preparation for the use of visual aids. Articles by eminent educators, some of them pioneers in the field of visual education have given us valid answers to basic questions in the minds of administrators for the preparation of teachers. This contribution deals with topics such as:

1. The need for teacher preparation in visual education.
2. The trends in teacher preparation for the use of visual aids.
3. Training of teachers in service in the use of visual aids.
4. Desirable scope of instruction in the use of visual aids.
5. The direct vs. the incidental method of instruction for the use of visual aids.
6. The scope of instruction in courses in visual education.

Like the first of this series of digests, "The Administration of Visual Aids" this publication will prove to be a distinct contribution to all who are interested in furthering the use of visual instruction.

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## Moviemakers

JOHN J. FLOHERTY

"The motion picture theater is more than a place of mere entertainment. It has become a unit of a great university that is forever disseminating knowledge, for here on the screen which might be considered an animated blackboard, we have presented literature, history, geography, science, art, while we become familiar with the customs and manners of the peoples of the earth. This is true education, for as someone has said, 'Meeting the world is the best step toward understanding it.'" Thus John J. Floherty concludes his book on the making of the movies which is a selection of the Junior Literary Guild.

Mr. Floherty has written simply and with facility. His book is filled with effective and pertinent photographs. The book is not only artistically beautiful, but it is also clearly-organized and presented in a concise, logical manner, so that one is immediately enthusiastic about this breath-taking industry.

The wonderland that exists only in the make-believe realm of Hollywood is explained with careful attention to all details. He begins with a short history of the movies and then takes us to the motion picture "lot" where art and industry are completely mixed. We are shown how sets are made, how every detail of costume and property is perfected and authentic as to period, how sound is recorded and camera shots are taken. Each department: production, story, research, casting, make-up, and distribution is a part of this gigantic industry—each is a fascinating procedure.





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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

To RICHARD BOLESLAWSKY

### EDITORIAL

Progress—Where To? .....	3
--------------------------	---

### LIFE AND THE CINEMA

The Motion Picture in World Affairs .....	5
Japan Educates with Films .....	7
The Library Cooperates .....	9

### THE CINEMA, ART, TECHNIQUE, AND INDUSTRY

Four Star Scripts .....	11
Rhythm in the Film .....	12
Music for the Films .....	14
Creating the Illusion with Sets .....	15
Animate Light .....	17
The Rose, Queen of Flowers .....	18

### THE SCHOOL AND THE CINEMA

What Are your Problems? .....	20
The Function of an Educational Film .....	22
Motion Pictures in the New Education .....	24
Cinema Appreciation in High School Life.....	26
A High-School Movie Project .....	27
Learning by Doing .....	28
Appreciation Problems Answered .....	29
Cinema Appreciation Forums .....	30

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## In Memoriam to Richard Boleslawsky

His vision of the new art robustly developing from the shackles of commercialism, summoned to become the powerful projection and permanent record of the dramatic genius of the nation and the nations, has inspired us from the very beginning of his strenuous and thorny career in Hollywood. While still unknown and unappreciated in the American cinema he first came to our classes in Cinematography with his enthusiastic message. He remained true to this friendship to the end. In his work in the studio, to which he gave the last drop of blood from his great heart, he taught us how to embody what he visioned.

He encouraged us in the publishing of our magazine, CINEMA PROGRESS, in which we try to impart to the growing generation of future workers in motion pictures and to the new motion-picture-conscious audience, his and our belief in the artistic future and the great social function of the cinema. His sympathy and support have given us the unswerving determination to maintain our effort, and to be true to his ideals.

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## Progress—Where to?

Some educators and parents look with alarm at the frequent movie attendance by the young people. A child exposed to so many exciting experiences loses his sense of normal everyday values; the routine and obligations of family and school life become uninteresting and tedious to him; by and by he develops an insatiable desire for continuous fun, good time and thrills. Steeped in an unreal world of false values and expectations, movie-struck children easily become unbalanced and maladjusted and finish with nervous breakdown and delinquency. The general atmosphere of big city life with the downfall of conventions, traditions and moral code, coupled with the gloomy perspective of unemployment, greatly contribute to the growing social unrest in the young generation.

A conclusion might be drawn from this, that motion pictures are purely a negative factor in the life of young people. But is this conclusion right?

Being a part and parcel of modern life, motion pictures reflect both aspects—the tendency of social decay, and social regeneration; and it depends a good deal upon the competent social effort of the very persons who see the danger which pictures of the first type may have on youth to counteract the influence of these pictures and to encourage the production of the second type of pictures. They may do this by building up public opinion in favor of a desirable rather than an undesirable type of pictures. The movie problem cannot be solved by coercion and prohibition, which have proved to be ineffective in America, and by the censorship which cannot eliminate insipid inferences and instill positive values and vital spirit into the banality of some films. Therefore the way out lies in the “cultural activism” of educators, parents and civic leaders. With the large motion-picture-conscious audience behind them, they can neutralize the box-office promptings of sensation hunters, by an insistent demand for a higher type of pictures.

Instead of an attempt to isolate youth from the problems pounding into their consciousness in every step of life, from the newspaper, radio, motion picture, etc., cultural leaders should give youth a mental “serum” to protect them from destructive interpretation of these problems and their wrong solutions offered by the morally and mentally decaying elements of our society. Confronted with the complexities and contradictions current in motion pictures, young people will not be lost or easily misled if they are armed with “inner censorship,” growing out of a right and effective criterion of judgment of pictures. Guided and assisted by their teachers and parents with whom they will discuss films, young people will be able to discount the untruth and sham in pictures, to discriminate between them and finally to develop their own taste—the youth’s best protection.

The criterion for judgment and selection of motion pictures thus becomes one of the most important problems in teaching discrimination. Several articles will be published in later issues of CINEMA PROGRESS on the subject. Here we can establish only the main principles of such a criterion. The dogmatic, mechanical formulae cannot guide youth in problems of life and art and help them to grow into a flexible, imaginative and vigorous generation, capable of meeting the crucial problems



of the changing civilization. It is the right progressive attitude, the effective method of approach which is important; once established, it will be possible to use them as a guide in discussion of concrete pictures and their specific problems and to inculcate them in the mind of the youth.

In order to be a work of art and cinematic technique, themes of pictures should be sufficiently broad and yet vital; they should be expressed rather indirectly and implicitly. The preaching of propaganda of any dogmatic doctrine in pictures not only destroys their artistic qualities but is abhorred by the modern generation, just as the venerable educational system of "forbidding and ordering," or dry-bone rehashing of text-book. Therefore the basic requirement of the criterion of judgment of a picture should be a constructive emotional stimulation, *i.e.*, the stimulation which aesthetically leads to some constructive or significant idea, which reveals a new aspect of life and contributes to the broader outlook and building of character. It should not be at war with socializing elements of modern education; it should help the youth to tune in with *real progress* which demands from every member of our great nation a sense of responsibility, self-discipline and effort toward self-improvement and improvement of environment.

Real progress invisibly grows and moves in the mind of mankind in spite of all cross currents, relapses and stagnant pools into which sometimes life is diverted; it is directed to a closer unity and understanding of the people and peoples; to more widely spread participation of everyone in social, economic and cultural life of the nation.

Along with radio and television, the cinema is the newest and most marvelous tool of mental communication humanity has acquired, and as such can bring about the sympathetic understanding and communion of the nation and nations.

The ability of the cinema to record facts with utmost scientific precision and at the same time to transmit values, to focus them sharply and instill them with great emotional intensity; its power to unify and cohere the masses into one common vision makes this instrument of mental control and its mastery indispensable to modern cultural leaders. This mastery is necessary for vitalization of education as a classroom aid, and for the sake of influencing commercial motion pictures through the leadership of a motion-picture-conscious audience.

The so-called "motion picture appreciation" movement will grow, and will become a socially constructive and practical movement, only:

1. If it is guided in its standards of appreciation by social idealism;
2. If it is experimental; if educators teach the youth appreciation *by doing*.

The effective use of the 16mm. camera and projector, the writing and shooting of small scenarios about school activities, about subjects of study, with topics from fiction and actuality, is not more difficult than driving an automobile or learning shorthand and typing. The enthusiasm of the young generation and their gratitude to the educators for giving them a new mental equipment which helps their adjustments to the new world they are going to live in and enlarges their technique and potential scope of social control, will be the reward for this work.

## The Motion Picture in World Affairs

By ADAMANTIOS TH. POLYZOIDES \*

The motion picture has entered practically every field in the active and restless life of our times. But nowhere has the importance of the motion picture camera been more evident, and more conclusive, than in the study of world conditions and world affairs.

The study of geography and history is being revolutionized by the motion picture. The silver screen conveys to us a better, clearer, and more comprehensive idea of the world and its inhabitants, to say nothing of their activities. And people who are too busy or too lazy to follow world affairs in newspapers, magazines and books, have to have them at the local movie, where the ubiquitous newsreel brings them week after week, and sometimes oftener.

There was a time, and not very distant at that, when world events were usually distorted at the hands of the clever, and occasionally not very scrupulous propagandist. This danger although not entirely eliminated, has been considerably reduced since the advent of the motion picture.

Motion picture photography in the hands of able, honest, and sincere seekers after the truth, has become the greatest helper and ally, to the student, historian, and journalist. But the greatest benefit is bestowed on the general public, that gets much more from the picture than out of books and newspapers.

One of the most recent examples of the motion picture changing our entire viewpoint in connection with a great world event, was at the time when world opinion was carried away by an extreme admiration for the Ethiopian people, their valor, and their devotion to their independence. Quite independently from the merits of the case, world public opinion had made an ideal and imaginary picture of the Ethiopian nation, and the picture was far removed from accurate reality. It was a case of the Ethiopians capturing the imagination of the civilized world as the victims of unprecedented aggression.

Then some impartial and disinterested observers, armed with their motion picture cameras went to Ethiopia, and began to take views and scenes and other details of the life of the people, their methods of warfare, and their general characteristics.

It may be said without fear of contradiction that from the moment those pictures were thrown on the screen, Ethiopia morally lost the war. Public opinion the world over did not go against Ethiopia, or for Italy. But it got a truer and clearer perspective of the whole issue, and the result was a general change of the entire outlook of African affairs.

In the more recent Spanish tragedy, there can be no doubt, that world public opinion became decidedly more inclined to peace by the object lesson of the horrors of the civil war as projected by motion picture.

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These notes refer chiefly to actualities, but there is another almost untouched field

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in world affairs, that is only now engaging the most serious attempts of the historian and student. This is in connection with the picturization of some of the greatest historical events of the past. We have had some of these pictures in connection with our American history, but for a complete treatment of historical subjects we have to turn to Germany where a most important work is carried on with minute detail, and yet with sufficient dramatic approach, to take away the dullness from a strictly dry and factual narrative. Those who have seen the fine motion pictures of "Queen Louise of Prussia" and of "General Yorck" can very well appreciate the excellence of those productions combining historic accuracy, educational features and recreational values of the highest order.

France is certainly going ahead with the epic of her Great Revolution, and Italy has just amazed the motion picture world by that colossal picturization of the Punic Wars, which is a reminder of the immortal Roman glories of the past and also an incentive for the training of the Italian mind along the lines of Empire.

Biographies of great men and their reaction to the events of their times, have been rather common and very popular everywhere, and their value has this much in addition to other advantages that pictures of this type never grow old. The life of Disraeli, or the Duke of Wellington, and to point to a single outstanding feature in another field but politics, the Life of Louis Pasteur certainly prove conclusively what the motion picture can do to revive and to perpetuate the memories of the great men and their great deeds in the forward march of our civilization.

The motion picture in world affairs is rapidly gaining in importance and in usefulness. And the time is not distant when this type of motion picture will be indispensable in every school room, and in every well stocked motion picture library. This latter expression may sound a bit strange at this moment. But it is the guess of this writer that the time is not distant when the motion picture will enter the home to stay, alongside the book case and the radio.

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## A Film Library for Southern California

By B. J. L.

An educational film library for Southern California, stocked with more than 5,000 sixteen millimeter films for use in schools will be established in Los Angeles by the University of California. The library will be equipped to meet the steadily increasing demand by Southern California schools for educational films, states Boyd S. Rakestraw, assistant director of the University of California Extension Division, on behalf of Leon J. Richardson, director.

An initial expenditure of twenty-seven thousand dollars to stock the library with the educational films has been approved by the University; offices for the library have been established at the University of California Extension Division at 815 South Hill Street, Los Angeles, California, where all bookings and shippings will be handled. The library will be as large or larger than the one now on the Berkeley campus of the University of California. The library will be ready for bookings by March 1.



## Japan Educates with Films

By P. D. PERKINS \*

Of all countries, perhaps none is more film or camera minded than Japan. Small country villages each have their motion picture theatre. In the cities there is usually a Theatre Street such as Shin Kyogoku in Kyoto, Shinkaichi in Kobe, besides the smaller movie houses to be found near each shopping district. Sundays and holidays find the average family on its outing and usually father or elder brother carries a camera of the latest model with imported lens and range finder. The Japanese are indeed film conscious.

In the theatres, comfort has not been the primary interest and except in a few of the most modern houses, the seats and surroundings leave much to be desired. However, the admission fee is low and the usual program is twice as long as that of an American theatre. In the larger cities foreign films are shown—French, German and American, and of these the average theatregoer seems to prefer German to American films. However, the number of foreign films shown in comparison with Japanese productions is negligible.

Most Japanese films are produced either in Tokyo or Kyoto and most of the larger producers maintain two studios—one in Tokyo for modern pictures and one in Kyoto for historical pictures.

Generally speaking, most of the educational films to be used within the Empire are produced by the Department of Education. Companies such as Okamoto of Tokyo produce and rent films but the Mombusho films are sold. These vary in length from 200 to 1000 meters and are supplied on payment of the rental fee, but no charge for packing or transportation is made. The cost of a film varies depending upon the length. The name, text and price of each new film produced by the Department of Education is announced in the Official Gazette which is issued every day.

Films concerning the Imperial Family are limited to government offices, schools, libraries, museums, public institutions, newspaper and magazine offices and these cannot be shown for profit or may not be sublet.

A list of the general subjects might be of interest in indicating both the topics which the Educational Department wishes to emphasize and those it considers suitable for such methods of teaching: The Imperial Family, Sports and Athletics, Education in National Consciousness, Health and Sanitation, Geography of Japan, Noted Places of Japan, Famous Events, Japanese Industries, Popular Science.

These general classifications include such titles as "In Memory of Admiral Togo," "Athletics for Women," "The Common Fly and its Dangers," "The Care of Babies," "Etiquette," "The Nippon Alps," "The River Sumida," "Visiting Tokyo in an Airship," "Our Steel Industry," "Professions for Women," "The Biology of the Sea," "The Boy and His Father."

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The Okamoto company of Tokyo seems to be exceedingly aggressive in producing educational films and these are rented instead of being sold. The usual rental is one yen per reel per day, though a higher fee may be charged for special pictures or the newest production. The Tokyo Nichi Nichi and its sister paper the Osaka Mainichi, though they produce news films for the most part, supply some educational subjects and more important they manage a "School Circulating Cinema League." This league was organized in April, 1928, by thirty primary schools in and near Osaka and a month later was joined by twenty-six primary schools in Tokyo. Since both public and primary and middle schools forbid students to attend motion picture theatres unless they are accompanied by their parents, this league was organized to supply films that would both entertain and educate. There is an organization known as "Kyogo Renmei" (Educational Protection League) of which all secondary schools are members, and committees of teachers from each school regularly visit cinema houses to see that students do not attend.

The films are circulated once a month. To all subscribers special bulletins are sent with a monthly magazine "Cinema Education." The rate of subscription including two bulletins and one copy of the magazine is six yen per month per film for primary schools and eight yen for secondary schools. At the present time there are approximately 449 subscribers in the Osaka district (thirty-one secondary, 418 primary schools). Tokyo has 308 subscribers (ten secondary, 298 primary schools), Kyushu district 102 subscribers (thirty-three secondary, sixty-nine primary schools). Practically all prefectural or public schools now have film projectors.

Representative Titles of Okamoto films are: "A Tour Around Oshima Island," "Akakura in the Winter," "From Tokyo to Aomori," "Forestry in Saghalien," "Ship-building," "The Development of the Railroad," "Prevention of Fire," "The Island of the Sea Leopard," "The Human Body and the Principles of Conception," "The Tonsils," "The Surrender of Port Arthur," "Winter Sports," "Polo and Riding," "The Ant and the Dove" from Aesop's Fables, "The Tongue-Cut Sparrow," "Explanation of the Imperial Rescript," "Eternal as Heaven and Earth."

Most of these films average one or two reels in length and unless it is a sound film the teachers usually give an explanation before or during the picture. In some schools there is also a motion picture camera and pictures are taken of school events, such as wrestling, sea bathing, gymnastics, military drill, etc. Not only are these then projected for the school, but shown to gatherings of graduates who wish to see what their successors are doing and to know how the school is progressing.

It may be noted that Japan is not only fully cognizant of the value of motion pictures as a means of education, but is increasing the appropriations for educational films and no doubt in the future educational films will occupy an even greater position in teaching the boys and girls of Japan. And if one could not only see the films themselves but could watch the faces of the children as they view these monthly programs, one would appreciate that much careful planning had been given to the plots and scenarios, for they are not mere recitals of fact.

## The Library Cooperates

By FAITH HOLMES HYERS \*

Picture producers are increasingly aware as James Harvey Robinson stated in *THE HUMAN COMEDY*, that "the past is a mine full of precious ore," and they are finding this past, this mine of precious ore in books—fiction, travel, biography, history and even philosophy and psychology (if we consider such titles as *WAKE UP AND LIVE* and *LIFE BEGINS AT FORTY*).

The librarians, on the other hand, have always been aware of this rich ore in books on the past. But, of late, librarians have been oppressed by a tendency on the part of the general public to live in what Gertrude Stein calls "The nowness of now." It can no longer be said that families of average culture have book shelves stocked with work of Thackeray, Sir Walter Scott, Charles Dickens and a complete Shakespeare, or that they read and re-read these classics as they cling to old friends.

The desire to be *au courant* is not only engendered in our daily life, but extends to the motion picture productions. If the screen makes Anna Karenina some one to know or brings Aunt Betsy Trotwood to life, or makes Juliet and her balcony an event for today's discussion, then the books in which these people originate become the thing of the moment.

It is a healthy sign of the times that people do like to follow the seeing of a play on stage or screen by reading the book or play on which it is based. It is the best kind of self-education to want to know what is back of the news—news in the press, news in the films, news on the air. The curiosity that wants to know whether Henry VIII really lived the kind of life Charles Laughton portrayed should be satisfied by libraries; and it is a fact that the Los Angeles Public Library reports brisk circulation of every book about Henry VIII and many English histories during the period of popularity of such a film.

With the advent of the "biography" picture, a new field of profit to libraries is entered. Pictured lives of Richelieu, Disraeli, Pasteur, Florence Nightingale and Rembrandt inspire an interest in life stories which may introduce the vast field of entertaining non-fiction to a fiction fan. For there are more library card-holders than the missionary spirit of the librarian likes to contemplate, who never read anything but fiction.

The producer needs the library in his effort to raise the level of intelligence in his audience. In no case was this more evident than in the beautiful production of "The Barretts of Wimpole Street" for many a conversation could be overheard on the street as to "who were the Barretts anyway, and that fellow called Robert Browning?" Kings, queens, diplomats and pirates may be known to the general public, but an English poet of the 19th century is an unknown quantity.

Without the background acquired by the reading public in perusal of Pearl Buck's books on China, successful production of such a picture as "Good Earth" with its artistic photography, its deep elemental sense of the struggle for existence and the universality of emotion would be a nearly impossible achievement. The audience must

\*Library Publicist, Los Angeles Public Library.



have some measure of mental preparation for a picture that is "different." The Library with displays lists and talks on such books as *MY COUNTRY AND MY PEOPLE* by Lin Yutang, *HOUSE OF EXILE* by Nora Waln, *THE FOUR HUNDRED MILLION* by Mary Nourse as well as the novels of Pearl Buck may build up an intelligent interest in Chinese culture and Chinese life which culminates in a true appreciation of the research and care which have been expended on picturization of *THE GOOD EARTH*.

Libraries, may also, do much toward developing appreciation of the technical excellence of today's screen. Fine stills sometimes reveal the photographers' act in composition and lighting that might be missed in following the story. Books on the new techniques in sound and color, in methods of making set models, on costuming, and sample scripts should be a part of library collections, and are all valuable in promoting an intelligent understanding of good films.

Picture-information service was installed in the Los Angeles Public Library in 1934 at the request of the Research Committee of the Los Angeles County Coordinating Council. Today anyone may telephone the Los Angeles Public Library and ask for a review of a current picture. A librarian in the Teachers' Room will answer from a card file kept at the desk, giving the type of picture, whether it is a mystery, a musical picture, a comedy, tragedy, a war story, or an historical picture; naming the cast and producer; giving a brief synopsis of the plot; and stating whether it is suitable for children, young people, adults or "family."

This information service has been popular from the day it was established, according to Miss Rosemary Livsey, Department Librarian of the Teachers' and Children's Rooms. Parents, uncles and aunts and whole families sometimes ask aid in selecting entertainment, and the children themselves call frequently on Friday and Saturday for information on the pictures being shown in their neighborhoods.

The card file used for quick reference is made up of clipped reviews from the *Joint Estimate of Motion Pictures* issued twice monthly.

These brief reviews are supplemented in Miss Livsey's Library Department by various publications listing picture reviews, and the monthly bulletins issued by Mrs. Thomas Winter's Office in Hollywood *Leading Motion Pictures*; the companion publication *Selected Motion Pictures, West Coast and East Coast Previewing Committees*, issued from the office of Will H. Hays in New York City, and weekly sheets from the Fox West Coast Theatre Corporation called "Unbiased Opinion."

The general demand for evaluation of current pictures led H. W. Wilson Company, the library's first aid in indices and digests to begin publishing late in 1935 the *Motion Picture Review Digest* which comes out weekly and has a quarterly cumulation. Skillful in arrangement and condensation this Digest provides data on producer, cast, director, and audience suitability. It digests reports of pre-viewing committees and picture reviews in newspapers and magazines and adds comments of Trade Papers.

Librarians agree that the Wilson Motion Picture Digest is a publication, but believe it does not take the place of the library service on films suitable for children, and that a need yet unfilled, is the reviewing of screen fare in terms children may understand, reviews that will stimulate interest in the right kind of picture and discourage attendance at those unsuitable for younger minds. Such criticism should lead to the production of more pictures which may be rated as "family" fare.

Summarizing, the Library may go hand in hand with the Picture Producer in searching for the "precious ore of the past" in books; it may stem the overwhelming demand for books or the "Nowness of the Now" by following the screen's recreation of past events and vanished people; it may offer backgrounds and side-lights on people and places of screen interest; it may provide collections on the development of the technique and art of sound picture productions; it may assist in educating for better taste in pictures by acting as a clearing-house for reviews and comments on contemporary productions.

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## Four Star Scripts

Reviewed by TERRY BISSINGER

H. G. Wells, in connection with his screen adaptation of his book "The Nature of Things to Come," let fall a few remarks concerning his interest in the growth of an entirely new type of literature,

The study of the motion picture script as a form of contemporary writing has been carried on only by those who have been interested professionally. The public, classes in English and motion picture appreciation have, for the most part, been handicapped because shooting scripts have not been available. There are plenty of published scripts of legitimate stage dramas; however, the number of published talking picture scripts is very small. They are often not popular with the lay public because the intricate camera directions and technical vocabulary is confusing. And again, in an effort to reduce these technicalities of production directions, too much has been eliminated and the result loses sight of the screen and the related elements that make the work a *talking-picture*.

"FOUR-STAR SCRIPTS," edited by Lorraine Noble and published by Doubleday, Doran & Co., of Garden City, New York, in 1936, is sub-titled Actual Shooting Scripts and How They Are Written—A Text Edition.

The first chapter, entitled "Back of the Scenes in a Talking-Picture Script," describes the "production-factors" governing the writing of scripts in the major studios. The second chapter is called "How Scripts Are Written" and is an unusually interesting description of that subject as well as a necessary preparation to an enjoyment of the rest of the book.

The complete scripts of four outstanding pictures follow: "Lady For a Day," "It Happened One Night," "Little Women," "The Story of Louis Pasteur."

The lay-out of the scenes on the scripts used in the studio has been changed to facilitate more easy reading. The page looks much like that of a printed stage drama and capitals, italics, and regular type differentiate directions, action, and dialogue, respectfully. With these changes a person can read a script with as much ease and enjoyment as a novel and at the same time the student of cinema can study the image continuity, the building up of shot, scene, sequence, camera angle and movement, as well as the use of natural sound and dialogue. Thus, are preserved in a readable form the elements that are peculiar to the sound-cinema. The fine choice of scripts coupled with their unique editing for literary purposes should make this interesting book of special use to teachers and students of motion picture appreciation.

## Rhythm in the Film

By DONALD FISCHER \*

Music appeals directly to the emotions and through them to the intellect. The fundamentals of music and films are very similar: (1) both enlist the imagination; (2) both are founded on rhythm, the common denominator. Rhythm in music consists of "an accented time-pattern superimposed on a regularly-recurring beat." Film rhythm is obtained in three ways: (1) Cutting—length of shots (like music time-values), order of shots (e.g. long shot—medium shot—close-up); (2) Action-rate—tempo of scene-material (e.g. actors' movement, speech); (3) Camera means—slow or fast motion (e.g. accelerated conveyor-belt in Chaplin's *MODERN TIMES*). Blended, music and film make a greater emotional-appeal than separately. Film music, then, often appeals subconsciously—it requires no slow process of deduction.

What part does music play? The present main function is to enhance the underlying mood of scenes—to act as a psychological commentator. Though scenes change rapidly, as for example in a rapid montage, the music may keep to its own line and thus unify the separate scenes. An example is the long scene in *REMBRANDT* in which he decides to forget sorrow over "Saskia"; music here strikes a rhythmic mean rather than following details of action; the decision he reaches is indicated psychologically by the music's decisive crescendo and new-passion. First an analysis of some specific uses of film music.

Music unifies film. Two particular ways are: (1) leitmotiv—recurring musical themes identified with characters or things, used to foreshadow, coincide with, or recall an action—(e.g. short theme "boy meets girl" for each Chaplin jail-exodus in *Modern Times*); (2) theme-song, ("When It's Twilight on the Trail" in *TRAIL OF THE LONESOME PINE* heard first as atmosphere folk-song, later for funeral song exemplifying the effect of Buddy's death on the singer and mourners).

To set atmosphere, music may show period—(the ancient instruments in *ROMEO AND JULIET*) or place (e.g. bagpipes in *MARY OF SCOTLAND*). At the same time, it may set mood or play a part in the film-story.

To enhance dramatic values, music is used in many ways, such as:

1. Mood-presetting music is valuable to make the audience receptive, to build tension, or foreshadow story-happenings. An example including these points is *THE GENERAL DIED AT DAWN* music—largely composed of themes to be associated with the characters—heard from the trademark up to the story-conflict exposition in the street of the Chinese taxed-to-tatters town.

2. Music background to dialogue, if faded-in softly and properly related in pitch to speaking-voices (for instance high melody outlines deep-voice words; low woodwinds back child-treble), is subtly-strong—is used particularly for lyrical-emotional scenes. Other music-speech combinations are: (1) melodrama—rhythm of music and speech near-coincident as in *AMPHITRYON*; (2) recitative—music fills silence between speech fragments, for instance in *ROMEO AND JULIET*—Romeo's garden-soliloquy after the first balcony scene.

\*Summary, M. A. Thesis, University of Southern California, 1937.



3. Music may replace dialogue by accompanying pantomime (e.g. each estrangement in *DODSWORTH*), telling the feelings when the scene is mental for example—sustained dissonant chord during poster-burning grilling of “Gypo” in *THE INFORMER*).

4. Music with noises may have the noises ordered to act like percussion instruments of a sort (in *REMBRANDT*—the windmill music—the “clank” like part of the music), or music may replace noises (e.g. tones for taps of cigarette in *GENERAL DIED AT DAWN*). An often-symbolic close imitation of natural sounds may be made musically (for instance *THE INFORMER*, instrumental imitation for each coin-fall except final downfall using the real sound).

5. Music in synchronization with the visual (e.g. marching band, ballet) is satisfying because both primary senses of sight and hearing are exercised at once. The film can use varying degrees of synchronization from exact (e.g. matching music beat to step) as most used in cartoons and sound-film operettas, to staggered found principally in feature dramatic films (for example—“Gypo” staggering to the church in *THE INFORMER*, the musical beat-notes timed exactly to the movement but inserted at odd intervals so that no feeling of re-enforcement of step by music is given). Music may be matched to the individual tempo of the actor (composer times movement with stop-watch); musical emphasis then may be inserted before, with, or after the action—a gesture for example.

6. In parallelism of music and scene, the music furnishes the expected sound to the scene or duplicates the action. In *THE BAND CONCERT* (Disney) as the music of “William Tell Overture” becomes stormier, a real storm comes up to carry the band and the music—which is still playing—to great heights.

7. The opposite, film counterpoint, as it applies to music, depends on contrast of music and scene for special emphasis—i.e. opposing forces are thrown forcibly together in the same way as two pictures of contrary nature superimposed. Counterpoint is obtained in three ways: (1) music-nature contrasts simultaneously with nature of scene (as in *PETRIFIED FOREST*, loud buoyant jazz from radio contrasts with tense scene of “Jackie” about to kill “Bose” for an insult); (2) music contrasts coincidentally with speech or noises (for instance—the exaggerated whispered prayer of a mother heard at the same time her daughter is singing a loud vaudeville-style song of opposite sentiment—the picture *APPLAUSE*); (3) music in one scene contrasts with music in the next while the scenes remain parallel (for example bugler first seen and heard sounding taps at a funeral, then playing in a dance-band), or music in one scene parallels music in the next while the scenes are contrasted (e.g. orchestra first seen and heard in opera house; opera music dissolves to farewell music as the orchestra is seen next on a railway platform *DARLING OF THE GODS*).

8. As a direct or indirect dramatic motivator, music enters into the story—for instance the barrel-organ near the close of *WINTERSET*, which played, attracts a policeman to save the principals. Especially true is this of musical films with story built around song as in *THE GAY DESPERADO*.

9. Subjective effects thru music try to put us in the character’s place (for instance—man alone in park pantomimes symphony-conducting; spectator hears the music the character supposedly imagines *BORN TO DANCE*).

10. Characterization by music uses themes created to express the personality of the character—i.e. a musical paraphrase of the thoughts (for example—GARDEN OF ALLAH; Donald Duck's saucy fast-tempo music).

11. Music may symbolize: in EMPEROR JONES—the drum-beats in the film-version meant pursuit but also symbolized the nemesis of the late-deposed jungle-king.

12. Musical metaphor (for example—howling baby seen, but trumpet blast heard) is found most in the cartoon and feature comedy (as in Chaplin's CITY LIGHTS, satire of speakers' voices by musical instruments during statue unveiling).

Since sound-films divide into sections, finished musical forms may be used within them (e.g. song-forms, fugue, scherzo, theme-with-variations have been used successfully). Some use of fixed musical forms as a basis for the film-structure has been made (e.g. cartoon JOI DE VIVRE using modified song-form of ABC—Trio—CBA with drawings made to synchronize), or the cuts are sometimes made to conform with the tempo and rhythm of the music—(MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM). Other ways of unifying film are to use music for: (1) continuity of story, (2) transitions, (to fill fades, interpret a lapse-of-time), (3) utilitarian purposes—background to keep audience receptive, add interest to static scenes. Easiest to unify might be the concert film (a musical selection illustrated by pictures as in the treatment of Bach's "Little Fugue in G Minor" in BIG BROADCAST OF 1937) or the abstract film (music interpreted by abstract visual accompaniment).

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## Music for the Films

By LEONID SABANEEV \*

As Mr. Sabaneev himself so ably phrases it, "This book is intended primarily for the man already familiar with the technique of musical composition, but as yet unacquainted with the special and novel requirements of the cinema." The author is more than qualified in writing such a statement because he has had considerable experience in writing and arranging music to meet the requirements of the films, and his helpful suggestions are of immense value to the musician. It is self-evident that the cinema is a sphere, rich in material and artistic possibilities, providing the musician with a new and vast arena wherein to develop his powers.

From the very beginning music has been associated with the cinema. Its aesthetic function was to fill up the tonal void in the silent film—to supply the necessary poetry and emotion, and to provide rhythm for the happenings on the screen. With the arrival of the sound film, the rôle of music was altered. It ceased to be mere improvisation and developed into strict and solid composition. And now music has to share its functions with dramatic speech and various naturalistic noises. Music is such an integral part of the whole, however, that it often dictates the rhythm and tempi to the screen.

This is recognized by all directors. If the cinema is to become an art, this background should be carefully thought-out and thoroughly well-prepared.

The successful composer for the cinema, in addition to the thorough mastery of

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\*Reviewed by Edith M. McDonald, Music Supervisor, Arcadia.

the technique of his profession, must be able to write music rapidly and confidently, and be ready, in case of need, to alter it without delay. He must have a good knowledge of musical literature and styles because he is hardly ever asked to create anything new—but is asked to write music in the style of a given period. Little value is attached to a talent for novelty and invention because of the difficulty in recording these effects.

There are three rules to follow in writing music for the screen:

1. It must accord with the mood of the scene.
2. It must coincide rhythmically with the movements of that scene.
3. It must be timed exactly for the duration of the scene.

It is far easier and a great time-saver to defer the actual composition until the film is shot and the "montage" finished. This does away with so many radical alterations which occur while the "montage" is in process. The wise composer will avoid the following:

1. Complex harmonies with many notes—they always blur in reproduction and often sound out of tune.
2. The interweaving of more than two independent and melodic parts.
3. Very high or very low registers.
4. The piling up of notes within a restricted space, particularly in the lower registers.

This book gives the essential, practical, and technical advice to enable composers and conductors to understand the mechanism whereby the sounds of the human voice, the orchestra, etc., are transferred to the celluloid strip. The author includes such topics as: the orchestration of the sound film, conducting and synchronizing, musical doubling, the "montage" of the sound film, and music for animated cartoons. The book is a veritable mine of concise and practical information for the interested seeker.

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## Creating the Illusion with Sets

By AILEEN BROWN

The largest stage set business in the world goes on in Hollywood. It is the center of the building-up and tearing-down industry, and it takes *three days to build a Rome and only a few hours to effect its fall*. The details are guarded like Victorian virtues. There is sound reason for this reticence on the part of the community that is usually articulate about its successes. Hollywood is in the business of building *illusion*, not sets. It sells glamor, not props or techniques. The public likes to feel that the stork brought "THE BIRTH OF A NATION," and it likes to feel that a cameraman hung in the clouds, mid-Pacific the day that John Barrymore fought the whale.

The background business in Hollywood is indeed a magnificent affair. It involves millions of dollars a year, and has the enjoyment of sinking as much as fifty thousand dollars in a single setting. It employs thousands of craftsmen, designers, artists and architects. Taking pictures on the lot is the fashion even if the Taj Mahal has to be moved to the favorite star. It is more economical and workable than moving the star to the Taj Mahal. And besides the economics there are other questions and con-



siderations. The Taj Mahal may be a bad actor. It may be run down at the heels or be back to the sun or big in the wrong spots. The camera is a demanding little beast with no respect for tradition and sentiment.

*Sizing* is very important. In the "Crusades," if the fortress had been built of stones in the actual size of the period, they would have had *no dramatic strength*, consequently the stones had to be greatly magnified. In "Anna Karenina," Cedric Gibbons was faced with the problem of making Russia really look like Russia. The Russian interiors of 1875 might have been any other country of the time. The feeling of Russia, however, had *to be sustained*, and this was accomplished by making all the furniture and fixtures *slightly larger*. An oversized Victorian or Louis XVI chair looked immediately slightly Moscow.

There is a definite *system for negotiating backgrounds*, and this system is conducted by a staff, the head of which is the art director. He works with the producer and the picture director, and his name is on the film, accredited. Under him is a group of unit art directors to whom the individual pictures are assigned. Also a number of departments: the drafting rooms (sketches); the set dressing and interior decoration (props, chairs and screens); the drapery department, the greenery and landscape group. Also working under the supervision of the art department are the departments of special effects (fog, snow and storm); processes and miniatures (trick effects and small scenes that look large); the scenic effects (the painted background, for example). With regards to sets Cedric Gibbons says:

"A moving picture set is designed with regard to the action it will hold. The set is never for the set's sake, but for the story's sake. It is not finished until everything intended to be shot by the camera is there. Consequently many of the sets look like the devil. And then after the set is all done to the last pilaster and the prima donna and company have swept in—there is always a camera. If there are any surprises in the stage designing business, they can come through the photograph. A set can be designed of chromium and mirror, sheen and glitter. If the cameraman chooses to use a soft focus lens, where are you?"

In Hollywood, studios permanent sets which are kept after use are only those which are the *common needs* in the plot situations. All others are destroyed. No studio could get through a year without brownstone fronts or a western street. A trip around Warner Brothers lot is a *trip around the world*. There are New York streets, a Venetian canal, Mexican Plaza, Midvale Street, French Street, Canadian Street, Coney Island Street. *Most of the buildings have only a front elevation*. A village store stops abruptly at the back of the front window. Gondolas may be chopped in half.

The public has more or less become used to what is known as the Hollywood touch. It refers primarily to lavishness, and to the show girls in the background business; carved marble staircases, cut-glass decanters, chandeliers, candelabra, penthouses, dressing tables, cologne bottles, bars and lattice work. Hollywood has glorified all of them, and each has performed its little part in producing the illusion of reality to the audiences who view motion pictures.

## Animate Light

By FRANCES CHRISTESON \*

Light is life to the motion picture. Without it there would be no pictures on the film and no way to show them on the screen. It is light that gives life to the camera and the projector making of them useful things, able to record and rerecord motion. And so it was upon animate light that we depended to bring life to the static material we had to work with when we made a film suggesting some of the work done in the College of Architecture and Fine Arts at the University of Southern California.

Light and the shadows it casts when obstructed is important to the architect. Everything that protrudes from the walls of a building cast shadows at different times of the day. It was this problem that first suggested to us the possibility of filming these changes, this play of light on a real building, by proxy, using beautifully constructed detailed models of buildings and moving light around and over them, simulating the play of light as the sun rises and passes overhead. The result was effective and startling beautiful. We still want to film the play of light over a real building, beginning early in the morning and by stop motion at one minute intervals record the change of light throughout a day.

The section of the film devoted to ceramics presented the same problem of making of static material, a subject suited to our medium. Animate light did it again. The hands of the potter, gently and delicately molding the clay were filmed in very low key dramatic light as the clay on the potter's wheel began to take shape. The light increased through a series of dissolves until a graceful bowl emerged. For the final shot of this sequence we mounted the finished bowl on the wheel and as it turned slowly in close-up, we moved one light over and around it, beginning with a thin crescent of light on the edge of the bowl, and moving through a series of interplaying light and shadows cast by the bowl itself, we end with the light fading out on the same edge. Again animate light gave movement to an inanimate object and at the same time created a beautiful moving pattern.

We ended the sculpture section in the same way, playing a single light over a cast figure as it revolved slowly.

And so we learned how to give life to lifeless material. Apparently we used light in a way it has not been used before in 16 mm field. At least the matched, meaningful lighting made of our film one which prompted the Amateur Cinema League to choose it as one of the ten best amateur films of 1936.

For us it is a step forward in learning to use light purposefully. We pass on the suggestion to you who may have use for it.

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\*The film here described is: "Architecture and Fine Arts" by Harry Merrick and Frances Christeson, University of Southern California; the article written by Frances Christeson.

## The Rose, Queen of Flowers

By ELLIS M. YARNELL

*Purpose:* Advertising California Roses, Inc., Puente, California. The picture will be used by John van Barneveld, president, in lectures given before garden clubs. It is a 400-foot 16 mm. Kodachrome picture.

The advertising plan, hence the picture, has two main divisions: (1) Instruct the audience in the details of the two-year task of producing a budded rose bush for market; (2) present specimens showing some of the different kinds available.

*Plan:* Unfortunately, in common with most amateur productions, this picture was started without a detailed shooting script. This would have been difficult to prepare because I knew nothing of the rose business and Mr. van Barneveld, producer-director, knew little about motion pictures. I served as cameraman and cutter.

The following plan was drawn up and followed, the details as to scenes and camera positions being worked out at each step in the field.

Main title: John van Barneveld presents THE ROSE, Queen of Flowers.

DISSOLVE TO

Credit title: Produced by CALIFORNIA ROSES, INC., Puente, California.

Photographed by Ellis M. Yarnell.

FADE OUT:

FADE IN:

Subtitle: The story of growing roses as it is done in our outdoor California nursery.

Subtitle: The foundation: Ragged Robin root stock.

Scene 1: Cutting ragged robin in the field, cutting into shoots, and cleaning the shoots for planting. (December).

*Progress of the work:* The shooting of the picture was done during a three-day period in mid-September at the nursery. The camera was taken into the field and the different operations filmed from such camera positions as seemed most practical at the time. The employees of the nursery made up the cast, and were instructed to cooperate with the cameraman.

The steps were not necessarily shot in the order of their occurrence in the initial outline. The main point watched was to film shots requiring dissolves together to simplify making the dissolves.

The instructional part of the film has sufficient action and continuity inherent in the material. The shots of different specimens, both in the field and in the cut flowers, lack action. The possibility of adding movement and continuity by some method such as having a person or persons move about inspecting them was considered. The plan was ruled out on the grounds that it would require too much valuable footage. The rose-fancier will be sufficiently interested in the flowers alone; the beauty and novelty of the color pictures will also help.



Approximately one week later, after the first four rolls were returned from the laboratory, I spent about four hours arranging the material roughly according to the outline. I then projected the reel at the nursery and noted the suggestions of the owners. Plans for further cutting, retakes, and subtitles for the body of the picture were discussed. I then made the titles with double-exposed backgrounds; cut according to notes made at the first projection, and spent two days attempting stop-motion pictures of opening buds. A fairly successful shot was obtained of a double rose that required nearly two days to open. Exposures were made about every ten minutes except during the final rapid burst, when exposures were made every five minutes for two hours. Different persons relayed in the task of staying with the equipment for the periodic exposures. Daylight through a window was allowed to fall on the bud between exposures. The daylight was excluded and photoflood lamps turned on for each exposure.

Reflectors were found valuable in lighting the shaded under portions of the plants in the field for closeups of the various operations. Color work requires flat lighting with no sharp shadows, therefore the shooting was arranged so that different locations were used when the sun was in the most favorable direction, behind the camera. The new No. 365 Kodachrome emulsion just released at that time fortunately gives good greens on the foliage. The Weston speed of this emulsion was not available at the time of shooting. Calculating from previous data I decided on a speed of eight, which proved very satisfactory. Absolutely correct exposure is essential to good color rendition.

Extreme close shots of certain operations could not be obtained with short-focus lenses without extension tubes, which were not available. The shots were obtained with the  $4\frac{1}{2}$ -inch lens by screwing the lens  $1\frac{1}{2}$  revolutions beyond the usual focusing scale. By this means a field only five inches high can be obtained. Extreme care must be taken to keep the action within the field and in focus. The main title background an even smaller field. This was accomplished by unscrewing the front lens element as far as possible, thus changing the focal length of the lens. The element was steadied by taping its mount to the main lens barrel.

Fade-ins and fade-outs were used to open and close the main divisions of the picture as well as could be judged from the abbreviated script. All titles and the calendars were faded in and out. The picture was made at 16 frames per second throughout, except the stop-motion.

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“Radio is a new force which science has placed in the hands of civilization. Its potential uses are so numerous and varied that it has captivated the imagination of the entire civilized world. As a means of diffusing entertainment and information over wide areas, broadcasting has no peer. Steadily it is breaking down the barriers of isolation, broadening the horizons, and enriching the lives of countless millions of people. Within a dozen years radio broadcasting has become an important social factor in nearly every country in the world.”—Koon, *Cline M., The Art of Teaching by Radio*, 1933, p. 1.

## What Are the Problems?

By STANLEY L. COMBS

A recent questionnaire sent out by the Cinema Appreciation League to leaders in education in the secondary field was entitled "What and How in Appreciation of Motion Pictures," and was divided into five main parts. The first part established the purpose for asking suggestions regarding motion picture appreciation, to formulate the opinions of educators and civic leaders, and to give a report of experiences with teaching appreciation of motion pictures. The second part dealt with the objectives and placement of stress in teaching of picture discussion, the question was raised of elevating the tastes and standards for judging motion pictures and thus developing a demand for better pictures. It also asked where the emphasis should be placed in the selection of pictures and their discussion: on content—their social aspects, their interrelationship with the other subjects taught in school. The third part consisted of questions regarding classroom methods of teaching motion picture appreciation, whether as a separate course or as units in another, the time spent in teaching it, to what extent the pupil should learn by doing, and what material is of most value in the class rooms. The fourth part dealt with the major problems in teaching such a course, *i.e.*, definite objectives in the courses of study, definite plans and procedures, projection facilities, sufficient time. The fifth part of the questionnaire asked for suggestions for advancing the teaching of motion picture appreciation with special reference to the University courses needed, availability of useful catalogues, the desirability of better equipped motion picture material in libraries, and the experiences and attitudes toward publicity material sent by commercial organizations and other published guides, criticisms, and picture reviews.

Mrs. Helen Rand Miller of the National Council of Teachers of English, Evanston, Illinois, believes that the term of appreciation as applied to the teaching of motion pictures is false. She feels that motion pictures should be evaluated in the light of standards, which have been set up in the class room, and thus develop motion picture discrimination which will lead to the demand for better pictures. Others suggest that pupils should be taught "to select pictures intelligently," should have "a set of standards which may be applied to all pictures seen." Miss Annette Glick, Supervisor of the Visual Education Section of the Los Angeles Schools, believes that "critical appreciation" can be taught.

Mrs. Howard C. Ray of Palo Alto High School says that "an average of one hour per week during the *entire* high school course is allotted to motion picture appreciation" as part of English courses, and Social Science courses. She also says that "films as a whole—good, bad, and indifferent—are the greatest single educational influence in the life of the American child of today, irrespective of the use made of those films in the schools themselves. . . . Despite lip service to the motion picture appreciation ideal, no cooperation whatever is being offered schools in the way of providing special contract arrangements to permit educational showings of any save second-rate pictures. . . . In this day when teachers and students are eager to avail themselves of motion picture materials, when producers express a desire to make more pictures of the



finer type, why is no progress being made toward making those finer pictures available?"

The school system of Boulder, Colorado, according to Mr. Claude E. Wilson, is in the process of establishing a real program in visual education and the appreciation of movies, and "our schools are desirous of securing information that will tell us where we may best teach appreciation of the cinema, in a special class or integrated in several classes."

With the question of the extent the children should be privileged to learn by doing, *i.e.*, by making 16 or 8mm. motion pictures, or doing other experimental work in the field, Miss Lillian E. Davis of Sacramento believes this is a good means of motivation, the opportunity being available. The Superintendent of Schools of Monrovia feels such work would be of little significance, and that it would be too costly. Miss Isabel M. Gray of North Hollywood says, "I am of the opinion that it would not be, at present, a useful activity in public schools." Others say, "this would hardly be worth the time involved in an English class room," and "probably helpful, but requiring time, money, and experience."

Another suggestion is that experimental work be used only in teaching technical production courses for the few, or as a culminating activity for a unit of work. Mr. F. G. Macomber of the Curriculum Department of the Riverside City Schools believes that it would help in understanding the medium of motion picture art and technique. In answering the question of what to emphasize—content, medium, or the educational aspect—Mrs. Howard Ray says, "the question of the interrelationship of motion pictures with numerous departments (in schools) represents one of its greatest values, serving to break down the opinion encouraged by the average school organizations that life is made up of air-tight compartments which bear no relation to each other."

Mr. H. A. Gray of the Erpi Consultants of New York City believes that the content of the pictures should be given first and foremost importance; interrelationship with the subjects taught in the school, second; and understanding the medium of the motion picture art and technique, third.

Beatrice R. Trippe, Teacher of Motion Picture Appreciation in West High School, Rochester, New York says, in part, "I am convinced that we can elevate the taste and standards of appreciation of motion pictures and develop a demand for better pictures. Close scrutiny of the progress of my students in this course has convinced me of this. Free discussion, encouragement in the expression of honest opinion regarding pictures, questions designed to bring the pupil to form correct conclusions for himself instead of being told, group attendance at pictures good and poor, evaluation sheets not as an end in themselves but used to prompt thought about different attributes of a picture, written and oral reports in which the pupil expresses his personal opinion and reaction to a certain picture, which the class as a whole has not seen, studies of stills, study of motion picture history, careful study of professional reviews—all these are some of the projects of which I have made use. I think the stress should be placed on teaching the content of pictures, first, and the understanding of the medium of the motion picture, second. At West High Motion Picture Appreciation is taught as an elective course in the English Department."



## The Function of An Educational Film

*From the address by* DR. V. C. ARNSPIGER \*

In considering the introduction of the film into the educational program of the school, we must first give attention to the function to be performed by this medium of communication. It is simply this—to overcome limitations to the presentation of concepts which are now restricting human learning.

The history of teaching has been largely a record of man's attempt to overcome these limitations. In the far-distant past learning was slow because precept and example were the tools of teaching. The emergence of language made available to man a tremendously powerful tool. The printed word made possible the wider dissemination of knowledge. With the coming of the telescope and the microscope began man's monumental explorations into unknown worlds which otherwise would have been forever beyond his ken.

With all these tools of learning and teaching, however, it is difficult to present the vital, dynamic, moving quality of life to the new generation. Our dependence upon the printed word has operated as a definite restriction to the development of the curriculum. This difficulty is often apparent when proposals are made to include new concepts in courses of study. Often these proposals meet with the objection that the concepts are too complex or too difficult for a given grade-level, when the real objection is that they are too difficult to be presented by means of the printed word.

Research and investigation in the field of the sound film during the past seven years has revealed the fact that many of those limitations to learning can be overcome by the scientific use of this new medium of communication when it is properly prepared.

Most of the research of the past in the field of educational films has been confined to the testing in the classroom of films which happen to have been produced. The school no longer need be, nor should be, satisfied with anything less than a thoroughgoing evaluation of films in terms of adequate standards before purchased.

To summarize the production of an educational film in a succession of steps will indicate how these standards may be applied in the course of production of the film as well as by the prospective purchaser.

The first step is the working-up of the unit of instruction. This unit should be in itself an excellent teaching aid. It should include a statement of objectives, an overview for the teacher, suggested approaches to the study of the unit, a fully developed content of subject matter, suggestions for study activities or projects, culminating activities, and an adequate bibliography. Up to this point the film has not been considered.

The next step is a careful analysis of the subject matter of the unit whereby the various elements are classified in the following categories:

1. Those facts, ideas, and concepts which can best be presented by means of the printed word.

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\*Director of Research FRPI Picture Consultants, Inc., abstract, Marlon L. Israel.

2. Those which can best be presented by means of the spoken word; that is, which can best be comprehended by means of teacher-and-class explanations and questions.
3. Those which can best be presented in a group discussion.
4. Those which can best be presented by the laboratory method.
5. Those which require for adequate presentation mechanical devices involving motion, sound, magnification, reduction of distance, isolation of concepts, and the like.

The subject matter which falls into the fifth class is that which will be worked into the film continuity, and the production of the educational film starts at this point.

It can be seen that this procedure will be very different from the so-called educational film in which a man simply "sprays the landscape" with a camera. A film produced after the preparation described fills a unique place in the teaching process. It is not expected to do the entire job, to convey all the information to be derived from the unit. It functions as a special-purpose tool, which the teacher welcomes as a medium of communication.

Opposed to a haphazard system of audio-visual instruction is the planned program in which the film takes its proper place. The materials used should be well integrated with the whole program of instruction. A serious attempt should be made to expand the curriculum beyond the offering possible with the older devices. The materials should be selected according to recognized standards.

For the educational film, these standards should include:

1. Instructional value—the film should be a comprehensively taught lesson fitted directly to the course of study.
2. Uniqueness—the content of the film should include only that which can best be presented by this medium.
3. Unity—unity is insured by the adherence to a central theme to which each sequence contributes.
4. Accuracy—all subject matter must be accurate and authentic.
5. Thoroughness—the central theme should be presented in sufficient detail to leave no blank spots in comprehension.
6. Technical excellence—good lighting, sharp definition, and well-balanced composition, with clear and intelligible sound, are essential.
7. Artistic value—the total effect of the film should impress the spectator as an artistic presentation.

The talking picture seems destined to play a large part in the school of tomorrow because it is essential to the solution of educational problems created by the ever-expanding curriculum. Its most promising functions appear to be: the release of teachers from time-consuming work, thus making more time available for those duties which can not be mechanized; the overcoming of those limitations to learning which now retard educational progress on all levels; the economical expansion of the curriculum; fulfillment of the learning needs of thousands of students for whom the present twelve-year system of education is really but a six-year program because of major psychological difficulties; the possibility of a cultural and educational program for adults designed to enrich and clarify social concepts, and so enhance community life.

## Motion Pictures in the New Education

By FRED W. ORTH \*

The results of recent scientific investigations relative to the influence of motion pictures upon education reveal startling and somewhat shocking evidence heretofore unknown. We learn that 28,000,000 children attend the movies on an average of once each week; that a goodly proportion of this number attend six times each week. Delinquent children are found to attend more frequently than other children and many of the activities of this group can be traced to the influence of the movies.

The motion picture has surpassed the printing press in its capacity to educate. That it has the power to create and to change attitudes for or against social sanctions, political practices, religious concepts, emotional experiences and conduct patterns of children is no longer a supposition. The power for education of young and old alike is present in the motion picture film.

Forman,<sup>1</sup> in his summary of the finding of the Payne Foundation stated that children learn more rapidly from motion pictures than from books and retain this information longer. It was further discovered that they learn a very large percentage of what superior adults learn and that they usually remember it longer and in greater detail. Impressions gained are lasting and increase with time.

Movies provide for increased mental receptivity. The pupil is expectant, impressionable, eager for new knowledge, sights and experiences. It educates while it entertains, and entertains while it educates. A medium which does this is too valuable to be omitted from the ranks of the principal aids to education. The motion picture provides not only a positive education available through an unsurpassed teaching device, but it also furnishes a mass of misinformation.

Perhaps the outstanding criticism of motion pictures today especially from the point of view of their suitability for children, is their unreality. Success is pictured as easily achieved, and luxury easily obtained.

Realizing the harmful effects of nondesirable commercial films upon children and the dearth of suitable pictures on the juvenile level, national and civic and religious organizations recommend that provisions be made for the distribution of non-theatrical films for wholesome recreation and desirable entertainment.

Why can we not have pictures of ordinary children engaged in the wholesome experience of child life? Children enjoy seeing others like themselves do things which they themselves can do. Let the school be the studio or perhaps the playground or park. Pupil's experiences need not necessarily be confined to the classroom.

The school provides the natural setting and must serve as a center for the development of such juvenile scenarios. A recent publication contains an excess of 7,000 activities, any one of which if produced would make an excellent film for children.<sup>2</sup>

\*Principal Virginia Road School, Los Angeles, California.

1. Forman, J. F., *Influence of Motion Pictures Upon Children*. Macmillan Company, New York, 1934.

2. Carey, A. E., Hannah, P. R., and Merian, J. L., *Catalogue, Units of work, Activities and projects up to 1932*. Teachers' College, Columbia University, New York, 1932.



Children are natural actors. All that is needed is an understanding director in the form of a teacher who may also act in the capacity of the cameraman. Pictures produced under such conditions afford the children unlimited opportunity for creative expression as well as impression. Russia leads the world in the production of such pictures.

A number of such pictures have recently been produced through the influence of the Los Angeles City Visual Education Department.<sup>1</sup> They have been the source of enlightenment and entertainment to large audiences of children and adults. Because of their highly instructive and entertaining values, they serve as excellent material for children to see in place of many of the undesirable commercial films to which children are subjected when frequenting the motion picture theatre.

Films of this type are of immeasurable value for public relations. They enlighten the parents and the public concerning new teaching procedures and the work of the schools. To see the average school as it really functions throughout the week or year would require innumerable visitations on the part of our citizens. After witnessing the showing of a recent school produced film, a studio representative recommended that steps be taken to allow such pictures to be exhibited in the commercial theatres in the place of travelogues with the belief that they would aid in "reselling" our schools to the public.

The motion picture camera provides a medium through which the average teacher can record such activities. The motion picture is especially useful in *motivating school work*. The recorded activity will invariably stimulate further activity. In pursuing the progressive program, films are particularly helpful in making pupils conscious of the necessity for new techniques, especially in the manual activities.

An example is the recent recording of the process of construction of unique objects of handwork. Interest in and enthusiasm for a different dance was created on the part of a group of timid and somewhat anti-social pupils through the showing of a motion picture record of the way in which children much like themselves, perfected and enjoyed it. Such records are also valuable as "stock shots" for future use. Films of this type are usually very short, not more than fifty feet in length, just long enough to stimulate children to action in desirable fields of activity.

Prospective teachers in training and teachers now in service who desire to learn more of progressive methods of teaching are seldom able to witness the teaching of a unit of work from beginning to end. Sufficient time for such an extensive series of observations is neither available for pupil or teacher. The usual "piece-meal" observations become of increased value, however, if detailed accounts of the activities observed are made available. The Los Angeles City Visual Education Department through its research division has "bridged the gap" and has now made available for teachers a pictorial presentation of numerous activities from their points of inception to their completed forms. These pictures present in fifteen minutes much of the actual work of the pupils over a period of weeks, showing a natural correlation and integration of all subjects involved.

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1. Visual Education Department, Los Angeles City Schools.

## Cinema Appreciation in High School Life

By MARIAN L. EVANS \*

High school students are living a variety of motion picture film experiences which are greatly influencing their life attitudes and appreciations.

First, there is the *self-chosen* or sometimes non-selected thrilling *entertainment "movie"* which is seen in the theatre by individuals or friendly groups in out of school hours. Second, the *school selected narrative, dramatic or special feature film*, which is often presented as an auditorium program, may be viewed by the entire student body or by special assembly groups. Third, we have the *classroom teaching or text film* which is presented by the instructor to introduce, illustrate, correlate or integrate a specific topic of class study and discussion. Fourth, the *extra-curricular motion picture* is often shown to clubs, home room groups, boy scouts, campfire girls, etc., to follow up particular interests, hobbies or sports of the boys and girls such as, swimming, camping, rowing, tennis, photography, home nursing, food preparation, arts and crafts. Fifth, the student created film, which may be a screen version of an original play or story, an adaptation or a pictorial record of a school activity, may prove to be the most valuable of all film experiences for both the student producers and the student audience.

Today, we find that the methods by which photoplay appreciation guidance is being offered vary according to different high school programs. In some cases, a limited number of boys and girls who are especially interested in the various phases of motion picture production are given an opportunity for intimate and intensive study of the artistic, dramatic and technical phases of the motion picture through special credited elective courses.

On the other hand, a much larger group are now being reached by the *integration of photoplay appreciation* units into such already established courses in the curriculum as Art, Drama, English, Music, Social Science and Science. Such units, containing suggested student problems, discussions and activities are developed as an integral part of the subject being studied.

Another very effective way of offering photoplay guidance to all the students in the high school is through the auditorium film program assembly. In fact, this method of the film approach to learning offers one of the greatest challenges to secondary school education today, in that the motion picture has potential social, vocational, health and aesthetic as well as recreational life values which are capable of deeply enriching and balancing the physical, mental, and emotional life of boys and girls. Flexibility, and continuity makes it an integrative medium of expression and communication today. By uniting the actual living situations and vicarious educational experiences of student life, it will successfully aid the process of fusion.

Such auditorium films may be selected so as to encompass a wide variety of subject to include such appealing and dramatic subjects as the historical film which sketches man's rise from savagery to civilization, "The Human Adventure," the biological "Tree of Life," the astronomical film revelation, "The Solar Family,"

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the picturesque musical, "William Tell," the artistic and stirring, "Thunder Over Mexico," and the epic geographical, "Grass," "Korean Rice Farmer," "Face of Britain," and "Man of Aran." If these auditorium films are chosen to appeal to the fundamental human interests and common needs of the entire student body, they would surely aid in the process of developing truly integrated personalities who would personify balanced healthful, useful, cooperative, appreciative living—the goal of secondary education today.

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## A High School Movie Project

By MARJORIE MATTHEWS \*

The trials of the Movie Club at Chico High School, Chico, California, have been numerous but stimulating according to Marjorie Matthews. She says, "The main difficulties which have confronted us since our organization last year are lack of money and the high cost of photography. The club is extremely popular, but many who apply are drawn merely by the magic term 'movie' and are soon confounded by the serious application and work incident to carrying out the club objectives. The ability of students to produce plays is taken for granted but motion pictures are new and untried. High school students can't produce successful photoplays!

"To a certain extent many of these obstacles have been overcome. First we grappled with the financial wolf. By dint of levying 25-cent dues, exhibiting a rented film, and a 'jitney' dance, we closed our first semester with \$8.00 toward a camera. The next semester more members were admitted. A contest netted us enough for the down payment on a Model A Cine Camera—we are still struggling to pay the remainder.

"But now we had the basic requirement for making a film. While the financial alchemists had been turning nothing into gold, a story committee had been changing a few hazy ideas into a scenario. We built our story around a school situation where our settings were ready made. Football season being at its peak, we used it for our climax; thus the story idea which became 'High School Hero, or The Rise of Teddy Norton.'

"With a camera, two rolls of films, and a script, two inexperienced cameraman, and a fine lot of enthusiasm, we started shooting. I directed, assisted by two willing, energetic youngsters. We started with the football shots. All week-end we worked at top speed making use of the precious light. Our film was gone before we were well under way, but a local photographer trusted us for seven more rolls. For three weeks we shot and re-shot without benefit of lighting devices, filters or any mechanical aids to good photography. We could not use school hours and after school it was light for only about twenty minutes. Our best cameraman had a paper route. The leading man lived twenty miles away in the hills. The leading lady was given to appearing in a frock different from that she had worn in another part of the same scene. The cameraman would forget that the take called for a fade-in or fade-out—these were hand made, by the way.

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\*Instructor Chico High School, Chico, California.



"Eventually the last title was taken and the nine rolls of film were ready to cut. Night after night we worked at this, using a rewind made of a boy's erector set, and a small Craig Jr. splicer. Finally came the day when, some thirty-six dollars in the red, we darkened the club room to test the finished product on the whole membership. Only the editors had seen the rushes; no one had viewed the film in sequence. The general attitude was doubtful. A silence fell, a feeling of growing interest filled the room—the first laugh came when it should have, then another—now surprised, appreciative exclamations could be heard. Sweet music to the jaded ears and weary brains of the production staff!

"After the preview there was no question of the support and confidence of the organization. They managed the exhibition skillfully, and to our surprise, the premiere drew more than 500 people. Our expenses were made on one showing."

The students are now looking forward enthusiastically to next semester's movie. The camera is nearly paid for, and we have proved that we mean serious business. Furthermore, this practical experience in cinematography has led to a more intelligent analysis of professional films. At present we hopefully anticipate a future financial stability, made possible by the proceeds from the exhibition of our own films.

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## Learning by Doing Educational Film Forum

By F. W. O.

EDUCATIONAL FILMS was the theme of the membership meeting held on December 14th at the Bell and Howell Studio in Hollywood. An interesting preview of silent and sound motion pictures depicting progressive education practices from kindergarten through high school was presented. Teaching films, students' films, and films of a scientific nature were included.

CIRCUS PARADE was the first film to be shown. It was a film record of the influence of a "stock shot" (or a short motion picture) upon a kindergarten group.

A STUDY OF JAPAN represented a complete film record of a third grade Unit of Work carrying the observer through sixteen sequences of related activities. Half of the motion picture was in full color.

VISUAL AIDS IN THE UNIT OF WORK is a motion picture record of a unit of work on the Vikings which was produced by the Los Angeles City Schools, Visual Department. It is a teacher-training film which recorded the intensive uses of visual aids in a unit of instruction.

SOMBRERO produced by Miss Dora Dysart is a social studies film on Mexico, showing in full natural color, community life in urban and rural cities; also much of the beauty of this romantic country.

THE DATE INDUSTRY is a high school student production directed by Miss Edith Frost, teacher. It is by far the best film on the subject yet produced for students.

A STRAND OF SILK represents a systematic record of the life cycle of the silk caterpillar as viewed by little people. It was photographed in full natural color.

THE SPIRIT OF THE PLAINS, is described elsewhere in this issue.

## Appreciation Problems Answered

### *Riverside Conference*

Many problems in the teaching of cinema appreciation were answered at the Riverside Convention of the American Institute of Cinematography held December 18th and 19th at Riverside, California. Dr. Boris V. Morkovin, head of the Department of Cinematography at the University of Southern California, in introducing the chairman of the day, pointed out the divergence between the educational field in motion pictures, and the entertainment field. He said, that, "Films speed up learning."

Dr. V. C. Arnsperger, Director of Research for Erpi Picture Consultants, Inc., found that the motion picture was of greater value as a teaching adjunct for those of lower intelligence levels. He estimated about 20,000 schools now teaching appreciation in the United States, but without any great degree of uniformity.

Dr. Garland Greever, Chairman of Motion Picture Research Committee, found in his classes of creative writing, a great difference between the classics in printed form and on the screen—in plot, in character and in emphasis. The cinema is a different kind of medium, with such elements as rhythm, color, mood, and tempo to consider.

Dr. Rufus B. von KleinSmid, President of the American Institute of Cinematography in his remarks depicted an amazing advancement of the cinema in its technical artistic brilliance along with its growth of significance of theme, during the last two decades from the nickelodeon to such pictures as *THE LIFE OF LOUIS PASTEUR*, and *ROMEO AND JULIET*. This progress in commercial cinema has brought about a new situation for the educational world. Commercial pictures at their best have become an important factor for general education. Because of the variety and richness of authentic research material, they are an aid to specific subjects and problems of social science, literature, medicine, other sciences, and arts.

Mr. Ralph Jester of the Paramount Studios, pointed out that films producers were doing so well that they were not interested in educational films, unless the concerted action on the part of the educators can convince them that they should utilize and edit parts of fictional films which have an educational significance for use in schools.

The Saturday meeting was under the Chairmanship of Dr. C. C. Trillingham, Assistant Superintendent of County Schools, Los Angeles. He has contributed to the objectives of this organization as Director of Curriculum in the secondary schools.

The first speaker, Mary-Clint Irion, Assistant Director of Visual Education in Los Angeles County Schools, discussed the aims which might be achieved through motion picture courses in appreciation. She used as the basis for her discussion the results of survey which has been recently made by the Cinema Appreciation League. She particularly stressed motion pictures appreciation which will result in a better understanding and grasp of social problem. Miss Irion expressed confidence in a more intelligent selection and a critical evaluation of pictures as a result of courses in Motion Picture Appreciation.

The methods by which teachers have endeavored to achieve their objectives in teaching Motion Picture Appreciation and how effective they have proven were dis-

cussed by Marion Evans, Supervisor of Visual Instruction, San Diego City Schools.\* Objectives desired may be realized in the new fused programs which are rapidly being started in many schools. The new school program will recognize and utilize the motion picture with all its potentialities in the educational field.

In her contribution to the discussion—Marion Louise Israel, Director of Visual Education in the Los Angeles County Schools, answered many of the questions which teachers raise as to what materials are suitable for studies in Motion Picture Appreciation, what are available and where they may be obtained. A resolution was made from the floor that a committee be appointed to compile an annotated bibliography for teachers which will assist them in their class in Motion Picture Appreciation.

Miss Lillian Davis, teacher of English in the Sacramento High School, gave many helpful suggestions to teachers interested in inaugurating such courses in their schools. Miss Davis also discussed the problems of obstacles which teachers have met, and how they have overcome them.

Dr. C. C. Trillingham closed the meeting with a brief but inclusive summary of the discussions of the morning.

Following the round table discussion: "The Spirit of the Plains," was shown, a picture which was produced at Paramount under the direction of Ralph Jester, Assistant to Cecil B. DeMille. The film is a realization of the type of picture of which teachers have been so greatly in need for use in their classrooms. In this picture, Mr. Jester has used sequences from "The Plainsman," a Paramount picture which has just recently been released. The result is a one reel picture on 16mm. film, rich in material for social studies classes. The beautiful photographic effects of the picture are heightened by the musical background.

Teachers who have long bemoaned the lack of suitable material for use in their classes will rejoice at this move on the part of the studios to help teachers to meet their educational needs. They are looking forward to similar one reel 16mm. pictures which Mr. Jester plans for the future.

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## Cinema Appreciation Forums

*First Meeting, JANUARY 22, 1937.*

At the dinner preceding the Forum, Mr. Jean Hersholt, noted character actor was introduced. The actor described his earlier experiences in picture work.

In discussing the quintuplets, he said they were very healthy and were beginning to talk and walk. Hersholt described the curio and souvenir booths near the hospital as, "looking almost like a circus."

Dr. Kurt B. Von Weisslingen, chairman of the Forum, explained that 45% of our knowledge of acting and directing comes from between the covers of a book, but we could readily learn more from men who have made national and international success, such as Mr. Hersholt and Mr. Viertel.

Mr. Hersholt then showed some personal movies taken by him while in Europe four years ago. The contrast of the business life with that of America was striking.

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\*Article in this issue by Miss Evans.



Occupations were represented by signs: an optical shop was indicated by a wooden sign representing a pair of glasses, shoes for a cobbler, watches for the watchmaker, and so on. Two reels in color showed the famous "Quints" in their home and at play.

The second speaker on the Forum was Mr. Berthold Viertel, who formerly directed at the Viennese Theatre and who was responsible for introducing our American playwright, Eugene G. O'Neill to German audiences.

Viertel began directing when he was ten years old. He explained that the mimic types, "exhibitionists" are characteristic of the southern European. Gesture is very important in acting. The most essential prerequisite for both the screen and stage actor is imagination. Acting is an imaginative conception of the character embodied into a concrete image by means of a marvelous instrument of the actor's body and mind. The character actor in Europe is rated higher than the leading man in America. The German stage loves tragedy, drama and the utmost sharpness of character delineation. In America and England, the leading men are more in the foreground. Character actors like Charles Laughton are very rare. Mr. Viertel said Jean Hersholt was a human character actor. Motion pictures create a new human realism. The first law of the actor is absolute re-location of personality; then he is natural.

One of the most important things in acting, is being able to "wait." An actor is able to play scenes well only if he has learned to wait with complete grace. It takes away self consciousness. The tempo of filming means merely complete continuity of the thought, with action here and there in a certain rhythm; you feel it.

Everyone is an actor and everyone is a poet; the only difference being that the actor in life has only one part, and that is directing his entire life. A good actor must have confidence in himself.

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### *Second Meeting, FEBRUARY 19, 1937.*

At the Cinema Appreciation League dinner held in the Elizabeth von KleinSmid Hall, several guests of honor were presented. Laura Dreyfus Barney, connected with the Cinematographic Division of the League of Nations, Geneva, stated that the films now being brought to Europe were of a more intellectual and artistic nature than those of previous years, and that reports of several hundreds of world delegates at the last Rome Institute of Educational Congress of Cinematography marked great progress in scientific and educational films. Other guests of honor were Count Zanardi Landi and his daughter, Miss Elissa Landi, stage and screen actress and poetess.

Dr. Vernon B. Herbst, noted psychiatrist, who has recently returned from a long sojourn in India, with unique films of great educational value, expressed his sympathy with the work of the American Institute of Cinematography.

Dr. Boris V. Morkovin opened the meeting with an explanation of the purposes of the American Institute of Cinematography. Emphasizing the international atmosphere of the evening, he said, "One of our aims is to bring an understanding between

nations. At a time of a grave world crisis which is threatening our civilization, it is especially important to insist on the possibility of the cinema and radio as aids in averting the impending relapse into medievalism, by bringing about a mutual understanding. The cinema, however, will be helpless unless other powerful international institutions are nurturing the plant of peace and brotherhood, with all the ramifications and devices for the development and expansion of the idea.

Dr. Greever, chairman of the Forum, presented Mrs. Laura Dreyfus Barney, whose topic was "The International Aspects of Motion Pictures." She described the cinematographic work of the League of Nations, especially in the field of education and social welfare and intellectual cooperation, and gave an interesting report on the cinematographic activities of the major nations. Several nations have agreed that educational films should be exempt from duty. She quoted the opinion of different leading statesmen of Europe such as Mr. Stanley Baldwin, prime minister of England, on the vital importance of films for national culture and international understanding of more extensive and effective use of non-theatrical films. In Europe, she said, newsreels are of great importance because they have the characteristic of actuality. However, such films can be very dangerous if they are used for narrow nationalistic or militaristic propaganda. In closing, Mrs. Barney said that along with other undeveloped artistic potentialities this art has a strong mass appeal and it is rapidly becoming a powerful instrument of mental and social control.

Miss Elissa Landi gave readings of some original poems which furnished a brilliant spot in the meeting. Her dramatic ability as an actress was well demonstrated in the readings.

Dr. Greever pointed out that the American Institute of Cinematography, in its endeavor to be a clearing house of cultural interests in cinema, is especially proud to welcome in Miss Landi the unusual combination of a literary genius and a talented actress. This marks a new milestone in the development of cinema as a projection of great national genius in all fields of literary, artistic and scientific creation.

Dr. Herbst, world traveler, showed his films, "Capturing White Elephants in India Jungles," and "The Wedding of the Maharaja." These films were high lights of the program and proved that the expressive qualities of motion picture technique could be developed by the ingenious use of camera angles and by a variety of shots with a 16mm. camera.

Montague Love, pioneer of the motion picture in England and America, presented the comparison between stage and screen acting. He vitalized his discourse by some interesting details from his various amusing experiences; he emphasized the advantage that an extensive work in Shakesperian plays gave to an actor. "An actor who can play Shakespeare has learned the technique of diction." Mr. Lowe says he has never been nervous while acting in motion pictures. He attributes this fact to his early training. In conclusion Mr. Love expressed his appreciation for the work of the make up department of the Westmore Brothers and Jack Dawn. They have enlarged the range of motion picture acting by their "sculptural" make-up.

## Open Letter to Subscribers

We want to thank all our loyal subscribers for their splendid support and interest. Could we ask you to increase the sphere of our influence by asking your school or college, and your public library to put OUR magazine on their shelves?

Notify your local newspaper of our activities, they will be glad to hear about them. Perhaps your business or school associates would like to have a personal subscription, show him your copy.

This is *your* magazine do not hesitate at any time to make suggestions or ask questions about any phases of Cinematography. If we don't know, we will seek the opinion of studio and technical experts who are close at hand.

In the next issue we are planning an OPEN FORUM so that subscribers may ask questions or make suggestions—a sort of Round Table—by mail. This feature will be especially valuable to those outside California who find it inconvenient to come to Institute sessions.

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## Summer Institute

JUNE TO AUGUST . . . *Motion Picture Summer Session*—The University of Southern California.

Fundamental of Production, Story and Continuity, Social and Psychological Aspects of Motion Pictures, Motion Picture Appreciation, Audio-visual Education. Instructors: Dr. M. Metfessel, Dr. B. V. Morkovin, and Mrs. S. M. Mullen; with guests artists and experts from Hollywood.

*National Cinema Appreciation Convention*

(Symposium, excursions, performance, and preview).

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Convention Session—July 29-31, 1937.

Convention Fee. (a) Without Studio Excursion and Preview, \$1.00.

(b) With Studio Excursion and Preview, \$2.00.

(c) Summer Cinema Appreciation Banquet with Speakers from Hollywood (Price \$1.50) Town and Gown Foyer.

Subscription to CINEMA PROGRESS magazine for 1937 including membership in the Cinema Appreciation League, \$1.00.

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CINEMA APPRECIATION LEAGUE, 3551 University Ave., Box 74, Los Angeles, Calif.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### EDITORIALS

Film Award to Promote World Peace.....	3
Dictate of the Times.....	4

### LIFE AND THE CINEMA

The Committee on International Relations.....	5
The World Wakes Up to the Cinema.....	7
Community and Motion Pictures.....	9
Library Linked with Screen and Radio.....	10
Better Pictures for the Child.....	11
Impressions of the Cinema in Paris, Geneva and Berlin.....	11

### MOTION PICTURE ART AND TECHNIQUE

The Interrelation of Mechanical and Human Factors.....	13
What Does Color Add to a Motion Picture?.....	16
Illusions and Effects.....	18
Hints for the Screen Writer.....	20
Motion Pictures as an Expression Form in Art.....	22

### SCHOOL AND CINEMA

Instructional Agents of the New Era.....	23
Motion Pictures and Corrective Work.....	25
A Motion Picture Unit for Sixth Grades.....	27

### NATIONAL CINEMA APPRECIATION CONVENTION AND INSTITUTE .....

29

### OPEN FORUM ON SCREEN WRITING, by Francis Marion 31

### LETTERS TO CINEMA PROGRESS

Norma Shearer; International Educational Cinematographic Institute in Rome; British Film Institute; Ministry of Educa- tion, Nanking, China; Section Technique du Club de l'Ecran, Brussels .....	32
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## Milestones of the Cinema Progress

At the Fourth Annual Banquet of the American Institute of Cinematography, awards of achievement in the form of silver plaques were bestowed upon the following new honorary members by Dr. Rufus B. von KleinSmid:

### STATEMENT OF AWARDS

1937

- LIONEL BARRYMORE . . . for his distinguished achievement on the stage and in motion pictures during the past 28 years.
- CECIL B. DE MILLE . . . for his distinguished achievements as producer and director of many notable motion pictures including "*The King of Kings*" and "*The Plainsman*."
- FRANCES MARION . . . for her distinguished achievements in the writing of original stories and screen plays.
- BORIS MORROS . . . . for his distinguished achievements in creating higher standards of music in motion picture productions and theatres.
- MISS LUISE RAINER . . . for her distinguished performance in the motion picture, "*The Good Earth*."
- SPENCER TRACY . . . . for his distinguished performance in the motion picture, "*Captains Courageous*."
- SLAVKO VORKAPICH . . . for his distinguished achievements in advancing montage as a *major* element in motion picture production.
- ADOLPH ZUKOR . . . . for his distinguished contributions to the advancement of motion pictures during the past 25 years.

### *Honorary Members*

Warner Baxter  
Frank Capra  
Claudette Colbert  
John Cromwell  
Jack Conway  
Gary Cooper  
George Cukor  
Bette Davis

William Dieterle  
Walt Disney  
Howard Estabrook  
Sidney Franklin  
Henry Hathaway  
Helen Hayes  
Frank Lloyd  
Ernst Lubitsch

Rouben Mamoulian  
Victor Milner  
Paul Muni  
Jane Murfin  
Max Reinhardt  
Robert Riskin  
W. S. Van Dyke  
King Vidor

## Film Award To Promote World Peace

We have overcome space barriers by networks of railroads, steamship lines, airplanes, and radio and made this planet our neighborhood. But when the world became smaller it also became deadlier. Instead of bringing us closer together, the newly-found proximity has bred potential sources of destruction, making air raids and sudden invasions by mechanized armies possible.

Unless the growth of mere physical communication is paralleled by the advancement of mental and moral communication, universal destruction threatens. Through the use of the cinema, radio, and television, we may yet bring minds closer together and develop a sympathetic understanding among neighbors.

To pave the way toward peaceful cooperation among nations, the American Institute of Cinematography at its meeting, May, 1938, will give a special award to the film which makes the most outstanding contribution to international goodwill. This award will be bestowed in consultation with other national film institutions, such as the British Film Institute, the International Educational Cinematographic Institute in Rome, the Chinese Film Institute in Nanking, and analogous organizations in other countries.

\* \* \* \*

From Lionel Barrymore, prominent screen actor, who was unable to be present and personally accept his award at the Fourth Annual banquet of the American Institute of Cinematography, came the following letter:

"Please allow me to extend my thanks to you personally, and through you to the American Institute of Cinematography, for the plaque and life membership that body saw fit to confer upon my poor efforts.

"It is an honor that has made me very proud.

"I am sorry that, as was explained to you, I could not be present to thank you and the Institute personally for the very kind thought of me. But rest assured that my thanks are no less heartfelt, though conveyed through the medium of the printed word.

"May I hope that every success attends the work of the Institute, and assure you of my keen interest in this work."



## Dictate of the Times

The throbbing intensity of the Twentieth Century with its increased complexities and mental traffic has made old educational methods utterly inadequate. The exclusive use of books in education is outdated and not unlike the use of horse and buggy in the age of automobiles and airplanes.

Study from books consumes half of a student's active life, in order to establish fundamentals and prerequisites which in the meantime may become obsolete. Such study is not accessible to the masses because it is costly, prolonged, and demands an special gift for abstract thinking. It overworks the memory and neglects the development of the observational abilities of eyes and ears which are of such importance in the actual life of individuals.

The cinema, radio, and television, these powerful new instruments of communication of facts, thought, and emotions, are peculiarly fit, if they are rightly used, to help the masses in their mental adjustment to the rapidly changing world. Without this swift and continuous adjustment, large masses remain beyond the pale of understanding of life processes and intelligent participation in government: The lack of orientation and the indifference of the masses spell dangers for democracy.

Cinema, radio, and television are not only able to impart everywhere up-to-date facts and ideas, but to do it in such a way that the attention of the least prepared person is gripped and guided and he is induced to participate in the various experiences and practices of other people.

An article published in this issue by a teacher of corrective work relates how she was suddenly made to realize the magic qualities of the new cinematic medium by making a picture with her students. Through the clear visual presentation of health ideals and ideas, she helped handicapped children, with the active cooperation of their parents, to recondition their bad habits and thus she returned them to social life more able to compete with their less handicapped fellows. The printed and oral word alone would not have had sufficient power to do this.

Such favorable results should convince educators who cling to the old fashioned "Three R's" that two other "R's" are needed, Reel and Radio, as the author of another article in this issue puts it. By neglecting the use of audio-visual sources of education, teachers and other cultural leaders will lose their influence over the students and parents and lose it to those who have commercial control of these resources and who may use them constructively or nonconstructively.

To further encourage the development of the magic medium of cinema and its constructive use for social, artistic, and educational progress, the American Institute of Cinematography, Inc., each year gives achievement awards to those who make an outstanding contribution to this end.

## The Committee on International Relations

A committee on *International Relations* has been formed within the *American Institute of Cinematography*.\*

The purpose of the committee is to study the international aspects of the cinema in all their important ramifications. Special topics to be studied are:

(1) Compilation of an up-to-date bibliography of cinematographical material, including 35 and 16 mm. films, books, and articles.

(2) Questions of copyrights and patents regarding films.

(3) Research projects regarding tariff restrictions and quotas as they affect the films. This study will involve the application of the recent international convention regarding "duty-free" circulation of "educational" films.

(4) The problem of censorship in its international aspects.

The committee will also endeavor to encourage the production and international distribution of worth-while, constructive films relating to the best in the life and culture of the various nations.

The committee's influence would naturally turn against films that patently arouse hatred and cause international discord.

The work of the committee will not be of a spectacular nature, but will take the form of a quiet, effective, long-range program.

The committee will make a thorough study of current events releases on the screen, such as Universal Newsreel, Pathe News, Paramount News, and March of Time.

The committee will also seek to encourage more "shorts" of a helpful, educational nature on the subject of international relations.

Since the cinema is a comparatively new agency of phenomenally rapid growth, it is felt that the members of the committee should build up an *esprit de corps* as a cooperating group, and that their gradually accumulated knowledge regarding the films may be passed on by each member in his own community. Thus their collective impact will make itself felt nationally and internationally.

A complete list of the members of the American Institute of Cinematography's Committee on International Relations follows:

Rufus B. von KleinSmid, Director of the American Institute of Cinematography.

J. Eugene Harley, *Chairman*, University of Southern California.

Bruce Baxter, President, Willamette University, Salem, Oregon.

Raymond Leslie Buell, President, Foreign Policy Association, New York.

Ben M. Cherrington, University of Denver.

Kenneth W. Colegrove, Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois.

David L. Crawford, President, University of Hawaii, Honolulu.

Walter E. Disney, Mickey Mouse Productions, Hollywood, California.

Madame Laura Dreyfus-Barney, Committee of French Associations for Education and Peace, Paris.

Clyde Egleton, New York University.

Charles K. Edmunds, President, Pomona College, Claremont, California.

## CINEMA PROGRESS

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Clark Eichelberger, Director, League of Nations Association, New York.

Charles G. Fenwick, Bryn Mawr College, Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania.

Malbone W. Graham, University of California at Los Angeles.

Charles Hodges, New York University, New York.

I. L. Kandel, International Institute, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York.

Charles E. Martin, University of Washington, Seattle, Washington.

Leifur Magnusson, Director, Washington Branch, International Labor Office.

W. O. Mendenhall, President, Whittier College, Whittier, California.

Boris V. Morkovin, Chairman, Department of Cinematography, University of Southern California; Assistant Director of the American Institute of Cinematography.

Denys P. Myers, Director of Research, World Peace Foundation, Boston.

G. Bernard Noble, Reed College, Portland, Oregon.

Charles W. Pipkin, Dean of Graduate School, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

Pitman B. Potter, Institut de Hautes Etudes Internationales, Geneva.

Bessie G. Randolph, President, Hollins College, Virginia.

Aurelia Henry Reinhardt, President, Mills College, California.

Leo S. Rowe, Director General of Pan American Union, Washington, D. C.

Frank M. Russell, University of California, Berkeley, California.

James T. Shotwell, Chairman of The American National Committee on Intellectual Cooperation of the League of Nations.

Graham H. Stuart, Stanford University, California.

Elbert D. Thomas, United States Senator (Utah), Washington, D. C.

Mrs. Thomas G. Winter, Motion Picture Producers and Exhibitors of America, Hollywood, California.

Herbert Wright, The Catholic University of America, Washington, D. C.

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\*A future issue of Cinema Progress will contain more information about the work.



## The World Wakes Up to the Cinema

By EDNA WILSON

Hollywood may be the film center of the world, but it is not the only place that is interested in the cinema. Every country of the globe today is awakening to the possibilities of the motion picture, not only as a constructive entertainment but as an important factor of cultural progress of the masses.

*France*—Filmed under government patronage and financed by public subscription, Jean Renoir's film, *La Marseillaise*, will depict the events leading up to, and the important incidents during, the French Revolution. One and one-half million two-franc shares will be circulated among the French people with reduced admission rates being awarded all share-holders. The French government is also contributing 50,000 francs toward the two million francs estimated as the full cost of production. Renoir intends to show the Revolution as seen through the eyes of a typical peasant of the stormy period.

*Germany*—The Nazi regime under Reichsfuerer Adolf Hitler has already realized the important part the cinema plays in the lives of the people and is encouraging production of worthwhile pictures. Tobis Films of Germany have just signed the celebrated actor, Emil Jannings, who is now known as "State Actor and Culture-Senator of the Reich." He left for Pompeii, Italy, with Director Veit Harlan in January to film *Der Herrscher* (The Ruler), the story of a great industrial leader.

*Italy*—Millions have been invested in the construction of a movie center, called "Citta del Cinema" or Cinema City, a few miles from Rome. It is modeled after the California movie capital. The new cinema center occupies 2,000,000 square feet. It is completely equipped for picture production, with nine stages, scores of office buildings, and six projection rooms. It has its own electric power plant and water and telephone systems.

*Belgium*—M. Henry Piron, president of the Association Belge de la Presse Filmée, has been elected to the presidency of the newly-formed international Federation of Newsreel Cinematographers, known on continental Europe as the Union Internationale de la Presse Filmée. Nations which have already announced their affiliation with the new organization are Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Holland, Italy, Poland, Greece, and Palestine, with more additions expected as the group progresses. The Federation will attempt to safeguard the professional interests of all persons engaged in newsreel work.

*Soviet Russia*—National and historical films are the most popular type in Russia at the present time with both the Moscow Studios (Mosfilm) and the Leningrad Studios (Lenfilm) busy with the production of 65 full-length sound films for 1937. Most outstanding of the films are two on the subject of Pushkin, "*The Youth of the Poet*" and "*The Journey to Erzerum*"; the last part of the trilogy "*The Youth of Maxim*" being filmed by Lenfilm. Others are "*Peter I*," the scenario for which was written by Alexei Tolstoy; "*Pugachev*," an historical film covering the events from 1773 to 1774; and "*The Far East*," which will be produced by S. and G. Vasilev.

*India*—Attacks made on the laxity of India in producing films were refuted recently when Sheikh Iftekhar Rasool explained the conditions in that country affecting the filming of pictures. Mass illiteracy, language difficulties, religious views, and lack of capital are serious handicaps in India, he says. In India there has not been a single case of a bank's financing a producer at any rate of interest. The recent All-India Motion Picture Convention sent requests to the government for assistance in the matter of import duty, foreign competition, and internal censorship.

*Holland*—A Dutch version of George Bernard Shaw's *Pygmalion* will soon be on the screen following the untouched translation of the drama as nearly as possible. Dr. Ludwig Berger will return to direct *Pygmalion* for the first time since the filming of *Sins of the Fathers* in Hollywood.

*Turkey*—Following the subsidizing of Turkish film companies in 1930 by Kemal Ataturk, the Ipek studio, first in the Near East, filmed the story of the revolution and evolution in Turkey under the title, *A Nation Awakes*. Without showing Kemal in person, the picture clearly portrayed the fact that the people owed their freedom to him because of his overthrow of the Sultan and defeat of the British. Since that time, Turkish directors, who have studied all over the world, have turned to a combination of this nationalist propaganda with Hollywood's idea of civilized life in an attempt to educate the people.

*Australia*—New ideas are appearing in Australia since the passing of the Australian Quota Act in July, 1936, which makes it mandatory that at least 4 per cent of the film footage shown by an exhibitor be home-produced. Cinesound, Ltd., the major film company of Australia, has announced its future policy to include the production of five or six features annually for Australian and world distribution, the addition of a second unit for outdoor pictures, and the exchange of stars with foreign nations. In the list of films for 1937 are *Orphan of the Wilderness* which will feature "Chut", the boxing kangaroo; *Yellow Sands*, the story of Australian sport; and *Pearl of Great Price* which will describe the pearling industry.

*China*—Producer Lo Mingyua states that the two leading motion picture producing companies of China average fifty pictures a year. One chain of exhibitors has some 150 houses. Mr. Mingyua lists Norma Shearer and Clark Gable as the two American favorites. At present Mr. Mingyua is planning to film the tempestuous history of China, a story of conquest, invasions, and cultural advance.

## Community and Motion Pictures

By BETTINA GUNCZY\*

"Motion Picture Council," "Cinema Club," "Motion Picture Forum," "Film Guild," "Council of Theatre Patrons," "Better Films Council," "Motion Picture Study Club." Any of these may be the designation of a community motion picture organization, but whatever the name, they are all working toward one general objective—community participation in the development and best use of the motion picture in recreation and education. They have been doing so since the plan was first initiated by the National Board of Review of Motion Pictures in 1916, when the better films movement was beginning to take shape.

The motion picture as a factor in entertainment, in recreation, and in education has grown so in importance, the pictures have improved so much in quality during these twenty-odd years, that the approach to the subject by the community groups has gradually changed from the negative one of the motion picture as a community *problem*, to the positive one of the motion picture as a community *program*.

Scarcely a phase of community life at present is without contact of some kind with the motion picture. Whatever the special interest of an individual or an organization, be it in the home, the school, the library, the church, or in business, the motion picture has come to be considered in that interest. Therefore a community-wide motion picture organization following the original plan of representation from all the educational, social, religious, civic, and other interests of the community, has a more definitely important place.

The objectives of this educational program are:

To demonstrate through the education of public opinion the effectiveness of selection and classification, instead of censorship, as a means of forwarding the development of the motion picture and its best uses.

To encourage through open meetings, forums, classes, and other means, the study of the motion picture as a medium of entertainment, education, and artistic expression.

To fix the attention of the public on specific valuable films through the publication of a Photoplay Guide to Selected Pictures shown currently at local theatres.

To arrange family Friday night or week-end programs of selected films and to arrange junior matinees of pictures particularly suited to the tastes of children, through cooperation with local exhibitors.

To endorse and further the use of visual education through motion pictures in the schools and through university courses.

To arrange and promote occasional exhibitions of exceptional and cultural films that would not ordinarily be shown in the commercial theatres.

Thus through the last thirty years that the motion picture has been developing, the National Board of Review has believed, and continues to believe, that this plan provides for selection and discrimination on the part of the individual and for articulation and unification on the part of the organization, and as such has offered a service directly to the picture patron and indirectly to the picture producer.

\*Secretary of the National Motion Picture Council of the National Board of Review of Motion Pictures, N. Y.



## Library Linked with Screen and Radio

By MARY DUNCAN CARTER\*

It is impossible for the lover of books, be he publisher, book seller, librarian, or reader, to lose sight of the significance of other forms of communication in modern life. When he hears that eighty-one million people attend motion pictures every week, and that twenty-six million radio sets which are used from four to five hours every day are installed in homes, he cannot close his mind to the fact that the leisure time of millions is being spent in the enjoyment of these two means of communication.

It behooves the librarian, or any other person who is engaged in book distribution, to admit the significance of the radio and the screen, and to see in what way books and libraries may link up with them. Undoubtedly, the modern library will be equipped with rooms in which to listen to the talking book and projectors through which one may read the materials contained in rare books and photographed on films. The modern librarian may feel the responsibility of stocking his library with films and records; he may have a listening room for radio talks.

Some of these things have already had their beginnings. There are listening rooms for radio talks in some of the English libraries which are used as a means of encouraging discussion groups on topics of the day. There is a laboratory of experimentation for micro-photography in Chicago. The talking book is already installed in a few libraries, among them the California State Library, for use by the blind.

But what of our library of today? Can the librarian be satisfied to serve those who happen to find their way to the library and who have a natural love of reading? Or must he reach out and attempt to link the use of books with the obvious interest in the radio and the motion picture? Many librarians are already reaching out in this direction.

Those who are interested in the library and its connection to radio and screen are invited to attend a Round Table Discussion on the subject which will be a part of the Summer Convention of the Cinema Appreciation League. It will be held at the University of Southern California on the afternoon of Saturday, July 24th, from 3:30 to 5:00 o'clock. The Chairman will be Mrs. Mary Duncan Carter, Director of the School of Library Service, and the speakers will be:

Miss Gladys English, Librarian of the Children's Department, Los Angeles Public Library

"Children's Radio Book Club: Its Purpose and Results"

Mrs. Faith Holmes Hyers, Publicist, Los Angeles Public Library

"Picture Information Service in Libraries"

Mrs. Norma Olin Ireland, Reference Librarian, Pomona College

"Library Exhibits as a Link Between Motion Pictures and the Library"

Mrs. Richardson,

"The Library as Related to Motion Pictures."

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\*Director of the School of Library Service, University of Southern California.

## Better Pictures for the Child

By H. E. HASTINGS, Winnipeg, Canada

Organized to assure children better pictures, the Canadian Women's Council has carried on an active and successful program for the past year. The work is based on the findings of the Motion Picture Research Committee which was financed by the Payne Fund.

The Women's Council condemns the "double-feature" as being harmful to the physical being of the child. Extenuated emotional tension and eye strain from viewing motion pictures for a period of three to four hours is definitely harmful to the child. Their second objection to the "double-feature" is that the child usually must see a picture in which he is not interested.

This group has outlined two extensive appeals. One is directed to the industry and the other to the parents. In addressing the industry these women demand that films be graded as to audience suitability, that off-color sequences be omitted from family films, that more stories be produced about decent people, that stars who are favorites of children be kept in wholesome pictures, that less drinking be depicted, and that scenes demonstrating the technique of crime be eliminated. To the family they stress the advisability of parents selecting the family films, and they advise the parents to attend the movies with the children. They also emphasize the inadvisability of parents leaving their children for a half-day in the theatre while they shop.

In publicizing their work, they have obtained endorsements for their movement from forty-five civic organizations. The local radio station is supporting the work by broadcasting reviews of current films. The cooperation of the public libraries has been obtained in directing and stimulating interest in visual materials. The group solicited the aid of the attorney general and of the minister of education as a step toward improving the type of pictures shown.

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## Impressions of the Cinema in Paris, Geneva and Berlin

By J. EUGENE HARLEY\*

As a curious visitor direct from Los Angeles and Hollywood, where many things connected with the cinema are no longer secret and mysterious, the writer last summer invaded three cities of Europe and noted with special interest the films exhibited in the motion picture houses. Would you like to know what you could have seen if you also had been there?

In Paris the cinema seemed to be not too well attended, and many of the motion picture theatres were having a hard time to keep going at all. Among the pictures shown in August, 1936, were Harold Lloyd in "*Safety Last*," Eddie Cantor in "*The Kid from Spain*," at 4 francs; Margaret Sullavan in "*Le Corps Diable*" (the Devil in

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\*Chairman, Committee on International Relations, the American Institute of Cinematography.

Flesh), at 15 francs; and George Raft in "*Bolero*." At the Rex, the newest and best theatre in Paris, we found Shirley Temple, along with Guy Kibbee and Slim Summerville, in "*Captain January*." Of special interest to the writer was the excellent French used by Miss Shirley and Messrs. Kibbee and Summerville. Most of the Hollywood made pictures are put through the process of "doublage" or doubling (for voice only). By this process a little French girl speaks for Shirley, and the people of the audience believe that Shirley does the speaking in the French language.

The high point of our Parisian cinematographic experience came with Gary Cooper's "*Mr. Deeds Goes to Town*." Notwithstanding the fact that we had already seen the film in Los Angeles, we ventured forth to see the presentation in Paris in an elite theatre along the Champs Elysée. As we had already visited the Olympic Games in Berlin and had spent considerable money, we sought to economize a little by purchasing seats for 15 francs (\$1.05) which appeared to us to be adequate. While we expected that these seats would not be the very best, we were unprepared for realities. The boy usher showed us to the extreme front of the theatre—first four or five rows—and informed us that all of these were loges except the two at each end next to the two walls. Now it is one thing to sit in the fourth or fifth row near the center and look at the screen, but it is something else again to sit at the extreme side and look upward and cross-wise at the same time. This most awkward procedure on the part of the management of the theatre produced the desired result! The irate movie fan grumbled at the idea but finally yielded to the advice of the usher that to pay "5 francs supplémentaire" (5 francs more) making a total of 20 francs, or \$1.40, to see Mr. Deeds. The original English dialogue was used with some French titles for "*Mr. Deeds*."

Hollywood films dominate the field in Paris, but the French insist upon a certain type of romantic entertainment that only French producers can satisfy.

True to the Swiss broad-mindedness, and more in tune with the national life of Switzerland, the people of Geneva (who lean toward French culture) take their films from France, Germany, and the United States. Since Switzerland is officially tri-lingual, (French, German, and Italian), the language problem in the cinema is a real one. Voice-doubled films are used a great deal; and in many films both French and German titles are given. In Geneva (as in Paris) the current events films are called "actualities." One is impressed by the emphasis placed upon skiing and mountain scenes, but this point of interest is natural for the Swiss with their majestic Alps and their winter sports. Evening performances begin very late, usually at 8:45 or 9 o'clock, because of the late hour for dinner. There is only one show at each theatre; if you are not there on time, you miss part of the film.

In Berlin we found that the cinema world consisted of two kinds of films: those made in Germany, and those made in Hollywood. The two chief producing companies in Germany are Ufa and Tobis. The government has a large financial interest in the Ufa Company. Arriving from California, the writer became interested in the announcements that "*Der Kaiser von Kalifornien*" would be shown during the Olympic Games season. In due time we attended the Ufa-Palast am Zoo theatre to see Luis Trenker in this Kaiser of California. Having previously seen a



screen version depicting the life of John Sutter, we expected that this might be an adapted version of the same film. The show started, the Kaiser appeared, but the background and scenery were not California. We waited, but not a single scene, not a single foot of the feature was made in California. The duller-appearing streams and mountains were European.

The visitors to the Olympic Games were permitted to see a Hollywood film that ran during the entire period of the games. This was "*Seine Sekretarin*" ("*Wife versus Secretary*") featuring Clark Gable, Jean Harlow, and Myrna Loy. The original English language version was given with a running account of high points in the story being presented by titles in the German language.

A beautiful film both from the visual and the musical standpoint was shown at the Ufa-Gloria-Palast. This was the musical presentation *Schlussakkord* featuring Lil Dagover, Willy Birgel, and Maria von Tasnady. This was undoubtedly the best European-made film shown in Europe during the past summer. One could see it more than once without being bored. A leading orchestra of Berlin furnished excellent music for the film.

A good deal of advertising preceded the showing of a color film which was to reveal the latest in German color work. While the color process used in the film shown may have possibilities of perfection, it was decidedly not as good as technicolor, much less the kodachrome process. The red colors fairly shrieked with their disproportionate intensity, and the entire color effect was far from satisfactory.

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## The Interrelation of Mechanical and Human Factors in the History of Motion Pictures

BY JULIA & MURRAY KNOWLTON

In the early days of the cinema there were no studios, no lights, no scenarios; only cameras. Edison's first interest in moving pictures came through his desire to add personality to the voices of his new invention, the phonograph. He and an assistant succeeded in reproducing pictures on a cylinder coated with photographic emulsion. The pictures were so microscopic, however, a viewer had to look through a peep-hole magnifying glass to see them. Edison became discouraged with the limitations of these tiny images and decided to abandon his experiments until some sort of transparent and flexible material should be invented which would make larger photographs possible. So the development of motion pictures was retarded by the lack of a material that is today the backbone of the industry.

Celluloid film was introduced after many years of failure and ceaseless experimentation by George Eastman. Eastman was motivated by the conviction that without a flexible substitute for glass, the motion picture art would never be a commercial success. The first long strip of celluloid film was produced in 1889 at Eastman's laboratory in Rochester, New York.

Edison, encouraged by the new invention, continued his experiments. Four years later he built his famous studio, the "Black Maria". The grotesque structure was lined with black material and turned on a pivot to follow the sun. There were still no scenarios. Action was thrown together by the studio staff a few jumps ahead of the grinding camera. Nothing more startling than a sneeze was necessary to arouse pleasure and curiosity in the naive movie public; and the story department, under those conditions, hardly needed the few minutes preparation allowed it.

The first attempt at continuity came not from the motion picture producers, but from a photographer of still subjects. In 1894, Alexander Black saw the fragments of a story in a correlated group of stills, and he made a startling innovation by showing these story-telling pictures in sequence. This same year the Kinetophone was shown for the first time in Roff and Gammon's Peepshop Parlors at New York. Sound accompanied the pictures. The spectator clamped earphones to his head and strained his eyes staring down at the flickering images of Edison's trained bears and dancers. Only one individual at a time could see and hear the new marvel and each machine had a long line of curious New Yorkers.

The leaders of the industry realized that motion pictures could not develop until they could reach more people. With a new spurt of energy, inventors on both sides of the Atlantic plunged into the search for a projector capable of throwing a large image on a screen. In the same year, 1895, Latham of this country, Paul of England, and Lumière of Paris, each developed the first projector and paved the way for the huge audiences of today.

Woodville Latham, the American, worked with two associates and adapted the peephole machine to a magic lantern and made a projector. He opened the Kinetoscope Parlor on Broadway to show animated pictures of vaudeville acts, prizefights, and dancers on a screen for the first time. His machine could run off a thousand feet of film in one loading.

With projection an accomplished fact, the year 1896 brought several changes in equipment and methods. Edison invented the first electrically driven camera, the Biograph. Although bulky and weighing nearly 400 pounds, it was an advantage over the lighter hand-operated cameras of Lumière and others. Artificial lighting was used for the first time for a picture in the New York subway. As a result of the new camera, the Biograph Company was formed with a single studio. The sun was still the chief source of lighting, and an ingeniously contrived stage was constructed to follow its orbit.

This same year an obscure inventor by the name of Anton Kleigl was experimenting with a new type of lamp for use on the stage. For the first time the movies went to the spoken drama for material. A sensational kiss in a popular stage play was photographed and received considerable notoriety under the title of "The Kiss." The osculation, magnified by the first close-up on record, horrified the purity leagues of the day and started the first demand for censorship.

The next important advancement came because of the insistent demand of the public for something more than the scraps of action then available. Richard Hollaman was persuaded to produce the first connected picture having a story interest. It was

called "The Passion Play" and required as much time to film as a super production today. This same year, 1897, saw the first attempt at trick photography through double exposure and the projected background. This was used in "*A Trip to the Moon*" made by Houdini's assistant, Jules Melies.

Two hundred people lost their lives in a fire in the Paris Charity Bazaar. Whether rightly or not, the projector was blamed, and it was a long time before the public could overcome its fear to attend another showing.

The first three years of the twentieth century ushered in momentous changes in two departments. Arc lights were used as standard equipment for studio work. The lighting was flat and everything was flooded, regardless of values. The second improvement was in the scenario department; written scenarios began to appear. These early scenarios were the forerunners of the rapid fire melodramas of pre-war days. "*The Great Train Robbery*" and "*The Life of an American Fireman*" held their audiences enthralled under the spell of a new medium. In the latter, the last-minute rescue was used for the first time with such excellent results that it is still being used.

The industry was definitely growing up. The invention of Bell and Howell's light-weight "Gaumont" camera made action pictures of the "chase" type possible. This and the use of exposure meters made a great difference in the quality of photography. Light was still a problem; companies started the trek to the west coast in search of it. The small producer who couldn't afford costly equipment found a godsend in the long hours of sunlight around Los Angeles. Glass stages were introduced, but even the eternal sunshine of California was not sufficient and the demand for lights spurred experts to new inventions. Within five years there was a general adoption of artificial lighting, and backlighting was used for the first time. Lighting units became mobile. Effect lighting, small spots, and moonlight lamps were introduced by Kleigl.

While the war retarded the technique in other countries, it helped motion pictures in America to forge ahead. People were entertainment mad; trying to forget the horror and carnage that was going on across the water, they demanded more and greater movies. D. W. Griffith (who introduced parallel action in "*Birth of a Nation*") Cecil B. De Mille, Charles Chaplin, Ernst Lubitsch, were among the outstanding directors of post war days. The roll of great pictures increased year by year. "*The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*," with its symbolism and dramatic contrast emphasized by settings, was followed by the "*Thief of Bagdad*" with its emphasis on fantasy! "*Woman of Paris*," the forerunner of the sophisticated light comedy; "*Covered Wagon*," probably the greatest epic yet filmed; Charles Chaplin's outstanding picture, "*The Gold Rush*"; and the introduction of montage by Pudovkin in "*Mother*."

Throughout the history of the industry, sound technicians had never given up the dream of talking pictures. Year after year they toiled without recognition. From 1876, when Alexander Bell called to a co-worker, "Mr. Watson, come here. I want you," until 1926, there was no real public demonstration of sound. In that year Harry Warner released "*Don Juan*," the first public audition of a sound sequence.



It was introduced by Will Hays who predicted a revolutionary success for sound. As a matter of fact, the coming of sound completely disrupted the industry for the time being. The directors, the actors, the technicians, the scenarists, all had to relearn their medium of expression. *They went back to the days of "The Kiss" and tried to transfer stage technique to the screen with disastrous results.* The public was dissatisfied. As in the early days, once the novelty wore off, audiences became bored and demanded something better. There was too much talk, too little action. Now, ten years later, the motion picture industry is again finding its stride and forging ahead more rapidly than ever before.

The branch of the industry most highly developed at the present time is the cartoon. This form first made its appearance in 1906. Early subjects showed a man rolling his eyes, a dog jumping through a hoop, and similar bits of action. Today it has reached perfection in color, synchronization of sound, music, and action. Its appeal is universal. From a program filler it has become an eagerly awaited feature of the program. And this year, 1937, the color cartoon is threatening to take its place alongside feature pictures with the promised release of the world's first full-length color cartoon "Snow White and Rose Red", by the Walt Disney Studios.

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## What Does Color Add to a Motion Picture?

By CHESTER L. HOGAN, JR.

When Technicolor introduced its three-color process, producers were somewhat hesitant to try it, remembering past color booms and the subsequent drops. One company, aware of the possibilities, produced "*La Cucaracha*," a gem of color with a Spanish theme and background. The possibilities of the new process were immediately apparent and the film caused the starting of other color productions.

"*La Cucaracha*," released in 1935, was an experiment in the new process for public approval. The lighting was beautiful and effective, but certain difficulties were immediately apparent; the shadows were deep shades of green and blue which, while unique, did not pass as authentic. Close-ups of faces were avoided as the art of make-up for the new process was not complete.

"*Becky Sharp*," released on July 28, 1935, aroused the theatre-goer to the possibilities of color if properly handled. John Hay Whitney was the producer and financial backer of this first feature three-color venture. Robert Edmond Jones, one of America's foremost stage directors, acted as co-director and set designer. Jones was enthusiastic over the possibilities of wisely created color films. "Fully realizing my lack of qualification as a prophet, I am none the less confident that the introduction of color will bring about a change in screen methods comparable only to that brought about by sound. Not as quick, certainly, nor as devastating; but once a few good color films have been released, the Industry will have to become color conscious."

The picture was a monument of chromatic balancing of colors, yet the public

was made too aware of the color. Color was not used as a background, but as a means of presenting the mood. The public, not being color conscious, disapproved of the result. To be blunt, it went over their heads. Color, as yet, cannot carry the story. This was proved by "*Dancing Pirate*," released in May, 1936. In making a great picture one must have names that sell at the box office. A fairly good picture is poor business. It is most evident that story, names, and production are still needed to carry the burden of color.

"*The Trail of the Lonesome Pine*" fared better in its tour of the trade. It was a highly successful and profitable venture. Walter Wanger, the producer, instructed Director Henry Hathaway to "throw the color away." In an interview carried by *Motion Picture Herald*, Wanger declared, "the goal we set at the start of production and never deviated from, was to hew the story to the line and let color fall where it may." Unusual precautions were taken to keep the color subdued and of secondary interest. The technique of presentation was a most logical one, that of using the color in a natural way rather than as expressing the theme or mood.

"*Ramona*" was produced in much the same manner as "*Trail of the Lonesome Pine*" with color subdued or relegated to the background.

New techniques for color pictures were introduced in "*Garden of Allah*." Exterior shots of some scenes were matched perfectly with close-up shots of the same scenes which were made indoors. On location near Yuma, Arizona, the longer exterior shots were filmed. In some of the same scenes close-ups were necessary, but were made indoors with artificial lighting. The only necessary requisite was to build up the light level until it corresponded with that of the same scene taken out-of-doors. Night effects were also attempted, some being made in the daytime with natural light and filters, much as one would make a filtered night effect in black-and-white. Instead of using a heavy red filter that gives night effects in monochrome, a blue filter was used. The most effective night shots were actually made at night. The picture is breath-takingly beautiful at certain points, but the story is one which the masses of the people will never understand.

One of the most recent color pictures released was "*God's Country and the Woman*," an outdoor picture with the Northwest as the background. Beautiful scenery was used effectively within the action. This picture compares favorably with "*Trail of the Lonesome Pine*." Some new features never before attempted in three-color processes were used. In scenes showing the mountains and lakes through an aeroplane window, the rear projection method was employed. The plane's cabin and the action in it took place in front of an 8 by 10 foot rear projection screen.

The latest picture to be filmed in Technicolor is "*A Star Is Born*," released April 20, 1937, directed by William Wellman. The picture is powerful, dealing with the comic and tragic masks of Hollywood's movie makers. The two leading characters are Janet Gaynor and Frederic March. Perhaps the most praise one can pay the color is to say that you forget it is in the film. Certain scenes in the pictures utilize color as a means of presenting dramatic thought. A very beautiful sunset effect is used to emphasize the thoughts of March as he contemplates suicide. A

panoramic shot of the glittering colored lights of Hollywood and Los Angeles conveys to the audience not just a picture, but a subjective expression of the hopes and ambition of the little girl from South Dakota. The convincing quality of the scene in which the glittering little gold statue of the Academy Award is contrasted with a drab shoe is all the more remarkable when one realizes how much more color adds to a picture.

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### Illusions and Effects

By HARRY COULTER

You can't believe anything you see nor half of what you hear in Hollywood. Such was the conclusion of listeners at the third Cinema Appreciation Forum held March 19 on the University of Southern California campus. Binding more closely together education and the motion picture industry, special-effects men R. T. Layton and Ray Binger of United Artists; Slavko Vorkapich, montage expert of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer; and director-cameraman Hal Mohr, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, revealed, probably in greater detail than has ever been done before, the abracadabra by which studio magicians create fantasy and illusion.

Miniatures are coming to be used more than ever before, asserted Layton, who, for "*Ben Hur*," supervised construction of the Circus Maximum, most expensive miniature of its type ever created. In "*San Francisco*" it was known exactly how the Lyric Hall was to shake and crack. Built to scale with this knowledge in mind, the hall added a very realistic effect to the picture. The New York harbor scene in "*Maytime*" was two-thirds miniature. Models were made of the background of 1870, including the shipping and the ferry.

"Miniature work today has ceased to be just a type of model building. Miniatures must be exact duplicates of the original and must be combined with normal-action scenes of intervening distance. They are aco-perspective, and can only be construed by a scenic artist who is sensitive to this perspective."

Aladdin had his magic carpet, but the studios have their stock shots which can give the illusion of any background in the world. Roving cameramen are constantly taking shots of famous locales like the Riviera, Monte Carlo, various world capitals, etc., which the studios store in film libraries to be used when needed. Thus, in "*Dodsworth*," backgrounds of the Riviera were real, but the characters were far away in Hollywood, Layton revealed.

Use of coffee-grounds in "*The Good Earth*" to substitute for grasshoppers who temperamentally refused to become movie actors, was told by R. T. Layton. "The grasshoppers, which very much resemble locusts, would not swarm into the air in a compact mass at the right time or place. After much experimentation, we hit upon the device of boiling and saturating coffee grounds, which we put in a glass tank full of water. Placing the camera beneath the tank, we shot the coffee grounds as they floated in a mass. Then we superimposed this scene upon a background of mountains and wheat fields. As the shot was a long view, it gave the effect of millions



of locusts swarming over the crest of the mountains and into the wheat fields below." Another difficulty was to get the grasshoppers, in the close-up shots, to swarm over the brow of a hill and descend en masse upon a grain field and destroy it. Solution to this, Layton explained, was the construction of a realistic-appearing hill, in miniature, behind which was put a bouncing table. The latter was made so that anything placed upon it was immediately hurled into the air. It had a brush forty feet long in the form of a flexible shaft, which popped the grasshoppers over the hill into a specially built field of wheat. The field was constructed on the order of a roll-top desk, with six pounds of needle-grass attached to the slots of the roller. As the roller was moved, the "wheat" disappeared. The Hollywood magician had waved his wand again, and it appeared as though the hungry "locusts" were doing a good job of destroying the "wheat"!

In the bull-fighting sequence in "*The Kid from Spain*," according to Ray Binger, Cantor is shown being chased by a bull. Of course, he really wasn't. The cameraman got the animal to rush at them in a separate shot. Then the comedian stood in front of a screen upon which the action was projected, and synchronized his movements to coincide with those of the bull, while another camera recorded this composite scene. Just as the bull apparently had run into the cape Cantor was holding, it was snatched from his hand by a wire. The aeroplane scene in "*Kid Millions*," in which Cantor really is safe in a replica suspended in front of a transparent screen, is made horrifying by use of this screen background, showing spinning earth, and other details. In "*Strike Me Pink*" the same effect was used in filming a chase on a roller coaster. There was the background of spinning earth and awful gyrations, as shot on an Ocean Park roller-coaster, which Cantor had never seen. When side-view shots were required a duplicate track was built at the studio, where Cantor sat in a special, fool-proof car, which did nothing more than tilt gently. To give further illusion of motion the camera was tilted in the same direction and at the same angles as the car was supposed to be lurching. These effects were achieved by use of the rear-projection process, one of the most important of the modern "wonder-workers" magical tools. A projector, with a throw of 80 to 130 feet and a 200 ampere light, projects the desired background upon the rear of the screen, which is made of celluloid with a ground surface. On one side of the screen, the actor goes through the proper motions to suit the background. To link together the camera and the projector the overlocking synchronous motor was developed.

Montage, the art of presenting an idea through combination of a series of quick, unrelated shots, was explained by Slavko Vorkapich along with films explaining the various forms. A study of movement around the railroad yards was the first. There were shots of a train and locomotive from the side, then from the front, where it seemed to be running over the camera, the pistons of the engine, and all possible angles. This was called "analytical montage". "The filmic mind should try to see every single event, movement, or action from infinite points of view. This means a more personalized interpretation—a breaking up of monotony. Movement and stimulation are produced." Montage as a means of symbolism was illustrated in the next scene which showed stacks of money piling up on a table before the depression. Faces

of bankers looking up at the coins registered greed and happiness. Then there were quick shots of the coins falling, as the depression struck, and the bankers' faces showed fear and despair. The illusion of the coins which stacked themselves up and then fell was produced by piling the coins on tubing, which, when pulled away, naturally made the coins fall. This was shot in reverse, so that the coins appeared to be building up into huge stacks. They were really *falling up!!*

Montage symbolism was also beautifully used in "*Romeo and Juliet*," Vorkapich explained, to express love. Shots were shown of two lovers in a flower garden, of the big moon, and its sparkling radiance in the water. Then, what was apparently a lark, the bird of love, flew over the couple. The lark was really a black-bird released by a man from behind a nearby bush. Thus, without any dialogue, these scenes of quick shots blended together, impressed upon the mind the romantic mood. Vorkapich, who is the leading exponent of the art of montage, describes it as being "a creative cutting and a visual change in a static image".

The importance of the photographer in contributing dramatically and emotionally to the picture was told by Hal Mohr. He used illustrations of "*A Midsummer Night's Dream*" and "*Green Pastures*," two different types of fantasies, which required camera interpretations. The former tried to convey scenes of the spiritual, of the unreal, and of the lyrical, according to Mohr. This required a distinct method of lighting, handling of people, and presenting of material upon the screen. "*Green Pastures*," said Mohr, "is a primitive fantasy—the colored person's idea of what heaven should be like. The angels were dressed in night-gowns and had paper wings. Even the clouds were purposely unreal, being obviously huge chunks of cotton.

That you cannot believe all you hear was also indicated by Hal Mohr, who revealed that singing in motion pictures is pre-recorded. In photographing the scene, the songs are played back and the players synchronize their work with the sound track. Synchronous motors accurately combine the sound and action.

Such, briefly, is the work of the modern witch-doctor—the Hollywood cameraman, special-effects men, and montage artists, whose powers are far greater than any ascribed by history to Merlin or any of the ancient miracle-workers.

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## Hints for the Screen Writer

If you can chase a man up a tree, throw stones at him, and then bring him safely down again, you may become a successful screen writer.

At least that is the contention of Graham Baker, United Artists scribe, who, with Miss Dorothy Yost, RKO writer, and Warren Scott, University College scenario instructor, recently gave inside pointers at the Fourth Cinema Appreciation Forum held April 19 on the art of creating salable motion picture plays.

In advising one to chase people up trees, Baker was speaking figuratively, of course, of slapstick comedy, which he declares is good preparation for "big league"

writing. Baker, himself, gained skill as a stone-thrower when he first came to Hollywood, turning out five comedies a week, which he sold for \$35 each.

Collaborator with Gene Towne, with whom he forms the famous screen writing team of Towne and Baker, he has authored such successes as "*Little Caesar*," "*Five Star Final*," and "*Sonny Boy*." The latter film has grossed more than any other, costing \$212,000 and making \$5,000,000.

Story evolution goes something like this, Baker says:

1. First you get an idea;
2. You write it;
3. Then you rewrite it, perhaps many times.

"You must continually tap the pulse of the public for your story ideas," Baker explained. "Perhaps your scenarios will be conceived from newspapers, plays, shows, or just from talks with people."

A story currently being written for Leslie Howard is an example of a plot suggested by a newspaper item, he said. A small article told about two convicts. One, scheduled to be executed in a short time, had \$1000 worth of property. He made the other convict executor of the estate. The studio quickly grabbed this theme for a story.

Often yarns are written around a certain star. Their known characteristics determine the type of play. A much different story would have to be written for Clark Gable, for instance, than for Leslie Howard.

Sylvia Sidney was to be the lead in one. As Baker puts it, "she suffers magnificently," so he and Towne wrote a prison picture, "*Ladies of the Big House*." So well did Miss Sidney "suffer," other prison roles were given her in "*Mary Burns, Fugitive*," and "*You Only Live Once*."

Baker closes with the following hints for writers:

1. Strive for motion. Be conscious of the camera more than of the microphone. In "*Mary Burns, Fugitive*," 75 per cent was motion, and 25 per cent dialogue.
2. For dialogue, have interesting topics of conversation. If the topic is not dull, the dialogue will not be dull.
3. The characters tell the story—and sell it. Give the actors plenty of "business," little mannerisms, character touches, and facial movements.
4. A literary style always annoys producers who are not literary themselves. A writer must be able to adapt himself to studio demands. Baker and Towne are two of the few scenarists who never write a line until they have sold the producer their story idea.

According to Warren Scott, stories must have these important qualities:

1. Universality of appeal. Subjects of world-wide interest that people want. They may be familiar, but must have a new slant.
2. Visual presentability. Forget elaborate phrasing. Make PICTURES.
3. Inherent motion. The theme has to be carried up a hill by the main character, assisted by another character. When he finally reaches the top, the main character must jump off. Every character has a function in the story. He must help



carry the theme up hill. He has a certain place, certain obligations, and traits which typify him. Thus, there is motion and vitality of life.

4. Emotional appeal. Entertain people through the heart as well as through the head.

5. Conflict. A combination of mental and physical.

6. Climax. Reached through inherent motion of the story.

7. Tempo and balance.

8. Dialogue. It must show the cream and essence of natural conversation. It must flow smoothly—must be a part of the action and not stop it.

9. Names and titles. Very important because they suggest an image. For screen purposes, Joan Rosebud became Joan Blondell, and Spangler Arlington Brugh became Robert Taylor. "*History Is Made at Night*," is a good title. It makes people ask, "What kind of history?" It arouses conjecture, hints at mystery.

"The essential quality of a story is facts," Scott declared. "The story that sells well is the one that has old qualities contained in it—things that are about us every day."

"In writing for the screen you have to SHOW the scene, not merely put down words," Scott said; "otherwise the story is not successful; inherent motion is necessary, moving to a climax. Actors have to go through a scene in lifelike characterizations. Life and vitality are essential to hold the audience."

In regard to story ideas, Miss Dorothy Yost, for 18 years a film writer, declares:

"Why worry if the studio steals your idea? If you are a person of only one idea, you had better put it in a book or story, where you can look at it."

A flexibility of approach, an interest in everything, and a willingness to cooperate are necessary for a studio writer, she stated.

"Anyone can write a story," Miss Yost said. "The better plays are centered around ideas from life and everyday things. There is a story in everything. Don't narrow your viewpoint, and don't take the first idea that comes along."

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## Motion Pictures as an Expressive Form in Art

By NEJAT A. YONCEOVA, A. B., *Universit yof Istamboul, Turkey*

Reviewed By WINIFRED F. WATTS

*A Critical Survey of the Motion Picture as an Expressive Form in Art*, written for the Department of Cinematography at the University of Southern California by Nejat A. Yonceova in his A. M. thesis, calls attention to the open field for intensive research in the aesthetics of the motion picture. He considers this problem doubly important because (1) the motion picture is a synthetic art, and as such has at its disposal the media of all the other arts; but on account of the very richness of its resources it can easily degenerate into an inferior *pot-pourri* form; (2) since its appeal is world-wide, the motion picture is responsible for the education of the sensibilities of world audiences.

A study of the relation of the motion picture to the sister arts of literature, the

theatre, music, and painting leads the author to expect the development of a new form of motion picture which will far surpass the standard magazine-story type of picture which is prevalent today and which has developed out of all proportion to other forms. This predominance of a single inferior form has created the fallacious impression that the motion picture is inadequate to express more subtle values of ethical and aesthetic worth. New forms other than the dramatic may be expected in the motion picture as soon as the first enthusiasm for new discoveries of a mechanical and technical nature shall have abated. Epical or lyrical poetry, biography and autobiography, or other literary forms may be used to create a new motion picture form; or a poetically combined cinematic form of rhythmically moving objects and sounds may arise.

But the motion picture must never forego *movement* as its own peculiar characteristic, and therefore will always be preeminently a *musical* art, dependent upon *tempo*, and demanding rhythmical arrangements of mobile elements.

Consideration of the world-wide appeal of the motion picture leads the author to insist on the importance of the individual point of view of the director. If we admit the variability of content and form in the motion picture, then the director must be given the free scope of the creative artist. But since the motion picture is destined to be the educator of the sensibilities of world audiences, then the director's philosophy of life, which he will of necessity express even if he himself be unaware of it, becomes of supreme importance both ethically and aesthetically.

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## Instructional Agents of the New Era

By SARAH McLEAN MULLEN\*

The increased complexity of present-day living brings with it the necessity for students to accumulate a mass of unorganized information. There is an even greater need today than ever for the learner, if he would be successful, to *master* factual information in the field in which he plans to earn his living. But there are, in addition, a bewildering array of other facts which he must comprehend, if not master, so that he may live effectively as a constructive member of his social community. The text book is no longer counted upon to provide all essential information, nor can the magazine, newspaper, or other printed material, carry the entire burden of communication. The spoken word of the lecturer and instructor too often fail because of lack of time for presentation of a complete exposition or of sufficient examples to make clear the meaning or because of other limitations inherent in the use of words. Too long the teacher and the student have counted upon mere verbalism.

The student of this busy age finds he has not sufficient time, or often, sufficient ability to *read* with comprehension the subject matter he would master. Fortunately, science, which has made living so complex with its increasing demands, has also supplied new media of communication of ideas, readily available to all. Electricity

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\*Mrs. Sarah McLean Mullen is the Head of the English Department and coordinator of visual education at Abraham Lincoln High School. She is a member of the Committee on Visual Education for the N. E. A., and will conduct courses in visual education during the summer session at the University of Southern California.

## CINEMA PROGRESS

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has made the pictured screen and radio the handmaids of education. Both provide the student with means of learning that are easy, fast, and effective. And above all, they are pleasurable methods.

"We are living today in a rapidly changing social order," we are frequently told. How necessary it is that educators keep step not alone in giving factual instruction that will prepare the present school generation to fit into this new order, but to develop attitudes and appreciations that will make them want to forward those changes toward realizable and worth-while goals!

The radio makes its chief contribution in provision of current supplementary materials through programs carefully developed. Interviews, concerts, reports of economic and social events and of experimentation, as well as news and sports keep us abreast of the times. Radio has a way of making boys and girls feel a part of living today without the necessity of waiting till they grow up. Motion pictures, both theatrical and commercial, release all barriers of time or space. There is no place in the geographic world, which it is not possible to see in pictures. Practically every known sound, too, has been captured mechanically and recorded, ready for re-presentation through sound pictures or radio to give new meaning to conglomerate letters. The two agents of radio and motion pictures are available; they are popular; they are effective. It remains only for the schools to avail themselves more constructively of the screen and the dial.

That mental learning and emotional experience must go hand in hand to bring about complete education is the fundamental educational philosophy. How, then, can teachers who consider themselves up-to-date continue to disregard the use of two such powerful agents of instruction as the screen and the microphone? It is as foolish to attempt to prevent their full entry into the scheme of education as were the vain efforts to limit education to the traditional three R's. We are cheating youth when we do not add the new R's of Radio and Reels.

Already in most schools of the metropolitan centers of the United States visual aids to education have been recognized as valuable, and centers of production and distribution have been established. Production, however, has far out-distanced use. Teachers are quick to acknowledge the benefits of experience gained through handling of objects, through slides—too often still called "magic-lantern" slides—, through cursory inspection of pictures. They insist upon illustrated reading material, but still regard these as mere supplementary materials to enliven book learning. There are not a few who limit the use of visual materials to rewards for good learning—through reading. They fail to recognize that these materials have a significance as aids to learning, or that they often provide new concepts or corrected concepts to the student. They fail to realize that visual learning is not limited to reading and that all sensory learning is essential; that all forms of visual and auditory aids should be utilized.

The reasons for neglect of audio-visual educational aids are many. The strongest probably is fear. Some fear the machine will eliminate teachers. To those who know the correct use of audio-visual apparatus that idea is ridiculous. To other teachers, the mere sight of a projecting machine is frightening, because they are afraid



to manipulate it. They are ignorant of techniques of visual instruction and they fear to attempt their use lest they find themselves less competent than they now judge themselves to be—masters of teaching through reading. And yet how poorly many of our high school students read! They don't half try, we say. But should they? Perhaps the students are wiser than the teachers, having known the facility and joy of learning through the radio and talking pictures during their entire lives. They are conditioned to these new agents; and it is the older generation which lags behind, still worshipping an outmoded fetish—the book.

Many states have wholeheartedly adopted educational programs based upon daily use of audio-visual instruction. Pennsylvania, for example, insists that one pre-requisite for a teacher's certificate is a course in these newer technics. The requirement is retroactive to the extent of demanding that teachers now in the ranks who lack this training shall take courses in audio-visual education. Other states and individual cities are adopting similar measures.

The children of America are not to be much longer denied the use of essential aids. While lack of funds has hindered the purchase of proper equipment and materials, industry has leaped to provide visual programs, to make loans and gifts of pictorial materials, more especially of illustrative booklets and of reels of picture films. Valuable as these sponsored commercial films have proved to be in vitalizing learning, they lack the skillful construction based upon educational psychology to which teachers have grown accustomed in other teaching materials. Teachers demand teaching films that are truly educational films.

Educators must take the leadership in determining not only what pictures will be shown in the school, but when and where, how and why. The radio, through control of the Federal Council for Communication, has already established excellent educational programs over the two major net works, programs worked out by teachers with a realization of school needs and developed by masters in the field of music, literature, economics, geography, and other educational subjects. A wealth of material is on the air. Its use depends merely upon administrative organization to make it available and upon teacher knowledge of how to present it most effectively.

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## Motion Picture and Corrective Work

By LARRY E. LAWRENCE

While making an educational picture of the corrective work at Benjamin Franklin High School at Rochester, New York, I realized the potency of this new tool of education, particularly in the field of health and physical education. I felt that this medium is summoned to revise the teaching methods of the future. The urge for the mastery of this medium became so strong that I found myself in the University of Southern California doing experimental work in cinematography.

My research work in cinematography gave me a new outlook, and I saw my experiment in Rochester in a different light. To me, the making of a picture is now

no longer producing merely a teaching adjunct, but developing a new educational method which is capable of arousing the initiative and creative cooperation of students with their parents in the corrective and restricted work.

This corrective picture was an attempt to show the type of work being done in the secondary school for the individual student in the correction of postural defects and the alleviation of foot abnormalities. Since part of the program is devoted to recreational activities, the games best adapted to the corrective program were developed in a newsreel treatment of archery, shuffleboard, and deck tennis. This picture is thus brought to a climactic finish by presenting a title which states that a perfect body, happy disposition, and a return to normal health are the aims of the individual health training program. The scene then fades to "shots" of this ideal student in athletic activities, utilizing the principles taught by producing efficient coordination of muscles and kinesthetic beauty of movement.

There were several technical problems involved in making a 16 mm. picture. The problem of lighting was eliminated by borrowing several photoflood lights and using a minimum intensity of several thousand watts. A photo-electric meter was then employed to determine the correct exposure, but in addition to this we "ran" through about thirty feet of test film. The experimentation with various diaphragm readings by the photographer enabled him, after this film was developed, to choose the best "stop". The orthochromatic film was used for the outdoor and the panchromatic for the indoor scenes. The camera was the Eastman Cine Kodak, Model B with a one-inch f. 1.9 lens. It was of course necessary to have a tripod so that all camera movement could be eliminated. An exact record of "shots" and sequences was kept, so that editing could be done with some degree of accuracy.

Various exercises were presented. An exercise showing the correction of the upper back was executed in front of a mirror. Another exercise demonstrating the amount of lung expansion was accomplished by having the student place the hands on the sides of the chest and inhale and exhale as deeply as possible. The camera was then placed so that a close-up of the breathing process (as indicated by the flexibility of the chest walls) could be obtained by "shooting" directly down upon the student's chest. In the exercises for the correction of the arches of the feet, an effective "shot" was devised by having the student write her name with her toes.

The results of this picture may have been beginner's luck for it was made at an expense of less than twenty-five dollars and contains about three hundred and twenty-five feet of film. The services of the cameraman, janitorial staff, physical education faculty, and students in the school were donated.

In the process of making this picture, I discovered the magic effect of the camera in vitalizing the work so that students were able to grasp the significance of good posture without coercion on the part of the teacher. The classroom mirror took on a new meaning as the group prepared to withstand the acid test of the camera. Students were not preparing for the remote future, but the immediate present. The members of the class were no longer individuals segregated from other activity groups because of a physical handicap; instead they were privileged characters. The classroom had become a laboratory and the students experimenters in the field of research.

Perhaps its greatest value was that of securing parent interest. So vital had become the program that the children wanted the parents to see the picture. Thus, entirely ignorant of the truer significance, the parents were able to visualize the work, understand the types of defects—the preventive as well as the corrective measures which were being attempted. It is only through parental understanding and cooperation that progress can be made and benefits derived.

It was also found that the motion picture was a powerful argument for the expansion of the program when presented to administrators. And it is reasonable to believe that when legislators demand educational retrenchment, this new tool in education can do much to argue for corrective work.

In making this picture of the corrective program, the encouraging effect of the work on the students prompted me to search for still better ways of utilizing this new medium. By producing a short 16 mm. picture as a part of a class project, in the Department of Cinematography, I now found that an educational picture could present its subject more effectively if it used various impressive cinematic devices; camera angles, camera distances, chemical dissolves, different methods of cutting, etc. By breaking up the scenario into smaller fragments of actional details and assembling them in a vivid and suggestive way not unlike a jig-saw puzzle, one can exert an unusual effect upon the attention of students. As a result, the picture ceases to be a mere illustration to the verbal lecture of the teacher. By cinematic building up the action, it guides the mind, stirs the imagination of the student and involves his participation and collaboration with the lesson presented in the picture.

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## A Motion Picture Unit for Sixth Grades

By MARGUERITE ESTUDILLO

This study of motion pictures and motion picture appreciation was presented in the sixth grade at the Thirty-second Street Demonstration School in Los Angeles, California.

At the beginning of the semester when the teacher and pupils were discussing study units in which they were interested, the children expressed a wish to study motion pictures.

The unit was started by a discussion lesson, with the pupils finding out what they wished to know about this huge industry. All the objectives were listed by the teacher and these included: learning about the early history of motion pictures; present-day production; studio life; sound pictures; cartoons; photography; film; sets; makeup; "props," projectors, sound effects; etc.

A mimeographed questionnaire about their movie attendance, picture preferences, etc., was filled out by the pupils. The preparatory work was completed by a trip to the Los Angeles Museum, where the motion picture section presented an interesting and instructive cross-section of this industry. This display, which includes early motion



pictures, was studied, beginning with the Chinese puppets, through Leland Stanford's developments down to the present-day pictures.

The children then chose project units which they would like to work on, such as costume designing, making cartoons, sound effects, "props," toy-sets, and photographic experiments.

The group on costume design first experimented on folk dancing costumes (to be made and used for a program) which were copies of a drawing, and were water-colored. They then made original sketches showing the four steps in designing movie wardrobes. These steps included (1) conceptional drawing (undecorated), (2) details added on one-half the dress, (3) completed front view, and (4) completed back view. These were also water-colored.

The cartoon group practiced on original and copied cartoons, making single comics and in a series. After many practice periods the pupils made first drafts on onion-skin paper, traced these on celluloid with ink, and on a second piece of celluloid opaqued (water-colored) the drawings. Others made cartoons depicting a series of slight movements and then put them on celluloid and opaqued them. One background was made for all the pictures taking place in the same locale. Manilla paper was used and it was water-colored. Members of this group also made mutoscope peep shows, which are progressive action drawings, bound together, and show movements when thumbed through rapidly.

A praxinoscope, another work project, was more difficult to make. It was modeled after one in the Museum, being made of cardboard, small mirrors and a cartoon series, which were pasted on the outer revolving cardboard circle and reflected in the mirrors on the center spool.

Sound effects were easily made and were interesting to those pupils who enjoy manual activity. Airplane noises were made by wrapping tape around the prongs of an egg-beater and putting a pin through each piece of tape. Railroad noises were obtained by putting pebbles in a can. A piece of tin punched with holes in various places, and scraped with another piece of tin produced the sound of a train starting, and when the tin was completely perforated, it gave the illusion of a train going at full speed. Crumpled cellophane was used for a fire-burning noise; halved coconuts rubbed on a padded board sound like horses running. A lion's roar was obtained by running a leather strap through a toy drum.

The toy set unit planned their set and then practiced drawing on large sheets of heavy manilla paper. A satisfactory drawing was put on heavy cardboard and then kalsomined in colors.

There is little available material for informational type lessons, but a few books are available to explain the inner workings of a great studio. We were especially fortunate in having students from the Cinematography Department of the University of Southern California give lectures on (1) color photography, (2) projectors, (3) sound, (4) news-reels, (5) special effects, (6) cartoons, and (7) make-up. The day following each talk we would have a class discussion of the things learned from the lecture and then each pupil would write a short essay on the information he had learned.

## CINEMA PROGRESS

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Composition practice was gained by having open discussion of the motion pictures seen during the week, and then writing a criticism of the cinema (from the viewpoint of a sixth-grader).

Each pupil made a movie scrap-book with designed cover. Pictures of stars, movie reviews, individual written work, and related miscellaneous materials were pasted in. The proper arrangement of material provided an instructive lesson.

The bulletin board displayed newspaper clippings about the studios, latest pictures, movie reviews, and pictures of the actors and actresses.

This unit is still in progress and will be completed by the students filming a short school news-reel, which they will develop and cut.

Since the majority of the pupils see movies weekly, this study has proved very valuable to them, besides being one of great interest, and it has developed a finer appreciation and understanding of the industry.

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## National Cinema Appreciation Convention In Los Angeles, July 22-27

As the culmination of a very active season, the Cinema Appreciation League will have its Annual Convention from July 22-27 under the general guidance of Dr. Rufus B. von KleinSmid, president of the University of Southern California and director of the American Institute of Cinematography; Dr. Vierling Kersey, superintendent of the Los Angeles City Schools; Dr. Lester Burton Rogers, dean of the Summer Session; and Dr. Boris V. Morkovin, head of the Department of Cinematography at the University of Southern California and editor-in-chief of the magazine, *Cinema Progress*.

JUNE 20-JULY 30 . . . Before the convention, *Motion Picture Summer Institute* will take place at the University of Southern California from June 20 to July 30. Courses will be given to train teachers in "Appreciation of Motion Pictures" and "Audio-visual Education" by Mrs. Sarah McLean Mullen; "Motion Picture Production and Scenario Writing" by Dr. Boris V. Morkovin; and "Social and Psychological Aspects of Motion Pictures" by Dr. Milton F. Metfessel.

JULY 6 AND 7 . . . . On July 6 and 7 will be the *pre-convention* of those who will participate in the Summer Institute during which the Motion Picture Forum on "Writing for the Screen" will be conducted by the leading writers of Hollywood. Dudley Nichols ("*The Informer*"), Graham Baker ("*History Is Made at Night*"), and others. On July 7 the awards will be given for the best screen story written by students of the Summer Institute, teachers, and members of the Cinema Appreciation League. In honor of the twenty members

## CINEMA PROGRESS

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and authors of the best stories a round-table will be conducted and tea given by Miss Frances Marion ("*Camille*") in her garden house.

JULY 22 AND 23 . . . The main convention will start on Thursday, July 22, with a Cine-Art performance (*staged scenario*). On Friday, July 23, the following round-tables will be farmed:

- (1) "Theatrical and Non-theatrical Films, Their Evaluation and Use in Schools," with Mrs. Sarah McLean Mullen as chairman.
- (2) "Social Studies and International Relations," with Dr. Milton Metfessel as chairman.

The Cine-Art Banquet will be given with addresses by Rouben Mamoulian and Spencer Tracy in the Town and Gown Foyer, University of Southern California.

JULY 24 . . . . . On Saturday, July 24, the following round-tables will take place:

- (1) "Administrative and Organizational Problems Connected with the Teaching of Motion Picture Appreciation and Audio-visual Education," with Mr. William B. Brown, secondary curriculum section, Los Angeles City Schools, as chairman.
- (2) "Radio and Television in Education," with Mrs. T. H. Rew, U. S. C., as chairman.
- (3) "Stage and Screen Make-Up," with Mr. A. B. Shore of Max Factor's, as chairman.
- (4) "Libraries in Motion Picture Appreciation," with Mrs. Mary Duncan Carter, head of the School of Library Service, U. S. C., as chairman.

JULY 26 AND 27 . . . On Monday morning, July 26, there will be an excursion to Hollywood studios and in the afternoon a preview of a major studio. The Convention will end with a business meeting and election of officers on Tuesday, July 27, at 2 p. m.

All teachers of appreciation of motion pictures, students and civic workers in motion picture appreciation are cordially invited to participate in this important milestone of the movement. The detailed program will be sent to anyone interested by MISS ROSE WALTON, Secretary of the Convention. Address, 3551 University Avenue, Box 74, Los Angeles, California.



## Open Forum

Miss Frances Marion, writer and producer of Columbia Studio, recipient of the silver plaque awarded by the American Institute of Cinematography in 1937, will be glad to answer questions of subscribers and readers of *Cinema Progress* on the subject of Screen Writing.

A few questions received are answered by Miss Marion as follows:

Q. 1. Should the amateur's script be written in the form of scenario?

Ans. The only form of motion-picture writing for the amateur is the original story with no technical directions or matter. In appearance it is the same as the magazine story, but its content must have more action and drama than the usual magazine story.

Q. 2. Would a college story adapt itself to the screen and have box-office appeal—I mean, without music?

Ans. Yes, with or without music. It would appeal to youth and offer opportunity for love episodes and drama.

Q. 3. Is the "triangle" story—the husband, wife, and other woman type—still in demand and marketable for screen use?

Ans. The "triangle" story was, is, and apparently ever will be, from ancient Greek drama to Mickey Mouse and onward.

Q. 4. What is the importance of dialogue to the plot and characterization?

Ans. The plot determines what the characters shall talk about. Dialogue must either advance the action, develop character, or get a laugh, or do all three of these, otherwise it merely halts the action of the plot. Dialogue must be consistent with character. It should agree with a character's education, environment, temperament condition and circumstances. Settle these things first, then make the dialogue correspond.

Q. 5. Will the treatment of "*Garden of Allah*" establish precedent for future handling of denouements? This ended in sacrifice.

Ans. The validity of the sacrifice ending has long been established. The ending of "*Garden of Allah*" was inevitable. The hero would have found neither happiness nor self-respect unless he kept his vow, nor would the heroine if he had done otherwise. What the world wants is the happiest ending that *logic will permit*.

## Letters to Cinema Progress

NORMA SHEARER.

"Thank you very much for having sent on the November issue of *Cinema Progress*. The splendid tribute to Mr. Thalberg was deeply appreciated, as were also your kind wishes."

INTERNATIONAL EDUCATIONAL CINEMATOGRAPHIC INSTITUTE IN ROME, LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

"Having received your magazine, *Cinema Progress*, published under the auspices of The American Institute of Cinematography, we express our desire to establish permanent relations with you and obtain through you a liaison between our Institute and the governmental cultural and cine-industrial organization in America."

BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE.

"It would seem that the work which we are trying to do is closely parallel to the work which you are doing. We would very much welcome the opportunity to exchange publications with you . . . to receive from you a syllabus, "*Fundamentals of Motion Picture Production*," used in the Department of Cinematography at the University of Southern California, as well as copies of your magazine, *Cinema Progress* . . ."

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, REPUBLIC OF CHINA, NANKING.

"A copy of *Cinema Progress* was referred to me a few days ago. . . . We are very much interested in your work. Since our work has just been started and at the same time is new to our people, any suggestion or account of experience from you will be of tremendous help to us. The Ministry subsidizes each and every province and municipality in purchasing the necessary equipment for showing educational films and supplies films free of charge regularly with the ultimate hope of establishing two thousand such centers throughout the Republic. . . ."

SECTION TECHNIQUE DU CLUB DE L'ECRAN IN BRUSSELS.

"Once a week we give lectures on different motion picture subjects with a showing of films. The principal subjects treated this year were: "The Color in Films, and Its Use in Walt Disney Cartoons," "Documentary Films," "Different Phases of Production," "Use of Music, Sound, Dialogue, etc." Another lecture treated sound and dialogue, cartoon, and trick films. . . . Next year we are planning to extend this activity and hope to develop this forum into a Cinema Appreciation League. . . ."

"We would be very grateful to receive some of your programs and material you issue for your Forums and Convention, and will do our best to make known the importance of your movement here and will write about it in our papers."

## A New Cinema Progress

Today, with the entire world realizing the possibilities offered by radio and the films in education, in entertainment, and in international understanding, intelligent people are looking for a source of authentic information in these fields. We, the editors of CINEMA PROGRESS, intend to develop our magazine so that we shall be able to bring to you the information that you desire. But an increased subscription list is a primary requisite in presenting regularly an explanation of the problems, techniques, and possibilities of the industry.

With the aid of prominent men in active technical, production, and publicity work, we will be enabled to provide you with immediate authentic data. We have already secured the assistance and interest of such film luminaries as Cecil B. De Mille, Adolph Zukor, Spencer Tracy, Boris Morros, W. S. Van Dyke, Ernst Lubitsch, King Vidor, Walt Disney, Frank Capra, and Max Reinhardt in our work. Now we must obtain your help in the same work.

We will accomplish real Cinema Progress in the year 1937-38 with your help. We should like to reach all of the approximately 20,000 cinema appreciation classes and study groups in high schools and the 100 universities with photoplay and audio-visual education courses, as well as the thousands of individuals throughout the United States who are interested in the future of the cinema and radio. We should like to place CINEMA PROGRESS on a regular monthly publication basis and bring to these groups monthly previews of forthcoming major studio productions. It is our desire to establish a closer relationship between the motion picture industry and you who comprise the cinema audiences.

It remains for you to make CINEMA PROGRESS your own magazine and your own medium of expression. The subscription blank which you will find herewith attached will bring you CINEMA PROGRESS for one year. One subscription is not enough. Place this before your friends and acquaintances and interest them in the understanding and appreciation of radio, cinema, and television—the most valuable media of the century.





# Cinema Progress

3-3  
The Film and Life



"THE ROAD BACK" — DOES IT LEAD TO PEACE?

*In this Issue:*

- Robert Hill Lane
- Boris Morros
- W. S. Van Dyke

- Sydney Franklin
- Barrett Kiesling
- Frances Marion

**AUG.**  
**30c**  
**1937**

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Lionel Barrymore	Walt Disney	Paul Muni
Warner Baxter	Howard Estabrook	Jane Murfin
Frank Capra	Sidney Franklin	Luise Rainer
Claudette Colbert	Henry Hathaway	Max Reinhardt
John Cromwell	Helen Hayes	Robert Riskin
Jack Conway	Frank Lloyd	Spencer Tracy
Gary Cooper	Ernst Lubitsch	W. S. Van Dyke
George Cukor	Rouben Mamoulian	King Vidor
Bette Davis	Frances Marion	Slavko Vorkapich
Cecil B. De Mille	Victor Milner	Adolph Zukor
William Dieterle	Boris Morros	



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### EDITORIAL

- Creative Approach to the Cinema..... 2

### LIFE AND THE CINEMA

- 'The Road Back'—Does It Lead to Peace?..... 3  
Who Is To Be Blamed for Poor Pictures?..... 5  
The Movies Watch Television Progress..... 7  
More Art and More Children..... 8  
Good Books Make Good Movies..... 9  
The Film Goes Forward in India..... 10

### MOTION PICTURE ART AND TECHNIQUE

- Franklin the Thorough..... 12  
Van Dyke the Unorthodox..... 14  
Essentials of Educational Film Production..... 16  
Sound Technique in Motion Pictures..... 17  
Music and Films..... 19  
Movie Magic of the Month..... 23

### SCHOOL AND CINEMA

- Life Should Begin at School..... 25  
Education 'Goes Hollywood'..... 28  
British Found Film School..... 30

- FRANCES MARION'S SCREEN WRITING FORUM..... 32

## Creative Approach to the Cinema

Modern mechanical inventions have proved to be double-edged weapons. They have increased man's power and comfort immensely, but at the same time they have given rise to various economic problems such as overproduction, unemployment, and depression. The excessive division of labor has meant the mechanization and standardization of life. Instruments for destructive warfare make possible another world conflagration which may prove fatal to civilization. It will require a great creative effort within and between nations to direct these recently conjured powers of mechanical forces toward the benefit of all classes and all peoples.

The mechanical inventions of moving pictures have not only increased the facilities of commercial entertainment, but they are rapidly spreading the pattern of living of western civilization through the entire world. The immense possibilities of the cinema as a new art of the 20th century and its potential power to aid the real progress of humanity can be used only if the leaders of both movie production and movie consumption approach them in the creative spirit. Without this, the indiscriminating masses, hypnotized by the glamour of cheap movies, will blindly adopt socially doubtful values and have their appetites whetted toward false ideals as they pursue the "modern" way of living, loving, and thinking.

To further the creative approach to the production and consumption of movies and to stimulate cooperation between movie-makers and the public, the Cinema Appreciation League provides a meeting place for creative artists, conscious of their great responsibility for their product, and for the leaders of the rapidly increasing cinema conscious audience — educators, students, parents, and civic leaders. Far-seeing producers, having an organized contact with this new type of "fan", will be able to give their best, knowing that their efforts will be appreciated by the audience and supported at the box office.

The producer and director will be encouraged to make more creative approaches to the selection of stories and to their interpretation. Some directors have already been doing this as the interviews in this issue will show. The creative director does not mechanically mix up the contributions of the writer, the art director, the camera man, the research, property, and wardrobe departments, etc., but he imparts his vision to all of them, fusing the technical devices and the collective efforts of the entire studio into a unified work of art. The teacher and student of movie appreciation, the intelligent parent, or any cinema conscious consumer will follow the creative process of cinema artists to increase and deepen his own enjoyment. Once the conception of the whole picture has been defined, the student may profit greatly from the analysis and criticism of the picture. He will see how the variety of data collected by the story writer or by the research department upon the epoch, social strata or background, on history and geography, customs and costumes, or on individual, national, or racial psychology will crystallize before his eyes into living characters and situations. He will gain insight of how characters with different purposes, ideals, conflicts, heroisms, and weaknesses are related to each other and to their background and individual predicaments; how all the details fit together into a living and organic whole.

In their critical evaluation and study of motion pictures, the teachers and students

of motion picture appreciation, of drama and the fine arts, of music or science, will learn and teach the "how" of motion pictures. In following the creative processes of production they will recognize the use of technical and artistic cinematic devices. By and by, they will understand the *cinematic language* into which the story has been translated. By breaking it into crucial dramatic situations, they will see how the dramatic emphasis, effects and atmosphere were built up by the help of acting, dialogue, camera angles, lighting, sound effects, and music, by the tempo of cutting, and by scenario technique; how the capabilities of microphone and camera were utilized to the utmost; how by skillful dramatic blending of sight and sound the strings of millions of human hearts have been played upon; how, in short, the dream of Wagner, as mentioned in one of the following articles, creating a magnificent synthesis of all the arts, has been achieved in the cinema.

### 'The Road Back'—Does It Lead to Peace?

Can war pictures foster peace? Is the camera mightier than the sword?

Peace advocates, pointing out that during the past 4,400 years the world has had only 264 years of peace—one for each 15 years of war—are hoping that Universal's *The Road Back*, sequel to its famed predecessor, *All Quiet on the Western Front*, will help mold public opinion against human slaughter. Jittery at the thought that modern warfare may not let man survive another 4,400 years, they hope that this latest war-debunker will uphold the tradition of *The Big Parade*—that it will be another *All Quiet on the Western Front*, a film which caused many persons to remark:

*"If this picture could be shown in every theater in the world people would see how stupid war is and would refuse to be stampeded into another conflict."*

Jesse L. Lasky once said:

"Conscientiously, we avoid propaganda of any kind. Unconsciously our pictures reflect current trends of thought. Since *All Quiet on the Western Front*, first major picture to debunk and deglorify war, the screen has fol-

lowed the paths of literature and newspapers in presenting war as it is, a calamitous horror.

*"I believe the screen, without deliberate propaganda, will automatically serve as one of the greatest educational factors in bringing to the masses the truths of war and peace. And the world's reigning statesmen cannot forever ignore a universal desire for permanent peace."*

The action of *The Road Back* takes place during the last 48 hours of the war and shortly thereafter, depicting the struggles of German soldiers attempting to adjust themselves to a society which apparently has no further need for them.

In filming the story, No Man's Land was a 150-foot square on the studio's back lot. Around three sides was a backdrop of sky, while on the fourth was a track for the huge traveling camera crane. All the trenches, roads, barbed-wire entanglements, and buildings were built in perspective, so that at 150 feet distant they appear to be miles away.

Each night one sequence of the film was made and the scenery in the arena



changed by studio artists for the ensuing sequence the next night. This means that the details of scenery were different, necessitating changes in the field surface. The advantage of filming the picture this way lies in the permanency of the lights and the camera track. Thus, there is no variation in the amount of illumination from scene to scene and the even movement of the camera on the aluminum boom gives the action a fluidity that otherwise could not be attained.

Forerunner of the cycle of anti-war pictures, lately supplemented by *The Road Back*, was *The Big Parade*, directed by the late Irving Thalberg. It was one of the first films refusing to soft-pedal conflict 'with pretty nurses and a "they-lived-happily-ever-after" theme. Instead, it sharply exposed the folly and bitterness of war, having the hero come home on crutches, his friends killed. Who can forget those ironic shots of truckloads of doughboys moving to the front down that long, shell-blasted French road as loaded ambulances return?

And who can forget that climactic scene in *All Quiet on the Western Front* when the German soldier reaches out of his shell-hole for a butterfly, and catches a bullet, instead?

Quickly sensing a strongly-growing sentiment for peace among the movie-going public, producers followed with other films stressing the inhumanity and futility of killing — *The Prisoner of Shark Island*, *Under Two Flags*, *A Message to Garcia*, and now *The Road Back* and M-G-M's *They Gave Him a Gun*.

Along educational lines, the motion picture may prove to be the ideal means

of inculcating in school children friendly attitudes toward people of other nations. Tests reported by I. N. Madsen of Lewiston, Idaho, at the National Education Association convention in Portland, Oregon, last summer, showed the movies to have a substantially permanent effect in helping children to acquire new slants.

*Seeing a picture favorable to the Chinese made a difference in the attitude of children toward the people of China. Nineteen months later they retained the ideas they had gained through the movies of family life, love, success, and general philosophy.*

In this connection, the late director, Richard Boleslawski, prophesied:

"As plans progress for the development of international production bases in other countries, I foresee new vistas opening. A few short years ago, the population of one nation knew very little of the world beyond its boundaries. Then Hollywood was bounded by pasteboard walls. Today, the remotest corner of the globe may be transported anywhere to sight and hearing. Today, with industry itself decentralized as to geographic location, it seems possible there has come into existence the germ of an international culture."

*Motion pictures, the only form of communication international in scope and language, may do much to outlaw war, according to educators and others interested in peace. Universal, with *The Road Back*, puts in its bid for the trophy to be awarded next May by the American Institute of Cinematography, in collaboration with similar organizations in 18 other countries, for the film produced during 1937 which best pro-*

motes international understanding and peace.

As Will Hays, president of the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors

of America, declares:

"When men understand each other, they do not hate, and when they do not hate, they do not make wars."

## Who Is to be Blamed for Poor Pictures?

Who is to be blamed for poor pictures—censors, audience, or producer? The former two are, recently declared Hal Hode, executive assistant to Jack Cohn, vice-president of Columbia Pictures, who presented the producer's view at a luncheon conference of the National Board of Review.

Sugar-coating of sociological themes, or the avoidance of them altogether, is the fault of the censors and the public, not the producer, Hode said, pointing out that pictures aimed at intelligent audiences frequently proved "duds" at the box-office.

Bitterly complaining that the public stays away from the clean classics in no small numbers, the nation's organized showmen at the convention of motion picture exhibitors stated that civic leaders, including teachers, take the lead in this striking abstinence. *The Informer* was cited as one of the most beautiful pictures of the era, but it lost a great deal of money. *Romeo and Juliet* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* have lost and are losing money for their exhibitors.

An educationalist's view of the situation is presented by Edgar Dale, visual training instructor at Ohio State University, who in the June issue of his monthly bulletin, *The News Letter*, indicates that we have not begun to tap the potential resources of the motion

picture—that we have been "*well entertained, but not well enlightened.*"

"Would we still have sweatshop child labor, for example, if we could see the subject treated honestly and factually on the screen?" he asks. "Would we not have hastened measures to insure a more intelligent use of the land if we could have had not one film like *The Plow That Broke the Plains*, but scores of them? (The picture has drawn an average monthly audience of 750,000, not counting additional thousands who attended school showings and the like, according to Department of Agriculture figures presented in *The Motion Picture Herald* of April 17.) Would we still have had some 150 deaths from diphtheria in Ohio if we could circulate a film showing factually and dramatically how diphtheria might be wiped out?"

Showing how education might use the film to better train youth along social and cultural lines, Dale says:

"As they become older, they need to learn such things as: that there is no biological basis for a belief in the superiority of one race to another; that the Germans are not 'Huns,' as we were taught to believe during the War; that a slum environment is one of the important causes of juvenile delinquency. (EDITORIAL NOTE: It will be interesting to see how *Dead End*, soon to be released by Sam Goldwyn, treats this

problem); that our national resources—soil, forests, and water power—are being depleted at an alarming rate; that public health is purchasable; that many children and their mothers die needlessly each year because we are not intelligent enough to use the scientific information already available; that propaganda is not confined to wartime. These are but a few examples of the needs of children and youth."

Dale laments the dearth of such pictures as *A Family Affair*, "which gives us a fairly accurate and certainly pleasant picture of an intelligent family household"; *The Devil Is a Sissy*, which "is well contrived and shows excellent insight into child psychology"; and *Fury* and *Black Legion*, "which sensitized high school students to grave economic abuses of today," and "deserve the highest praise." He recommends that more of such pictures be produced and that they "be shown in the school, the church, the forum."

Considering what boys and girls would choose if they had an opportunity to select good books they would like to have filmed, Dale refers to a study he made in 1931 in Cincinnati, which showed that elementary and high school children preferred the following books: *Ivanhoe*, *David Copperfield*, *Lorna Doone*, *Little Women*, *Anne of Green Gables*, *The Crisis*, *the Count of Monte Cristo*, *A Tale of Two Cities*, *Treasure Island*.

Since that time most of these books have been made into successful pictures, and others have been added, such as *Wee Willie Winkie*, *Captains Courageous*, *Penrod and Sam*, and *The Prince and the Pauper*. Being made now is *Heidi*, and planned for the near future is *Kim*.

Hollywood is rapidly utilizing children's literature in a way that bodes well for the box-office.

But, says Dale:

"The filming of children's literature should not blind us to the fact that we must eventually develop our film classics for children and youth, not from literature, but directly through the medium itself. We must develop scenarists who can write honestly, intelligently, and dramatically for the screen. Production programs on the gigantic Hollywood scale *have not permitted the kind of exploration of the motion-picture medium that is necessary to advance its progress as an art*. Only as we have motion picture craftsmen working on motion picture production not only in Hollywood but in the schools and universities straight across the country will we arrive at the potentialities inherent in this device."

Lamenting the ever-present financial bugaboo, Dale suggests that "we take the money that will be used to build one or two new battleships—about \$50,000,000—and see what we might do to use this money for educational instead of destructive purposes."

With this money, each of the nation's 250,000 schools could be equipped with a \$200 sound projector, he asserts. If only half of them were so equipped, however, the remaining \$25,000,000 could be used in the production of 2,500 educational films at a cost of \$5,000 each, and of 500 more elaborate films at \$25,000 apiece.

"Then, indeed," Dale concludes, "we would see the start of a real educational film program."

But still we have the question, "Who is to be blamed for poor pictures?" As



far as education is concerned, lack of money has hampered its production of visual training films. And as far as Hollywood is concerned, lack of money from movie patrons refusing to support past cultural productions has slowed up its activity in that line. But from this

latter standpoint the outlook is promising. Picture schedules for the coming year contain an increasing number of productions of historical and social significance. If the public responds, there will be no battleships to darken the financial horizon and prohibit further production of cultural films.

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### The Movies Watch Television Progress

What is the attitude of the motion picture industry toward their sight-sound rival, television? That the movie makers are watching developments keenly is indicated in "The Second Annual Report on Television from the Standpoint of the Motion Picture Producing Industry," a technical report prepared by the research scientific committee of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. Issued in June, it says in part:

"It is still improbable that television will burst on an unprepared motion picture industry; many millions of dollars must be invested before nation-wide exploitation of television becomes possible in the United States; the start of such a development, forecast for 1937-38, is confirmed. . . . The one change to which we would call attention is that recent improvements in true design of electronic projection devices give promise of a considerable enlargement of television screen area, the realization of which would vastly accelerate the evolution of television as a practical art.

"A mass of data on the technique of television, electrical interference conditions, signal distribution, etc., has been and is being collected," the report con-

tinues. "Papers describing the technical aspects of the research are presented periodically before the Society of Motion Picture Engineers, the Institute of Radio Engineers, and other recognized bodies. In connection with one of the most recent of these papers there was a demonstration on a scale as large as 10 by 8 feet, using optical projection from a kinescope equipped with a suitable lens system, with, it is said, impressive results.

"Occasional television programs are transmitted from a Philco station in Philadelphia, and others. The Columbia Broadcasting System has announced its intention of installing a television transmitter on the Chrysler Tower in New York."

(And just the other day the producers of *Showboat* filed a formal application with NBC for an option to sponsor radio's first commercial television broadcast when equipment is installed for a Los Angeles experiment.)

"Both here and abroad, systematic engineering progress is being made in the development of high-definition television. The situation has reached a point where it warrants careful observation and analysis.

... "For the United States, it is to be hoped that no attempt will be made to commercialize home television until a picture equivalent in definition to the best home-movie projection, and not smaller than 24 by 18 inches, can be furnished with routine reliability.

With this significant statement, the report concludes:

"In view of the progress being made in television, this Committee feels it advisable to report its findings semi-annually hereafter, and is scheduling its work accordingly. The next report will thus be issued in January, 1938."

## More Art and More Children

By ADAMANTIOS TH. POLYZOIDES\*

Europe has proved that the cultural as well as the entertaining picture may rise to high artistic values and still not be prohibitive in cost. Anyone who has seen the products of French, Italian, German and Soviet studios, where costs are based on cents rather than on dollars, must acknowledge that the cinema in those countries has not suffered artistically.

With the exception of France, the other three countries, in keeping with their program of planned economy, have reduced the motion picture industry to a state function. It is the government, through its special agencies, that directs and regulates the trends of the motion picture. The state, in this connection, can force upon the public new tastes and new ideas about cinematography without giving thought to the box-office.

The state-controlled motion picture industry can experiment; it can push certain pictures and the development of ideas of a patriotic, social, or economic character; it can establish new standards for art in motion picture, and get away with it.

The present trend in Germany, where motion picture appreciation is developing to an astonishing degree, is toward a new state of things, when art will not be so manifestly subordinated to the mechanics of technique. This at least is the gist of an article in the *Frankfurter Zeitung*, where the problem is examined in every aspect. The writer grants the superiority of certain Hollywood productions, and the whole article is extremely fair and sincere. On the other hand, it is pointed out that the motion picture industry today depends too much on the collective process to allow much freedom to artistic improvisations. It takes too many technicians to manufacture an emotion as a laboratory experiment, and the effect becomes apparent to the cultured audience. Is there anything one can do about it? The German writer prefers not to answer the question.

From another slant the Italian magazine, *Cinema*, approaches the new trends of the motion picture. The author and editor, Luciano de Feo, who also presides over the cinema activities of the League of Nations, is uneasy because at least one element of social life is gen-

\*University of International Relations, Los Angeles.

erally missing from the motion picture. That is the *child*—not the artistic-child, not the prodigy-child, or the genius-child, but just the normal every-day kid. The trend seems to be away from children, away from the family, away from the home. Mr. De Feo thinks that if this tendency continues, we are going to suffer. The writer pays tribute to such

a picture as *Dr. Engel, Pediatrician*, made by Dr. Fiemann of Berlin, or *Hanneles' Voyage to Heaven*, or *Forget-Me-Not*, or the masterpiece, *Long Live Life*, and finally the *Ninth Symphony*, all pictures made in Germany and having a tremendous audience appeal.

More art and more children seem to be the trends in at least one section of the European motion picture world.

## Good Books Make Good Movies

By BARRETT C. KIESLING\*

Best-selling novels become best-selling movies.

A list of any year's most popular movies invariably includes a large percentage of widely read novels.

For this reason motion picture producers are ever on the alert for successful books. Film executives know in advance that a book which proved popular with the reading public will be even better liked on the screen.

There is no mystery about the relation between successful books and movies. After a book has been read by millions, there are a million different mental images formed of each of the characters. When the story is brought to the screen, the readers are all anxious to compare the film stars with their favorite mental images.

Obviously, a best-selling novel must

have an intriguing, cleverly contrived plot. And film producers have found that in almost every instance, a plot which interests readers is certain to hold their attention on the screen.

For this coming year Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer announces the following list of popular novels to be filmed:

T. Everett Harre's biographical novel, *Heavenly Sinner*, is to be picturized with Joan Crawford in the starring role. *Stand Up and Fight*, novel by Forbes Parkhill, will star Wallace Beery as a rough-and-ready stage coach driver. *Springtide*, which was written by J. B. Priestly (under the pen name of Peter Goldsmith) and George Billam, will star Robert Taylor.

Rudyard Kipling's classic story of *Kim* will star Robert Taylor and Freddie Bartholomew. Of equal importance will be Stefan Zweig's famous novel, *Marie Antoinette*, which is to be immortalized on the screen by Norma Shearer. Another best-seller will be *Goodbye, Mr. Chips*, by James Hilton.

Among other best sellers to be made as pictures during the coming season by

\*Mr. Kiesling's new book, *Talking Pictures*, outgrowth of 22 years of studio experience, will be available for high school teachers of visual education and their students the latter part of August. Written from a practical point of view, it takes the reader in simple terms through every technical phase of motion picture production as practiced in the major studios. A complete report of the book will be given in the next issue of CINEMA PROGRESS.



M-G-M are *The American Flaggs* by Kathleen Norris, *The Foundry* by Albert Harper, *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen, *Mannequin* by Katherine Brush, *Anchor Man* by Fannie Heaslip Lea, *Bright Girl* by Vina Delmar, *Declasse* by Zoe Akins, *The Distaff Side* by John van Druten, *The Far Off Hills* by Lennox Robinson, *The Harbourmaster* by William McFee, and many others. *Molly, Bless Her*, by Frances Marion, is to be produced with Wallace Beery and Sophie Tucker.

Other studios are planning to produce their share of best-sellers. Twentieth Century-Fox will make *Drums Along the Mohawk* by Walter D. Edmonds, *Earthbound* by Basil King, *Four Men and A Prayer* by David Garth, *The Giant Swing* by W. R. Burnett, *Island in the Sky* by Leonard Lee, and several others.

Warner Brothers-First National will make *White Banners* by Lloyd C. Douglas, *The Story of San Michele* by Axel Munthe, *The Sisters* by Myron Brinig, *A Prayer For My Son* by Hugh Walpole, *Comet of Broadway* by Faith Baldwin, *Sister Act* by Fannie Hurst, *And It All Came True* by Louis Bromfield, and others.

RKO-Radio Pictures will release Walt Disney's feature-length color cartoon to be made from the novel *Bambi* by Felix Salton, as well as productions based on other novels.

In addition to the already published best-sellers, Hollywood film studios have another method of securing popular film fare. They bring the famous novelists to the movie capital to write original screen stories. Such authors as P. G. Wodehouse, Anita Loos, James Hilton, Cyril Hume, and Dalton Trumbo went to Hollywood at the behest of the movie magnates and have written prolifically for the screen.

Frequently these original screen stories are of best-seller calibre but are never published in novel form because the studio owns the story rights. There are occasions, however, when the studios have these originals written in novel length and printed in serial form in newspapers, as in the case of M-G-M's *Saratoga*.

The policy of such studios as Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, Twentieth Century-Fox, Paramount and the others is: "If a story is good enough to be a best-seller, then it deserves the best treatment we can give it."

## The Film Goes Forward in India

By RAM BAGAI\*

Six theaters to one producer. "Quickie" concerns mushrooming into existence only to gradually die out. That, briefly, is the motion picture situation in India today.

For the "quickies" have invaded the land south of the Himalayas just as they

have the land of the unrestrained superlative—Hollywood and its nation-wide suburbs. Strange, indeed, are the figures of India's infant movie industry, which show that there are:

110 producing concerns  
99 distributing companies  
670 theaters.

\*Peshawar, India.

Immediately the question arises: Why are there so few theaters and so many movie-makers? Why such an uneven relationship between the producer and the reproducer? And just as immediately we have the answer: Lack of financial backing.

Out to "clean up" are scores of new studios and producers which are springing up almost daily in India. Most of these newcomers are in the "quickie" business—and eventually fall by the wayside. In years to come the present 110 producers should gradually sift down to a more permanent figure of around 60—when speculation is succeeded by business-like methods and more available monetary resources.

Slowness of theater building is also due to lack of finances. A steady income is required to support movie houses, and often it is more expensive to construct and maintain a theater than it is to produce a film. With the expected rejuvenation of the studios, however, the number of theaters should increase easily to 1,000 times the present figure.

It was in 1907 that the first motion picture—via the foreign route—arrived in India. At first it was regarded as a scientific curiosity, but soon its entertainment value was recognized by a Mr. Phalke of Bombay. In 1913, Phalke, through the aid of imported technicians, made his first film and India's industry had begun. In 1931 the first sound picture was produced in India. Today sound occupies an important place in the country's cinema.

The average picture ("B") in India costs from 60,000 to 100,000 rupees (about \$25,000 to \$40,000). But it must be remembered that the purchasing power of one rupee in India is easily

the equivalent of one dollar in the United States.

Nor are the salaries of the Indian stars as exorbitant as those of headliners in America. In the average picture the total salaries of the actors range from \$6,000 to \$7,000.

The theme of the Indian picture is different from the American. Here the main idea of the majority of pictures is the "boy meets girl" angle—and how to keep it alive for 90 minutes. In India the greater number of pictures deal with religion and the spiritual side of life, with historical characters and well-known tales handed down through generations. Another factor that determines the success of a picture there is whether it has any songs (religious, not love!). The people go wild over the words—not so much the tune. Sometimes, as the hero sings, the screen is divided into two parts. One division shows him singing, while the other displays the words for the audience. And they write them down right then and there, too!

Little has been done with the educational film in India. There are two reasons for this:

1. So far the industry has been trying to get on its feet commercially—via the entertainment field. Undoubtedly there would be no profit in the educational film.

2. The government has shown little co-operation in this matter. The usual procedure in visual education is through the 16-mm. medium. However, the government, at this writing, has refused to lower the import duty on cameras and projectors of this size. Quoting from the pamphlet, "Motion Picture Society

of India": "Had the government agreed to the reduction of duty, a great impetus would have been given to Indian educationists interested in the production of films to meet this requirement."

Many times have I heard the remark: "Why don't we see the Indian pictures

in this country?" The answer to that is the theater monopoly here by the Hollywood industry, with its block booking. Some foreign pictures, however, are shown at special theaters. And some of India's best reach South America, the nearest they get to this country.

## FRANKLIN THE THOROUGH

By BERNARD ZERBE

Sidney Franklin is an integral part of every one of his productions, from start to finish. He takes an active part in the writing of the scenario, doing as much work on it as the assigned writers. For the past 10 years he has worked with Scenarist Mrs. Claudine West. Together they devise the treatment, then scenario form, and later revisions.

Upon taking supervision of the *Good Earth*, he and Mrs. West completely rewrote the script, to fit his ideas of the picture. This revision took two and a half months. By this time the crew had returned from China, and found that what they had shot over there was of little value to the revised script. But Franklin now had a script that he knew, understood, and agreed with, while before he had a script that he was unfamiliar with, and which did not conform to his ideas. If Franklin is to do a good job, his script must satisfy him.

Franklin says in regard to cinematic study: "If you are going to study direct-

ing—or the cinema at all—*begin* with the script, for that is where the whole picture begins — and ends, in some cases."



Sidney Franklin, director of such films as *The Good Earth* and *The Dark Angel*, believes in thorough research and analysis of script. *Marie Antoinette* is his current assignment.

Research on a script is valuable if you are to know what you are writing about, and to make it convincing. However, in an historical film, *condensation* is necessary, facts must be cut out or changed to fit the screen limits. In *Marie Antoinette*, Franklin has condensed the

In writing a script, it is important to action to keep up the tempo of events. The fall of the Bastille is followed (in the film) by the mad savagery of the revolutionists, while in actuality, there were several weeks of quiet after the fall. However, he and Mrs. West, in the three years they have worked on the *Marie Antoinette* script, have read about 60,000 pages on the period. By means of this research, they have been able to select those incidents and events which have most appeal for the screen, and to discard those which are unimportant or cinematically impractical.



keep in mind the tempo of the whole picture. "An even flow from scene to scene (call it rhythm, if you like) is of utmost importance," says Franklin. In regard to this, he stated that the director must keep in mind, at all times during the shooting of the film, the main tempo of the picture. He must also establish the individual tempo of one scene to the other, and of various scenes to the whole. The actor need keep in mind only the tempo of the scene being shot on a certain day. He illustrated this by a scene from *The Good Earth*, when Wang Lung said, in response to O-lan's expression that she was with child, "I'll go tell father." Wang said this slowly, and the entire company worked from sun-up to sun-down trying to get it right. The tempo was correct, but Paul Muni, playing the role of Wang Lung, objected to the way it was said. Throughout the entire day's shooting, Franklin had to keep in mind not only the correct way it was to be said, but also the tempo of the words. Muni had only to worry about the inflection.

Franklin allows his actors much latitude in their characterizations, as long, of course, as the actors keep within the bounds of the picture and the relationship of part to part. *The Good Earth* supplied another example. Wang Lung, on his wedding day, walks down the road in a jaunty, springy manner, that expresses his pride at being so well dressed, and his joy at being soon to see his wife. This walk aided the picture immensely, and was entirely an invention of Actor Muni. However, the characterization of O-lan, as played by Luise Rainer, was designed by Franklin.

He planned to have O-lan a silent creature, a type, and to have Wang Lung the "straight" for O-lan's character. To Franklin, the role of Wang Lung was much more difficult to play, because in playing straight, Muni had to set the scene. He had to express an atmosphere, a living being with many qualities of the Chinese people. O-lan had merely to be silent, hard working, and her role was immediately noticeable. It was her variance from the character of Wang Lung that made her so excellent. Therefore, in laying the foundation, Wang Lung was the more difficult to play.

Tempo is an important factor in the making of a picture. Related to tempo is audience tension. In *Marie Antoinette*, Franklin faces an important problem. Toward the end of the picture, Marie Antoinette, her husband, the king, and their children are seized as they try to flee the country in disguise. The revolutionary leaders seize them, behead the king, and then the children, leaving Marie alone and doomed. The tension in these scenes is so terrific that something must be invented to break it. As yet no definite solution has been decided upon, but it is believed that a short shot of a white note being slipped under Marie's door — signifying assistance from the outside — may help to break the tension. The interest Franklin has in the writing of his scripts is shown by the interest he has in breaking this tension. Something has to be done about it, and he is working as hard as Mrs. West on the solution.

Franklin has a great interest in the use of his sets. In *The Barretts of Wimpole Street*, he used his camera and his set very expressively. In this picture, Norma Shearer was upstairs in her

room. To her (playing Elizabeth Barrett Browning) the room seemed to express a prison. She was tied to it, and could not escape. In the beginning of the picture, Franklin confined his camera to this room for a long time, conveying to the audience that it was a prison. He kept the camera there so long that when, at last, it moved out of the room, the audience sighed with relief. Thus he conveyed to them, by means of the camera and set, that Elizabeth Barrett was unhappy, and imprisoned in the room.

Franklin further spoke of his sets in relation to the audience. He believes that it is well to set the "geography of the set" in the first few shots. Let the audience see the whole set, then narrow down to elements of the set, because then the audience will know where it is,

and will become more a part of the picture. In *The Barretts of Wimpole Street*, Franklin handled this "geography of set" by means of the dog, "Flush." The dog came in, went through the hall, into the living room, saw the Father, scurried up the stairs (showing a dislike for the Father) and down the hall upstairs, to Elizabeth's room, (showing a fondness for her). Thus the audience found out in this opening sequence that Elizabeth was in a room on the second floor of a well-furnished home, that the Father was not liked, that he was harsh to the dog, and that the dog liked Elizabeth. The audience immediately knew what the setting was before the main action began—all through a little dog scampering over the house.

## Van Dyke, the Unorthodox

By BOB RODGERS\*

W. S. Van Dyke worked in stock companies. Started in picture business as messenger to D. W. Griffith (one of 10,000, he says). Did some acting. Directed first picture in 1916, *Land of Long Shadows*.

Well known for his expeditionary films, but finds they are cause of great grief. The picture is the last thing the director must consider. Care of the expedition problems is uppermost. Sometimes have trouble getting insurance companies to insure these expeditions. He is not of an adventurous spirit and does not like to leave home, although finds it hard to refuse because of vanity. The entire expedition is on shoulders of

director, thus the responsibility. Can't definitely conceive of problems or locations until on location, thus all judgment is left until time of shooting.

In ordinary pictures he does not like to leave studio at all. Farther away from studio you go the more difficult are the problems, he says. Sits in on the writing of the story throughout its creation. Can tell by looking at a finished scenario approximately how long it will take to shoot. Makes suggestions for changes in plot and action.

Does not bother to cast small roles in pictures; just the leads. Often works on story with thought in mind of who is to play in it.

No great connection with cameraman,

\*Cinematography student, University of Southern California.

sound man or other technicians. Merely tells them what he wants shot and what kind of lighting he wants. Sets are approved by him but are made by art director after the latter reads the script. Does not do any cutting. Leaves that to editor and producer. He does view film after it is done and makes suggestions for improvement. Does not acknowledge temperamentality in stars, although has little trouble along this line. Will not argue with them. Merely goes home.

Has great respect for assistant director because he is supposed to do all the detail work for director. Likes the same crew on all pictures because they work well together.

After helping in writing of story he never looks at it except for dialogue corrections, etc. Knows story by heart. Upon going on set he never knows definitely how he is going to do a scene. Figures it out after getting there. Works out technical blending, etc., after getting on set.

The principle he uses in connection with other divisions of the work is to let the cameraman, soundman, etc., use their own brains.

As for mood in pictures, he says it is all in characterization. Tempo is the soul of motion pictures. Does some cutting in the camera to create this. In regard to the acting, he says to throw your actor at the audience and let the latter do the acting. Audience filling shoes of actors, etc. Paint with a light brush in an interesting unserious manner.

Thinks motion pictures have a great

moral purpose in the world. Not through direct means but by suggestion. Thinks when television comes in motion pictures will be used for this. Believes manufacturers will pay a million dollars for a picture to use in advertisement program.

Does not like to do "arty" or sophisticated pictures. Says the best old-timers made the motion picture what it is today. All directors' methods have evolved from D. W. Griffith, who was the only genius in this field.

The best way to learn directing is to work up through the property or other departments. Director must know amusement and some dramatic values. First thing he asks when confronted with a story is "What's your romance?" Love is the basis of all stories.

He can do any type of picture from drama to musical with equal facility. Has no specific knowledge of music, but recognizes its fine qualities and effects.

Main thing is not to take yourself too seriously, and remember that there are others who probably can do just as well as you.

Says the best actors are not acting but merely being natural, Spencer Tracy, for example.

Montage has its place, but can't be understood when it is too artistic.

Shot *After the Thin Man* in 16 days.

Shot *His Brother's Wife* in 14 days.

Shot *San Francisco* in 2 months.



W. S. Van Dyke

Decides on technical blending and other details of shooting a scene after he gets on the set. Among this M-G-M director's successes are *San Francisco* and *They Gave Him a Gun*.

THE DIRECTOR'S WORK  
RESUME OF FRANKLIN AND  
VAN DYKE INTERVIEWS

I. PRE-SHOOTING:

1. Script—Close collaboration with writer.



2. Research and selection of dramatically important, but not necessarily authentic, material.
3. Finding the axis of the picture and building around it (theme, romance, etc.).
4. Casting—Director has main characters in mind.

### II. SHOOTING:

1. Assistant director—Handles organization and details.
2. Actors—If experienced, director lets them give own interpretation of character.

3. Set—Must give the public a clear idea of the "geography."
4. Cameraman and sound engineer—Director tells dramatic values desired, but lets them solve, technically, the pictorial and sound aspects.
5. Tempo—Is the soul of the picture. Director determines the rhythmic alternation of suspense and relief.

### III. POST-SHOOTING:

1. Cutting—Director selects best shots of dally "rushes." Determines dramatic purpose to be achieved in each, and lets the cutter do the rest.

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## Essentials of Educational Film Production

By FRED W. ORTH\*

Educational film production implies motion pictures which present information or contribute understanding of subjects requiring motion to make them clear—subjects about which the learners need to know.

The prime essential in the production of any successful film is a plan or theme. It must represent a continuity of ideas if your audience is to remain attentive during the showing of your picture.

Your plan, which you will work into a scenario, will probably not contain all of the action you wish to include in your picture if it is to be 400 feet in length. After deciding upon the essential sequences to be shown, they should be arranged in proper dramatic order. This will represent the scenario from which you will wish to make a working sheet of individual shots. It should be remembered that your camera, running at normal speed (16 pictures per second), records action at the same speed that the pictures are projected on the screen. The length of your scenes, then, will be determined by the length of time that

you wish your audience to see them projected. Seven to eight feet will probably be the length of your average shot. Normally, two and one-half seconds are required for the exposure of each foot of film.

Beginners usually film too far away from their subjects. The long shot should be reserved for the purpose of orienting the audience, or establishing the locale. Approximately 65 per cent of your scenes should be close-ups. It is not necessary to take scenes in sequence. They can be properly arranged later when cutting and editing.

To avoid unsteady pictures on the screen, a substantial tripod should be used. A free-ball head is a requisite for slow, steady panoramas and for tilting. Attention to composition in each shot will result in pleasing photography, providing the film is properly exposed.

Though the average film used by beginners has considerable latitude with regard to exposure, the use of a good exposure meter will aid in obtaining the maximum number of well-exposed shots from your roll of film. It is wise for the beginner to confine his early filming to

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out-of-door shots. Interior filming will result from much study and practice.

Your educational film will probably require titles, which may be "home-made" or professionally made at a reasonable cost. The usual cost of titles, if you have them made, is 25 cents for each title of eight words and 3 cents for each additional word. Titles should be kept brief and simple.

The judicious use of fade, iris, and dissolves add greatly to the interest and

beauty of your film. They are not difficult to make, the prime requisite being care and patience.

In conclusion, it is well to remember that good amateur films are not made by accident. Advanced planning is essential to good movie making. Think before you shoot, remembering that full happiness in movie making comes with seeing sequences on the screen that will bring expressions of pleasure and happiness from the audience.

## Sound Technique in Motion Pictures

By FREDERICK WEISENHEIMER\*

As I sat in the park one afternoon, my attention was attracted by a young lady next to me on the bench. She had a small child on her lap and together they played a sort of game. The young mother would put her hands over the child's eyes and then begin to speak excitedly about some fascinating marvel that was supposedly occurring in their vicinity. If the child's curiosity overcame his better judgment he pushed aside his mother's hands and looked for himself.

In a word, the illusion which his mother had created failed to satisfy his need of experience—in that the physiological process of sight was available by the simple procedure of removing his mother's hands. To generalize: No experience, however trivial, can be fully enjoyed if *all the available senses are not utilized*.

How does this apply to the *dramatic use of sound in motion pictures*? Fundamentally the motion picture is to us

an experience, the fascination of which lies in its peculiar ability to create, for a brief passage of time, a *substitute* for the world in which we eat, drink, sleep, and exist generally. The extent of this illusion depends primarily *upon the completeness of the projected experience*. This experience must obviously be recorded by the human senses (*i. e.* eye, ear, sight, smell, etc.). But in the cinema we are limited to that of eye and ear. Apparent it then is that the limitation of the silent cinema is its inability to stimulate this second center of reception. Apparent also is it that such a restriction must necessarily restrict the completeness of our experience and thus ultimately the completeness of our illusion.

Surely then the sound picture has added much to silent cinema? Yes—but more definitely, No. By this I mean that aiding as it has in the physiological illusion it has almost consistently been *misused in terms of dramatic technique*.

\*A. B., Cinematography.

The very suddenness of the sound picture forced upon the public a series of mumble-jumble, re-hashed plays whose only point in common with cinematic values was the possibility of the newly accepted speech. Hasty producers forgot that nothing should be in the dramatists' business that does not either *illumine a character or help on the action*. *Words for the sake of words* became the motif and the old standards of pantomime and movement were discarded.

What, then, must be the basis for a synthesis between sound and sight? Obviously, *selectivity* is the solution. Sound must, like pictorial effects, be subjected to the primary principle of the drama that nothing should be presented to an audience, that by its inherent nature detracts from the progression of the plot.

By implication we must therefore modify our postulate of *naturalism*. In a scene, for example, in which a clock appears, the sound of its ticking might distract audience attention from a more important event. For this reason the sound of the clock may logically be eliminated. In fact, such elimination is in keeping with our own physiological process. Intellectually, we reject those phenomena which have no *immediate importance*. The mere fact of concentration of any kind involves the rejection of a hundred and one varied stimuli.

If, on the other hand, the ticking of the clock bore some definite relationship to the conflict, as in *The Informer*, where the ticking of a clock becomes a subjective accusation, it would be stupid indeed to overlook its usefulness.

In subjective characterizations the cinema has great opportunities, but with the exception of Fritz Lang and, to

some extent, John Ford, little of this advantage has been realized. In *Of Human Bondage*, a pictorial representation of Philip's inferiority feelings linked to the sound of his hobbling, crippled foot clearly illustrates the effectiveness of sound used in conjunction with visible means. Here the two were used as a sort of causal counterpoint, sound showing cause, pictures illustrating effect.

More frequently utilized is visual concentration upon a different object than that from which the sound emanates. The indirectness of showing the effect of words or sounds on only one party to a conversation, for example, is an obvious form of emphasis. Contrast is easily secured by this means. A jazz band playing blatantly in a cafe; nearby, a man seated at a table. He has a sad expression on his face. Here is effective contrast. He places his hands over his ears. The volume of the music decreases. It is as though we, ourselves, have covered our ears.

But sound has another vital function. That also contributes to dramatic technique which by natural device hastens the development of plot. It has already been noted that perhaps the most elemental feature of cinematic art is the speed and fluency of transition between different sets and situations.

In the work of Fritz Lang we have a living example of the value of sound in these transitions. It was from "*M*," where sound linkage bridged the gap between two clocks in various sets, that John Ford derived his tri-set transition by the ticking clock in *The Informer*. But more often the transition is not sound-to-sound transition. Frequently the movement is from sound to pictorial effect, as in the scene in "*M*" where



the speaking voice of the thief saying, "We must use the beggars," is linked with shots of the beggars' activities.

In the same picture such a transition lended itself to a noteworthy and speedy characterization. From the sound of the psychologist's voice describing the personality of the murderer, a cut was made to behavior verifying the psychologist's diagnosis. In this case, the words con-

tinued in conjunction with the pictures, thus eliminating a return to a shot of the psychologist between each shot denoting a single personality trait of the murderer. Apparently once the source of a sound has been noted, the more indirectly it is used the more effective is its benefit. For the time saved by such technique is of fundamental importance to cinematic art.

## MUSIC AND FILMS

By BORIS MORROS

Music is one of the most amazing, most beautiful and certainly the most universally expressive of all arts. It can plumb corners of the heart and soul which are too deep for words. It expresses what is inexpressible; it articulates what is beyond the speech or design of other arts. And at the same time, always and everywhere, it has proven one of the most popular forms of entertainment. It can be understood by everybody because it reaches consciousness, not through analysis, but primarily through hearing. Therefore, everyone, even those of most primitive taste, can enjoy music. Besides, music is so varied in form that it can satisfy any preference from the very ordinary to the most refined. It always speaks for itself and does not need any explanation, despite all the arguments of the musical commentators, if listeners will only realize that music is merely human emotion and imagination felt by the composer and shared by him through the medium of vocal or instrumental song.

Music has always been the faithful assistant and collaborator of the cinema.

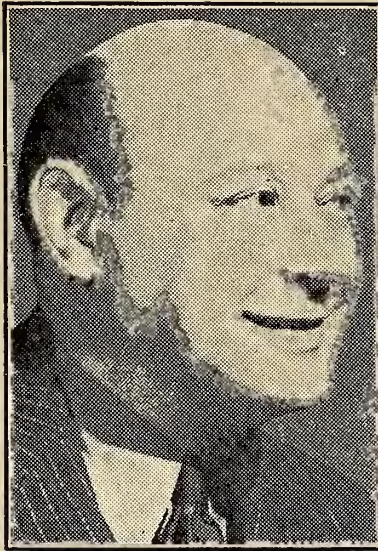
Dependence of films on music has been evident since the earliest public presentations of moving pictures. In the days of the nickelodeon the lone assisting pianist constituted a colorful feature during all picture programs. With one eye on the screen and the other often on a novel reposing on the lap, he or she played all day long from opening to closing of the show. The nature of the selections performed depended upon the temperament and experience of the performer. The young lady usually played the latest ragtime, methodically going through the stack of music on the piano rack, departing from this routine only with occasional "realistic" touches to illustrate such dramatic moments as falling off cliffs, custard-pie warfare, and the inevitable chase by the police. For a death scene she played *When I Lost You*, and for sadness she turned to *Hearts and Flowers*. The man pianist, who was usually an ex-piano teacher, played more solid fare—minor salon pieces of the 19th century—but he, too, was not unmindful of the dramatic opportunities to which he would occasionally respond

with improvisation. Can you ever forget those sinister themes, in a heavy staccato, which were universally played to symbolize the villain's ominous entrance?

The next steps in film-music expansion brought the pipe organ, and later the movie orchestra.

With the arrival of the sound film the role of music altered. First and foremost, for technical reasons, music ceased to be mere improvisation and developed into strict and solid composition. While previously, in the silent days, synchronizers found it possible to play anything they chose, such procedure henceforth was not permitted. On the other hand, while music was once the sole provider of sound for the cinema, it now had to share its functions with dramatic speech and various realistic noises.

Naturally it became necessary to make various concessions when sound came, since logic required music to give way to dialogue and mere imitative sounds. Music had to retire into the background. Notwithstanding the physical subordination of music, especially as background, it has gained in importance psychologically, and for that reason also artistically and technically. Similarly, the music craftsman of the film world is now coming into his own.



Boris Morros, musical director at Paramount, believes the time is at hand when operas, ballets, and concerts will be transposed successfully to the screen. For the future, he visions a new type of film-lyric drama. First to bring a noted symphony conductor to the screen, Mr. Morros presented Leopold Stokowski in *The Big Broadcast* of 1937.

There is reason, then, for planning in proportion with these widening musical horizons. Film music must draw in proportion on cultural treasures of the past, must enlist musical world-literature, just as film-drama has borrowed from the immortal masters of the pen of all ages. Just as film-drama has enlisted the torchbearers of novel and drama, the modernists of music of today and tomorrow should share their reactions and views of life with us in scores composed expressly for film-drama. Just as they will benefit the realm of cinema as an art, the world-wide cinema-distribution in turn will release audience-opportunities for contemporary composers on a scale undreamt of heretofore. The world will become the auditorium of today's composer and such opportunity and responsibility should prove highly inspirational.

Ten years ago the cinema and good composers seemed like two great parallels. There was no contact. But this state of isolation between serious cinema art and music is a thing of the past. In Europe such famous composers have written for films as Richard Strauss, Paul Hindemith, Kurt Weill (Germany), Arthur Honegger (Switzerland), Jacques Ibert, Florence Schmitt, Rinaldo Hahn, Darius Milhaud, George Auric (France), Vittorio Rieti, Fran-

cesco Malipiero (Italy), Serge Prokofiev, Dimitri Shostakovich (Russia), William Walton, Eugene Goossens, Arthur Bliss (England).

In America the contributions to our films of such composers as Werner Jansen, Ernest Toch, George Antheil, Erich Korngold, Deems Taylor and Dimitri Tiomkin, the eventuality of enlisting Stravinsky, proves that composing for pictures is not just an accident. Our leading American academies of music, the Juilliard School of Music in New York, the Curtis Institute at Philadelphia, the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, and, last but not least, the very helpful American Institute of Cinematography at the University of Southern California in Los Angeles, must cooperate with us and offer special courses where young musicians can study the newest methods of musical recording and become acquainted with the technique of writing music to films. The Juilliard School is already in contact with me and I am expecting to start working soon with two graduates from its composers' class. Not only composers, but just people with great professional knowledge of music are greatly interested in this work and are offering me their services.

However, it is not merely a matter of composers, but of their methods, and more yet a matter of relation between music and film-drama. This new relation I consider one of the best proofs of the qualitative and organic advancement of film music. I refer to the progress of music from a strictly supporting factor to a truly independent force. While, of course, psychologically and therefore dramatically coordinated, music takes the place not only of words but anticipates situations which develop in succeeding

scenes. I think the time has come when not only musical reviews and comedies, but operas, ballets, and even concerts can be transposed to the screen. In the broad meaning of the word, the film then becomes lyric drama, not to say music-drama.

I am definitely convinced that while cinematography is transposing existing operatic works into film terms, there will result an entirely new form of art, which will be a new synthesis of all arts including the cinematography.

Conviction is growing generally that the future of the opera lies as much with the cinema as does the future of the theatre as a whole. The film theatre of the not-so-far-future will mount existing operatic masterpieces in the way it will mount Shakespeare and drama generally. Combination of this scenic progress with well-chosen powerful music or music expressly written to match the impetus of the screen, will bring about screen-music-drama. This need not be serious always, but can be light and still represent new art ideas.

For the benefit of those who storm and rage at the popularity of jazz, it is necessary to repeat a truism that the one who enjoys Gershwin today will be an admirer of Grieg tomorrow, and the fans of Irving Berlin will in due time be devoted to Beethoven. It is a fact that we have to take cinema audiences through various degrees of musical melodramas, through a good deal of Johann Strauss and later a good deal of Puccini. However, we do this with justified hope and conviction founded on experience.

Wagner and Tchaikovsky now hold an important rank with music film fans. This is significant, for if Wagner has created the music-drama through the op-



era, we shall find our new form of music film through Wagner, for he is now, with his nineteenth-century music of the future, the composer of the people today. For a long time the world as a whole has regarded Shakespeare with indifference—the two of them, Shakespeare and Wagner, are still the greatest showmen of all times.

The filming of a symphony concert with outstanding orchestras, conductors and soloists presents another great achievement. It is inspiring just to think of the possibility of having a film record of those works and those artists whose names will be famous for centuries. What would we not give now not only to hear a composition of Chopin played by Liszt, but to see Liszt himself playing the composition. Sound motion pictures make such wishes as seeing and hearing Paderewski, Rachmaninoff, Menuhin, Flagstad, accompanied by world-known orchestras, conducted by Toscanini, quite realizable.

My first experiment along this line, presenting Leopold Stokowski and a symphony orchestra playing Bach in the Paramount picture, *The Big Broadcast of 1937*, produced most interesting results, and the public greatly appreciated them. In the forthcoming *Big Broadcast of 1938*, we are going to show Kirsten Flagstad in excerpts from *The Valkyrie*. In London, a picture has been made starring Paderewski. Not so long ago such feats would have seemed quite impossible, and just the mentioning of them would probably have caused much laughter.

In America at the present time there are only a few large cities where operas and ballets as well as symphony concerts

with world famous soloists can be heard. But even so the majority of people cannot afford this sort of entertainment, because the admission price is too high. The transmission of this art to the silver screen will immediately associate millions of new people with music. The tremendous popularity of the motion picture and the low cost of admission to performances about which the average listener and spectator could heretofore only dream, will attract new masses, and what is quite important, will greatly increase the circulation of our pictures on the international market, because the language of music is understandable in any country.

I thoroughly believe in the truth of my words, and only wish that my enthusiasm would affect others. I also believe that the film of the future will be made much more in the light of music than of the spoken word. This will be done for the reason that the possibilities of the cinema and music are well-nigh unlimited. Art and life will be benefited, because it is music which deepens and enriches the whole meaning of life and is a symbol of harmony and peace. . .

Additional screen-writing hints, revealed by Miss Marion recently during a round-table discussion at her home with amateur scenarists, show that:

1. One of the best type of stories is that inspired by some strong, personal feeling. (*Green Light*, *Magnificent Obsession*, etc.)

2. Ideas for stories are all about us. In a magazine, Miss Marion read an editorial describing prison conditions. Acting on a hunch, Miss Marion interviewed the warden at San Quentin. Result: *The Big House*.



Above is the  $2\frac{1}{2}$ -acre island and lagoon built for *Hurricane*. In foreground is huge water conveyor, while to its left is seen one of the powerful wind machines.

## Movie Magic of the Month

### *The Hurricane* (Goldwyn)

It cost Samuel Goldwyn \$150,000 to build a South Sea island village and \$250,000 to destroy it with a powerful and realistic man-made hurricane.

After sending a camera crew to Samoa to film background action and to bring back hundreds of photographs to serve as guiding models for the setting, Goldwyn had two islands and four lagoons built on  $3\frac{1}{2}$  acres of the studio's "back lot."

The largest island, known as Manu-

kura in the story, comprised  $2\frac{1}{2}$  acres altogether— $1\frac{1}{2}$  acres being a lagoon with an average depth of 5 feet. Stretched in a rough semicircle about the lagoon were the palm-thatched roofs of the native village. All the buildings were completed structures so that interior scenes could be shot. Fringing the lagoon's shore were 50 coconut palm and parau trees. Plaster casts of the tree trunks were brought from the South Seas. Studio technicians attached California native date palm foliage to the concrete reinforced palm trunks and

large magnolia leaves to the parau trunks. The illusion is perfect to eye and camera.

Adjacent to the large island was the smaller one of Motu Tongu. It also had its own lagoon, a tank 100 feet square, a white beach of imported Monterey sand, and a veritable forest of towering cocconut palms. Rocks for both islands were plaster casts of Samoan originals. Motu Tongu was covered by a vast tent, one end of which was a realistic sky backing. There was no village on this island.

And now for the \$250,000 storm brewed by Goldwyn and his associates, which utterly destroyed the two settings. Hydraulic pumps hurled hundreds of thousands of gallons of water down 60-foot chutes and spillways to wreck the village. Nine 12-cylinder Liberty motors with giant 3-bladed propellers, capable of lashing out a 90-mile-an-hour gale, were used.

Caught by the whipping wind were blinding showers of spray produced by a network of 30 fire hoses, uptilted at a dozen angles. The effect is that of giant waves beating against the land, sending their spent force skyward.

Human wave-makers, equipped with large box-like paddles, churned up the seas. Thousands of gallons of soapsuds provided the creamy foam peculiar to storm-tossed salt water.

Black and yellow-tinged smoke, which gave a realistic storm pall, was produced by a sulphur base. Smoke sticks, resembling Roman candles, were lighted and burned down bit by bit, sending forth dense clouds.

And thus Sam Goldwyn's Hollywood "hurricane" was concocted.

### *One Hundred Men and a Girl*

(Universal)

A new advance in musical recording was made the other day in Philadelphia when, for the first time in motion picture history, six sound tracks were used to record the music of a symphony orchestra. Leopold Stowkowski's musicians spread out into six groups of violins, reeds, wood-winds, basses, brasses, and tin pans. Over each group a "mike" was suspended, whose sound did not go into the mixing panel but was recorded on a separate sound track.

Thus sound was tied in with sight. When the camera is centered on the horns, for instance, their music is emphasized, and that of the other groups dies down. The same for reeds, etc.

For long shots showing the whole orchestra playing, the music is more evenly distributed. Also, there are two additional sound channels—one to record the voice of Deanna Durbin as she sings with the orchestra—and the other to capture the resonance of the auditorium as a member of the audience would hear it. So, altogether, 8 "mikes" record on 8 sound tracks, and a new type of musical interpretation is born.

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### *Artists and Models* (Paramount)

On Paramount's recording stage No. 1 recently stood Conductor Irvin Talbot, baton in hand, earphones clamped to his ears. With him stood two assistants, beakers of water before them and a straw in each beaker. They also wore earphones.

A scene began to move on the screen in front of all three, showing an actress singing in a tub. As she sang—"Trou-



ble Is a Bubble" was the number—he-  
 lium gas was pumped into the soapy  
 water of the tub, causing bubbles to rise  
 and float away, in artistic fashion.

Every time the music reached an off-  
 beat, Talbot waved his stick and the

two assistants blew into their tumblers,  
 making a gurgling sound. The gurgling  
 was picked up by the "mikes" and put  
 onto the sound track with the music, so  
 that both will be heard simultaneously  
 and in rhythm.

## Life Should Begin at School

*An Interview With*

ROBERT HILL LANE\*

Giant steel structures puncturing the  
 heavens. . . .

Mighty bridges stretching across wide  
 expanses of water. . . .

Great dams harnessing millions of  
 water-power for man's use. . . .

Choking dust-storms blotting out the  
 sun and driving thousands westward in  
 a new migration. . . .

Forests growing where none grew be-  
 fore, withered souls gaining new  
 strength and hope as armies of depres-  
 sion-smitten youths leave city pavements  
 for CCC camps and a life of health  
 with nature. . . .

Ribbons of concrete echoing to the  
 roar of a nation on wheels. . . .

Slums disappearing, Garden Cities  
 springing up. . . .

Experiments in democracy. . . .

That is changing America, vigorous,  
 vital, ever-intriguing. That is life, and  
 Robert Hill Lane, assistant superintend-  
 ent of the Los Angeles City Schools,  
 hopes to bring it to the classroom—with  
 film.

Too long, he believes, have children  
 been intellectual prisoners, shut off from  
 the outside world by the limited con-  
 fines of classroom discussion and the

printed word. Growing up in a little,  
 artificial world all their own, they leave  
 school and plunge into the real world—  
 a totally different one from that they  
 have left. They are bewildered, un-  
 prepared, disillusioned.

Through the equal use of film and  
 book, even elementary grade pupils may  
 participate in life immediately, and learn  
 from it, Lane believes. Students will  
 WATCH huge steel girders swing into  
 place, will HEAR the b-r-r-r of the riv-  
 eting machine. They'll thrill to the  
 ROAR of electric dynamos, will  
 WATCH verdant farm fields turned  
 into deserts, and deserts into farm fields.  
 They will FLEE WITH drouth and  
 flood refugees, will SEE in their faces  
 the haunting despair that can come only  
 with the loss of everything. And hav-  
 ing SEEN, they will SYMPATHIZE  
 and UNDERSTAND, and will plan  
 how to prevent such recurrences in the  
 future.

They will HEAR the thud of picks  
 and sledgehammers across the nation,  
 will SEE the sweat roll off the workers'  
 backs as dams, bridges, highways come  
 into being, and slums retreat before city  
 planning. They will FOLLOW a bill  
 from the time of its introduction in the

\*Assistant Superintendent of the Los  
 Angeles City Schools.



Clearance of slums, such as those shown in Goldwyn's *Dead End*, could be effectively treated in the documentary film, Lane believes.

House of Representatives, until its approval or rejection by the President. And they will FOLLOW the footsteps of the farmer as his plow cuts contour furrows in the hills to prevent erosion.

In short, an improved type of documentary film, followed by books to augment the details, will give the student a more vital and practical understanding of his subject than he could ever hope to obtain from the printed word alone.

Pioneering in this field is the Virginia State Course of Study, also called the "functional approach to curriculum building." Started as an experiment 4 years ago by a group of educators from Columbia University, the plan since "has spread in elementary and junior

high schools throughout the United States, wherever there are progressive school systems," according to Lane.

The theory is to try to find the major functions Americans are discharging these days, bring them to class, and construct from them the curriculums.

Here are 12 major functions as Lane sees them:

1. Americans are producing goods of all kinds.
2. Americans are transporting goods.
3. Americans are consuming goods.
4. Americans are laboring in all fields.
5. Americans are transporting people.
6. Americans are maintaining families — raising children and educating them.

7. Americans are building—dams, bridges, houses, etc.

8. Americans are playing—all types of recreation.

9. Americans are satisfying religious impulses.

10. Americans are satisfying their desire for beauty—music, art, theater, literature, etc.

11. Americans are preserving life, property, and natural resources.

12. Americans are trying to make democracy work, are experimenting with various forms of it.

“The student then chooses a live, current topic and draws his materials from all of these major functions,” Lane declares.

Suppose the subject is “Americans Are Changing the Appearance of Their Country.” Briefly, we would outline our study plan as follows:

1. They are changing the skyline of our great cities. In New York is Radio City and the new docks built to accommodate the Normandie and Queen Mary. In San Francisco, the great bay bridges. New architectural and engineering triumphs have resulted.

2. They are rebuilding our great cities upon definite planning schemes. Slum clearance, garden cities, “white-collar” dwelling projects, and recent developments in New York and Washington, D. C.

3. They are harnessing our great rivers (T. V. A., Boulder Dam, Grand Coulee, Bonneville, Fort Peck, and flood control). They are trying to conquer erosion (dust bowl, contour plowing, and terracing).

4. They are trying to improve our great boulevard and highway system

(underpasses, overpasses, and sodium lighting).

5. They are constantly enriching our National Park Service (Utah’s Dinosaur National Park).

6. They are putting their homes on wheels (trailers, streamlined trains, busses, planes, and boats, with all the luxuries and comforts of home).

7. They are developing new types of domestic architecture (imitating Europe, they are using the functional plan, building from the inside out—that is, for comfort and convenience rather than for looks).

8. They are building for cultural opportunities (theaters, planetariums, etc.).

9. They are changing the appearance of their women (face powders, and other chemical aids. Also clothes and styles of hairdress and figure. In this latter connection, women watch their weight more carefully, and are more athletic than formerly.).

“Not only is such a curriculum interesting to children,” the Los Angeles educator points out, “but it is one in which they can participate. It plunges them right into the center of life.

“For the plan to succeed, it requires schools with up-and-coming principals who have vision, and teachers who have imagination. At present, there are far too many teachers who cannot see beyond the end of their nose.”

Although the Virginia State Course of Study is confined to elementary and junior high schools, Lane foresees a time in the near future when it will spread to the senior high schools and the colleges—when the film will share as important a place as the book, and students will SEE and HEAR, as well as READ—a time when LIFE will begin at school!



## Education Goes Hollywood

By HARRY COULTER

Education is "going Hollywood!" No, not in the ballyhooistic sense, but in a systematically-planned campaign of audio-visual instruction which will see science, the arts, and the social studies embraced by film. Intellectual leaders, realizing that klieg lights and camera angles are just as important in training twentieth century youth for the "more abundant life" as are books and class lectures, are turning producers, are taking an attitude of "Well, if the films can exert such a tremendous influence on young people through the entertainment medium, why not along educational lines, too?"

Heralding the new movement is the conference on production of motion pictures in the schools, held last February at Ohio State University, the rapidly growing film library at Harvard, and the recent formation of the General Committee on Motion Pictures, under the auspices of the Department of Secondary Education of the National Education Association.

Comparing notes on films already made in the various branches of learning, plans for future productions on a more extensive scale, and the all-important problem of finance, comprised the three-fold discussion of the Ohio group.

Pictures made ranged from a film on typing, which disclosed 16 different movements of the hand, to the photographing of the digestive processes of a cow through a hole in the side of the animal. To give the proper lighting, it was necessary to wire up the inside of the cow.

Less bizarre but equally as interesting were films on the Akron sewage and waterworks systems, beginning and advanced swimming methods in slow-motion analysis, library instruction, spelling, perspective and its application to fine arts, home economics, nature study, rare medical cases, the operation of various industrial plants, and school activities, social and athletic, as well as academic.

But what has been done is only a small prelude to the shouts of "lights, camera, action!" which will echo and reecho throughout the educational world during the coming years. One high school is planning a film on safety instruction. Another will produce a picture, at least partly in color, showing proper and improper techniques in chemistry laboratory work, and will follow with a film on educational guidance. A school superintendent has scheduled a picture covering activities from kindergarten to the eighth grade, allotting 75 to 100 feet of film to each grade.

Other ideas suggested for education's "shooting schedule" include microscopic studies, nature study depicting insect life histories, insect behavior, insects of economic importance, bird nesting activities, wild flower studies, plant ecology, local history, local civics showing various county officials in discharge of their duties, local industries, and correct processes in the industrial arts or other skilled subjects.

Every school will eventually need a visual library as well as a library of books, one educator prophesied, advocat-

ing that it be financed by the school. Here a serious problem—that of raising funds to support their film campaign in the schools—was brought to the attention of the convention.

Suggestions included contributions from students, as in Germany, where each pupil contributes about 30 cents a year. Several million dollars of income is thus obtained and about 65 educational films have been produced; contributions from the federal government, P. T. A., and citizen groups. The interest of educational associations and teacher-training institutions must also be obtained, it was pointed out. Also, courses in visual education must be increased if the efforts of the above groups are to be utilized successfully.

The nation's colleges are waking up to the possibilities offered by the cinema and radio, a recent survey of 720 institutions by United States Commissioner of Education, John W. Studebaker, shows. Although only 14 schools are offering regular courses in the two fields, 224 signify that they are giving some instruction in these subjects, and three-fifths of the 720 declared they were planning such instruction for the near future.

Meanwhile, moving to another "lot" in the educational Hollywood, we find the flourishing three-year-old Film Service Library at Harvard. Unbeset by the financial woes afflicting other institutions attempting an audio-visual campaign, the Cambridge organization, although a non-profit enterprise, pays its own way. The Film Service rents and sells prints of its own films. It also sells prints on order from certain of the negatives stored in its vaults and listed in its

catalogue, having 35 and 16 mm. in both sound and silent.

Facilities include an editorial room fully equipped to edit films, a small projection room for previewing, a laboratory for developing and printing films, and complete production equipment for making silent films. In addition to notifying the various departments of the university about new films of possible teaching value, the Film Service furnishes projectors and licensed operators.

An extensive variety of subjects is covered by the Film Library. Demonstrating the arts, we find pictures on stone sculpturing, bronze working, etching, wood engraving, the technique of the silversmith, spinning and weaving, and medal casting. In the field of social science are films depicting the interdependence of peoples and the growth of land transportation through the ages. Under the heading of natural science, is a series of 8 sound films showing the earth and its life as follows: (1) the earth's rocky crust, (2) the wearing away of the land, (3) the work of running water, (4) plant life, (5) animal life, (6) plant growth, (7) the frog, and (8) reactions in plants and animals. Miscellaneous films include one on surface changes in metals at high temperatures and a medical picture dealing with the diagnosis treatment, and results of pernicious anemia.

Another important factor on education's far-flung, if financially troublesome cinematic front, is the newly-formed General Committee on Motion Pictures, with a total membership of more than 300. Sponsored by the Department of Secondary Education of the National Education Association, the group is concerned with the teaching of

motion picture appreciation and the development of standards for evaluating entertainment films; with the stimulation of production of better educational films and their improved use in the classroom; with the training of teachers in the use of visual aids; and with the stimulation of research to make for better use of the motion picture and other visual aids, and to evaluate the results of their use in the classroom.

Thus can be seen the many-faceted side of the ambitious audio-visual campaign being carried on in American schools. Whether a cinematic Nirvana will eventually be attained, with film replacing books and financial aid being supplied by federal, state, or local agencies, it is difficult to surmise. But despite monetary obstructions, education is definitely "going Hollywood." Lights, camera, action!

## British Found Film School

By G. BUCKLAND SMITH\*

In the summer of 1935 the British educational world saw the birth of a new venture—a school for teachers interested in the instructional possibilities of films. The Film School was instituted and has been organized in subsequent years by the Educational Handwork Association, an organization for the development of modern school practices, in conjunction with the British Film Institute, which exists to promote the film as a means of instruction and entertainment.

The London Film School has now come to be the annual meeting place of those comparatively few British teachers who are working for the development of the film as an aid to instruction. The three functions of the school are:

(1) To propagate amongst teachers a better understanding of the film medium;

(2) To provide a means whereby teachers can obtain instruction in all

matters relating to the use of the film in the school;

(3) To bring together all those teachers from all parts of the country who are using instructional films for the purposes of pooling information, keeping in touch with recent developments, and elucidation of general principles.

The instruction is usually in four parts:

(a) Technique and Manipulation:

This course is essentially practical, consisting of instruction and practice in the handling of sub-standard apparatus, the care and maintenance of films, etc.

(b) Film Production:

Also essentially practical, the students producing a series of films of a documentary or instructional nature under the guidance of several well-known documentary film directors.

(c) The Use of Film in the School:

This comprises a series of lectures and demonstration lessons given by noted experts in the use of instructional films. The talks embrace all the subjects for which films are being made and the lec-

\*Organizer of Visual Education, Brentwood School, London.



tures include practicing teachers, eminent educationists, and film-makers.

(d) The fourth group of lectures are given in the evenings and are open to the public. They are given by prominent people in the film and educational worlds, this year's program including lectures by Robert Stevenson, the director of *Tudor Rose* (*Nine Days a Queen*) and *King Solomon's Mines*, etc.; Paul Rotha, the famous documentary film director and author, and Dr. Emanuel Miller, a noted authority on child psychology.

But as regards the extent to which educational cinema has extended and the number of schools making any real attempt to use films for instructional purposes, there is urgent need for improvement. In fact, the support which the educationists are giving to the instructional film producers is so slight as to seriously retard production and almost bring it to a standstill. The position is gradually improving, helped, it is believed, by the Film School and the other activities of the British Film Institute.

In the training of film appreciation, too, we have made but little progress. The need for providing some training in film taste is now recognized by most teachers in the country but, perhaps owing to our natural conservatism and deeply-laid traditions, very few teachers have made any attempt to investigate how this might be done. At the moment, one or two are endeavoring to bring the matter into the light and to encourage more teachers to tackle its problems.

Two approaches have been tried by investigators, both in interesting comparison to those adopted in America.

The differences arise from the divergent ideas of cinema which are held in America and in Britain. America has made the cinema a means of presenting a drama, played by experienced actors and actresses and assisted by the various powers of the medium. Britain, finding her ideals in the great documentary tradition which has arisen during the past eight years, has made the film a medium essentially different than any other and requiring material and methods of its own.

The first approach to be tried was through film production. The pupils were taught to use the tools and techniques of the film artist in the belief that this would lead to an understanding of his problems.

Another approach being investigated—and interim tests indicate that it is being successful—seeks to encourage the appreciation of films through the study of their historical development. The course has embraced the evolution of the film in America, Sweden, France, Germany, Russia, and Great Britain from the very beginnings up to the present day, stress being laid upon those contributions to the evolution of the cinema for which the various schools of production are remembered. The survey included a study of commercial production and of the documentary, educational, and experimental films. The lessons were copiously illustrated with stills and films representing the highest standard of production of their periods.

Educational cinema was born in this country in the early years of the century but it is still an infant. It is a flourishing and fascinating infant, however, whose growth will be well worth watching.

## Frances Marion's Writing Forum

Miss Frances Marion, noted writer and producer of Columbia Studio, answers more questions for readers about screen writing. Miss Marion will be glad to reply to all queries submitted by CINEMA PROGRESS subscribers.

---

Q. Which pays best, popular fiction or scenario writing, and what is the average price paid for a screen play?

A. Scenario writing, generally, except in the case of some prolific and very popular fiction writer. However, a writer of popular fiction has little difficulty in turning to scenario writing, if he wishes. The "average" price would be hard to figure. I have known stories to sell at \$200 and others to sell at \$50,000. It depends on many factors, including the record of the author for writing hits, his popularity with the public, the quality of the story, etc.

Q. How does one get soul and life into a character one draws from the imagination?

A. First, you must be able to recognize those qualities that you call soul and life. Discover what you mean by those qualities in living persons and you will be able to express them in your imaginative characters. One naturally realizes that it is more important to know that a friend is loyal and sincere than that he has blue eyes and brown hair. Look beyond material and physical aspects and let the character's actions express the qualities you admire.

Q. What requirements are necessary for the short story to be considered for film material?

A. Some of the features that will sell

a short story to a studio are: dramatic action, appealing characters, emotion-arousing episodes, an interesting story based on a timely topic.

Q. Can a successful scenario be built around an outstanding character?

A. Certainly. A large proportion of them are; both in the biographical pictures such as those featuring Lincoln, Wellington, Disraeli, etc., and in pictures featuring the life of some imaginary person. Character may be even more important than plot.

Q. What is the studios' plan for finding suitable story material? What type best suits the screen story editor?

A. The major studios have reading departments that examine all current novels, magazines, and plays; scouts here and abroad to discover material ahead of its publication, and readers who search the world's literature of the past.

A plot doesn't have to be unusual, but the characters must be colorful and real. If a story is good, any background or topic can be used. Once it was thought that war stories, costume productions, musicals, and pictures of the South were outworn. The illusion was shattered with the appearance, one by one, of good stories in each of these fields.

Winner of the screen writing contest sponsored by Miss Marion was Miss Greta Martin, summer session student at the University of Southern California, the Columbia writer-producer announced. Because she "has a talent for dramatic incident," Miss Martin was awarded a six-months' contract at M-G-M as a writing apprentice.

# The New Cinema Progress

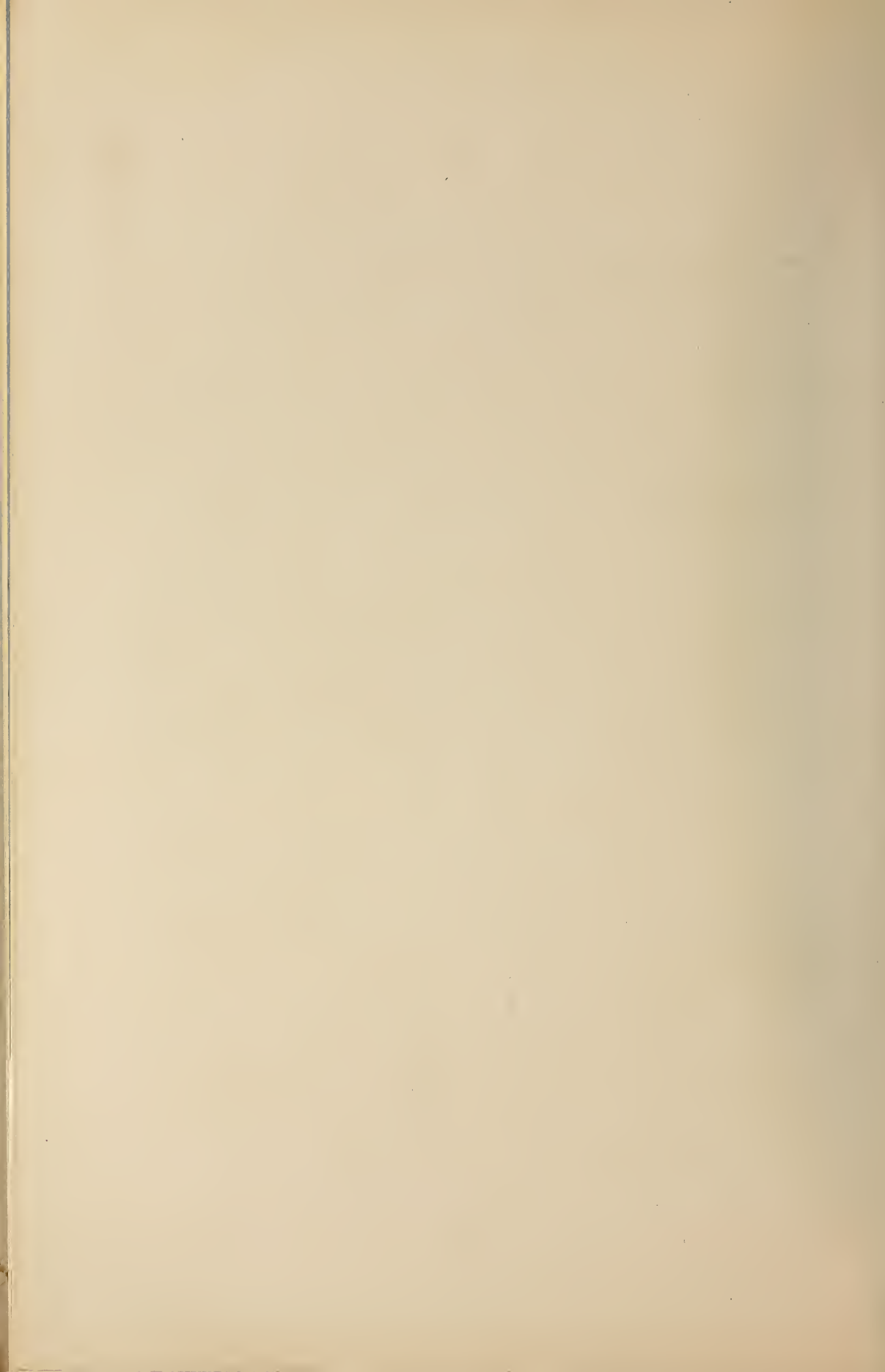
With this issue, the editors present for your approval the NEW CINEMA PROGRESS, featuring a different cover, make-up, paper, additional departments, and articles by and about authorities in the motion picture and visual education fields.

Striving always to bring the BEST to its readers, CINEMA PROGRESS presents in this issue contributions by BORIS MORROS, Paramount's noted musical director; and BARRETT KIESLING, of M-G-M, who for 22 years has been engaged in practical studio work. Also, there are interviews with ROBERT HILL LANE, assistant superintendent of the Los Angeles city schools, who foresees a great future for visual education; SIDNEY FRANKLIN and W. S. VAN DYKE, well-known M-G-M directors. And in addition there is, of course, our regular Screen Writing Forum conducted by MISS FRANCES MARION, Columbia writer and producer, who is one of Hollywood's highest-paid scenarists.

Beginning with the next issue (October), when CINEMA PROGRESS goes on a monthly publication schedule, a department with reviews of outstanding pictures will be added. Also, there will be articles by motion picture authorities, experts in their respective fields.

CINEMA PROGRESS invites you to express your opinion of its mechanical overhauling. Has it improved or has it failed? Is the general appearance more attractive? The writing better? Are the stories varied enough, and are they too long or too short? What changes would you suggest? What do you enjoy most about this issue? CINEMA PROGRESS welcomes your reaction. Remember, it is YOUR magazine, and the editors are anxious to please YOU.







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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### EDITORIAL

- Finding a Common Ground..... 2

### MOTION PICTURE ART AND TECHNIQUE

- Five Who Help the Stars Shine..... 3  
Stokowski Explains New Recording Device..... 8  
What Price Realism?..... 9  
Selecting the School Projector..... 12  
Talking Pictures—A Book Review..... 14

### LIFE AND THE CINEMA

- How Moral Are the Movies?..... 15  
Wake Up and Teach!..... 18  
Wanted: A Coordination of Audio-Visual Forces..... 19  
Film and Science..... 21  
"Better Films for Children," Canadian Cry..... 22  
World Vies for Television Supremacy..... 23  
The Younger Generation Looks at the Cinema..... 24

### DEPARTMENTS

- Movie Magic ..... 26  
Cinema on Parade ..... 28  
Frances Marion's Screen Writing Forum..... 32

## Finding a Common Ground

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THERE IS a seemingly unbridgeable controversy as to what makes the "better picture." The leaders of motion picture trade and production uncompromisingly insist that the quality of pictures should be measured by their financial success, in short by the returns at the *box office*.

ON THE other hand, the leaders of the motion picture-conscious audience insist, as we find in one of the following articles in this issue, that the pictures should be measured by their wholesome effect upon the public. One of the purposes of CINEMA PROGRESS is to find a common ground between the two major picture factors in national life—the leaders of production and the leaders of consumption.

THE EDITORS are convinced that if the extremes are taken out of consideration, this common ground can be found and a cooperation established—that is, if we eliminate those who deny any social responsibility for their product, on one hand, and those who completely disregard the necessity of the industry to have an appropriate financial return for its pictures. Neither side can ignore the view-point of the other. It is a fact that such recently produced pictures as *The Good Earth*, *Louis Pasteur*, *Emile Zola*, *A Hundred Men and a Girl*, and others have satisfied both sides.

IT IS necessary to establish the same terminology with the same meaning of words in order to bring about mutual understanding. The question for many is whether a wholesome picture can be entertaining, and an entertaining picture can be wholesome.

EITHER ONE of two extremes is easy to produce—an empty picture playing on the lower instincts of the masses, on thoughtlessness and slipshod morals, or a dry bone picture with lots of teaching and preaching which leaves the audience cold and bored. Real art is the right balance between an interesting, worthwhile idea, situation, character, or angle, and good emotional treatment and right proportion of dramatical, comical, artistic, and musical elements.

IT IS true that such a combination demands an effort on both sides—the producer and the public. To make this effort they both have to feel the sense of mutual obligation and responsibility. *The producer* should be blamed if he takes the easy way out and produces a harmful picture instead of doing his best to make a worthwhile one within the box office possibility. *The public*, especially the educators and civic leaders, should be blamed if they do not actively support the type of pictures which were mentioned above, i. e., pictures combining entertainment and worthwhileness.

THE FINDING of a common ground bringing both sides together in a mutual understanding and emphasizing the mutual obligation and responsibility of both sides will be the effort of the magazine, CINEMA PROGRESS. Thus, we hope to serve the real CINEMA PROGRESS.

TRENDS OF realistic pictures of social significance seem to be on the up-grade, judging from such recent pictures as *Dead End*, *Life of Emile Zola*, *Mr. Deeds Goes to Town*, etc. The question is—how far in realism can a picture go, without

becoming sordid and propagandistic, and does the public want to learn about real life or does it want to escape from realism? This is another very important controversial subject to which space will be given the defenders of both sides in future issues of CINEMA PROGRESS.

TO STIR the right sort of emotions the picture has to keep a certain distance from actualities and not go into sordid details unless it gives an inside and new angle of this reality, and unless these realistic aspects of life disclose interestingly their meaning and significance. On the other hand, the picture which distorts realism, and presents "perfumed lies" instead of truth, as Zola put it in the Warner Brothers picture, loses the value of real art and worthwhileness and may become even harmful and act as a dope for the masses.

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### Five Who Help the Stars Shine

By HARRY COULTER

Their names don't glitter from marquees. Autograph hunters don't swarm around them at premieres. And when the credit titles are flashed briefly upon the screen, too few theatre-goers are impressed with the vast importance of their work. But when a studio prepares to make a picture, especially such a one as *The Life of Emile Zola*, it calls upon, among others, the skilled resourcefulness of five persons: writer, research head, art director, make-up artist, and director of photography. These five (including the director and actors, of course), are the ones upon whom the success of a production largely depends. They are the men behind the stars.

So it was that when Warner Brothers decided to bring to life France's great man of letters and fighter for justice, Emile Zola, they set Norman Reilly Raine, Dr. Herman Lissauer, Anton Grot, Perc Westmore, and Tony Gaudio to the task.

#### RECREATING PAST EVENTS

Raine it was who took the story prepared by the studio writers, Heinz Herald and Geza Herczeg, and adapted it to the screen. Before preparing the initial draft of the story, Herald and Herczeg had spent seven months in research, reading numerous biographies and old news accounts concerning the chief characters of the colorful Zola-Dreyfus era.

"The creation of characters such as Zola and Dreyfus is a 50-50 proposition between the writers and the actors and director," Raine declared in an interview at the studio.

"There was such a wealth of material, however, that it was more a process of elimination than of creating. Therefore, we used only material that would further the dramatic action of the story."

Zola, as pictured upon the screen, was real, according to Raine. His fear of drafts was well known. He was stoop-



shouldered, myopic, and fiddled with his hands and glasses. Slow and deliberate of action, Zola was not a heroic-looking figure. All Zola's traits were described in the script to enable Muni to make his great characterization authentic.

Created by the writer purely as a "human touch," however, was Zola's ability to pick out good lobsters when he went to market.

Also improvised was his contankerous nature and crankiness when he had a cold.

"But the reactions we gave Zola were natural and would be true of any person," Raine explained. "Most people who have a cold are cranky and miserable and react to little situations in the same way. So it wasn't hard to recreate this part of Zola's character. He always suffered from colds and small illnesses."

Montage, dissolves, and other short-cut methods of covering space and time are written into the script by the writer. Here is one, which the length of the film unfortunately made necessary to delete: In a Bastille Day celebration in the streets of Paris, we see showers of confetti falling—a scene of gladness. A dissolve is then made to rain falling down and Dreyfus peering out of his cell window—a scene of sadness. Such contrast is very effective.

But while at least 90 per cent of the screen action is determined by the script, there are occasions when directors and actors "*ad lib*" their "business" after arriving on the set, Raine pointed out. Thus, it was Director William Dieterle's idea to have Muni end one of the early scenes by swinging his coat into the camera in glee upon learning he had obtained a job. Also, in the scene showing Dreyfus liberated from

prison, it was Joseph Schildkraut's plan to walk hesitantly out of his cell, then back and out again, as though not quite understanding he was at last a free man. This was one of the most effective bits of "business" in the entire picture.

The shot of the German attaché's hand placing Esterhaze's document in a pigeon-hole, and the shot of another hand stealthily removing it while the *Marseillaise* was played to identify the hand as belonging to a Frenchman, was conceived also by Dieterle.

"The psychology of *Zola*, *Pasteur*, and other films of that nature is that people like to root for the underdog. They favor the weak man with the just cause. They want to be saviors and protectors, and, as in *Zola*'s fight against political corruption and tyranny, they want to help him," Raine declared.

#### CREATING AUTHENTICITY

Now for the research department. While Raine and other writers are putting words into the mouths of recreated Zolas and Dreyfuses and breathing life into their limbs, Dr. Herman Lissauer is hard at work reproducing the surroundings in which they lived.

While the script is being prepared Dr. Lissauer and his assistants secure books and material for the writers; supply pictures to the art department to aid in designing sets, and to the property department for use in creating all movable objects or "props" needed for the production.

During the shooting of the picture hundreds of questions pour in to the research department from the director, his assistants, and from heads of departments in regard to the smallest details of scenery, costume, props, etc.

"For each picture we prepare what

we call a 'bible,'” explained the research head, whose offices resemble those of a well-stocked library, with thousands of books, magazines, and newspapers from all over the world.

“The 'bible' contains all the pictorial material needed to produce authentic atmospheres and backgrounds. For *Zola*, we made hundreds of photostatic copies of old magazines of the period—*L'illustration*, *London Daily News*, etc.—of documents bearing the handwriting of Zola, Mme. Dreyfus, and of contemporary newspapers. There were photographs and drawings of costumes, streets, and of exteriors and interiors of buildings, collected from many sources, including France, England, Austria, and the New York public library. From the latter, whole books were photostated. At least one year of preliminary research was necessary before *Zola* could be started.”

One of the most difficult problems faced by the research workers was that of determining how French government officials would censor a letter from Mme. Dreyfus to her husband on Devil's Island. It was certain that any letter sent there *would* be censored. Although museums throughout the United States and France were contacted, it was impossible to learn, so parts of sentences were blocked out haphazardly. Also, when the letter was prepared, the insert department copied from an old document the style of handwriting used by Mme. Dreyfus, and put it into English.

Despite a strict adherence to the facts in producing *The Life of Emile Zola*, four violations of historical truth were deliberately made for dramatic effect and to save time, Dr. Lissauer revealed.

1. In the screen story, *Nana* was the

first book written by Zola. Actually, it was *L'Assommoir*.

2. The visit of Mme. Dreyfus to the jail to see her husband never occurred.

3. In the picture Zola died the night preceding the reinstatement of Dreyfus. Zola died in 1906, four years later, but it was more dramatic to telescope the two events.

4. In the film it was implied that Zola went to England after his trial. Actually, there were *two* trials, and it was after the second that he went to England. The two trials were combined on the screen to save time.

#### REPRODUCING BACKGROUNDS

Two main themes were followed in creating the art work for *Zola*, according to Anton Grot, noted French designer, who had charge of this phase of production. He had to:

1. Depict the poverty of the lower classes, to which Zola belonged, and

2. Show the contrasting luxury of the better classes—the military and the aristocracy.

Poverty of the period was understressed, rather than overstressed. Actually, Zola and the people of his class lived in much worse conditions than were depicted upon the screen.

“If the wretchedness was too sharply drawn, it would cause the audience to shiver,” Grot said, “and this is not at all desirable.”

“The background settings should never predominate over the actors and foreground action, but should be subordinate and merely suggestive,” Grot declared.

“In creating an atmosphere of poverty it is necessary to pay more attention to details than in depicting aristocratic sur-

roundings," he said. "The artist must 'feel' the poverty—the doors, furniture, walls, etc., have to be aged, and there must be constant conferences with the director and the heads of the prop and other departments."

The period of Zola was a very much overdressed one—that is, among the aristocratic classes, Grot explained. The rich overstuffed their homes with gaudy furniture, drapes, antiques, etc. Grot, however, simplified and understressed this aspect, also, except in Zola's home (after he had become famous), in order to emphasize the contrast between his early poverty and later position of affluence. Zola, of course, like many poor people coming into wealth, wanted to buy things, and did it in a whole-hearted way—antiques, rugs, drapes, weird furniture, objects of art, etc.—thus Cezanne's disgust when he visited Zola and exclaimed that he had "become smug and self-satisfied, stuffed in body as well as in mind." Zola's home was reproduced almost exactly, even to the pictures and tapestries on the walls, Grot revealed.

Devil's Island was the most difficult of all to reproduce because no photographs were available, the noted designer said. The set was therefore an impressionistic creation, and was made much smaller than it really is in order to emphasize the isolation of Dreyfus—imprisoned on a speck of earth in the middle of the ocean, far away from France and home just as the military staff wanted him.

#### RECREATING THE CHARACTERS

Given the story, the research work, and the reproduced locales of a vanished era, the next step was to bring back to life the characters, themselves. En-

trusted with this near-miraculous task, were the deft fingers of Perc Westmore, chief of Warner Brothers' make-up staff.

"It is just like painting a portrait upon a man's face," Westmore declares. "Every little detail of make-up has to be perfect because the slightest error will show up on the screen, which magnifies objects from 200 to 400 times. The scientist uses his microscope when he works; the make-up man uses the camera and screen.

"Actors no longer are cast for parts because they look like the characters they are to represent. Muni in life doesn't look a bit like Zola. The former has a low forehead, narrow face, and weighs around 150. Zola had a high forehead, wide face, and weighed 210."

To effect the transformation, Muni's forehead was raised by means of lifting the hairline with Latex, Westmore explained. Latex is a raw rubber composition that fits over the skin and can be painted a lifelike color. The material was also applied to Muni's cheeks to give the jowled effect. The beard around his mouth and chin was real, having been grown for a previous picture, but the side whiskers were false. Then a few pads were symmetrically fitted over the body muscles to give Muni the needed extra poundage and a famous man long dead stood recreated, ready once again to send "truth on the march."

#### MOOD AND ATMOSPHERE

With the characters created, only one thing remained to do. Tony Gaudio, "Great strides have been made in the art of make-up during the past three years, and in three or four years from now we will laugh at our present accomplishments.



last of the five technical wizards, had to wave his magical wand and open wide the gates of this recreated world so that the audience, too, might enter and participate with reborn Zolas and Dreyfuses in their struggles and adventures. As director of photography, it was Gaudio's job to synthesize the work of the others, to set the mood and atmosphere in such a way as to most effectively play upon the emotions of theatre-goers.

With the director and art director he decides upon camera angles, lighting, and composition of the set. With the make-up artist, he determines the amount and type of make-up to be used by the actors.

A notable example of Gaudio's work is the creation of Dreyfus' Devil's Island cell. To give a feeling of close confinement, Gaudio had the walls painted in such a way as to emphasize the dirtiness and grey bleakness of the surroundings. It produced a sketchy, engraved effect which only suggested details, but did not bring them out. That, plus lighting, made the cell, supposedly 8 feet square, seem much smaller than it really was. Actually, the cell was built considerably larger to give the camera greater mobility. An effect of narrowness was also obtained in one shot by sharp-angling the camera lens through a special hole dug in the wall.

Lighting was the problem faced by Gaudio in the opening garret scene. The garret, a small set with a skylight forming most of the background, made special precautions necessary to see that the side walls wouldn't be too bright, but would still have enough light to pick up the faces of the players. Therefore small "spots" were used instead of large floodlights. If the latter had been

used, all the walls would have been as bright as the skylight, which wouldn't have been natural.

A realistic deception was achieved in the Parthenon by means of "spots" ranging in intensity from 400 amperes to 10,000 amperes, which were focused in such a way as to give the building a dome effect which it did not naturally have. The lights were placed to produce just the right amount of shadow needed to give the ceiling a curved appearance.

The ray of light streaming down upon Zola's coffin from the high Parthenon window was actually only a painting upon a piece of black georgette cloth 6 inches square, which was placed 4 feet in front of the camera lens. In executing the effect, Gaudio first determined the relation of the cloth to the camera angle, and then its perspective in relation to the window and the coffin below. The ray of light was then painted in white at the proper angle upon the cloth. The texture of the black georgette was so coarse that the camera lens could easily catch the action through it. The white ray of "light" did not show up, however, until a lamp at the side of the camera was turned on at the psychological moment when the ray was meant to appear.

Briefly, then, we have glimpsed a few of the many factors entering into the making of a picture, have seen how five little-publicized men recreated an era and those who lived in it. Invaluable and necessary as their work is, however, it must be brought to fruition by good directing. And, as Perc Westmore sums it up, "The best make-up in the world is of no use unless the actor, himself, can complete the characterization."

But these five—

## Stokowski Explains New Recording Device

A tall, distinguished appearing man sat before a panel-board recently, listening intently as he deftly manipulated the dials with his long, sensitive fingers and watched an electric needle dance over the face of one of the panel-board instruments. As the needle fluctuated, music such as the several score enraptured listeners never believed possible filled the Universal Studio projection room. It was almost as though the audience were in box seats in Philadelphia, enjoying Leopold Stokowski's famous symphony orchestra. And they might just as well have been, for what they were hearing was a demonstration by Stokowski, himself, of the new musical recording process used in making his latest picture, *100 Men and a Girl!*

The occasion was the annual national convention of the Cinema Appreciation League, to which Universal was host on this particular day.

Following the end of the electric needle's dance, and the bursts of applause that greeted the selections from Wagner, Bach, Liszt, and Tchaikowsky, the noted symphony conductor explained to his listeners the new method of recording.

"Our first aim," Stokowski explained, "is to give more truth to the tone color of instruments. Sometimes these harmonics are lost in recording, when an attempt is made to squeeze 90 decibels into 25.

"Our second aim is to try to keep individual instruments and groups of instruments with their full musical values. We must make the whole thing plastic, must throw individual instruments into

relief, just as sculpture aims to do. In musical architecture we should watch for high relief, middle relief, foreground, background, etc."

To achieve his "musical architecture," Stokowski divided the Philadelphia orchestra into six groups of violins, reeds, wood-winds, basses, brasses, and tympani. Over each group a microphone was suspended, whose recorded sound of its particular section did not go into the mixing panel but was retained on a separate sound track. By this means sound was tied in with sight; when the camera shows a close-up of the horns, for example, their music is emphasized, and that of the other groups dies down to form background music. The same for the strings, etc. For long shots showing the entire orchestra, the music is evenly distributed.

Sitting at the mixing panel in the studio projection room, Stokowski blends these separate recordings to suit his exacting taste, just as though he were actually conducting the living orchestra.

"In real conducting, you look into the eyes of men, who are human beings with responsive emotional feelings. Using the controls as I do here is not merely a mechanical operation. I feel the emotions of the men as if they were present.

"Also, an advantage of using studio controls is that we can correct mistakes here, which wouldn't be possible in an actual concert."

Music Stokowski defines as "something that happens inside of you, emotionally, in your imagination." It is his aim to see that the right things happen.

## What Price Realism?

By RAM BAGAI\*

Realism, Hollywood fetish which decrees that producers must make the unreal seem real, and must spend almost unreal sums of money doing it, is well illustrated in two forthcoming productions—M-G-M's *Kim*, now in preparation, and Samuel Goldwyn's *Adventures of Marco Polo*, soon to be released.

For Metro's purposes, it was necessary to transport Kipling's India to Culver City, no matter how many ship loads of props it took, while all Goldwyn had to do was bring thirteenth century Peking to some open fields 35 miles from the movie capital, at a cost of \$20,000 per day. Props and research are the aspect of realism faced by M-G-M; location and budget problems that by Goldwyn.

First, let's go to India. As in the quest for authenticity in *The Good Earth*, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer strives again to lend realism to a production. This time agents were sent out to bring back documents, pictures, implements, clothing, and anything else to aid in preparation of their forthcoming film—Rudyard Kipling's immortal *Kim*.

### Realism, Hollywood Fetish

So, as this is being written, the fabulous India of *Kim* is already in Hollywood. The treasure of props from India, 4,279 individual pieces ranging from earrings of dancing girls to howdahs and camel trappings — are now being unpacked and catalogued at the large Culver City studio.

Supervising the job is Hugh B. Hunt, a member of the studio's interior decorating staff, who traveled 25,000

miles in three months to make the collection. On this trip Hunt was accompanied by his assistant, L. R. Walker, and a photographer, A. J. Patel, both trained observers.

"The first step before we sailed," said Hunt, "was to read the book and make what we call a 'breakdown', or detailed description of each scene, noting the 'props' used or needed, not only from the standpoint of realism, but for photographic value and atmosphere. Upon our arrival in Bombay, we had our plan of procedure mapped out, and had decided to follow the action of the story, scene for scene."

The Punjab, or central state of India, is the locale of *Kim*, and Hunt made his headquarters at Lahore. From Lahore they followed the footsteps of Kim and the Lama over the Grand Trunk Road, which cuts across India. They covered the 300 miles from Lahore to Benares by auto, stopping often to make panoramic photographs of the countryside and the life enroute. Travelling along the roads from town to town, they were amazed at the beauty and natural settings. Nature has been very generous to India—bestowing upon her something that can never be grasped physically by man—beauty and naturalness.

Photographic film, however, seems to be the lone exception; for Mr. Patel took more than 10,000 photographs, which will be used by the art, wardrobe, makeup, property, and research departments, as well as the process shots for the special effects department.

A motion picture buying representa-

\*Hollywood representative of The National Call, Delhi, India.



tive in a foreign country need not search for "props", according to Hunt. "Everywhere," he said, "we were shown the utmost in courtesy and co-operation by English and Indian authorities. Despite daily temperatures ranging from 110 to 118 degrees, there was no lack of enthusiasm on the part of merchants and traders. Our task was to choose judiciously from the thousands of objects offered for sale. Those that could be reproduced as cheaply, or cheaper, in the studio property department, required that we purchase only samples, but even so we had to buy a bewildering assortment of 'props', such as musical instruments, camel saddles, pottery, brasses, Buddhas, shrines, cooking utensils, charpoys, slippers, dresses, and a hundred and one other things."

Hunt is proudest of a Maharani's four-wheel bullock-cart, a museum piece, and exact duplicate of the one in which Kim and the Lama travelled down the Grand Trunk Road.

Victor Fleming, who will direct Robert Taylor as the grown-up Kim and Lionel Barrymore as the Lama, is now working with Art Director Cedric Gibbons; Superintendent of Properties, Ed Willis; and Hunt on the physical outline of the picture, which promises to be one of the most spectacular from the standpoint of settings, yet filmed in Hollywood.

Now let's go to Thirteenth Century Peking. Few outside of the motion picture business have any concept of the everlasting headaches produced by long and elaborate journeys on location.

The average producer shuns them, and usually will resort to any legitimate means (process shots and painted glass shots) to avoid the cost and dangers

attendant upon expeditions far from home. In a sense, going on location is similar in many respects to moving an army. Both have their advance guards, their transportation, feeding and housing problems, and they share alike in matters of sanitation, policing, and the observance of schedules.

Lately, the most ambitious location enterprise is Sam Goldwyn's *The Adventures of Marco Polo*, starring Gary Cooper in a story of thirteenth century China. Using a daily average of 800 extras in battle scenes and awesome Mongolian charges, it is obvious that pageantry of this sort cannot be made in studio stages.

For this particular picture, two men were sent out to pick a site which resembled the Chinese scene of the story. These location scouts must observe definite rules. The perfect site must be without interfering houses, telephone poles, etc., must fit the action of the story; must have proximity to some source of food supply, electricity and water; and finally, must be adaptable to housing a large number of men and women.

The location men then make a series of photographs of the country under consideration. These are taken back to the studio and in this particular case were presented to Goldwyn and director Archie Mayo for approval.

A beautiful pastoral country a few miles from Malibu Lake and 35 miles from Hollywood was finally chosen and this then became the focus for an amazing industry. As soon as arrangements had been made with the owner of the property, some 200 carpenters were hurried to the spot. These artisans, working three 8-hour shifts over a period of 10 days, constructed an authentic re-



Covering acres of ground is this reproduction of thirteenth century Peking created for Goldwyn's *Adventures of Marco Polo*. Above is seen a section of the city wall and one of the huge gates.

production of Peking and its outer gates and walls at a cost of \$92,476.

Before the production army arrives on the scene a number of interesting side phases of location enterprises take place. Once the set is approved, electricians swarm over the place, laying lines and tiggig lamps, and at the same time the set dressers get to work. These last are the ones who fill empty sets with furniture, rugs, and the innumerable trappings which make motion picture settings so 'real'. In the case of *Marco Polo* they had to dress the entrance to 'Peking' with thousands of typical articles and foodstuffs. Small stalls had to

be made, realistic with Oriental delicacies; meats had to be hung in the equivalent of butcher shops, flags draped about, and palaces and houses furnished.

Ready for production, a fleet of busses in downtown Los Angeles picked up 450 Chinese atmosphere players and dispatched them to 'Peking'! The cowboys and other extras came through the studio gate at 5 a.m., were loaded into busses and sent out. They had to be on the set a couple of hours ahead of shooting time to be costumed and made up by the makeup artists — who were also among the early arrivers.

Each step of the campaign had been

carefully planned and was executed on schedule. The commissary department had functioned with equal efficiency in providing savory breakfasts and luncheons for the "army" in a circus tent mess hall.

On the basis of these and other items, it cost Goldwyn about \$20,000 a day to keep his company on location. To the average person this may seem an exorbitant sum to expend on production, but the figure given is the bare operating expenses, minus the salary of Cooper, Mayo, and other supporting players and technicians.

This \$20,000 a day is broken up as follows:

Salaries to 800 extras and  
bit players .....\$ 8,500  
Salaries to 200 technicians  
(electricians, cameramen,  
prop men, wardrobe,, and

makeup people) ..... 6,000  
Feeding ..... 2,345  
Electric current ..... 225  
Rental of 800 costumes,  
some wigs ..... 450  
Rental of site ..... 250  
Rental of Oriental furniture .... 300  
Animal rentals ..... 600  
Raw film expenditure ..... 250

Total.....\$18,920

The total, however, does not include such items as transportation, petty cash expenditures, hospital maintenance, and feed for animals, which easily make up the difference.

But the gamble is part of the business of making pictures. The studio technicians are geniuses in the art of make-believe and short cuts, but so far they have been unable to substitute for actual location scenes.

## Selecting the School Projector

The increasing demand of progressive educators for aid in selecting projectors for educational purposes makes a general consideration of the factors affecting the choice of a projector a felt need. This need has arisen with the realization of educators that educational situations do not all use the projectors for the same purposes. Some schools desire to use the projector for instructional purposes in the classroom; others may want to use it for larger audiences. Under certain conditions, in which the school assembly hall is not too large, the 16-mm. sound projector may be suitable for both purposes.

Relative cost is not the only concern in the selecting of a suitable projector. Careful consideration should be given to the film supply in conjunction with the choice of a projector. Then, too, we are concerned with the various uses which may be made of the 16-mm. sound or silent projector as the case may be. This means the need of the classroom and the assembly hall must be recognized and considered.

When the appropriate type has been decided upon it remains to narrow down the choice to the actual make which will be most suitable. This matter may be facilitated and the choice insured by



asking for a demonstration in the room where the projector is to be used. In such a demonstration it is well to give special attention to the following points:

### 1. ILLUMINATION:

- a. Does the projector give sufficient brilliancy to make the picture the required size?
- b. The lamp should not be run at more than its normal rating.
- c. The film used should be of average or more than average density. For example, cartoons and snow scenes are unsuitable for this purpose.
- d. The screen used should be of the same type which it is proposed to buy. If the screen is silver or beaded it is necessary to observe both from the normal position and the worst placed seat.
- e. The room should not be more thoroughly darkened than will be the situation in actual use.

### 2. PROPER LENS:

- a. If the projector has to make a very long throw or a very short one, it is well to make certain that the projector may be fitted with proper lens.
- b. If prolonged shows are to be given, it is well to be certain that the projector will carry an oversize reel. The 16-mm. machine carries a normal reel of 400 feet. Oversize reels carry 800, 1200, and 1600 feet of film. The oversize reel will eliminate loss of time necessitated by changing the reel.
- c. Where high lamp wattage is desired, bear in mind that high lamp wattage is not necessarily equivalent to high light output, and that

high wattage lamps entail increased cost and running expenses.

### 3. QUIETNESS:

- a. In the demonstration, note the amount of mechanical noise; excessive noise will detract the attention of the audience and especially those seated near the projector.

### 4. STILL PICTURES:

- a. For classroom purposes the teacher may desire to show a still picture. It is desirable to have a machine which permits one to turn the film forward or backward by hand; incidentally this will be a convenience in threading the machine. This feature is found only on certain machines.

### 5. CARE OF PROJECTOR:

- a. It is desirable in any projector that the inside of the gate should be easily accessible for cleaning purposes; otherwise attempts to clean it may result in scratching the faces of the runners, which will increase the tendency of the film to deposit cakes of emulsion there.

### 6. SOUND PROJECTORS:

- a. In choosing a sound projector give special attention to the volume and quality of sound.
- b. Be certain to test the machine under the actual conditions of use, for acoustic properties differ with the room.
- c. In selecting a 16-mm. sound projector capable of running at silent speed it should be noted that alterations to the shutter blade may be involved when the speed is changed. It is important that these alterations should not be difficult to carry out.

## Book Review

TALKING PICTURES, *How They Are Made, How to Appreciate Them*, by Barrett C. Kiesling. Published by Johnson Publishing Company, New York, 1937, 332 pages.

Reviewed by BERNARD ZERBE

In the Muncies, Middletowns and Main streets of America there are millions who wonder why the shadow pictures on the screen of their favorite theatre seem to be so alive. Barrett C. Kiesling has endeavored to show the intricacies of the motion picture in a casual "Cook's Tour" manner. He has not tried to explain everything, but he has given sufficient material so that those readers interested in the various departments can, at their leisure, read more. His book is as comprehensive as possible, explaining the ingredients that go into the recipe of a modern film.

Designed primarily for those with little knowledge of the cinema industry, *Talking Pictures* is an excellent guide. Kiesling begins his book with an introduction expressing the training and foundation needed for proper motion picture appreciation. Sound estimates arise only from sound knowledge, and he has taken this as the *raison d'être* for his work

The material on the director, producer and assistant director is especially good. Kiesling has looked at these men in an understanding manner, and has presented their work graphically. It is with these men that the making of a motion picture becomes centralized, and it is here that good scenarios become bad pictures, and actors become camera fodder or stars. Here too, Kiesling shows the sincerity of his work. He has taken

the assistant director, who usually is cartooned as a puppet, and gives him credit for being one of the most important elements in the making of a film.

As an aid to classroom work, the book should prove valuable, for many teachers have nothing but a casual acquaintance with film production. The material gained from reading this book should supply a needed background for more complete appreciation, and thereby enliven classroom discussion and activity. The people and the pupils of the Muncies, Middletowns and Main streets of America need wonder no longer why the shadows on their favorite theatre screen seem so alive. They are alive because there is so much life behind them.

### What They're Saying

"Much has been said about the revolutionary changes television will make in the entertainment world, but a calm view of the situation proves that the motion picture is progressing far more rapidly than any other medium."—*Howard Estabrook*, associate producer and scenarist at Paramount.

\* \* \*

"Why not put the League of Nations to work? If the League would appoint a committee to encourage and finally to supervise the production of text-films and text-books, to be used all over the world, the problems of mankind could be settled within three generations. Why don't we stop talking about this 'brotherhood of man' idea—why not make it a fact, instead of a dream?"—*Walter Wanger*, producer.

## How Moral are the Movies?

By DR. EDWIN D. STARBUCK\*

The motion pictures:

Cultivate and dignify the art appreciation of the public.

Encourage peace and enhance beauty in the midst of the necessity of portraying the ugly and coarse.

Depict the gangster as what he is instead of as a hero.

Are on the up-grade in their quality of presentation.

But—they also:

Err in their treatment of murder and the value of human life, respect for law, and ideal love.

Resort to sensory and sensuous appeals, the use of melodrama, and a type of humor that is perhaps not funny except to persons of low taste.

Create false social standards, and

Violate Art in the interest of Success.

Such were some of the conclusions of 200 summer session students at the University of Southern California, when asked recently in a questionnaire to evaluate the good and bad qualities of a social force which affects 40,000,000 Americans weekly.

Just how much people are really being influenced is open to question, but the theme is so important that none can escape the challenge to think into it as soberly and as clearly as possible.

*There can be no doubt that motion pictures are stealing the cultural show. Of the 40,000,000 persons who jam into the theaters every week, there are 11,000,000 youngsters under 14, more than twice that many youths in the 'teens, and an uncounted throng of grown-ups. There probably is nothing in all history to match this invasion.*

\* Professor of philosophy, University of Southern California.

Why has the cinema such a tremendous hold over the citizenry of the world? It is because "we think with our muscles," as one of the nation's leading psychologists has put it. We respond with our entire organism to the appeal of a shadow world — not only with the skeletal muscles that have to do with action and reaction, but with the smooth or visceral muscles involved in breathing, digestion, glands, and blood circulation. It is the genius of the motion picture art, appropriating as it does the techniques and appeals of nearly all the other arts to strike straight into the basal urges and drives — the raw stuff of which personality consists.

Possibly never has there been a wider door of opportunity flung open to a human agency than that enjoyed by the cinema. But is filmdom rising to that opportunity? Is its program toward better art and finer living? Unfortunately, we do not know. None of the prolific writings on the subject and the researches made have been objective.

Student reaction, however, indicates that the scales balance neatly in quite a number of items. The cinema does and does not break down racial prejudice, dignify marriage and the family, cultivate right social attitudes, approve toughness and rudeness in settling difficulties, and use the tragic and terrible to accentuate gentler and nobler qualities.

It seemed to this writer there might be some value in obtaining a cross-section picture of the opinions of a group of cultivated persons, part of whom have lived close to the moving



picture world and are preparing to enter it professionally, and another group, equally cultivated, who have no such professional hopes. Such an opportunity was furnished at the U. S. C. summer session, for there were classes of students in cinematography, psychology, and speech, with moving pictures as the topic of study. Also, there were classes in philosophy, character education, and general education. Further, most of the students were high school and university instructors, thus insuring more mature judgment.

In answering the questionnaire, students were asked to check the capital Y for an emphatic yes, the small letter y for a modified affirmative, O meaning can't decide, small n inclined toward the negative, and capital N for an emphatic no.

Typical of the questions asked, and their answers by the college group:

1. Is the influence of motion pictures, in your opinion, wholesome?

Y—10, y—87, O—22, n—65, N—15.

2. In your opinion, are they improving in their moral tone?

Y—63, y—95, O—12, n—24, N—6.

3. Have the movies presented war situations in such a way as to encourage world peace?

Y—66, y—66, O—17, n—39, N—23.

4. Is movie humor on the whole elevating and artistically satisfying?

Y—12, y—33, O—22, n—74, N—58.

5. Have the movies created false social standards?

Y—68, y—70, O—21, n—26, N—11.

6. Are there too many instances in which divorce is made too easy and delectable?

Y—78, y—67, O—24, n—22, N—6.

7. Is sensuous appeal too often dragged into the plot apparently just for the sake of making the picture "take" or "go over" or "sell"?

Y—83, y—70, O—22, n—9, N—5.

8. Is the ugly and coarse usually treated in such a way as to enhance beauty and refinement by contrast?

Y—21, y—70, O—34, n—32, N—21.

9. Do motion pictures, on the whole, cultivate and dignify the art appreciation of the public?

Y—19, y—72, O—30, n—39, N—17.

10. Is there a tendency to over-sentimentalize?

Y—49, y—79, O—22, n—33, N—7.

The implications of the findings indicated above are too self-evident to need much comment. Approval and disapproval seems evenly divided concerning the wholesomeness of the influence of motion pictures upon the public. Most



Dr. Edwin D. Starbuck, author of this article, is nationally known in the fields of philosophy and research, and is a keen student of the motion picture.

encouraging of all is the extremely heavy weighting of opinion that the quality of presentation is on the upgrade. On only one other count do the scales balance heavily and definitely to the credit of this art. It does seem to cultivate and dignify the art appreciation of the public.

On just about half the items, however the cinema suffers disapproval. The impression is rather definite that it errs in its treatment of ideal love among mates, murder and the value of human life, sensuous and illicit companionships, and respect for law. There is an overwhelming condemnation of its resort to sentimentalities, sensory and sensuous appeals, the implication that drinking and smoking are essential to social success, the use of melodrama, and a mediocre type of humor. The matter of playing up to artificial social standards is an object of definite disparagement. The films "usually deal with the leisure-luxury class." They "tend to be ultra-sophisticated." They "make the rich usually honorable and the poor stupid." *There seems to be a heartache for the wholesome simplicity and the sincerity of a Will Rogers or a Marie Dressler.*

*The public itself must bear a heavy share of the blame if the cinema is not as spotless as cultivated people would desire. Producers cannot afford to lose a half-million or a million as is sometimes done, on films of distinctly superior quality.*

The burning question is that of what the general public can do to improve this

situation. *I should like to see the cinema as a craft and also as an art taught in all high schools of the United States.* I should like to see researches made that are to the last degree objective and that are in all ways scientifically sound, extending through a period of three or five or more years, on both the specific and general effect of motion pictures on the behavior and ethical attitudes of children and youth. I should like most of all to see the springing up in America of what one might call a Young People's Better Arts Association, that should encourage in every way the Little Theater, the art gallery in every community, better landscape architecture and house-furnishing, more art in the curriculum of the public schools, and better moving pictures.

If the youth of America, the millions in other countries, and artists, producers, and directors should band together for improving all the arts including the motion pictures, the tawdry, hair-raising, sentimental, commercializing and propagandizing films would have to fold their tents. We shall not get very far in the long stretch of years with all this until art and art appreciation are made central and fundamental instead of incidental in all the schools of America from the baby years through college and university. It is quite possible that we will have it so we can bring onto the human scene generation after generation of persons who cannot be tricked with the gaudy and the spectacular presented in the name of Art.



## Wake Up and Teach!

What influences our children most—6 hours daily at school or 3 hours divided between movies, radio, and comic strip? The latter does, according to B. H. Darrow, chairman of the National Congress of Parents and Teachers, and it's all the fault of education, he says.

In a recent radio broadcast from the headquarters of the educational group in Washington, D. C., Darrow declared:

"The attitudes of our children towards life are being increasingly dominated by the talking motion pictures they attend, the comic strips they see, and the radio programs they hear. These three devices are outstripping other forces in determining attitudes and ideals of children.

"They should be in full use by educators, but are not. As a result the motion pictures which come into our local community, while doing a thoroughly effective job of teaching, are not educator made and do not always impart what parents would like to have them teach. Likewise, the comic strips and the radio programs are not educator made, except in a small degree. These three marvelous new devices take an average of more than three hours daily of the attention of our children."

Are screen heroes, radio comedians, and comic strip characters seriously competing with Shakespeare, Aristotle, and the multiplication table for a place in the juvenile fancy? Apparently fearing they are, Darrow deplores the fact that these "*more effective ways of teaching—the cinema, the speaker, and the graphic*

*arts—have been so largely ignored by the educator and so fully used by the seller of entertainment."*

The problem boils down to these three significant facts, he points out:

1. Some new tools are enormously effective, especially with children.
2. People working for profit immediately use these new tools.
3. Education delays adoption of them or makes half-hearted use of them.

Most powerful medium of the three is indisputably the motion picture. There are approximately 18,000 theaters in the nation, with a weekly attendance of 70,000,000, of whom 18,000,000 are young people, and 11,000,000 are children under 12 years of age. This latter group spends four or more hours weekly at the neighborhood movie house.

"Motion pictures are inescapably educational," argues the chairman of the national school group. "They take hold of the child and virtually enthrall him as long as they are on the screen. He sees new and strange cities, plants, animals, methods of travel and countless ways of doing things. The motion picture becomes an 'action pattern' and he unconsciously or consciously imitates some character whose course he considers especially delightful. To some children this is so effective that mere parroting of copy-book maxims seems well-nigh futile in the face of it."

But if Plato's sayings are to keep pace with Joe Penner's, if Andrew Jackson's exploits are to vie with those of Popeye or Tarzan, education must make greater use of the radio, book illustrations, and the motion picture, Darrow indicates.



## Wanted: A Coordination of Audio-Visual Forces

Can audio-visual instruction assume its rightful place in the nation's educational system if it continues along its present disconnected lines? Does the blame for its slow growth lie with the administrator or with the teacher? How much should motion picture appreciation enter into the curriculum, and how should it be taught?

These were a few of the many questions raised when nearly 400 teachers from 48 states gathered in Los Angeles this summer for the fourth annual convention of the Cinema Appreciation League, held at the University of Southern California under the auspices of the American Institute of Cinematography.

Speaking for the school heads, J. Warren Ayer, superintendent of the Monrovia, California, schools, declared:

"What we administrators need is a key teacher who can be a chairman of teachers and help train others—one who can point out things that are needed and can bring this idea into a concrete plan and proposal—one who will say, 'You can buy such and such that you need here, and it will cost you so much,' etc."

But according to Ayer, many teachers do not have any adequate comprehension of the importance of understanding sight-sound instruction.

To provide a perspective and sense of cost that is woefully lacking at present, the Monrovia superintendent advocates that universities offer teachers more training in audio-visual education.

"We need to oversee the whole field to discover possibilities," he said. "We should have board members, laymen, and students in conference to get a broad cross-section of views."

Not only do teachers need such training, but it should also extend to administrators, contends Fred Orth, principal of a Los Angeles elementary school.

"Visual education is most important from the supervisor's standpoint," he said. "He is the deciding factor as to whether the district is progressive. The first function of the principal is to improve instruction in the school. The superintendent decides whether the principal is improving the instruction. It depends upon the principal whether visual education will be successful. He must teach teachers how to use it. If we had principals interesting themselves in it, the problem would be solved—through the training of principals."

Also deploring the lack of a central plan to coordinate the use of visual education in the schools, William B. Brown, assistant supervisor of secondary curriculum for Los Angeles, advocates the setting of national standards as to the amount to be spent for it in proportion to other expenditures.

"I see individual teachers pioneering, and outside groups helping, and I am conscious that we have no center principle guiding the entire effort," he said.

Just such a pioneer is Miss Marjorie Brown, a Los Angeles high school teacher, who developed one of the first units in the city's secondary field of motion picture appreciation.

Miss Brown's system of instruction has a three-fold objective:

1. To make boys and girls realize the sources from which they can select motion pictures intelligently.

2. To show them how to interpret what they see, to tell the false from the

real in such a way as to develop a right and wrong code of ethics.

3. To make them able to use these principles intelligently in everyday life.

Miss Brown has her students keep a notebook of newspaper and magazine reviews of pictures, which they study for two weeks before going to see them. The students then write their own reviews and compare them with the others.

"Each one realizes that he wants certain things out of the picture," explained Miss Brown. "If he finds he can discover this in the reviews, he will look for what he wants before he goes."

To analyze the picture they saw, Miss Brown divides her students into groups, each studying a particular phase of production. Information is obtained from libraries, studios, speakers, and other sources.

"If they can understand a picture and find out about its construction, they are no longer controlled by their emotions," she explained.

As a result of the convention's discussion of the audio-visual education problem, a committee of prominent administrative officers and teachers was formed, under the auspices of the American Institute of Cinematography, to hold monthly meetings and to send mimeographed reports to school officials.

Pointing out that "there is a definite charge on boards of education to see that information is up to date, authentic, and available," Miss Marion Clint Irion, of the department of audio-visual education of Los Angeles county, hoped the Association for Visual Education could formulate standards, selection of materials for instruction, the equipment minimum,

a financial program, and some practical suggestion for training, so that "these boards of education could be broadened into securing such a service."

That there is a definite need for audio-visual aids in the modern educational system was indicated by Miss Lillian Lamoreaux, curriculum supervisor of the Santa Barbara elementary schools, who declared:

"The films must help us bridge the gap between life and school . . . they are of use in the curriculum in presenting different types of lessons in research, and in enlarging our viewpoints. We can get help from films because they are ahead of the publishers."

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### School Experiments With Movies

Experimental motion picture classroom instruction for pupils in their 'teens will be tried this year in three Philadelphia schools. Sponsored by the Progressive Teachers Association, the movement will be pioneered in the Friends' Central school, the Oak Lane school, and the Cheltenham Township high school.

Selected sequences from commercial films will be shown to "help adolescents solve their personal problems and develop a keen insight into human relations and needs," leaders of the experiment explained.

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### What They're Saying

"The difference between producing a stage play and producing a motion picture is the difference between painting a picture and making a mosaic."—*Herman Biberman*, former New York Guild member, now at Columbia Studio.

## Film and Science

The past few years have seen a great development in the technique of making scientific motion pictures. At the Paris Scientific Film Congress of 1936, the scientists of all fields lauded the motion picture camera as an indispensable tool in modern science. One of the latest developments in the use of camera is *cinemicrography*, the purpose of which is to photograph details not apparent to the naked eye. Doctors were impressed with the possibilities of micrography in connection with their studies on the amoeba and blood parasites. At the same Congress, child psychologists and educators praised the infra-red slide film as a great help in the study of backward children and their behavior. Slow motion permits detailed study of such cases. Dr. Puchstein recorded the mental evolution of a child from a few seconds to seven years of age in the picture, *On With Life*. Astronomers have found the cin-

ema valuable in studying eclipses and various celestial bodies. The same medium was used in photographing submarine life.

The scope of the use of motion picture camera was increased, and its work was popularized by the use of more artistic as well as interesting ways of presenting scientific and educational facts. The Royal Photographic Society of England has awarded its Plaque of 1936 to a scientific film which combines art with science. *The Private Life of the Swallow-Tail Butterfly* received the award for its colorful sequences of movement in following the struggles of the formless larva through its evolution. Thus the lens of the motion picture camera penetrates into recesses inaccessible to the human eye, discloses the mysteries of nature and human life, and presents them in a fascinating way.

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## "Better Films For Children," Canadian Cry

By MRS. H. E. HASTINGS\*

Double features are harmful to children.

Royal Canadian Mounted Police are not enthralled with Hollywood ideas of the force.

Shirley Temple continues to draw big crowds to her pictures . . . and

Good musical plays are favorites with Canadian audiences.

These are a few of the conclusions reached after a nation-wide survey by women's councils throughout the Dominion of motion pictures covering the period from spring, 1936, to spring, 1937. Working to secure "better motion pictures for children," cinema committees in every large Canadian city turned in reports.

WINNIPEG: Because Saturday matinee audiences are composed almost entirely of children under 14, a campaign is under way to eliminate the double bill because "it is . . . against all the laws of health for children to be kept at tension for three and four hours and . . . the strain is too much on the eyes." Also, "the child must sit through the showing of an unsuitable picture before he can see the suitable one." Advocating one feature picture with an educational or travelogue, the committee suggests, among other things, that the producers:

1. Grade films as to their audience suitability before release to the distributors—(a) adults, (b) family, (c) children.

2. Keep stars who are favorites of children in wholesome pictures.

3. Eliminate scenes demonstrating the technique of committing crime.

4. Depict less drinking in pictures.

*The committee also recommends that motion picture appreciation be made a part of the school curriculum.*

MANITOBA: Of the 1,901 pictures censored by the local government board, only 21 were rejected, while 112 were passed with cuts. Of these films, 1,798 were American.

The committee lauds the following pictures shown during 1936: *Nine Days a Queen*, *Little Lord Fauntleroy*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Tale of Two Cities*, *Rose Marie*, *Story of Louis Pasteur*, *Rhodes—Empire Builder*, *The Great Ziegfeld*, *Mr. Deeds Goes to Town*, *Theodora Goes Wild*, *Ghost Goes West*, *My Man Godfrey* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

REGINA: "When pictures of an historical nature have been here, such as *Nine Days a Queen*, and when pictures with literary merit, such as *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, have come, we got in touch with the school principals and they co-operated by having such showings announced in their schools.

"When exceptionally good musical films have been here we informed the musical club and choir leaders about them."

Coming films of "a desirable type" are also publicized through bi-weekly radio broadcasts and in cinema bulletins placed in all the libraries.

SASKATOON: Plans are being made to form a local chapter of the National Film Society of Canada, which

\*Winnipeg, Canada.

was founded to study the cinema, encourage better films, and promote the use of the film in education.

EDMONTON: Of 6,548 reels reviewed by the government censor, only 4 were rejected in entirety, while 91 were cut.

"Compared with previous years, when as many as 20 films were absolutely rejected and 100 newsreels were cut in half," the committee reports, "this is a matter of congratulation, and shows that better films are being made.

"Cheap musical stuff is not liked, but the theater managers say that good mu-

sical plays, such as were given last year, are favorites with Edmonton audiences and are the best playing programs. The high-cost historical plays have a steady following, and Shirley Temple continues to draw the crowds to any of her pictures.

"Edmonton audiences liked 'the most popular picture of 1936,' *Mr. Deeds Goes to Town*, as 'repeat' shows testify. *Rose Marie* was a favorite, too, because of the 'locality,' but the Royal Canadian Mounted Police here are not enthralled with the Hollywood ideas of the force."

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## World Vies for Television Supremacy

An international race for television supremacy looms today as nations the world over work feverishly to perfect the dual transmission of sound and sight.

Threatening to leave the United States second in the field, France has announced that Paris will have the most powerful television station in the world this month. The new French transmitter will be located on the Eiffel Tower, 1,100 feet above the street, and will have 30,000 watts power. The greatest American transmitter, perched atop the Empire State Building, has only 7,500 watts, but at present is the world's most powerful.

The coronation of George VI found the mass of Londoners unable to afford ringside seats. The British Broadcasting Corporation, by arranging to televise the coronation, made it possible for thousands of British subjects to obtain a better view of the procession than could

be had by many who paid exorbitant prices for seats along the line of march. Londoners within a radius of 30 miles viewed the spectacle by television and were able to catch some glimpse of the pageantry. The British television transmitter at Alexandra Palace is rated at 5,000 watts.

In America, plans are already being made to televise the inauguration of the President in 1940. Tests using a coaxial cable are now under way between New York and Philadelphia. The problem of the ultra-short waves makes it necessary to place the image transmitter as high above the earth's surface as possible and attempts have been made with a rod atop the Washington Monument and the Empire State Building. Because the coaxial cable is only good for short distances, some 20 experimental stations have options on high buildings throughout the United States.

## The Younger Generation Looks at the Cinema

In colleges and high schools throughout America young men and women are becoming vitally interested in a comparatively new art—the motion picture—which is playing an increasingly important role in their daily lives. Dolly-ing our camera for close-up shots of the nation's campuses, we find bustling activity as students band together to intelligently discuss the cinema, investigate its technical aspects, and in many cases, even make their own films.

At the UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA, in the heart of Cinemaland: Striving to develop a closer relationship between students of motion picture production and the industry, itself, is Delta Kappa Alpha, cinematic fraternity formed at the Los Angeles institution in 1935 by cinematography students. Not only does the group keep abreast of latest advances in technique and production through individual reports, group discussions, and addresses by leaders in the industry, but also it films the "Trojan Review," a day-to-day newsreel record of important campus activities. After doing all photography, titling, and editing, the fraternity periodically screens the newsreel at an all-university assembly. To further a national comprehensive study and understanding of motion pictures, the fraternity is pushing a campaign to form additional chapters in colleges throughout the country.

The EVANSTON TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL (Illinois): The modern high school youth is a more discerning and critical movie patron than he used to be, if members of the student Cinema Club may be considered

representative. He doesn't like pictures that depict drunkenness, is opposed to fake, impossible climaxes in stories, and believes that many academic courses would be much more interesting and beneficial if motion pictures could be used for illustrative purposes.

Discussing "How We Are Learning to Judge Motion Pictures," the group held a joint session recently with the Better Films Committee, an adult organization.

Said one student: "Many movies show too much drunkenness. Why don't the censors cut out scenes . . . showing how the highly sophisticated, ultra-wealthy class lives? The people I know don't like that type of movie. These movies do influence many of our boys and girls. Before this type became so common, they didn't try to be so sophisticated and smart. Now the girls, especially, seem always to be posing. They bleach their hair and long for activities which imitate the wealthy class. Most of us girls don't want the boys to go around imitating the movie actors."

Declared another: "The story as a whole must be studied. We want to watch the plot develop, to keep track of the scenes as they lead up to the climax. We want the problems to be solved in one big scene. We don't want a fake, impossible climax. The good director may give us a happy ending or one that we will have to figure out for ourselves, but he does not leave us hanging in mid-air, wondering what is going to happen."

Proposed a third: "Movies should be used in schools more often. In our science classes we see how bugs jump along strings. It would be interesting



in ancient history courses to see the excavations and all that goes on during an expedition. *Maybe so many of our courses would not be taken in vain if we had movies to help us understand them.*"

**HAMDEN HIGH SCHOOL** (Connecticut): *Realizing that high school students see on the average one movie a week and listen to at least two or three radio programs per day, officials at this New England school have set up an experimental course in the appreciation of motion pictures and radio. Students are trained to evaluate programs and pictures by breaking them down into their essential types and then isolating the elements characteristic of each type. Each student then tries to set up his own valid criteria for each variety of program.*

First activity of the class was to prepare a questionnaire to discover the experiences and tastes of the students. At the end of the semester a similar questionnaire was given, and the results compared. Throughout the course there was

constant listening to radio and observing of movies, followed by informal discussions. Besides arousing the students' interest, officials found that *such a course lends a zest to learning, with the opportunity of discussing with 30 or more classmates the program or movie of last night.*

**CURTIS HIGH SCHOOL:** A motion picture club whose members take movies of the annual school field day as well as study make-up, acting, and directing, has been active for more than two years. The club is also affiliated with the junior group of the National Board of Review of Motion Pictures, and several of its members have attended previews at major studio projection rooms.

**SNAPSHOTS ON OTHER CAMPUSES:** The Park School in Baltimore has produced a six-reel film on the Wauwatosia Indians, while in Cleveland one complete graduation exercise was a film recapitulating the achievements of the graduating class.

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SAN FRANCISCO'S waterfront of 1849 will look like this when it appears in Paramount's *Wells-Fargo*. The set is a clever combination of suspended miniature, backdrop, and optical illusion. The dock is actually 40 feet below and about 100 feet behind the "city."

## Movie Magic

*Wells-Fargo* (Paramount)

You have probably heard of Laputa, the island in the sky visited by Gulliver. And, more recently, you have undoubtedly read of "The Lost World," lofty, almost inaccessible plateau in Arizona. But you probably never suspected that the San Francisco waterfront of 1849, as presented in Paramount's *Wells-Fargo*, is a mixture of both.

Suspended 40 feet above the ground by wires and a wooden framework is this combination of canvas back-drop, minia-

ture, and perspective illusion. Upon the screen, it will appear as though we were viewing the early-day waterfront from the deck of a ship. Bordered on the right by the prow of one schooner, to the left by the stern of another, and in the center foreground by the wharf stacked high with cargo bales, the city is seen stretching far to the hills in the background.

But the railing over which we are peering on our "ship" is the only part

of the vessel that exists, being slightly below and about 20 feet in front of the camera. The prow of the *Rainbow* and the stern of the *Flying Fish* are also the sole parts of their respective ships that are "real," being only half-sections suspended by wires in front of the "city."

"San Francisco" rests upon an upward-tilting wooden platform, just behind the two "ships." The houses are built in perspective, dwindling in size as they get further away from the camera, until, when they reach the cardboard hills, they are only paintings. In the foreground streets are small wagons, horses, cargo bales, and people. The latter range in size from 4 to 6 inches,

and are made of rubber. Forming the "sky" is a 20 by 50 foot canvas backdrop, hanging just behind the cardboard hills.

Most amazing of all, however, is the wharf. Seemingly in front of the city, it actually is on the ground 40 feet below and about 100 feet in back of it! To make up for its remoteness, the wharf is constructed upon a larger scale—10 feet high by 60 feet in length, so that actors may walk upon it.

With the camera focused at the proper angle from above, suspended miniatures, back-drop, and realistic wharf blend perfectly, and the "city in the sky" looks like the real thing.



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## Cinema on Parade

## Truth Marches On!

*The Life of Emile Zola*—CAST: Paul Muni, Gale Sondergaard, Joseph Schildkraut, Donald Crisp, Erin O'Brien-Moore, Gloria Holden, Vladimir Sokoloff, John Litel, Henry O'Neill, Morris Carnovsky. Story by Norman Reilly Raine, Heinz Herald, and Geza Herczeg. Directed by William Dieterle. Produced by Warner Brothers.

"Truth is on the march" and so is Warner Brothers. Certainly one of the most important pictures ever to come out of Hollywood is this screen biography of France's liberal man of letters, Emile Zola, whose life-long fight for truth and justice is climaxed in one of the world's most sensational trials by his active support of the Dreyfus cause.

Zola's life, from his early impoverished days in a Paris garret to his unromantic death in old age from monoxide poisoning, is portrayed by Paul Muni in academy award style.

We see an impoverished Zola and his artist friend, Paul Cezanne, burn the "perfumed lies" of hypocritical writers in order to keep warm. We see with Zola—in excellent montage—the wretched plight of the Paris poor, marvel as the sharpest pen in all France jousts successfully with corruption and tyranny. We see a snug, middle-aged Zola, "stuffed in body as well as in mind," torn loose from his art objects and antiques to battle for the freedom of a man he has never seen.

Attempting to isolate an outstanding scene is like holding a cut gem up to the light to see which facet sparkles the most. But aside from the "J'Accuse" and courtroom episodes, probably one of the more appealing scenes is that wherein Zola, shabbily dressed and half-starved, goes to his publisher to borrow

a few francs, not realizing that his book, *Nana*, has become practically an overnight sensation. Instead of getting the price of a meal, the astounded Zola is handed 18,000 francs.

Still dazed, he goes out into the pouring rain, throws away his old umbrella, buys a new one from a street peddler. Soon we see him staring unbelievably into a store window filled with his books and one of his portraits. Entranced, he is unmindful of the storm beating down upon him and the fact that his new umbrella has blown wrong side out.

Long dialogues occur in the "J'Accuse" and trial scenes, but so eloquent is the language, so arresting the acting, and so effective the inter-cutting, that one is hardly aware of it. Especially is this true of the court action, where from time to time the camera travels not only to various parts of the courtroom, but also gives us flashbacks of Dreyfus in his miserable Devil's Island cell. Notable, also, is the film's flexibility in tempering tenseness with comedy. One will not easily forget the moment when courtroom spectators, predominantly anti-Zola and anti-Dreyfus, yell out "Long live the army!" "Yes, but not its generals," quickly retorts a lone Zola supporter.

To Paul Muni go top acting honors, but Lucile Dreyfus, Capt. Alfred Dreyfus, Maitre Labori (Zola's attorney), and Cezanne are characters reincarnated in Gale Sondergaard, Joseph Schildkraut, Donald Crisp, and Vladimir Sokoloff. This Warner Brothers production should prove that no longer must "boy meet girl" to spell Box-office.

Social Challenge

*Dead End* CAST: Sylvia Sidney, Joel McCrea, Humphrey Bogart, Wendy Barrie, Claire Trevor, Allen Jenkins, Marjorie Main, Billy Halop, Huntz Hall, Bobby Jordan, Leo Gorcey, Gabriel Dell, Bernard Punsly, Charles Peck, Minor Watson, James Burke, Ward Bond, Elizabeth Risdon, Esther Dale, George Humbert, Marcelle Corday. Screen play by Lillian Hellman based on play by Sidney Kingsley. Directed by William Wyler. Produced by Samuel Goldwyn for United Artists.

A challenge for social reform is this realistic, powerful picture of the slums, presenting in sharp outline a drama of tangled lives and environment—a drama played out in that sombre area where narrow streets, as well as opportunity, are rebuffed by Manhattan's East River.

There is Drina, hard-working, honest, fighting to free herself and her young brother, Tommy, from the sordid surroundings of a dead-end, tenement district, which slowly is turning the youngster into a criminal type.

There is Dave, ambitious, idealistic—an unemployed college graduate who hopes some day to reconstruct the slums, and to marry a rich girl who is not of his world.

There is Babyface Martin, a cruel, notorious killer, who, after 15 years in the "big time" rackets, returns to his old haunts with a diamond ring, expensive clothes, and an underworld record that is the envy of the youthful dead end gang.

Into this study of life "on the seamy side," Samuel Goldwyn has packed story punch and brilliance of direction and acting. If at times detail and atmosphere are realistic to a shuddering degree, and if at times we see bugs crawling in the garbage, it serves only to remind us that we have social garbage to clear away. But sordidness is kept well in check by adequate comedy relief.

One of the best scenes in a group of memorable ones occurs when Babyface Martin, sought by the police, returns home after 15 years of killing and gangsterism, to see his mother. Entering the house, he rushes excitedly toward her, arms extended affectionately. His mother merely stares, horror-struck, at him.

"You no-good tramp," she mutters brokenly, and slaps him. (Applause from audience.)

Good technical devices:

(Camera)—To emphasize theme, the opening of the picture has the camera descend from the roof of the city, among skyscraper tops and sunshine, down, down, down into the gloom of the tenement district. And when the drama in the depths has unfolded, the camera rises again—toward daylight and fresh air.

(Dialogue)—Tommy has been arrested by police. Drina begs a rich man, his accuser, not to let Tommy be sent to reform school.

"Nonsense. He will learn a useful trade there," the man replies.

"Martin went to reform school to learn 'a useful trade,'" Dave cuts in bitingly.

(Contrast)—We see a high angle shot of a veranda far up on the skyscraper mansion adjoining the dead end street. Merry-makers dance to the gay music, oblivious to the tragedy enacted below.

Striking forcefully, with just the right amount of realism and entertainment, at the problem of slum environment and the social illnesses inherent therein, *Dead End* is undoubtedly one of the finer productions of recent years.

Sea Justice

*Souls at Sea*—CAST: Gary Cooper, George Raft, Frances Dee, Henry Wilcoxon, Harry Carey, Olympe Bradna, Robert Cummings. Screen play by Grover Jones and Dale van Every, based on story by Ted Lesser. Directed by Henry Hathaway. Produced by Paramount.

Is a lone-handed war against the slave trade justification for a man to "play God" and sit in judgment upon his fellow human beings? *Souls at Sea* uses this theme to present a well-directed, action-packed drama of the sea, based upon historical truth.

It was in 1841 that the packet *William Brown*, Liverpool for Philadelphia, rammed an iceberg and sank off the Newfoundland coast. To lighten the load of the leaky and overcrowded longboat, Alexander William Holmes, a seaman, caused six men and a woman to be thrown into the sea, basing his selections upon the apparent value of each castaway to the others. Around this incident, famous in maritime annals, Paramount built its story, added the slave element, and substituted a spectacular fire-at-sea for the iceberg.

Enriching the drama are little subtleties of transition, symbolism, and contrast. In the steerage of the *William Brown* we see a little girl reciting a poem. Forgetting a line, she pauses. A voice supplies it for her. The camera tilts up and we see Cooper sitting above the child, watching her in amusement. By this neat device, Cooper, whom we hadn't seen for several scenes, is reintroduced into the action.

When the ship catches fire, the little girl grabs her treasured music box to save it. A little later, amongst the confusion, we see the old father pick up the instrument from the deck, symbolizing that his small daughter has perished.

Amazing Voice

*Make a Wish*—CAST: Bobby Breen, Basil Rathbone, Marion Claire, Henry Armetta, Ralph Forbes, Leon Errol, Donald Meek. Screen play by Gertrude Berg, Bernard Schubert, and Earle Snell. Produced by Sol Lesser. (RKO release.)

More pretentious than Bobby Breen's first two pictures is this engaging tale of life at a boys' camp where Chip, son of a retired opera star, meets John Selden, composer, and later helps him to make a success of his operetta.

The amazing voice of this 10-year-old youngster is given ample rendition in the operetta and in beautiful campfire scenes. Three of the catchier tunes, written by Viennese composer Oscar Straus, are *Make a Wish*, *Birchlake Forever* and *Old Man Rip*. Marion Claire also offers some effective singing.

Next to the music, the most appealing moments of the film are probably those depicting life at a boys' summer camp. In a setting of tree-clad hills and sparkling lake (Malibu), we see youngsters engaged in healthful, out-of-doors recreation—canoeing, swimming, hiking, contests, and all the other activities every boy longs for when the school bell tolls for the last time in spring.

In his third offering, Bobby surpasses his performances in *Let's Sing Again* and *Rainbow on the River*. *Make a Wish* is heartily recommended for those who would enjoy one of the finest voices ever to come to the screen, and, at the same time, a growing American institution—the boys' camp.



Musical Milestone

*100 Men and a Girl*—CAST: Deanna Durbin, Leopold Stokowski, Adolphe Menjou, Mischa Auer, Eugene Pallette, Alice Brady, Bill Gilbert, Alma Krueger, Andy Clyde. Story by Hans Kraly. Screen play by Kraly, Bruce Manning, and Charles Kenyon. Directed by Henry Koster. Produced by Universal Pictures.

The finest classical music ever to reach the screen is presented in this lively tale of a young girl's efforts to inveigle Leopold Stokowski into conducting a symphony orchestra of 100 unemployed musicians so that her father and his friends may have work.

Bach's Fugue in G-Minor, Tschaiowsky's Fifth Symphony, Liszt's Hungarian Rhapsody, a selection from Wagner — all flow faultlessly, rapturously through a new system of recording which reproduces the full musical values of individual instruments and groups of instruments.

Appealing is the mature voice of 14-year-old Deanna Durbin, and excellent are the performances of Adolphe Menjou, Mischa Auer, Leopold Stokowski, and others of the cast.

Although story is secondary to music, the high comedy values of the former cannot be overlooked. Particularly funny is the running gag of Deanna's hat-feather, which goes wherever she goes, usually to her detriment. There is the time Deanna, attempting to "crash" the rehearsal hall to see Stokowski, crawls on her hands and knees in front of the watchman's glass booth, only to have the feather on her hat stick up like a periscope and give her away. Later in the story she again tries to get in, with the same results. But this time she outmaneuvers the watchman and flees into the hall. While the guard searches vainly for her, we see a tall feather mysteriously moving about

among hundreds of empty seats. In another scene Deanna sets out to sneak into Stokowski's home. We don't see her get in, but we soon know she has succeeded for, from behind a statue in a corner of the room, we see a feather rise triumphantly!

*100 Men and a Girl's* effective presentation of world-famous classics should prepare the way for a new type of film-music entertainment.

Men and Oil

The news that Ralph Jester at Paramount has produced a two-reel educational short specifically for school use should be welcomed by every classroom teacher in the country. Taking sequences from the Paramount success, *High, Wide, and Handsome*, which have to do with the dramatic discovery of oil in Eastern Pennsylvania in 1859, Mr. Jester has arranged them with such deft continuity that the result is an interesting and dramatic story. The tremendous results of this discovery are shown in the scenes which follow—the hectic boom of an oil town—the mad rush for oil land — the crude ways of drilling the first wells. There is high dramatic value in the scenes which follow, depicting the struggles of the farmers who discovered the oil and their efforts to lay a pipe line against the opposition of the teamsters and the railway companies. The commentator augments the dialogue whenever there is a need to keep the continuity or to authenticate the story of the discovery of oil. *Men and Oil* ends in a series of flashes which present, through artistic montage, the use of oil in the Story of the World Today.

No social studies teacher should miss the opportunity of using this film.

## Frances Marion's Screen Writing Forum

Q.—Since most successful pictures have a great variety of little episodes and incidents, what kind are the best to use, and can they be weaved into the main plot without breaking the dramatic development? Please give examples.

A.—Most successful pictures have this variety of little episodes and incidents for the somewhat obvious reason that any great or impressive situation is made up of or preceded by a number of incidents of lesser importance. But I think in this question you are referring to the little incidents or episodes that are often woven into a story to make it richer in interest. To weave these into the plot so that they will not appear irrelevant or break the plot, it is essential they concern characters already in the plot and that whatever they call upon the characters to do must be *something that is in character*.

When seeing *The Barretts of Wimpole Street*, the audiences thoroughly sympathized with the little spaniel, Flush, in his anxiety to avoid Mr. Barrett, and they understood perfectly why the dog hastened down from the couch and into his basket when Barrett approached. If Barrett had spoken kindly to Flush and gently tweaked an ear, it would have been entirely inconsistent with Barrett's character as presented in the story.

It is not difficult to "plant" characters or properties needed for an incident to be inserted in a story.

A director who was interested in a story based on life in San Francisco in 1880 and presenting only fashionable and wealthy characters, wanted to make

a place in it for a picturesque old "desert-rat" who could play a banjo and dance a "breakdown" with extraordinary agility. Though he seemed entirely foreign to this story of fashionable life, he was "planted" successfully in the following manner: Near the beginning of the story, one of the fashionable young men seeks shelter in a saloon when he is caught in a sudden and heavy shower. Among the men lounging about the bar in the dingy room is the old man whose witty remarks bring him to the favorable attention of the young man and also of the audience.

Several scenes later, the young man, as required by the original story, is driving his sweetheart in his smart trap. He sees the old man earning pennies by playing his banjo on a street corner. "That's a witty old fellow," the young man remarks as he stops his horse. The girl and he listen to the old man's playing. So does the audience.

The original plot proceeds to the point where the girl's mother plans an elaborate entertainment for the benefit of a charity. The young man wins her favor by producing the old man and his banjo to take the place of an artist who failed to appear. The old man plays, dances and sings, and scores a great success. The audience, having seen him in the beginning of the story, was thus led to accept his appearance in a social stratum far removed from his own as quite natural.

Introducing the character, animal, or property needed for the episode to the audience *before the episode takes place* always helps to make it appear to be an integral part of the story.

# TALKING PICTURES

How They are Made — How to  
Appreciate Them . . . Barrett C. Kiesling

The first textbook written from inside the moving picture industry—so vividly presented that it approximates a personal visit behind studio walls. The complicated processes of picture production are explained in simple terms. The chapters include such topics as selection of stories, why stories are changed, scenario writing, research, properties, make-up, set designing, sound recording, motion photography, film editing and developing, home movies, and the educational film. Color photography, television, and third dimension are also discussed. The completed picture is shown as a mosaic—a vast design made into a harmonious whole by the skilled workers of two hundred and seventy-six arts, professions, and vocations. Beautifully designed and illustrated

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# Cinema Progress

The Film and Life

Vol. 2

No. 5



SNOW WHITE CALLS ON SEVEN DWARFS

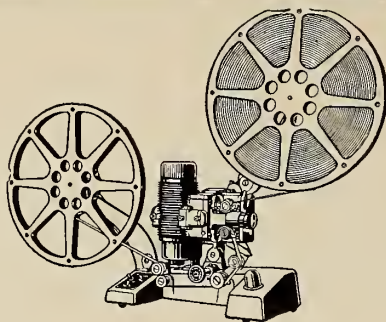
*In this Issue:*

- **Walt Disney — Modern Grimm**
- **Thoughts on Directing by William Dieterle**
- **Vorkapich Forecasts Future Montage**

**Dec.-Jan.**

**20<sup>c</sup>**

**1937-38**



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### CINEMA PROGRESS

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# CINEMA PROGRESS

Vol. 2, No. 5 Dec.-Jan., 1937-38

## Table of Contents

### ARTICLES

Walt Disney, Modern Grimm	3
Noise for Sale . . . . .	7
The Photoplay-Appreciation Movement . . . . .	9
Thoughts on Directing . . . . .	11
The Motion Picture in Education . . . . .	15
Microphotography in Stride . . . . .	16
Montage—A Peek Into the Future with Slavko Vorkapich	18
Uncle Sam Turns Producer . . . . .	22
Cinema and the Public . . . . .	24
Why Visual Aids? . . . . .	25
Vierling Kersey Sees In- creased Use of Radio, Film in School . . . . .	27
Motion Pictures as a Field for the Book Collector . . . . .	28
Visual Aids in the Reading Program . . . . .	30
Russian Celluloid . . . . .	33
DEPARTMENTS	
Movie Magic . . . . .	32
Book Review . . . . .	34
Frances Marion's Screen Writing Forum . . . . .	35

## THE GRAPHIC CINEMA

IN A TIME when folk poetry, art, and music are apparently in decline, one artist has had a vision of something very like a new folk lore.

THIS MAN has embodied his vision, with the help of several hundred artists and technicians, in the animated cartoon. These symphonies of color, movement, and music have become alive with striking characters—lovable, whimsical, and appealing. And Walt Disney, after having confined himself to one-reel miniatures, has now produced his first feature-length opus—*Snow White And The Seven Dwarfs*.

THE TIME has not yet come to estimate the full significance of this new creation, but we know that it is a great milestone in the development of the most potent popular art of the twentieth century—the animated cartoon.

SNOW WHITE AND THE SEVEN DWARFS openly combines industry with art: the most ingenious mechanics with a vibrant creative imagination, the collective effort of a factory with the unity of artistic vision.

LIKE A pure cinema, it stirs the imagination of the audience primarily by its impact upon visual, oral, and kinesthetic senses. Yet this impact is so peculiarly fused, counterpointed and harmonized, that it leaves an unforgettable, unified image. The succession of multicolored polyphonic "images" conveys the narrative and the moods directly to the senses.

LIKE A peculiar art-shorthand, it condenses its message by means of sight and sound montage—rhythmically and musically organized—and yet abounding with innumerable human touches, and with actions of intense interest. Although it is a sheer fantastic fairy tale, one cannot help recognizing the common humanity of the characters, their mannerisms, feelings, and philosophies. One feels as though he has always lived with them.

THE BEAUTY of musical rhythm in this latest and most pretentious of Mr. Disney's pictures falls in an amazing way into the dramatic pattern of the story and is accentuated by story punch.

AGAIN WALT DISNEY is a pioneer, has blazed the way for new developments in the animated cartoon. Mr. Disney definitely takes his place among the significant creative artists who, in many diverse ways, have contributed to the enrichment of mankind through their work in color, form, and sound in the graphic arts, and in literature, music, and drama.

—B. V. M.

# Walt Disney.

ONCE upon a time there was a man named Jacob Grimm who was much beloved by his people and by the world because of his great gift for story-telling. And on any evening, one might peek into homes and find elders grouped around the hearthstone with their children, taking as much delight as they in Grimm's wondrous tales of beautiful princesses, doughty heroes, and fearsome ogres.

When Grimm died the people were very sad.

"Never again will the gods bless mankind with such a story-teller," they sighed among themselves. "But he has left us his works and we will preserve them for our children and for our children's children."

But the people were wrong. Another talented story-teller was to come a hundred years later—an imaginative young man blessed, also, with a gift from the gods—the divine ability to make men laugh and forget their troubles. He was to do visually what Grimm had done through the printed page.

Now it happened one day that one of Grimm's most popular tales, *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, was being given as a play in a certain city. Most impressed of those among the appreciative audience was a youth—a great admirer of Grimm—who was seeing his first play. His name was Walt Disney.

It wasn't long before the fame of this young man, with his magical pencil and its merry animal children, spread to the ends of the earth. But the memory of

*Snow White* still lingered in Disney's mind, and at last he determined to give the world his version of Grimm's tale. After three years of experimentation, hard work, and the expenditure of a million and a half dollars, he and his expert associates had created a screened fairy tale which would have amazed Grimm, himself.

And with its many innovations, *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* was easily the greatest cartoon fantasy of all time. First of all, the new "multiplane" camera, developed within the Disney studio, permitted characters, painted upon transparent celluloid sheets, to be photographed against a background at different levels, thus giving an illusion of depth.

Second, characters and backgrounds were drawn with more artistry and regard for naturalness, so that "animated paintings," rather than cartoons, were the result.

Third, all characters were made individual, clear-cut personalities instead of vague types.

Fourth, the story was built along the most approved dramatic lines, with due regard for tragedy, romance, humor, pathos, etc.

Fifth, montage was used for the first time in a cartoon—and with striking effect.

Sixth, music was used dramatically to build mood, and was written to the action instead of action to music as was often done heretofore in the shorts.

Seventh, color in softer and more subtle effects was obtained after experi-

## **The story of *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, and how a young man realized a life-long dream.**

**By HARRY COULTER**

# Modern Grimm

mentation with more than 1500 different shades. Color was also used to emphasize mood and to aid in characterization.

And eighth, *Snow White* was the first full-length color cartoon ever made, running one hour and twenty minutes.

The major problem faced by this 1937 Grimm was the building up of the original short fairy tale into a full-fledged and dramatic feature length scenario. And to do this, Disney had to make a few changes in the famous story of the jealous queen who plotted the death of her step-daughter because the latter was more beautiful than she.

Disney's first step was to strengthen the characters of each of the principals in the "cast," and how he did it is best illustrated in the case of the seven dwarfs, each of whom was given a definite personality and even a name which was symbolical.

*Doc*, the self-appointed leader, is a pompous, frustrate type who tries to be an executive but only succeeds in getting his words and ideas mixed, and when an important decision is necessary he becomes so nervous he can't make any decision at all.

*Happy* is a fat, roly-poly little fellow with a perpetual smile and a bright, cheery voice.

*Sleepy* sees life through half-closed eyes, and talks always through a yawn. He says little, but when he does speak it is straight to the point, even though he doesn't know it.

*Grumpy*, the real leader of the group, seems to be peeved at the world. His pet hate is women. But under his grouchy exterior beats a soft heart. When trouble arises, it is *Grumpy* who acts first.

*Dopey* is a likeable, slightly balmy fellow who gets a great kick out of life. He doesn't talk, but uses pantomime to get over his ideas.

*Sneezy*, a hay fever sufferer who talks through his nose, is as dangerous as a lighted cannon, always manages to sneeze at the wrong time.

*Bashful* is a kind-hearted, incurable romantic, with a red-apple blush and a nervous habit of twisting his beard.

When the script was first begun, Disney had the various characters of the dwarfs in mind, but their personalities and mannerisms developed more fully as the story and animation progressed, somewhat in the manner of the snowball rolling down the hill. Sometimes a writer would get an idea, sometimes an animator. Then would follow eager staff conferences, and *Grumpy* would develop a feud with *Doc*, while *Dopey* would

Below is seen the new "multi-plane" camera which adds depth and a third-dimensional effect to *Snow White*. The camera permits five pieces of painted celluloid, suspended at different levels, to be photographed simultaneously.





emerge with clothes five times too large for him.

Color also plays its part in characterization. *Doc* and *Grumpy*, the two most prominent of the dwarfs, wear a russet colored jerkin and a dull magenta one, respectively, in contrast to the grey and tan garments of the others. *Doc* wears the warm russet shade because he is a cheery individual, while the magenta brings out *Grumpy's* peevish personality. *Dopey* wears a "dopey" color scheme of saffron yellow doublet and greyed-lavender cap.

Because *Snow White* is the principal character, she is done in lighter color values in order that she may stand out against any background. Her skin coloring is light, and the skirt of her gown is cream-colored.

The queen, on the other hand, is cloaked in darker and more sombre hues, in keeping with her villainy.

Color as a mood builder is seen in the sequence where the dwarfs discover that someone strange is in their little woodland house. As they cautiously mount the steps to their bedroom, eerie shadow masses of dark blues and blue-greens help to convey to the audience that the little men are sure there is some sort of a monster in the cottage. It turns out to be only *Snow White*, who is seeking refuge from her wicked step-mother.

Creating the interior of the dwarfs' home was the hardest task faced by the background department. Everything had to look as though the little men, themselves, had made them.

So the backs of the small, straight chairs were carved in the form of owls. The legs were little squirrels sitting up on their hind legs, and the taps on the wine kegs were fish mouths. The water pump in the kitchen sink had a grotesque face, as did the ends of the split-log staircase. Even the ends of the beams overhead had carved gargoyles.

And in the bedroom upstairs, each bed had the name of its owner carved thereon, as did the seven little chests.

Eight songs were composed for the production of *Snow White*. They are *The Wishing Well Song*, *One Song*, *Some Day My Prince Will Come*, *With a Smile and a Song*, *Whistle While You Work*, *Hi Ho*, *The Washing Song*, and *Isn't This a Silly Song*.

*Some Day My Prince Will Come* is the theme number of the picture. Not only does *Snow White* sing it, but it is used as a background for many of the romantic scenes.

One of the most novel of the sound effects created was in the sequence where the seven little men play an organ of their own device. Technicians agreed ordinary organ tones would not do. The tones had to sound "home made."

Blowing on bottles partly filled with water helped produce the desired effect. Also used were clarinets minus mouth-pieces, trombones with bassoon reeds, and a crude clay instrument called an ocarina.

Reproduction of the sepulchre tones of the magic mirror, consulted by the queen whenever she wanted to learn the truth, was also a difficult job for the sound effects men. The voice of the mirror had to have a hollow, supernatural sound. The effect was finally achieved by stretching a drum hide over a square, wooden framework. This strange helmet was then placed over the head of a man, who talked through it into a microphone.

An example of Disney's story building may be found in an early part of the Grimm tale. In the original, it merely states that the queen ordered her huntsman to take *Snow White* into the woods and kill her, and that *Snow White* wins his sympathy, is freed, and finds her way to the home of the dwarfs, where she takes refuge.

Disney combines story technique and music to bring out the full dramatic value of the sequence. On the pretense that they are just on a holiday outing, the huntsman leads Snow White into the forest. The music here is a mixture. Snow White's little play theme is heard, mingled with the threatening theme of the huntsman. The theme of the latter becomes louder as he begins to work up courage to kill her. For a moment, he hasn't the heart to do it when he sees her befriend a lost bird. Then he grits his teeth and upraises the knife. Snow White sees his shadow on a rock and turns in astonishment, and as she finally wins his sympathy and the huntsman begs her to flee, the music—in keeping with the drama—reaches its height.

It is when Snow White runs through the woods that the first montage—a picture symbolism that in quick, successive shots expresses ideas and moods—is used to depict the girl's terror at being alone in the dark wilderness. As her terror increases, stimulated by imagination, the branches of trees seem to reach out for her. Falling leaves, blowing at her heels, seem to her to be pursuing demons. She sees owls' eyes, which apparently grow larger and larger and envelop her in a ring of fire. Fleeing in mortal fear, she falls down a cliff and into a lake. Even the floating logs seem to be alligators, and when at length Snow White reaches land, she faints from fright and exhaustion.

The music, throughout all this, is in a montage form, also, being merely a suggestion and blending of various fast-tempo themes. And when Snow White awakens in the sunlight of day, and sees the rabbits, chipmunks, and other little forest inhabitants frolicking about her, the music is at first questioning, and then confident, as she is reassured that the creatures are friendly and mean no harm.

Montage and music are used with picturesque effect again when the queen, discovering that Snow White is still alive, prepares to make away with the girl. Possessor of witch-like powers, the queen is shown in her castle laboratory, poring over a book of magic. She mutters to herself:

“Now a formula to transform my beauty into ugliness; change my queenly raiment to a peddler's cloak. (She finds the formula.)

“Mummy dust to make me old.” (She pours a chemical into a glass, and it takes the form of a scorpion.)

“To shroud my clothes the black of night.” (She mixes another potion into the cauldron, and dark clouds appear.)

“To age my voice an old hag's cackle.” (She pours in still another chemical, and a screechy cackle is heard.)

“To whiten my hair a scream of fright.” (Another chemical bubbles vigorously and produces the scream.)

“A blast of wind to fan my hate.” (The wind howls as she mixes in this potion.)

“A thunderbolt to mix it well.” (The thunderbolt duly appears, along with terrific thunder-claps.)

“Now begin thy magic spell!” (The queen drinks the mixture.)

Here, the montage proper begins. The room spins into a whirlpool of colors. Then, in its midst, we see a double exposure of the queen. She clutches at her throat as the brew begins to take effect, and collapses. The scene dissolves into a series of huge bubbles rising up, indicating the working of the magical formula within the queen. Then, in quick dissolves, we see again the effects produced before by the individual chemicals when the queen was mixing them into the cauldron. First, there is a huge scorpion. Then dark clouds appear, moving slowly, and, finally whipped by a howling wind, they merge into bil-

lowy streaks. (This indicates not only the queen's feelings, but the change occurring in her.) There follows a close-up of her beautiful hands, then a lightning flash, which outlines the bone structure. The hands are now gnarled and ugly.

The audience does not get any further hint as to the effect of the witch-brew until the shadow of an old hag is shown upon the laboratory wall. Then, after this suspense-builder, the camera tracks down to the erstwhile beautiful queen and shows the horrible transformation.

Music, during the montage, is fast. Played by strings, wood-winds, and vibraphone among the high octaves, it produces a weird, grotesque effect.

But the high point in drama and musical effect is reached when the disguised queen goes to the home of the dwarfs, while the latter are away, and gives Snow White a poisoned apple. The birds and animals of the forest, whom the child has befriended, fly to warn the dwarfs of Snow White's peril. Tempo-quickenning inter-cuts show the dwarfs speeding to the rescue, and then flashes of Snow White and the queen (whom she doesn't recognize beneath the disguise). But the dwarfs arrive

too late. Snow White eats the deadly apple and collapses. Then it is that a long threatening storm finally breaks (symbolically). And then, through a rising crescendo of music and storm, the witch-queen flees, upon the arrival of the dwarfs. In an exciting chase, she takes refuge atop a craggy mountain peak, and is about to roll down a huge boulder upon her pursuers when a flash of lightning strikes and topples her into an abyss.

Thus was the magnitude of producing the modern version of Grimm's *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, a visual fairy tale embodying 250,000 drawings and the work of as many as 570 artists, not to mention the scores of animators, scenarists, background men, musicians, and others.

But unlike one of Grimm's tales, we may not end here and say that Walt Disney, satisfied with the completion of a life-long dream, lived happily ever after. For this is but the first of many more feature-length fantasies to come. And across the chasm of the years, the spirit of Jacob Grimm probably smiles approvingly.

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Joe Delfino, head of the sound effects department at Twentieth Century-Fox studios, is shown handling one of the 3000-odd noise-makers he has been collecting in his "den of din" ever since 1928, when sound was first inaugurated in pictures.

## NOISE FOR SALE

Most people appreciate peace and quiet—but not Joe Delfino. He makes his living with noises.

Head of the sound effects department at Twentieth Century-Fox studio, Delfino, upon a few moments' notice, can reproduce anything from the wail of a banshee to the squeak in a patent leather shoe, and often is called upon to do so by directors.

At first glance, Delfino's workshop—a veritable den of din containing noises from all over the world—is remindful of a glorified pawn or antique shop, but it has the virtues of both, besides some very definite peculiarities of its own. Hanging from walls, suspended from rafters, and stacked on shelves and floor

are ancient musical instruments, sirens, horns, Samoan and Eskimo drums, German whistles and mysterious boxes with handles, that will produce any sound imaginable, and many that aren't. They are part of the 3000-odd noise-makers Delfino has been collecting and improvising since 1928, when he created the first outdoor sounds ever heard in a picture—some barnyard noises for Fox's *The Family Picnic*.

"In those days, sound, of course, was a novelty," Delfino recalls. "Directors thought everything in the picture should make a noise of some kind. Every tree had to have a bird in it—and the bird had to sing. And every time a dog crossed the street he had to bark."

Now, although sound is no longer used for its own sake, Delfino's job has grown much more complex because of the great variety of sounds demanded.

For Shirley Temple's *Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm* there is a sequence where girls in a boarding house are seated around the dinner table, and, while waiting to be served, tap on their water glasses with spoons. To give the director the musical effect desired, Delfino filled eight glasses of different shapes and sizes with varying amounts of water. When he tapped them with a small, hide-covered mallet, it was almost as though he were playing an xylophone.

*In old Chicago* had fire sequences with the steam-belching, horse-drawn fire wagons of the '90's, and required siren screeches and bell-clanging of the period, as well as sounds made by other pieces of ancient equipment. A ceremonial scene for the same picture necessitated sounds of drums such as those used in England's coronation rites. A little research and experimentation, and Delfino produced the sounds authentically.

Delfino's thousands of sounds fall, roughly, into two classifications: the "McCoy" and the "strictly Delfino"—the actual and the created.

In the former category are noise-makers from the corners of the earth—train whistles from England, France, Argentina, Ireland; chimes from Germany; telephone and door-bells from a score of lands; New York police sirens; French horns; whistles of British police, mail carriers, and railroad platform men; old music-boxes and all periods of phonographs, even to the old cylinder type with the sapphire reproducer; automobile horns; and, one of the most valuable possessions of all, an ancient piano-like hurdy-gurdy, one of the three existing in Los Angeles.

But it is the creative group that is most interesting—where the eyes be-

lie what the ears hear. It is in this field that Delfino's full inventive genius comes into play, and, how realistically, is indicated by *Zoo in Budapest*, which required twenty-six animal sounds. Although recordings of the actual sounds were made, the producers liked Delfino's best, and used them!

It is surprising what awesome and unexpected sounds can be caused to emanate from an innocent-appearing box with a handle on it. One, with a whistle-like attachment, is called a "wind-chest" and gives harbor effects—boat whistles, fog horns, etc. Another is a machine-gun, and still another—a huge steel affair rotating on an axle—is filled with scrap iron and produces explosions, avalanches, and earthquake rumbles.

The "Buffalo blower," which resembles a meat-grinder with a horn attachment, produces a wind wail, as does an airplane propeller arrangement, with several three-foot wires extending from the shaft instead of wooden blades.

For *Transatlantic Merry-Go-Round*, a narrow, electrically rotated barrel produced the effect of a ship's prow cleaving the water. Another barrel of different dimensions sounds like an elevated railway.

Cows, elephants, and almost any animal can be imitated on a pump-like gadget whose plunger forces out sounds through a horn attachment. One type of horn will make it a lion, and another, a calf calling for its mother.

But of all the weird contraptions in this strange domain where nature is harnessed in boxes, where brake drums double for church bells, and where dogs bark at you from cans with skin stretched over the end, there is one device more surprising, more amusing than the others. And it is with this that Delfino delights in playing pranks upon visitors.

Leaving for a moment on the pretext that it is time to feed his trained can-



aries, he goes into an adjoining room, returns shortly, and takes his visitor therein, presumably to show him further wonders. Then it happens! All the canaries in Christendom seem to warble out their songs at once. When the startled visitor looks about in vain for the birds, and finally traces the sounds to their source, he finds they emanate from a black box not more than six inches square. And while he is priding himself upon his discovery, the "birds" in the box suddenly cease, and across the room come answering calls. When they stop, the first box starts up again! And

so it goes, one box answering the other. A lever attachment on the boxes makes the "birds" warble either intermittently or steadily, but when Delfino is asked how he has "trained" his "canaries," he smiles mysteriously and declares it must remain one of the secrets of the trade.

Such is the "den of din," where Joe Delfino rules with an imaginative mind and a magical touch. And whether it's a frog's croak, a squeaking ship's hawser, or a howling storm, the director feels so sure of getting a good one in a hurry that he might almost be justified in saying: "I'll wait while you wrap it."

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## THE PHOTOPLAY - APPRECIATION MOVEMENT

By WILLIAM LEWIN

*Editor and Publisher Motion Picture Guide*

A decade ago scarcely a school anywhere attempted to teach boys and girls standards of taste in relation to photoplays. The power of the schools to influence movie trends lay dormant. In a land of a million classrooms, where 30,000,000 young Americans were participating in an unprecedented experiment in democratized education, teachers apparently were unaware of the potentialities of the theatrical photoplay as a social and educational instrument.

Today, more than 7,000 progressive schools and colleges are teaching photoplay appreciation. Study guides to the critical appreciation of selected photoplays, following recommendations of a committee of the Department of Secondary Education of the National Association of the United States, are issued periodically.<sup>1</sup>

The National Council of Teachers of

English, who published their scientific findings and their recommendations in a basic monograph,<sup>2</sup> have been joined by teachers of virtually all subjects in the secondary curriculum, as well as elementary and college teachers who are finding that, under proper guidance, theatrical films can be utilized as significant stimuli to the reading of desirable new books, and that photoplay experiences in community theatres afford a particularly fine basis for discussions correlated with periodical literature. Films often make dull classics luminous, thus helping boys and girls to love those classics instead of hating them.

One of the most effective methods of using a motion picture course is to correlate it with whatever films are currently playing in neighborhood theatres. One film may excel in characterization, another in story construction, another in

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1. Published by Educational and Recreational Guides, Inc., 1501 Broadway, New York, N. Y. List of materials for teaching photoplay appreciation available on request.

2. **Photoplay Appreciation in American High Schools**, Monograph No. 2 in the series sponsored by the National Council of Teachers of English. Published by D. Appleton-Century Co.



photography, another in social value, another in musical elements, another in settings and backgrounds.

When schools are more generally equipped with sound-film machines, it is likely that many subjects will be made available for showing in the schools, themselves. One such, *Scrooge*, is already available in 16 mm. for schools. Other subjects, excellent of their kind, are being made available for teachers of photoplay appreciation in this convenient size. The first of what is likely to be a notable series of "glorified trailers" was prepared by Cecil B. DeMille simultaneously with *The Plainsman*, a feature film recommended by the Boy Scout organization. The special short film, *The Spirit of the Plains*, contains excerpts of several films of the west, including that classic, *The Covered Wagon*. This is available to schools in 16 mm. through the Bell and Howell offices, with headquarters in Chicago.

In cooperation with Max J. Herzberg, I prepared suggestions for a short film to build appreciation of the screen version of *Romeo and Juliet*, and this subject is now being exhibited under the title, *Master Will Shakespeare*. It was shown before a capacity audience at the Portland convention of the Department of Secondary Education in 1936. A class of high-school students discussed it on the stage of the theatre before the assembled educators. Both Cecil B. DeMille and Jack Warner have shown great interest in the appreciation movement, and in England Alexander Korda and officials of Gaumont-British assured their co-operation.

Perhaps the most interesting phase of this work is the opportunity it affords to provide a practical basis for motivating discussions of attitudes in relation to all sorts of personal and social problems, problems of war and peace, patriotism

and politics, crime and punishment, parents and children, business and recreation, sportsmanship and self-control, neighbors and foreigners, religion and tolerance, and that of choosing a life career that may be of much or of little social value. These questions are concretely dramatized in the child's movie experiences and resolve themselves into personal issues.

Once a system of 16-mm. aids to film appreciation is set up, the movement will provide a steady procession of educational films that will justify schools in equipping themselves with projectors. Schools and theatres will then be of mutual assistance and both will serve as educational laboratories. Thus our methodology must be a creative evolution with many committees at work.

Some idea of the social possibilities may be gained by examining a set of typical themes written in class during the last fifteen minutes of a period after the opening discussion of the question, "Do movies influence your emotional attitude in any way?" Here are excerpts from papers written on the first day of teaching a new curriculum unit:

"Before I saw *Ramona*, I always had the impression that the former Indians were the most cruel and savage people that ever inhabited the earth. After having seen this picture, I was more against the white people than against the Indians. This picture reveals the true character of all people. Every race has its good qualities as well as its faults."

"Before I saw *All Quiet on the Western Front*, I naturally was not very enthusiastic about war, but in a way it seemed to me that there was some glory or other in war. But after seeing the picture it certainly changed my opinion on the whole subject. The thought of war to me now means only hardship and death. It sends a shiver up and down my spine."

# THOUGHTS ABOUT DIRECTING

By WILLIAM DIETERLE

This is the first of a series of articles dealing with the motion picture industry by William Dieterle, director of such outstanding successes as *The Story of Louis Pasteur*, *The Life of Emile Zola*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *White Angel*, and *Firebird*.

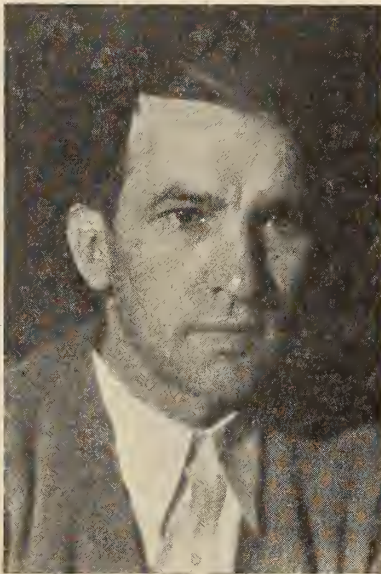
It is always difficult for a man to speak about his own work. Goethe once said: Bilde Kuenstler — rede nicht! Which means: Create artist—don't talk! I believe he was right.

What I have to say as a motion picture director — you can best read from the screen. There you find all that the subconscious force — (the only *real* creator in my opinion) wants to tell.

It is all right for bystanders to enjoy a blooming flower without knowing anything about it, theoretically; but as an expert gardener one should understand the flowering — and to understand one has to know something about the inter-relations of soil and air, water and sunlight, which conditions the growth of plants. To understand is a matter of experience. So I shall try to tell you about my experience as a director, with incidents from the *Pasteur* and *Zola* pictures.

Taking for granted that you all have seen the picture of *Zola*, I will give you a few highlights, from the first conception of the idea, to the final showing of the picture. To make *The Life of Emile Zola* was suggested, not by the studio, but by a European friend, Mr. Heinz

Herald, now a writer with Warner Brothers. The studio, quickly convinced of the great screen possibilities of the story, bought it for Paul Muni. As the writing progressed, research on the subject began to embrace, directly and indirectly, French, German, Austrian and English literature.



"The directors . . . and motion picture artists will . . . eventually win their fight for creative freedom."

I well remember a few years ago, when at my repeated insistence upon historical correctness, I got the customary answer: "Who knows the difference?" Strange as it may seem, studios did not have a very high opinion of people's knowledge of history. I said *did* not — because they now do have. Much criticism has been received which proved that the audience *did* know. So, today, there is a thorough check-up,

down to the most minute detail.

But a director should do more than check-up; he should know more than just the principal characters; he should become acquainted with the spirit of the entire period—its social and political set-up—its relation to other countries, to the world. This work may appear to be a detour, but it is not. It is the perspective of your main characters. Just think of primitive paintings and you

know what the lack of perspective does. That is exactly how a dramatic character would look, without the perspective of its period. No such figure can live, or will be capable of exciting human interest.

In this research work your characters already begin to live; from that moment on they will never let you alone—they demand to be brought to life; they become so insistent, that they actually hold you up. At this moment, please be careful. Don't let them corner you—keep out in the open. Too much detailed knowledge, as well as too little, would hinder you. Don't overrate the value of anecdotes and sayings. They are generally as untrue as the last words of famous men.

There is not a picture of historical character ever announced but what I am flooded with information about all the known and unknown anecdotes and episodes relating to the given character. To follow these well-meant suggestions, would mean almost certain destruction to any story. Anecdotes, wonderful as they may be, often destroy the artistic continuity of the composition.

The real fascination of a picture lies in the suspense with which the audience follows the hero, eager to find out whether or not he will justify its opinion of him. This relation between our characters and our audience we must try to understand, if we are interested in the development of motion picture stories. You will see best what I mean, when I tell you a little about the opening scenes of the *Pasteur* picture.

In the first script, Pasteur was introduced *right in the first scene*, taking for granted that everybody knew who he was. But when I spoke in the studio or in public about him, I always heard the remark: "Pasteur? Pasteur? Oh yes—the milkman!" and that caused me considerable worry.

For days I pondered, until I came to the conclusion that, when so many people of a good average education didn't know about Pasteur, then I could not expect it from the general motion picture audience, either. So I set out to find a way to combat this ignorance. Then suddenly one night it came to me, right out of the very atmosphere of Pasteur's time.

I opened the picture in this way: A doctor is murdered by a man who considers that his wife was killed through the uncleanness of the doctor. As proof, he shows a leaflet, appealing to all doctors to clean their hands before going from one patient to another, written by a certain Pasteur. And this leaflet becomes the highlight of the investigation. Nobody knows Pasteur, neither officials nor doctors, and when the matter finally comes to the attention of the emperor, he, himself, doesn't know but calls for the unknown scientist, *Louis Pasteur*. So the audience was led from ignorance to knowledge in a highly dramatic way, without cheating on historical facts.

Let us take another instance: the finish of the Zola picture. As you may well know, Zola died several years before Dreyfus was rehabilitated. Fearing that the early death of Zola, occurring before the rehabilitation of Dreyfus, would check further interest for the audience, the authors changed historical facts for a dramatic climax in this way: after Dreyfus leaves Devil's Isle, he is immediately rehabilitated. Then Zola is shown at home, working, and after going to bed he is suffocated, and then the funeral.

Such a finish would take a great deal from the success, because, as I saw it, it was not dramatic. It was a finish in a matter of fact way, besides being historically incorrect. So, I suggested with the very same facts, the finish you saw:



after Dreyfus' release, Zola is working on his last book, in which he intends to tell the world of his recent experiences, and is overcome by poisonous carbon-monoxide gas. Then follows the Dreyfus rehabilitation and thereafter Zola's funeral at the Pantheon. In this way, we have an ending full of suspense, still building up, holding the audience to the very end, without changing history. Zola dies before Dreyfus is reinstated. Minutes or years before, that doesn't matter—the screen has no real time. The spiritual truth, that and that alone matters. So much about the work with the writer.

Now let's visit the art director. Of him the public knows very little, and yet he is of the greatest importance in the process of making motion pictures. Naturally, he has to be correct in the style of the period, yet to the director, it is just as important that he builds his sets correctly for the dramatic continuity of the picture.

The law of *directional continuity* is one of the most neglected laws of all. Many motion picture people are not even aware of its existence. They hate to be bothered about directions. And yet it is in this way, that a screen story is properly told.

Take, for instance, a thief running away from the police. Let's say our thief runs from right to left and the police follow him. No matter how many cuts the thief runs away from the police, where, or in which direction has the thief to run? From right to left, as he has started. That is the correct answer. Otherwise, the thief runs right into the hands of his pursuers. But please watch your next picture and you will see.

Now, before we come to the actual making of the picture, one word about casting. The work of finding the necessary actors, conforming to the requirements of the script, is one of the most

difficult tasks of the director. In *Zola*, for instance, the actors had not only to look like the original characters, they had to be militaristic, too—which means they had to have good figures, and above all, had to know how to walk, something very few actors know; and to make it worse, they all had to look European. Yet with patience we succeeded.

Now that the picture is an accomplished task, it all seems very simple, but it was not so at the time. Take, for example, the part of Dreyfus. After innumerable tests with different actors, we tried Mr. Schildkraut, who, coming from Broadway where he was a stage star of first magnitude, had his own ideas of how the part should be played. Just as most actors playing an important part, he had the conception that he must show this importance and played more the monument in honor of Dreyfus, than the humble officer, himself, who, through tragic circumstances, became a worldknown figure.

Yet, after a little revision, Mr. Schildkraut created something marvelous, as you most likely have seen. It is important to know that, in pictures, one cannot "play a part"; one must possess a sum of real qualities, clearly expressed in the external, in order to obtain the desired effect. This leads to the question: has the screen need of actors, or of personalities.

All I can say now is: the personality who is not an actor is to me impossible—I prefer the actor with personality. It should never be necessary for the director to compel an actor to create something that is not in him; therefore, casting is important. The greatest difficulty for the motion picture actor is to overcome the surrounding conditions under which he has to work and, above all, to overcome the presence of the camera.

So the director must achieve a proper creative state, which will help the actor to the birth of inspiration. The rest will come about subconsciously—by nature. Not the actor alone, but all cooperators, whom I consider as important as the director, himself, give of their best only in a favorable atmosphere, which is the supreme task of the director to create. How can anyone, not to mention an actor, work if he is embarrassed, or if he feels a sense of inefficiency, of failure? To create success one has first to create the spirit of enthusiasm; that is, the spirit of success. This works miracles.

The job of the director is, in my opinion, like that of a gardener, who puts a stick here, to help a plant to grow straight, and cuts a branch there, that the whole tree may thrive better and a good harvest result. Of course, this way of directing requires intelligent actors. At this point I would like to mention Mr. Paul Muni, whom I consider one of the most intelligent actors of our day. Imagine, Zola's tremendous scene in the courtroom was the first and only take! Contrary to the common opinion, I believe in first takes. When a scene is taken over and over again, the actor is tired and bound to become self-conscious. Then his acting is not at its best. So, since intelligence is rare among actors, too, proper casting is one of the main factors of success.

Now, I take it you all know the significance of the camera. It is through this medium that the story is told. Since the camera is handled by a specialist, the director has to work closely with that man, which is the cameraman. This relationship cannot be too intimate. He is really to the director, what the brush is to the painter. It is through the technical possibilities of the cameraman that the ideas of the director can be transformed from abstract to concrete

form. Therefore, director and cameraman should have almost the same philosophy of life, but by all means the same artistic viewpoints. Only then, the beautiful unity of conception and form will enchant the audience.

In order to get this completeness, the camera should always be in the right position and should never move at the wrong time. Camera technique is what diction is to the writer—the director's style of expression. Yet two men never see alike, never react alike, and the tragedy of relativity is frequently discovered too late, in the projection room, and not all studios allow retakes, especially not for "technical reasons." That is exactly what the studio calls it when you are artistically not satisfied. That is of minor importance to them. But, if a kiss or a leg is not shown long enough, then you can be sure of retakes.

Only sometimes there are retakes asked for other reasons. For instance: the scene when Dreyfus leaves the prison on Devil's Island was at first not so well liked. I was asked to shoot it once more, showing Dreyfus closer and having him leave the prison directly, without going back and forth. I did as I was asked, to prove that the first form of the scene was right, and, in the end, my original scene was chosen.

This proves to you the importance of a definite setup of the camera. The quality of your film depends not only on *what* you shoot—but *how* you shoot it. This must be planned by the director and carried out by the cameraman. How you can *make* or *break* a scene through a set up, I will show you with another example:

The scene between Zola and his wife—so superbly performed by Miss Gloria Holden—after Cezanne leaves Zola and he tells his wife what Cezanne had said to him and all his reflections on the break of this friendship. This scene was

written to be played while walking from one room into another. That would have spoiled a beautiful scene, because not only had Zola walked with Cezanne through the rooms a few moments before, but after the tragic break the scene must come to a rest.

Therefore, I decided to play it as you have seen it: Zola with his wife sitting at the fireplace. Only in this way, the value the writer wanted was brought out. Very often, as in the case just mentioned, a scene may in itself read all right, but the picture as a whole, and not the scene, has to be considered. This leads us to another vital point in motion pictures—the rhythm. And with rhythm is connected film cutting.

Cutting is not merely a method of joining separate scenes or pieces, but is

actually a method of deliberate and compulsory guidance for the spectators. It is quite obvious that such an important task should not be done without the director. Visualize, if you can, a major operation being performed by a first-aid man. He could not help cutting into the life-giving arteries and sinews, which only the surgeon knows how to avoid. The same goes for motion pictures. Only the director can avoid hurting the life of the story, so cutting should be done in consultation with him.

But film art is yet in its childhood. As time goes on, the motion picture artists, not the directors alone, will continue and eventually win their fight for creative freedom, for the benefit of better pictures, to enlighten intelligent audiences.

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## THE MOTION PICTURE IN EDUCATION

*Reviewed by* BERNARD LONSDALE

The two studies on *Motion Pictures in Education*, published by the American Council on Education, should please all persons interested in the educational scene.

In the first study, *The Motion Picture in Education: Its Status and Its Needs*, the council expresses its cognizance of the power of the film as an educational tool. As the result of a nationwide survey, it is able to give a definite description of the present situation in the schools.

Investigation reveals that 10,000 projectors must serve more than 16,000,000 pupils in 82,000 school buildings. Production of films by teachers for classroom use is negligible or sporadic. Sixteen states have no state distribution facilities. In 9,000 school districts there are only 400 teachers or administrators

entrusted with special duties related to visual aids. Of 1,200 teacher training institutions, only a few more than 100 provide definite training in the selection and use of motion pictures and allied teaching aids.

An outline of suggested procedures to be used by the Educational Motion Picture Project for the wider and more effective utilization of films is given in this study.

The second of the studies, *Teaching With Motion Pictures: A Handbook of Administrative Practice*, deals specifically with each of the major problems discussed generally in the first. Teachers, principals, or administrators wishing a brief introduction to the problem of initiating and administering a program of visual education will find many heretofore vexing questions answered therein.



# MICROPHOTOGRAPHY IN STRIDE

By M. LEWELLYN RANEY

*Director of Libraries, The University of Chicago*

The photographic reproduction of records in miniature is sweeping into general attention. The filming of commercial paper, such as cheques and statements, is widespread, with economy of filing the usual motive, though in the Bank of England the hazard of war is said to dictate the policy. Great engineering organizations are storing film copies of their vital drawings and plans, in the assurance that if by fire, theft, or other catastrophe the originals are lost they can get going again in short order. The national Bureau of the Census is embarked upon the huge project of filming the entire population records of the country from 1790 to date, the 1840 numeration, for example, running to 325,000 pages, that of 1850 involving more than 700,000, while the index alone to the Census of 1900 requires 34,000,000 cards. This index, which now takes 7,000 square feet of floor space, will occupy but 50 afterward.

The National Archives has filmed the Veterans' Administration pension index on 2,600,000 cards and, in the case of vast quantities of informational paper, has decided to keep only 10 per cent of the originals as samples but film it all. The AAA and NRA Hearings, running to some 300,000 pages, were commercially filmed at a cost of about \$400 to each of a dozen libraries, while hectographed copies had been offered for \$6000 each, and a printed edition estimated to cost a half million dollars. The Social Security Board has recently let a contract to film tremendous quantities of its materials, starting with 30,000,000 forms received from employed individuals throughout the country. By this epochal technique the Library of

Congress has been enabled to bring home from European archives the copies of more than a million pages pertaining to American history.

But large undertakings are not confined to the Atlantic seaboard. Activity is general and varied. Thus, the Stockton and Larkin manuscript collections at the University of California have been put on acetate cellulose and this work is being extended. Stanford University has collected documents on film for the study of American diplomatic history before 1763. The Spanish and Mexican archives at Santa Fé are being so handled, while at the University of New Mexico approximately 25,000 projection prints of microfilms taken in Mexico have been made. Edwards Brothers, of Ann Arbor, Michigan, are engaged in reproducing at the British Museum all books issued in English up to 1550.

The list of projects could go on and on, but what about everyday usage?

Well, some forty American daily newspapers can now be had each month on film, while the world war years of the New York Times, 1914-18, are similarly available, and the New York Herald-Tribune has made arrangements to shoot its entire file. The staff from the new microphotography laboratory of the University of Chicago Libraries demonstrated the latest technique in the name of the American Library Association during this year's Paris Exposition, centering its efforts on reproducing about thirty newspaper files of the French Revolution period by courtesy of the Bibliothèque Nationale. A directory of filming agencies, appearing in *Microphotography for Libraries, 1937*, issued by the Association in November, lists twenty

libraries where microfilming cameras are installed and four commercial organizations that offer such services. In the very first year of its operation, Bibliofilm Service, as the unit set up in the Library of the U. S. Department of Agriculture in the autumn of 1934 is called, met demands for 300,000 pages from readers in and out of Washington, though at the time there was not in the market a single reading machine for such materials. They ordered on faith and in the meantime improvised. This Service, now under the recently formed American Documentation Institute, is expected to be extended to the Army Medical Library and the Library of Congress by the opening of the New Year, while a filming exchange between the latter and the National Library of Peiping had been arranged to begin about the same time, when the Sino-Japanese war interfered. Filming is readily seen as a profitable substitute for interlibrary loans.

But, bolder still, the little camera has turned publisher. The Oxford University Press recently made the announcement that henceforth none of its issues would be allowed to become unavailable. If a book has gone out of print and stays so, orders for it will be filled on film and at about the price of the original. Sheridan House follows suit with E. S. Bates' new book *Inside Out*, issued on both paper and film, each at \$5.00. The International Filmbook Corporation, true to its name, turns the same way and offers several famous works in this medium, including the Gutenberg *Bible* and Audubon's *Birds of America* (in color), while also experi-

menting with a dictionary, a telephone directory, and a card catalog. In general, it is already true that the individual scholar may have what he needs when he needs it whether anyone else needs it too, and at no greater price than a printed copy out of an edition of 2,000. Here, then, begins to loom the first possibility, not of world bibliography merely, but of racing far-flung records to any master brain for fresh assault on the unknown. And if we can see together, hates on earth will die.

The quiet sister has a way of her own and means peculiar to her need. She is like Emily Dickinson's robin

That speechless from her nest  
Submits that home and certainty  
And sanctity are best.

Film she uses, yes, but safety film—she means to keep her pictures for life and close at hand. She has developed special emulsions, dreaming of fine and finer grain, on the one hand, and for duplicates, a dye instead. She can repeat the original, stain for stain, but like the last of Sam's three wishes in Walter de la Mare's poem she prefers her product to wear the bloom of youth. Her processing, therefore, is individual, and so must her printers be. Her camera has an uncanny eye, while for projection she has, as befits her small self, released a bevy of miniatures that, like tortoises, carry their houses on their backs, for she means to go everywhere, day or night, and be at home by the fireside as in lordly reading rooms.

Hollywood had better look to her laurels—there are potencies brewing elsewhere.

## NOTICE

Because of the rise in costs, and because with this issue, *CINEMA PROGRESS* begins a bi-monthly publication schedule, with extra pages, more pictures, and better articles, it has been found necessary to increase the price of individual copies to 20c. Subscription rates will remain at \$1.00 per year, however, and foreign, \$1.25.

# MONTAGE—A LOOK INTO THE

Symbolism and “orchestrated” sound w  
Hollywood’s foremost

The time is 1945. Or maybe it is 1950 or 1960. Enticed by the “coming attractions” flashed before you from time to time on the television receiver, you have sped away in an aero-taxi to your favorite theatre, where you are completely absorbed in a type of screen-drama that would have amazed a 1937 audience.

You see the hero and heroine work out their more or less adventurous destiny on the wings of lap-dissolves, superimposures, and flash shots. On dolly shots, out-of-focus shots, and “still” shots. In slow motion. In fast motion. Where, in 1937, you marveled at the montage sequence in *Maytime*, showing Jeanette MacDonald’s long span of years as an opera singer in but a relatively few feet of celluloid, you now accept as a matter of course a film made up, not just in part, but in *the main*, of these special effects. Instead of *hearing* actors speak unnecessary dialogue to express their thoughts, you *see* these thoughts in graphic picture symbolism. And instead of a *musical* orchestra creating the proper mood and atmosphere for you in a particularly dramatic sequence, an “orchestra” of controlled *sounds* performs that service!

In short, with actions “speaking louder” and more effectively than words, and with “orchestrated” natural sounds judiciously replacing the music, a realism is obtained which, through the wizardry of psychological and physiological reaction, plumps you right down into the middle of the story in a way little dreamed of in 1937 — except by Slavko Vorkapich and, perhaps, by one

or two others of the industry’s far-sighted men. Keeping pace with the swift advance of scientific progress, the “personalized” camera of 1945, 50 or 60 has developed something akin to a soul— or, at least it has the power, under expert human guidance, to transmit an almost flesh-and-blood quality to the screen.

Thus did Slavko Vorkapich, M-G-M’s creator of montage, take a fanciful peek, the other day, into the cinematic future. Interviewed in his office in “Bungalow 9,” a small frame structure hidden away among the extensive sets and buildings of the Metro lot, Vorkapich explained that he was not making a “prophecy,” but was merely exploring the “ultimate possibilities” of the art he introduced to America.

“I do not mean to say that images may replace dialogue in entirety, or that sounds may substitute for music, but I believe that pictures and natural sounds will assume a larger role in the future than they have taken up until now,” he declared.

“For instance; instead of having an actor say, ‘I love you,’ why not let images show what he feels and thinks?”

Citing as an example the love mood created for a scene in *Romeo and Juliet*, Vorkapich described how the camera made a pan shot of the star-lit sky, which was succeeded, in turn, by a superimposure of a brook, its waters sparkling with reflected light from the moon and stars. With successive shots of the rose bushes and the flowers in the garden, of lessening shadows as dawn breaks, and of the advent of the lark, symbolic bird of love, the atmosphere and idea of ro-



# FUTURE WITH SLAVKO VORKAPICH

ly important role in years to come, says  
ent of new film technique.

mance was effectively presented to the audience—*without a word of dialogue*.

Montage, in its general sense, as used in Europe, means merely cutting for continuity—the correct matching of scenes in order. In the restricted sense in which Vorkapich uses it, it means creative cutting—a blending of two or more apparently unrelated images, which, together, form a complete mood or idea. This may be done by having one image follow another, in a cut or lap-dissolve, one image on top of another (super-imposure), or superimposures, cuts, and lap-dissolves combined.

An economical device that can cover great stretches of time and space in but a few feet of film, the montage, with its ability to suggest several ideas at the same time, is today invaluable in filling in story gaps.

Analytical montage—the breaking down of an action or event into its component parts—is also an important tool, Vorkapich explained.

“We must look at an action or event from many angles and infinite points of view,” he said. “If we do this, we get an intense feeling of that action or event, and the whole idea is more clearly impressed upon our mind.

“Suppose we film the passing of a train. Are we going to follow our first impulse—that of shooting the train from a distance as it crosses our vision? We must not. We will view the train from all possible angles—horizontal from far away, horizontal in a closer shot, from above the train, from below, with a close-up of the churning wheels, from in front as the engine rushes at us, and perhaps a shot of the interior of one of

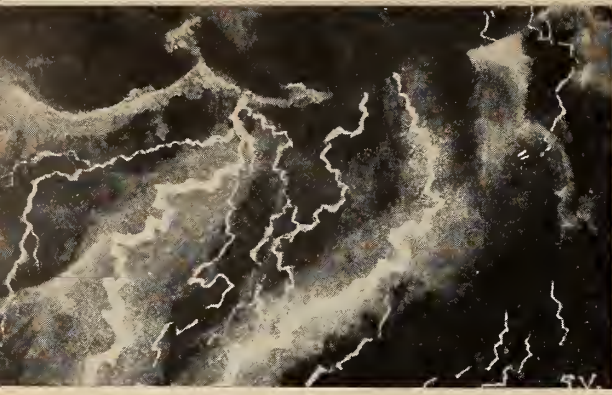
the cars. A clever matching of these short shots results in a more complete and vigorous presentation of the idea and, at the same time, an avoidance of monotony. Too often people look at things impersonally. That is a mistake. The film should be omnipresent and personal.”

What type of montage to use and when to use it is determined by the audience effect desired. Since primitive times human behavior has been governed by basic “urges” and “drives” which cause man to react in a certain way to certain situations. Such primitive reactions may be aroused by the screen, which affects us both physically and mentally, and it is around this theory that Vorkapich builds his montage ideas.

First of all, there is the strong and well-known instinct of self-preservation. It can be aroused by showing, say, a cavalry charge coming straight at the camera, as though to trample the observer to death. Involuntarily, we may flinch or have an inclination to duck or flee, just as did our caveman ancestors when attacked by a sabre-toothed tiger.

There is the horror man has of falling. How often it has been exploited in scenes of plummeting airplanes and in roller-coaster chases, we all know.

Slow motion is valuable in creating a dream quality, a sense of floating and loss of weight. In *Turn Back the Clock*, a man has fallen asleep in a taxi, dreams that he is running from a pursuer. Superimposed over the sleeping man is a figure of him running—in slow motion. In our own dreams we have had the same experience—an imperative desire to flee, which is impeded by an in-



ability to move our limbs with the necessary rapidity.

Somewhat similar to this is the DOLLY shot, which gives a pleasant sensation of floating and freedom of movement. Ever since childhood we have enjoyed pleasant movements—we were happiest when being rocked to sleep by mother, or enjoying a ride in a swing or upon a merry-go-round. The camera recaptures this feeling with the slow, easy movement of the DOLLY, as it brings the camera in from a long-shot to a close-up of a person or object. Perhaps we may see a city from afar, and then glide to one of the buildings, as though borne on a magic carpet.

The OUT-OF-FOCUS shot is based upon the natural human instinct to get the eye back in focus again if its vision is blurred or distorted by tears or some other impediment. If a girl is crying, the audience may “cry”, too, and see the scene through the girl’s tear-filled eyes. In *Crime Without Passion*, the OUT-OF-FOCUS shot is used to show how a woman about to be murdered sees, in a flash, the assassin as he prepares to strike. A combination of shock and intense emotion has distorted the victim’s vision, and the camera puts you in her place.

The QUICK-CHANGE sequence, wherein short shots, each distinctly different in composition, flash by in swift succession, has a trip-hammer effect upon the nervous system—produces a jarring and dramatic quality. Particularly effec-

series of three pictures taken from a sequence created for a recent film. One dissolving quickly into another upon the screen, they symbolize war and the clash of two great armies during the Napoleonic wars.

tive in depicting violent action, such as battle scenes, it was used in a recent picture to illustrate reaction to shock. In a courtroom scene, a startling statement has just been made by one of the spectators. We see quick shots of heads turning toward the speaker—heads of different sizes, from different angles, and with different lighting effects. If all the heads had been viewed from the same distance and at the same angle, monotony would have destroyed punch and the effect would have been lost.

In contrast to the QUICK-CHANGE montage is the ABSOLUTELY STILL sequence, which, through its ut-



ter lack of movement and its delayed-action effect, accentuates and prolongs the emotion of the moment. In *Manhattan Melodrama*, Vorkapich used the series of “still” shots to emphasize the emotion of horror. A fire, after ravishing a river steamer, has finally been brought under control, but not before it has taken a terrible toll. All the dead are laid out in a row on the steamer’s deck. Staring at them in dumb horror are the surviving passengers. In one “still” shot after another, we see the crowd staring—just staring. Each shot is different in composition, the same in length, is held on the screen and then



changed, with the same measured timing—almost as though it were a beat of music. In this case, the emotion of horror was brought home with such force that the producer decided not to use the sequence because it was “too sad.”

The DELAYED-ACTION montage is similar to the above, except that it prolongs important moments with *motion*, instead of *stillness*. Vorkapich created such a montage, showing a football player catching a pass, using three different shots of the same action. In the first, we see the player raise his arms at about shoulder level. In the second, his arms are at a 45-degree angle, and in the third, his arms are stretched high above his head as the pass sails into his fingers. Overlapping of the action of these three shots, with the arms in the three positions, produces a jerky, but dramatic effect which would not have been possible had the player caught the pass in one sweeping movement. The delay gives us time to realize the full significance and drama of an important moment.

Describing the physiological and psychological effect of these basic *visual* montages upon the audience, Vorkapich declared that movement “produces a physical reaction in us, in spite of ourselves, but it is the subject matter of the image that indicates the emotion to be felt. If the image is given the proper meaning, it becomes a very intense emotion.”

Sound will contribute as much to the montage of the future as images do now, he believes.

“Certain sounds affect us physiologically and psychologically just as images do,” he explained. “I believe it would be possible to express mood and feeling by using sounds in a creative way. This might be done by distortion, by filtering, or perhaps by magnification. Sounds can be recorded and then rearranged and superimposed just as are scenes in visual montage.”

And it is because people like realism that sound will assume some of the functions taken care of now by music, Vorkapich is convinced.

“They liked the earthquake rumble in *San Francisco*,” he said. “They like the battle sounds in war pictures, and they even enjoy Fourth of July noises. But the development of sound effects is still in a crude state. In the future, sounds will be used in sequences where it will be more natural and effective than music. Sound, after all, is more materialistic than music, which sometimes is too melodious to match the realistic texture of the film image with which it is used. We might say that sound is to music what the photograph is to the painting. I believe somebody should play with these ideas and discover their possibilities.”

Montage, both visual and oral, will be used more in years to come, but will not be in such a condensed form as at present, he believes. The montage sequences will be more measured, and the whole picture will be planned with a view to getting the most out of them.

In creating a montage, Vorkapich follows a procedure somewhat as follows: After getting his first inspiration, he thinks it over for several days until he is sure he has the right idea. Then he writes the sequence down, makes sketches of it, and confers with the producer. Vorkapich directs the scene and does the film cutting. You have seen his work in *Romeo and Juliet*, *David Cop-*

(Continued on Page 34)





# UNCLE SAM TURNS PRODUCER

By FANNING HEARON,

*Director, Division of Motion Pictures, U. S. Dept. of Interior*

Convinced that it is the privilege of the people to be thoroughly and impartially informed of the Government's business and the responsibility of the Government to provide the information, the Department of the Interior is producing and distributing motion pictures of its activities to help meet its part of this obligation because it knows that the moving film is crowding the top as No. 1 medium of public enlightenment.

The hand-writing is on the wall and from where we sit it's easy to read. The coming of the convenient 16-mm. projector; the Hays organization's recognition of the motion picture's educational possibilities; the American rejuvenation of the European documentary film idea; an inherent tendency on the part of Americans to be modern, and the amazing mass interest in pictures of any kind from anywhere have churned up an undercurrent which is having a tremendous effect on the business of educational films.

Schools, colleges, universities and state departments for public enlightenment are talking about visual education and doing something about it; major productions have recognized 16-mm.; CCC camps are establishing extensive non-theatrical circuits; European documentary film-makers are visiting those interested in this in America; universities—notably New York and Columbia—are starting courses in motion picture appreciation; and the country has gone so far off the end in its craze for pictures—still and motion—that newsstands offer nothing to read, only something to look at.

The Department officially recognized the fact that the educational and documentary films had "arrived" in America, when in November 1935, Secretary Ickes established in his office a Division of Motion Pictures to consolidate all motion and still picture activities of the Department. Before that time, some bureaus of the Department had picture units, and some had none. It was a jumbled business, which Mr. Ickes, with characteristic directness, did something about as soon as it came to his attention.

Today, there is effective unity. Three beliefs which those of us in the Division have taken to our hearts, dictate our activities. These, one of which has been stated, are:

(1) It is the privilege of the people to be thoroughly and impartially informed of the Government's business and the responsibility of the Government to provide the information.

(2) Pictures are made to be seen.

(3) Entertainment has a place in the educational film.

The first of these is the recognition of the responsibility and the second is the acceptance and pledge to fulfill. It is a healthy combination. The significance of the statement "Pictures are made to be seen" is simply that the Department of the Interior is determined to meet the requests of all reputable exhibitors and to keep its pictures out of the can and on the screen. Old word-of-mouth distribution restrictions have been chased away in a concentrated effort to give the people access to what is theirs.

The significance of No. 3 is not that we have a notion of competing with

stars and sets and plots, but merely that we believe there is an interest to be injected into the educational film usually lacking. Professional titling, background music with subject feeling, camera angles and special photographic effects, a little drama in the story, a little humor and perhaps a lovely girl in a white bathing suit.

Our policy, to be understood, should be separated into production and distribution. Production, as in the history of the individual film, comes first. The Department's several bureaus and divisions provide a blessed variety of interesting subjects—the magnificence of the national parks and the establishment and development of state and county parks; the Indian reservations and their colorful inhabitants; the Bureau of Reclamation with its Boulders and Grand Coulees; the protection of petroleum and the restoration of the cattle ranges; the General Land Office and the Geological Survey with their activities covering land; mining and big industry in the Bureau of Mines; the territories and island possessions such as Alaska, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands; and the nation's sponsorship of its schools and colleges through the Office of Education. This presents a desirable situation and affords excellent opportunity in the production of the educational film, where there can be little plot excitement, and the subject matter and camera treatment are vital to any degree of interest success.

As perhaps may not be too evident in a simple listing of the Department's subjects, back of all of them lies the most important single factor in the social and economic future of America—the conservation of her natural resources. The Federal direction for this conservation comes from the Department of the Interior, the nation's conservator and housekeeper.

There is an absurd, but annoyingly prevalent, belief that the Government spends millions making movies. It is the natural result of combining the two facts that Hollywood's great works do cost a lot of money and that one of mankind's inherent pastimes is talking about Government spending. Actually, the Department of the Interior is operating its motion picture business—production and distribution—on \$50,000 a year. At this rate, just one of the fairytale millions would meet our requirements for 20 years. For the cost of the rear end of a battleship, we can supply a generation with free motion picture information on one of its Federal departments.

In the fiscal year ending June 1937, we produced 30 reels of sound film, photographed in every section of the country, for \$1,700 per reel. And audience reaction, as expressed in many letters, is that they are good. Maintenance of this economical operation cost, so essential if we are to operate at all, is made possible by close figuring on travel and negative exposure and small personnel and production facilities. Fifteen people do all our producing and distributing, and the laboratory, though modern and adequate to bring a subject from camera to screen, is small.

We are content with small facilities, because making motion pictures without costly casts and *Alice in Wonderland* sets isn't a very hard thing to do. As in all creative work, it is a matter of brains seasoned with common sense. An intelligent, imaginative director and a technically-smart cameraman can expose negative on a good story and a simple laboratory can process. In our arrangement, the man who directs the cameraman in the field comes back to Washington and cuts and edits his own film. Following this, and the production of titles and special effects, we are ready for sound scoring. This is done on con-

tract with background music, sound effects and a professional voice.

An interesting sidelight on distribution is the circulation of our subjects in foreign countries. A notable example is Ambassador to Russia Joseph Davies, who was advised by President Roosevelt to take along some government films to show the folks over there. We selected a group for Mr. Davies, which he took along; and when he returned to America for a short stay, he brought back the first set and gathered up some more. Ambassador to Italy Phillips is another circulating our films, and recently there have been State Department requests for American representatives in several smaller nations. Besides the embassy distribution, we have sent them to educational and film meetings in Europe and South America and some countries have purchased prints. A significant request

came from Lord Beaverbrook, the British publisher, who wanted to see what America is doing about the documentary film business. Our latest foreign shipment was not accepted by the postal authorities. It was to the Y.M.C.A. in Shanghai. The man who made the request may never make another.

Our current production program includes one-reelers on Sequoia, Yosemite and Great Smoky national parks; the operation of the Taylor Grazing Act in saving the cattle ranges of the West; the recreational facilities of the Tennessee Valley Authority, the development of useless farmland into organized camps for underprivileged families, and the technicalities of testing coal for heat values.

These films which Interior produces belong to the people. The very act of giving a picture is a gesture of friendliness, and we give these to you.

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## CINEMA AND THE PUBLIC

By BERNARD ZERBE

How much does the motion picture influence the taste of the modern public, especially since the advent of sound? In an attempt to answer this perplexing question, the International Institute of Intellectual Cooperation, established in Paris by the League of Nations, has revealed the results of its recently completed survey in *The Intellectual Role of the Cinema*, a book published in France.

The first part of this volume consists of a survey of 42 years of the development of the cinema as an art, technique and industry in France, Italy, Denmark, Sweden, Germany, Russia, Spain, Austria, Czechoslovakia, Great Britain and the United States. The survey was compiled by Valerio Jahier.

The second part is devoted to answers of the inquiry made by the International Institute of Intellectual Cooperation. It includes articles by such leaders as Rudolph Arnheim, Georg Pabst, Paul Rotha, Elie Faure, Alberto Cavalcanti, and others. The United States is represented in the joint article written by Walt Disney and Boris V. Morkovin, *Cinema and the Public*.

The discussion of the article is based on the statement that "although commercial pictures are produced by the industry with an eye on entertainment and not on teaching or propaganda, motion pictures may indirectly influence the audience in its taste and attitudes through an unconscious participation by the public in the experience of the character."



# WHY VISUAL AIDS?

By MRS. ANNETTE GLICK BYRNE

*Assistant Director in Charge of Visual Education,  
Los Angeles City Schools*

Under the old education it didn't much matter whether the child understood or not the lesson he was intoning—just so he repeated the facts and figures which he had memorized with satisfactory speed.

Those were the days of "vague words, dim conceptions, and inexact abstractions"—of an encyclopedic, memoriter, recitative method, only concerned with the accumulation of a vast store of unrelated, isolated facts where memory alone was identified with study, and where, as Mr. Robert Hill Lane, assistant superintendent of schools, puts it, everything was learned from A to Izzard, from Asthma to Zebra.

A recitation was what it was named—a "re-citation," and the sole criterion of good teaching was the silent and inert child in his seat, feet flat on the floor, and hands folded, where the highest form of activity known was the hand raised in the air and the voice asking timidly, "Please, may I speak?"

This was the old *listening* school.

But since then we have come to realize through psychological studies, that words in themselves are not a magic means of transmitting thought. In themselves they are not the channels for the supply of concrete experience. We have come to see that words, whether they are printed or spoken, are only a sign—the symbol for an idea which has already been placed in the mind as a result of some real (or sensory) experience.

It was John Dewey who said that *if nine-tenths of the energy spent in learning were spent in seeing that the proper images were formed in the child's mind,*

*the educational process would be enormously speeded up and made more effective.*

In my own teaching experience I have had several amusing experiences resulting from instances where the child had failed to match up the correct mental concept with the word which stood for it. These are familiarly known as examination paper gems or "boners," but these I want to tell you now have actually happened to me or have been told to me by other teachers who have experienced them, though they have been repeated so often that people are telling them back to me now.

One youngster asked me if Nero was the same God as Nero in "Nero My God to Thee!" Another one stated that Louis XVI was "gelatined" in the French Revolution. The classic is the statement in a composition that Anne Boleyn, one of the wives of Henry VIII, was "ironed on". When the teacher traced that elusive statement to its source in the text-book, she found that the book read, "Henry the Eighth pressed his suit against Anne Boleyn."

Funny as these stories are, they nevertheless emphasize the need for something more in the learning process than the mere jugglery of words by which one word is used merely to define another. What clear idea, for instance, does the child have of the papal bull, or the line of demarcation? How will we describe to the child from the dust bowl, using words only, the rolling waves of the sea, or to the child from the rolling prairies, a carpet of pine needles?

We have today the *seeing, doing*

school where the doctrine of interest is opposed to the old doctrine of difficulty. This is the school where the concrete experience is the basis of all effective learning, where, if the child from the dust bowl cannot be taken to see the rolling waves of the sea, he sees a motion picture or studies lantern slides and study prints and stereographs so that he may understand what he reads about these foreign and strange things in his books.

And the child is anything but bored today with school. He is interested, absorbed in the worthwhileness of the thing he is doing. There is a new glow surrounding the things going on in the modern school room. There is the satisfaction, even exhilaration, which comes from a sense of mastery, of achievement.

The reason is that the motion picture is life, itself. It is as direct as thought, itself. It is not like the book, for the book, to be understood, must be translated in the child's mind to certain concepts he has built up through experience. When we expose children only to printed words, we have no way of knowing just what mental images the words may hold for them. Reading, after all, is just a series of pauses or complete stops, while the necessary verbal transfers are being made to the idea back of each word. But the motion picture requires no halts, necessary to make verbal transfers. It needs no translation. When we show the children a motion picture, they have a common experience upon which they can base a real understanding of words. We are then quite certain that they have the correct mental concept of words which they must later learn to read. This is the point brought out by Dr. Madeleine Veverka, Director of Elementary Curriculum.

As an example, perhaps we are trying to teach a child to *understand* as well as merely to read the paragraphs in his

book describing the necessity for crossing a street where there is heavy traffic. The sentence might read, "I must be careful when I cross the street."

We may teach the child to *pronounce* these words, to *read* them, but *we have no means of knowing that he understands them*. We have no way of knowing whether the child who lives in a busy section of town has the same idea of heavy traffic as the child who lives in a quiet neighborhood where cars pass only now and then. But suppose both of these children are shown a sound motion picture which shows traffic such as you might find on Wilshire Blvd. The child *hears* as well as *sees* the rushing cars, the whirl of motors, the signal bells, the traffic officer's shrill whistle. In spite of their differing backgrounds, the child from the congested district and the child from the quiet, rural neighborhood, *both* will have the same conception of heavy traffic.

Let's put it this way. We have been, as it were, keeping children down to the stage of the *Little Red Hen*, whereas we now find that we can present to these same children such mature social problems as, "How can our homes be improved and made more livable?" "How can our soil be kept from wearing away?" "How can our forests be kept from burning down altogether?" When we free children from the necessity of merely reading everything in words in books, because of their limited vocabularies, and present to them visual subject-matter on their real mental level, we find that they astonishingly have a mature comprehension of these problems. When children are freed from the difficulties of mechanical word recognition, we find that they can think as adults do! So we are all convinced that the whole process of education can be speeded up, and thus the taxpayer will get more for his dollar.

## VIERLING KERSEY SEES INCREASED USE OF RADIO, FILM IN SCHOOL

Increased public "ear-mindedness" and "eye-mindedness" will result in the school of the future making "much greater" use of the radio and the motion picture as supplementary educational aids, Vierling Kersey, superintendent of the Los Angeles city schools, predicted in an interview recently.

"The future will find the motion picture and radio more and more used in classroom, in the school assembly, and in the home," Superintendent Kersey said. "Modern education will not be sound except as it makes use to the maximum of those facilities aiding instruction which radio and motion pictures alone can provide.

"The particular values they can bring to the classroom are those not available through texts and through the ordinary means of instruction. They are those momentous and consequential experiences which occur but once, and which are restricted in their availability. A great motion picture, a world event presented by radio cannot be duplicated in a text, pamphlet, or in any substitute instructional material."

Explaining the use of these twentieth century tools of instruction, Kersey emphasized that preparation for the radio broadcast or motion picture and the follow-up after the presentation are equally as important as the broadcast or the picture, itself.

In Los Angeles, one of the pioneering cities in this new educational field, teachers are encouraged to supplement their regular classroom programs with radio and film "whenever advantageous," and to train themselves during service "to enrich all instruction through audio-visual aids."

But while much has been done to de-

velop radio and the motion picture for instructional use, no outstanding educational principles thus far have been discovered, the superintendent declared.

"Our knowledge of the worth of radio and the motion picture in the classroom is only general, and our technique of using these facilities to augment instruction are quite experimental," he said. "We have yet to find the proper balance between education and entertainment."

Lack of specifications of standard equipment which "would be suitable at an economic price" is another obstacle handicapping present extension of the program, the Los Angeles school official pointed out.

Some day, he hopes, financial conditions may permit teachers of science, history, geography, etc., to make their own films for supplementary work, instead of relying upon commercial products, which often are unavailable or unsatisfactory.

Turning to the theatrical film, Kersey declared that motion picture appreciation, as such, should not be taught as a separate subject, but should be applied to specific studies, as English, social studies, etc.

"I know that commercial motion pictures have their artistic side, and often teach a moral, but after all, you can't give a person ten lessons in thrift and expect him to be thrifty, nor can you make a person honest by teaching him honesty five minutes each morning."

The motion picture industry would raise its standard of production and would benefit generally if it would open its doors to the best talent of the younger generation, Kersey believes.

"We must educate the public to better pictures, so that they will demand them, and the only way to do this is through training in the schools," he said.



# MOTION PICTURES AS A FIELD FOR THE BOOK COLLECTOR

By ALFRED A. REED

London, England

The rage for collecting was never greater than at the present time, for everybody appears to be searching for some particular article, ranging from postage stamps to old violins, and from cigarette cards to suit-armor. All over the world thousands of persons are forming specialized collections upon subjects in which they are particularly interested, and I hope that among them are many enthusiastic film-lovers.

In the hope that it will encourage enthusiasts to collect books upon this fascinating subject, I will endeavor to give a brief resume of my own cinema library. It is quite a small collection, consisting of just over 300 items. However, I do not propose to bore the reader with a long list of titles, but I wish to point out various aspects of such a collection, and the great interest it is possible to derive therefrom. For this purpose I shall roughly classify the titles in question.

**EARLY ATTEMPTS TO DEPICT MOVEMENT.** Many collectors include under this heading all the early efforts to depict motion, culminating with marionettes, peep-shows, and shadowgraphy, but personally, I consider the ingenious toys invented during the first half of the nineteenth century to be the first serious attempts to achieve this object by mechanical methods. Among the many items dealing with these, the following titles contain descriptive accounts of such novelties as the Kalotrope, Phantasmoscope, Praxinoscope, Thaumatrope, and the Zoetrope: *Philosophy in Sport Made Science in Earnest* by J. A. Paris, 3 vols. 1827 (this work ran through many editions, the later issues

containing many more illustrations). *Letters on Natural Magic* by Sir David Brewster, 1831 (this book has been reprinted many times). *The Boy's Play-Book of Science* by J. H. Pepper. *Science in the Nursery; or, Children's Toys and What They Teach* by T. W. Erle, 1884 and *Marvels of Heat, Light and Sound* (Ward, Lock) N. D.

**MAGIC LANTERN.** Before proceeding to photography, I think that some reference to the Magic Lantern will not be out of place. It is surprising the number of items that have been issued on this subject, the most interesting among them being: *The Magic Lantern Manual* by W. J. Chadwick, 1878, *The Magic Lantern and Its Applications* by L. H. Laudy, 1886, *The Book of the Lantern* by T. C. Hepworth, 1888 (reprinted many times). *The Optical Lantern as an Aid in Teaching* by C. H. Bothamley, 1892 and *The Art of Projection and Complete Magic Lantern Manual*, 1893.

**ANIMATED PHOTOGRAPHY.** In omitting to mention the many names associated with the origin of photography, it will, I think, be quite obvious that space will not permit. The name of Eadweard Muybridge stands out like a signpost in any survey of animated photography. Particularly interesting is his original paper *The Attitudes of Animals in Motion, illustrated with the Zoopraxiscope*, 1883. Another, and equally famous item, is *Movement: The Results and Possibilities of Photography* by E. J. Marey. (English translation, 1895.)

**MECHANICAL HISTORY.** Among the many items dealing with the history of motion pictures from a me-

chanical standpoint, the following are of particular interest: *The Modern Bioscope Operator*, 1910. *Moving Pictures: How They Are Made and Worked* by F. A. Talbot, 1912. *Motion Picture Work* by D. S. Hulfish, 1913 (this work deals with practically all the various types of projectors then in use. It also contains a complete chapter on Talking Pictures and is profusely illustrated with scenes from early photoplays.) *Historie du Cinématographe* by G. Michel Coissac, Paris, 1925 (this book contains a most valuable appendix consisting of a tabulated list of the various improvements made between 1890 and 1900, arranged chronologically) and *De Wonderen van de Film* by D. Van Staveren, Rotterdam, 1935. The final establishment of Talking Pictures in 1928, resulted in many books being issued, among them: *The Film Finds Its Tongue* by F. Green, 1929. *The Talkies* by J. Scotland, 1930 and *The Romance of the Talkies* by G. Allighan, N. D. (with a foreword by Ronald Colman).

ACTING FOR THE FILMS. An interesting contribution to this section, is *Practical Course in Cinema Acting*, ten lessons, by Mary Pickford, Charlie Chaplin, Kenelm Foss, Aurele Sydney, Tom Mix, Eliot Stannard, Stewart Rome, Jose Collins, Violet Hopson and Gladys Brockwell, N. D. (Each lesson is complete in itself, and I believe these were also published separately). There is also *How to Become a Film Artiste* by F. Dangerfield and N. Howard, N. D. and *Practical Hints on Acting for the Cinema* by A. Platt, 1921.

AMATEUR CINEMA. For a long period cinematography for the amateur was more or less a closed book, mainly because of the bulky and expensive equipment necessary for the production of motion pictures. However, the innovation of the Pathéscope and other small

ciné-cameras in recent years have altered that state of affairs, and today there are hundreds of ciné-clubs and societies in existence. These organizations produce amateur films on many subjects, and I think that the greatest asset derived from them, is, that it enables amateurs to obtain a clearer conception of the many problems which beset the professional technician, and in doing so, develops in them a keener sense of appreciation. Among many others, are: *Motion Picture Photography for the Amateur* by H. C. McKay, 1924. *Motion pictures With the Baby Ciné* by H. B. Abbott, N. D. *Amateur Movie Making* by H. C. McKay, 1928. *Amateur Movie Craft* by J. R. Cameron, 1928. *Amateur Cinematography* by Capt. O. Wheeler, 1929. *A Popular Account of the Development of the Amateur Ciné Movement in Great Britain* by Marjorie A. L. Burgess, N. D. and *The Home Cinema* by J. P. Lawrie, 1933.

DOCUMENTARY. Many modern films are purely documentary, such as news-reels and travel pictures, and much has been written on this rapidly-advancing branch of cinematography. However, I shall only mention three of these: *The Biograph in Battle: Its Story in the South African War* by W. K.-L. Dickson, 1901 (this must surely have been the Father of full-length news-reels). *Sudan Sand* by S. C. Treatt, 1930 (this well-illustrated book deals with a trip to the Sudan and the filming of the Baggara Arabs for the picture *Stampede*), and *Behind the Camera* by Natalie Barkas, 1934 (an account of shooting a film in Nigeria for British Instructional Films, Ltd.).

(Editor's Note: Lack of space unfortunately forbids our printing Mr. Reed's article in full, but so valuable is his material to the serious student of the cinema, that the remainder will be presented in the next issue. General topics to be covered next time include EDUCATION, HUMOR, PRODUCERS AND STUDIOS, SCENARIOS AND SCENARIO WRITING, CRITICAL HISTORY, CHARLES CHAPLIN, and others.)

# VISUAL AIDS IN THE READING PROGRAM

By FRED W. ORTH

It is said with much truth that reading is the most important tool-subject in the curriculum, also that it is the most difficult to teach. Modern teaching procedures which include the improved use of devices long known to us have lessened the burden of the teaching of this important subject, resulting in its more rapid mastery on the part of the learner.

The use of visual aids in the teaching of reading in the elementary grades has made possible a wealth of vicarious experiences with which to prepare a suitable soil for context reading. In the teaching of reading it is well to take some of the following factors into account and be guided in the choice of teaching aids, visual or otherwise.

1. Small children are most interested in things in the immediate surroundings: themselves, parents, school, toys, pets, etc.

2. Play activity is the strongest motivating medium through which children express themselves.

3. Pleasurable emotions must accompany the building of memory reading.

4. Little children enjoy repetition of incident, and few characters in their play and in their stories.

In the teaching of reading in the first grade we depend almost entirely upon activity projects. Reading for the purpose of gaining information, it appears to me, follows at a later period. Thus the *action* may visualize stories already a part of the child's experience such as *Little Black Sambo*, *Peter Rabbit*, *The Three Bears*, *Cinderella*, or *Hansel and Gretel*, and with which most children are familiar. As a visual aid to reading, puppets may be said to do the same thing for the story that actors do for the written play. They *visualize action*.

An experiment with puppets recently has been made in a first grade where the age level of mental maturity was well below 76 months. It was thought wise to delay actual formal reading for the first few months. The children were first made aware of the possibilities for reading experience, and its need. The activities were visualized by the use of a boy puppet, Jack, and a girl puppet, Jane, who were dressed to represent children of the same age and background as the children in this class. Jack and Jane (and also their dog, Terry, and a small black kitten) were the puppets through which these children projected their own personalities: also their thoughts and experiences in the dramatization of their own everyday living.

Construction of stage sets and scenery, sewing, creative art, dramatization were other outcomes which followed the use of puppets as visual aids to reading in this particular grade. The seat work, silent reading periods, and drills were also based upon the reading units centered about the activity of the puppets.

A very necessary part in the teaching of reading in the primary grades is the building of vocabulary, and here we must draw heavily on visual aids. Study prints, lantern slides, and still films depicting objects, scenes and related experiences in connection with the children's home life, the community activities all about them, nature study, and all forms of transportation, are only a few of the valuable visual aids we can employ.

A careful organization of games and children's play other than games provides for extensive use of visual aids. They stimulate class discussion and a burning desire to read. Children's ac-



counts of such activities are greatly enjoyed by other children.

For little children, nothing is more beneficial than the excursion as a visual aid to reading vocabulary. In this way the child's knowledge of his immediate environment may be crystallized into reading experience. When the excursion is no longer possible or practical, the motion picture becomes the ideal substitute in the teaching of reading, since, through this medium, it is at once possible to provide experiences outside the immediate environment.

Visual education is a term which is applied to a large variety of teaching devices which function mainly through the sense of sight. It is not a method of instruction in and of itself, but coordinates with all subjects. Teachers of reading often find it valuable to use many or all of the following major visual aids during the course of their numerous activities.

#### 1. STUDY PRINTS OR FLAT PICTURES.

For individual study and analysis. They are cheap and abundant, durable, light in weight, inexpensive, and easily transported. They excel for close range examination.

#### 2. LANTERN SLIDES and STILL FILMS.

Provide best visual aids for group instruction through discussion and analysis. Produce artistic effects in color, line, and form. One profits here by projection, which compels attention, by semi-darkness, which excludes distraction, and by an enlarged picture which produces an illusion of reality. They make possible a minute study by all of the material reproduced.

#### 3. STEREOGRAPH.

With its three dimensional effect, it is especially valuable for group work and

for examination of scenes involving intricate construction.

#### 4. OBJECTS, SPECIMENS AND MODELS.

These aids present three dimension space and relative size in a most effective way.

#### 5. EXCURSION.

A cooperative enterprise showing phenomena in their natural setting. Shows three dimension, color, qualities, motion, etc. Offers opportunities for socializing instruction and blending school activities with community life.

#### 6. EXHIBIT.

Excellent from research point of view. Especially valuable for introducing a subject.

#### 7. SAND TABLE.

Like the model, it represents three dimension space and relative size in a most effective way, giving a meaningful interpretation to situations often difficult to understand. Shows phenomena in their natural setting, but in miniature. Gives opportunity to illustrate and emphasize various features of the daily lesson and affords children the opportunity to express their ideas.

#### 8. MOTION PICTURE.

Has unique advantage of depicting action or behavior with its irresistible illusion of life and reality. Especially useful in showing activity which no other pictorial aid can actually portray. It provides experiences which cannot be brought to us in any other way and emphasizes the necessity for continuity and close sequence of events.

The value of visual aids lies in their conjunctive use and not in the isolated use of any one form. To be most effective, each aid must make its unique contribution toward the total whole.

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Above are shown Tom Sawyer and Becky Thatcher (Tommy Kelly and Anne Gillis) exploring huge cavern built by studio technicians for *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*.

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*The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*  
(Selznick-International)

One of the most bizarre sets ever made in Hollywood was the huge, many-hued plasterboard cave constructed by studio technicians for Selznick's *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*.

\* \* \*

Roofed with 60,000 square feet of black canvas, the "cave" consists of a great semi-circle of underground formations, in which 17 different scenes were shot. In it are 90 tons of plaster, 30,000 board feet of lumber, and 120 bales of sisal fiber. Fifteen 50-foot poles support the black canvas roof, which is stretched over 3,000 feet of steel cable and 6,000 feet of rope.

In one waterfall scene, 125,000 gallons of water were turned on, and in the avalanche that destroys the villainous Injun Joe, are 10 tons of rock, gravel, and loose earth.

Because the film is to be in technicolor, it was necessary to paint in natural, vivid colors the stalactites and stalagmites, and even the mineral deposits on the walls. As a result, one sees copper green, zinc white, iron rust red, sulphur yellow, cobalt blue, and many other metallic hues.

As readers of Mark Twain will recall, the cave plays an important part in the story of Tom Sawyer, and it is there that some of the most dramatic incidents of the screen version take place.

\* \* \*

*I Met My Love Again*  
(Walter Wanger)

Similar to the above is Walter Wanger's forest set, complete with wooded glen, babbling brook, weeping willows, centuries-old rocks, dirt roads, broken-down fences, etc.—all in a barn-like wooden-floored sound stage.



# RUSSIAN CELLULOID

By JOHN KOLLIN

Russian cinematography appeared on the American screen in 1927, creating a sensation by the novelty of its treatment and approach. The public and students of the cinema have come to expect the unusual from the Russian film.

Until this year, two pictures have been outstanding. One, *The Road to Life* by N. Eck and the other, *Chapayev* by the Brothers Vassilyev. The others, while interesting, have not reached a degree of prominence which would make them unusual, with the exception, perhaps, of Dovjenco's *Frontier*. This picture was noted for its photography, music, and the bold theme of warning against Japanese ambitions in Asiatic Russia.

Of the ambitious undertakings by the Soviet studios, several have reached these shores. Some of the outstanding ones are: *The Last Night*, *The Thirteen*, *Baltic Deputy* and *Peter the First*.

*The Last Night* depicts the events on the eve of the Soviet ascension to power. Interwoven in the plot is the tragic love story of a young high school student, who is caught and killed in the skirmishes which accompanied the coup. The direction by U. Reisman is expert, and the cameraman makes excellent use of the lens and moving camera.

*The Thirteen* is the story of a group of Russian soldiers and an officer who have received a leave of absence from their Asiatic posts. While crossing the desert of Central Asia, they chance upon

a band of desert bandits. Their struggle is portrayed in a grippingly dramatic fashion. The photography by B. Volchek is the best that has yet come out of Russia. Not only does it approach the best standards of American technique, but artistically it realizes the utmost possibilities of camera work with desert sands as the scenery and background. The direction by Michael Romm shows a good knowledge of the film medium and is restrained.



Nicolai Cherkasov, who gives a vivid portrayal of Professor Timiryazev in *Baltic Deputy*.

Topping these in human interest is the story of the great Russian scientist, a Cambridge and Oxford scholar, Timiryazev. It was released under the title, *Baltic Deputy*. Having completed a manuscript on his seventy-fifth birthday, the aged naturologist and member of the Academy of Sciences arranges a birthday party. He finds himself deserted by his learned col-

leagues and the party is a fiasco. His loneliness is further accented by the hunger, cold, and darkness in his apartment, while the revolution storms without. To his rescue comes a loyal student, who had just returned from Siberian exile and together they celebrate, singing in Latin, a song to the Alma Mater. The story culminates with the professor's election as the sailor's deputy to the Petrograd Council. While the photography and sound leave room for much improvement, the artist, Nicolai Cherkasov, in the title role, gives an excellent portrayal of the aged savant.



He is ably supported by M. Domasheva as his wife. The picture, produced by Lenfilm and directed by I. Heifetz and A. Zarchy furnishes excellent entertainment.

At this writing there has been released Alexei Tolstoy's *Peter the First*, which advance publicity has hailed as "the greatest historical pageant film ever made." It was directed by V. M. Petrov and its theme is Tsar Peter's fight against Russian feudalism.

Thus while there have been no new departures in the Russian film this year, a steady progress has been made in technical and artistic improvement, and the tendency is undoubtedly towards a historic realism.

---

## MONTAGE

(Concluded from Page 21)

*perfield, Maytime, The Good Earth, They Gave Him a Gun*, and, more recently, *Broadway Melody of 1938* and *The Firefly*.

For students desiring to learn montage, Vorkapich advises that they first study the theory of analytical montage. That is, that they learn to analyze action, to get a "personalized" idea of objects and events by looking at them from infinite points of view. A good way to acquire this ability, he says, is to cut out from magazines pictures illustrating one idea or subject, as, for instance, waves splashing on the seashore. By arranging them cleverly, we may build up an entire storm sequence—may see waves in many forms: calm and wild, from far and near, under clear skies and under dark skies.

He still does these exercises, himself, "playing with pictures," as he calls it. The Yugoslavian-born genius might well be called "the man who, with bits of pictures pasted on cardboard, revolutionized an industry."

## HOW TO WRITE AND SELL FILM STORIES

By FRANCES MARION

Reviewed by JAMES BOOTHE

The cry of the story departments is that producers should use material written directly for their product. This is unquestionable logic, for the medium is altogether unique, and books or plays must, in any case, change their personality in translation to the screen. Often a stage drama gains immeasurably through this process, but it is provocative to wonder how full such pictures would have been if the playwright had created his piece for Hollywood. As witness *The General Died at Dawn*.

So many people—mostly third-rate technicians presenting antiquated formuli or dilettants going into a trance over "pure" cinema—have written books about motion pictures, that it is heartening to discover at least one active top-notch writer who has taken time out to give us working definitions. Certainly no one would question that Frances Marion knows whereof she speaks in a book on film stories, but she has done more than merely reveal a few tricks of the trade. This manual defines the technique, the restrictions of form which make for art, but wastes no nonsense in arty pretensions; we are told *why* films are written and *how*—to satisfy public demand, and by methods that have crystallized in the relentless testing ground of experience. In all new fields the quack can fool the public for some time with dialectics. This should scotch the pretenders. It is Hollywood's most successful writer telling us what she has learned about film stories—their conception, development, alignment, rounding, and production.

There is sufficient restatement of dramaturgical and human truths as conditioned by film requirements.

## FRANCES MARION'S SCREEN WRITING FORUM

Q. What type of themes and topics have great dramatic possibilities for the modern audience? Enumerate and tell how they can be dramatized.

A. It is impossible to enumerate themes and topics that might interest the modern audience, for the simple reason that nearly all themes and topics that ever have interested audiences at any time in the world's dramatic history, and even those that interested mankind before that era, have possibilities for the modern audience. Of course the theme or topic must be presented in modern dress.

For example, consider the triangle story in its simplest form, in which an outsider comes into the happy home life of a young couple and subtly wins the woman's confidence and induces her to do something that destroys their happiness. This is a good topic for a modern story in spite of the fact that it is just what happened to Adam and Eve and that it has been interesting mankind for a good many centuries. The serpent, in 1937, might be anyone from the husband's best friend to the ubiquitous brush salesman.

To dramatize any theme or topic, present it in its most emotion-arousing form. Consider how you might write it to make it most amusing or most tragic or most impressive. Increase the characters' dilemmas. Don't be afraid to make your characters suffer if by so doing you can gain sympathy for them.

Q. How can suspense be built and maintained in order best to excite the audience?

A. As far as an audience is concerned, suspense involves curiosity and sympathetic interest. Therefore the only way to arouse it is to give the audience characters with whom it can sympathize,

or at least like, and then confront these characters with problems that make the audience curious to know how they are going to solve them.

Actually, suspense does not "excite" an audience; it is the drama that does that. Always think of suspense as something that arouses curiosity as to the outcome of some situation.

Q. How do you recognize an emotional situation and how do you utilize and build it?

A. As far as fiction, either screen or written, is concerned, it is recognized and measured entirely by its effect on the spectator or reader. Any story situation that arouses feeling in reader or audience might be called an emotional situation. The emotion, however, must *be experienced* by the reader or the audience and not merely be something solely affecting the characters.

To build an emotional situation, study any interesting human situation to see what there is in it that can be used to arouse feeling.

For example, you see in the newspaper that John Jones, aged 19, of 870 Hill Street, drank strychnine last night and died. You do not know John Jones. The item arouses no interest, no emotion in you. But suppose your friend comes and tells you what a fine young man John was, and all about the unfortunate circumstances that surrounded him. If he stresses the terrible situation in which John found himself and from which he could find no way out but suicide, and if all this is told to you in such a way as to present it in its most pathetic form, your emotion will be stirred. You will, in all probability, feel considerable pity for the boy and sincerely regret that someone could not have helped him out of his difficulty.

# HOW TO WRITE AND SELL FILM STORIES

by Frances Marion

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# CINEMA PROGRESS

Vol. 3

The Film and Life

No. 1



DANTE, 1938

*In this issue:*

- William Dieterle
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- Robert Riskin
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A WORTHY  
INTERPRETATION  
OF A  
COLORFUL  
PHASE OF  
AMERICA'S  
HISTORY  
AT THE  
TURN OF THE  
19th CENTURY

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Directed by **CECIL B. DeMILLE**

Screen Play by Edwin Justus Mayer, Harold Lamb and C. Gardner Sullivan  
Based on an Adaptation by Jeanie Macpherson of "Lafitte the Pirate" by Lyle Saxon



# CINEMA PROGRESS

THE FILM AND LIFE

Vol. 3 No. 1  
FEBRUARY-MARCH, 1938

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### ARTICLES

A New Audience	1
Documentary Discovers America	2
The Theme's the Thing	5
Do Historical Films Fail to Capture Spirit of Times?	6
Filmic Flow	8
Pity the Location Man	9
1812, Pictured by Holly- wood, 1938	10
The Great God Box-Office	12
Paging Mr. Mars	13
Celluloid Diplomacy	14
The Cinema—a World Force	15
Streamlined Movies	16
Music In a Hurry	18
Motion Pictures and Book Collecting	21

### DEPARTMENTS

The Film and Science: Starring: Molars and Fillings Larynx and Weather Yield Secrets to Camera	22 23
The Film and Education: New Films for Schools Dramatized Learning	24 26
Picture Parade	27
Cinema Progress' Pictures	29

THE ADVENTURES OF TOM SAWYER  
SELZNICK-INTERNATIONAL  
NORMAN TAUROG  
D I R E C T O R



## A New Audience

If it is to counteract the recession in a more successful and lasting way, the motion picture industry must follow more courageously and consistently the methods of some of its more far-sighted producers, who, during the past four years, have recognized a growing public demand for a more distinctive cinematic diet.

Since 1935, a new and influential group of "fans" has come into being, and is playing an increasing role in directing picture trends. By a careful analysis of the quality of productions supported by this audience, it is possible to define the modern trend more clearly and to suggest methods of fighting the depression.

Typical of "honor roll" pictures of recent years are "Little Women," "David Copperfield," "It Happened One Night," "The Thin Man," "House of Rothschild," "One Night of Love," "The Informer," "Mutiny on the Bounty," "Fury," "Dodsworth," "The Good Earth," "Captains Courageous," "Dead End," "A Star Is Born," "Lost Horizon," "Louis Pasteur," "Emile Zola," "The Awful Truth," "In Old Chicago," "Snow White," "Adventures of Tom Sawyer," and many others.

Audience reaction to dramatic and comedy scenes in some of the revivals as well as the new pictures, reveals a very definite change in tastes and attitudes. This new "fan" yawns or laughs derisively at incidents which, not long ago, sent chills down the spine, even aroused tears. Now, he very easily detects the insincerity, unnaturalness, slow tempo, talkativeness, and overacting.

He gives his approval to the simple, "human interest" stories, to pictures with significant content, with striking and novel personalities presented in three-dimensional fullness. He applauds realistic details, incidents, and a variety of background. He stands in line at the box office to see dramas with music, song, and color and a consistent plot, with snappy dialogue and faster tempo. In a word, he knows what he wants—and goes shopping for it.

The Motion Picture Industry can overcome more easily business recessions if it will accept this two-fold approach already established by some of its far-sighted leaders:

1. Cooperate more sincerely and actively with the new motion picture-conscious audience, in order to distinguish and foresee its demands.
2. Seek new blood, train future artists and experts. Some intelligent producers and directors already insist on such training, and collaborate with youth by accepting as apprentices the best talent chosen from the well-trained and courageous new generation.

B. V. M.

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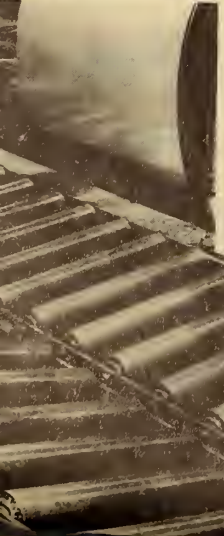
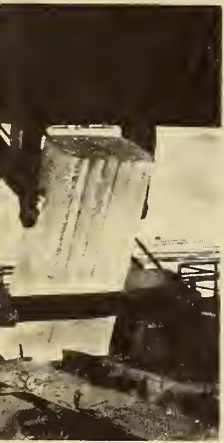
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# DOCUMENTARY D

Industry, Government, "March of Time,"  
Record and Interpret the American Scene

By J. LEWIS KOLLIN

**H**ALF a million persons are directly dependent upon 187,000 employees of the largest steel company in the world, which pays them \$312,750,000 in wages and salaries a year.

From the Alleghenies of Pennsylvania to the shores of California, down to Texas from the Great Lakes, over our whole continent are spread its vast enterprises and subsidiaries. Whole cities and towns are affected by this twentieth century industrial giant, which is the backbone of American progress.

Daily, men descend miles into the earth to extract natural resources, more precious than gold, while above the ground others toil amidst white flames of open blast furnaces, hardened like steel by their heat.

Into such "locations" went Director Roland Reed with a crew of cameramen and technicians to bring back a living document in natural colors of the men and the industry.

### AMBITIOUS PROJECT

The most ambitious documentary film yet produced in this country, "Steelmakers," extracts the sounds of Bessemer converters, mingles them with human voices to the accompaniment of music by Robert Ambruster and a narration by commentator Edwin C. Hill. It will be released in the middle of March, through commercial moving picture houses, to an audience of 10,000,000. In addition, a longer version will be made available to schools, churches, business and social organizations.

It follows closely upon the heels of two documentary films made by Pare Lorentz.

Millions of Americans have seen and continue to see his "Plough That Broke The Plains," while the "River's" commercial possibilities have undoubtedly been recognized by the film industry, Paramount having undertaken the picture's release.

No, that wasn't something from Dante's "Inferno" you saw on the cover, but only its modern counterpart, "Steel Makers," 6-reel documentary film in technicolor which soon will be released through Selznick-International. First real documentary film ever to be produced by a major industry, it reflects the growing importance of this type of motion picture as a potent recorder and interpreter of the American scene. Even the federal government has turned producer. To the right

are excerpts from the department of agriculture's much-discussed films, "The River," and "The Plow That Broke the Plains."

Thus, the roots of the documentary seem to have been planted in this country.

This type of film has a definite appeal to the American public, for it not only entertains, but also informs.

Who can forget the masterful strokes of photography, music and sound in the drama of the Mississippi in this last mentioned picture, once having witnessed it?

### INDUSTRY AMAZED AT "THE RIVER"

It was only necessary to watch the reaction of a critical Hollywood audience of producers, directors, writers, musicians and technical men of every description as they held their breath in astonishment. Forgetting the controversy surrounding this film, they thundered an applause accorded only a "four-star" premiere. For no individual could witness and forget the drama of the Old River's merciless retribution for human waste and neglect. The camera magnified ordinary raindrops, until they seemed to be endowed with life on the screen. Suspense rose to a high pitch, as these multiplied drop after drop, like the ancient Chinese penalty, then surged into mighty floods which swept and ravaged helpless humanity.

With a few casual exceptions, none of these pictures employed professional actors, but presented men and women as the camera caught them in actual life.

Herein lies the essence of the documentary method.

### DRAMATIZES LIFE

Distinguished from the fiction type of film, it presents ACTUAL experiences in every phase of life which have a SOCIAL significance. Its DRAMATIC appeal is inherent in its very material. It is film which faces and meets REALITY, providing therefrom ENLIGHTENMENT as well as entertainment.

It thus contrasts with the ESCAPE story, which takes an audience away from life into a bloodless ab-





# SCOVERS AMERICA

stract world. We do not mean to infer that all screen fiction is devoid of a measure of realism and should be discarded to be supplanted by the documentary "Messiah." For such proposals have indeed been made from time to time by seekers of film art forms.

The principal and in a great degree, just, ground of such individuals, has been the alleged failure of the majority of studio-made films to represent life's realities.

No doubt these charges are well based, if one pauses to reflect for a moment upon the extremes of illusion to which some films have gone. Even youngsters yawn at incongruous episodes which their immature but keen minds know are beyond the wildest possible imaginings.

## HOLLYWOOD REALISTIC

And yet, the studio produced film can not be said to be devoid of reality. As is ably pointed out by Paul Rotha, a foremost English exponent of documentary, the American film has, from its inception, been characterized

by the reality of its background. And, in truth, consider the mountains and prairies of the "Westerns," the living frontiers of the "Covered Wagon," those of "Cimarron," the



To say, therefore, that fiction film has outlived its usefulness is as absurd as it is unjust. One might equally as well deny Hugo his "Les Miserables" on the same ground.

But on the other hand, following the example of overseas producers, we can make a wider use of the strictly documentary films.

Abroad, the documentary film has been firmly established during the past decade. Following efforts by Dutch, Italian, Russian and German pioneers, England is today the leader in the field.

### BRITISH FORGE AHEAD

There, in 1928, the Empire Marketing Board created a number of producing units. The films sought to acquaint the British and Dominion public with the problems and interdependence of industry, labor and consumers. A characteristic example can be found in Rotha's "Shipyard," a film of the marine industry and its effect upon the welfare of many people. Rotha and another Englishman, John Grierson, have contributed a great deal towards the creation of a "Buy British" conscience, through vivid illustrations of this nature.

In this form, of course, the documentary film was directed at the extremes of patriotic and economic propaganda. In its pure form, however, documentary film presents actual dramatized facts and is confined to an exposition of their meaning in the general scheme of living.

But in this country we are not without documentary credit.

realistic settings of "Texas Rangers" and "Wells Fargo." And even such fiction as Fritz Lang's "Fury" and Henry King's "In Old Chicago" embody an excellent documentation of the past. Films of the above mentioned type have accounted for the popularity and prestige of American pictures throughout the world.





A dramatic kaleidoscope of American life is the popular "March of Time" which, like a cinematic bloodhound, ferrets out every significant turn in current events, drives it home with forceful zest into the public consciousness. Here we see New York's Fiorello La Guardia enacting the story of his career for a recent release of the nation's leading news-documentary film.

The first substantial effort at artistic and dramatic documentation was made in 1920 by Robert Flaherty in "Nanook of the North." This feature length drama of the Eskimos' struggle against Nature won, in its time, popular and commercial success throughout the world.

Other Americans, notably Merriam C. Cooper, Ernest Schoed-sack, and Mr. and Mrs. Martin Johnson succeeded in the documentation of life in the tropics and the jungles. But such fine pictures as "Chang" and "Grass" dealt with distant land and not the American scene.

A few occasional short subjects are made now and then by film companies and other organizations in this country. For example, Paul Strand, who photographed the "Plough That Broke the Plains," heads a non-profit motion picture organization producing realistic films of American life.

#### NEWS DRAMATIZED

Nor can we omit the "March of Time" which must be credited with much of the impetus to the documentary film in this country. Appearing at a time when the entertainment film was suffering from the world-wide depression, it helped to regain millions of patrons for the exhibitors. Its success has been phenomenal and well deserved. It has abbreviated some of the best elements of the documentary method, and at the same time has consistently maintained a policy of impartial illumination.

The "March of Time" is always

eagerly greeted and received, for movie audiences today have grown more mature and interested in economic and sociological forces about them.

Its chief limitation is, of necessity, the brevity of its subject matter. It is thus deprived of the opportunity to penetrate into many phases and ramifications of the questions it seeks to present.

We have thus sketched briefly some aspects of the documentary film in this country.

It is evident that the documentary film is still in its infancy here. Because there is an increasing demand for this type of film the supply will not be long in coming.

The field of the documentary is not without its limitations. The film industry may, however, find it profitable.

In the meantime, because of the comparatively inexpensive cost of production, groups and individuals should be encouraged to experiment. Such groups, whether independent companies, government departments, etc., can make valuable contributions to the moving picture.

And a few final remarks. It need not be supposed that because the documentary contains realistic and social values, it is sordid and devoid of humour.

Its subject matter is not confined to robot steam shovels, ploughs, tractors, and burdened humanity. It can show human beings happily at work and play. Life is not always gloomy, but is replete with amusing situation, manners and customs which, on the screen, can create more laughs than many an invented "gag."

In the hands of imaginative directors, writers, and cameramen, everyday incidents which seem commonplace can be presented in a highly entertaining manner, as has indeed been done.

The picture at the top of the page is an illustration in point. It is only one of many amusing episodes from a documentary presentation of the activities of New York's colorful "Little Flower."

EDITOR'S NOTE: This is the first of a series of articles on the documentary film. Another will appear in an early issue.



Whether it's politics, labor, disaster, or the christening of a new battleship, the "March of Time" is on the job to take samplings from the cross-patch pattern that is life. Shown above is a scene painfully familiar to Americans since 1929—in this instance, it is a mill shut-down in Manchester, N. H.

And now from poverty to plenty—or at least it looks like plenty. Actually, the money is counterfeit, the apparatus the property of a get-rich-quick gang. In dramatic re-enactment, the "March of Time" follows secret service men as they swoop down to break up the "fake" money-making business.





# THE THEME'S THE THING

By ROBERT RISKIN

**I**N THE APPROACH toward construction: First, on the assumption the story has a theme, most important is the method by which the theme is told. The most intelligent attack is one in which a play's dramatic content is brought to the consciousness of an audience—without the audience being conscious of it.

In "Lost Horizon" the idea was to lead an audience into the belief they were seeing an adventure story . . . a piece of fantasy—and send them out of the theatre with a message of hopefulness—tolerance—and the principle of "do unto others," etc., as their foundation for existence.

To do this—we bring them to a Utopia where such ideals are put into practice, and where peace and tranquility exist. To more forcibly project the idea—we create antagonists—people who are fettered by conventions—who are slaves to accepted concepts—they are the ones who create dramatic situations.

The struggle of a man, a product of our modern civilization—who inwardly longs for that Utopia where wars are unknown—where greed and lust—and self-aggrandizement are foreign characteristics—where life is lived by aesthetic and spiritual impulses . . . the struggle of this man whether to remain in such a "garden of Eden" and live beautifully and happily—or whether to leave with his brother who, not understanding, is miserable here—is the dramatic content of the second act climax.

To divide a scenario into three acts—a play is generally divided—has proven most effective, except that in motion pictures our canvas is so much larger . . . and our scope so much greater . . . we can break each act up into a great many scenes, each having a small climax of its own, and all leading toward that greater climax—the end of the act. These small scenes should be approached as complete little acts by themselves. By that I mean, they should have a beginning—a middle—and an end. In a picture, either a "dissolve" or a "fade out" substitutes for a "curtain" in each of these little scenes.

To return to "Lost Horizon"—the arrival of our principal characters into the sheltered Shangri-La after their spectacular and hazardous journey through the unexplored regions of Tibet—represented the first act curtain.

As described above, the struggle of Conway and his subsequent departure from Shangri-La constitutes the second act curtain.

The conclusion of the third act is naturally the third act.

Parallel action (if, in the use of it, we can be guided by a rule) should scarcely be used except in instances where the two actions are related to each other—story-wise. Or where some social observation is being made via action. There are probably other instances where parallel action is effective, but for the moment they evade me.

"Intercutting" is guided to a great extent by the same rule as a "parallel action."

The adapter of James Hilton's novel, "Lost Horizon," reveals a few trade secrets. One of Hollywood's best-known scenarists, Robert Riskin is New York-born, began his writing career at the age of 17, doing originals for Paramount, other studios. Eventually joined Columbia writing staff, turning out such successes as "Lady for a Day," "Broadway Bill." In 1934 he won the Academy award for the best adaptation with "It Happened One Night." Also author of hilarious farce, "Mr. Deeds Goes to Town." Is now at work on another Capra-directed picture, "You Can't Take It With You."



" . . . The screen is too pregnant a medium to stagnate it with a set of rules."

It is wise to know what the purpose of your scene is—and then to tell it in the smoothest—quickest—and most effective way. I have had scenes run for minutes at a time—and remained on a "two shot" until its conclusion—having found that it was more impressive this way. To disturb it with "close-ups" and "different angles" would rob the scene of its intended purpose

. . . which leads us to a very important thing to remember—**THERE ARE NO RULES.**

A writer's or a director's "dramatic instinct" is so much more important than all the rules that can be advanced. To be guided by rules is often likely to lead one into the habit of telling every story in like manner. The scene is too pregnant a medium to stagnate it with a set of rules.

This should be applied to the most inconsequential characters in the story—in fact, PARTICULARLY for the inconsequential characters—for their appearance in your story is short-lived—and they are obliged to make an impression quickly. A characteristic of some kind will do the work. Besides they will register as "human beings" instead of just fictional characters.



# Do Films Fail to Capture

YES! SAYS RESEARCH EXPERT . . .

An interview with Dr. Otto Bettmann, founder of the Bettmann Archive in New York, a famed collection of 10,000 reproductions of old art works constituting a pictorial history of civilization.

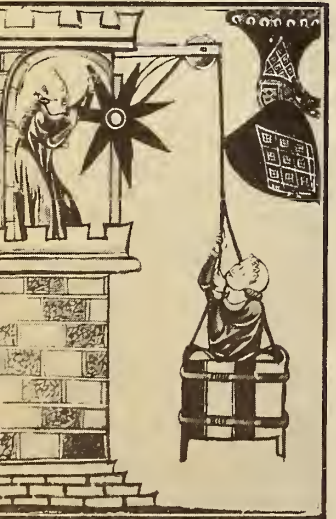
By LAWRENCE A. BENNETT



Portrayal of little incidents such as these would do much to capture the spirit of the age, contends Dr. Bettmann. This amusing middle 19th century lithograph shows that there weren't always bath showers and built-in tubs.



Jonas Hanway, first man to carry an umbrella in England, was stoned in the street, called crazy and made to sign a pledge that he would behave himself. Woodcut, 1764.



The first pictured elevator. From the 14th century Manesse manuscript. It had been used by the lovely lady to bring her lover up to the feudal tower. But now she has hired of his favors and down he goes. The above pictures are from the Bettmann Archives.

**Q**—Dr. Bettmann, I suppose you have noticed the cycle of historic films that is sweeping the present-day cinema.

**A.**—Yes—and with much interest. Although it has made much progress, up till now the industry's efforts to create moving canvases of the past have been largely superficial. But, of course, that is from an academic and historical viewpoint.

**Q.**—I see. Then how do you account for the use of the word "authentic" in such large quantities to describe some of the recent memoir movies?

**A.**—On the surface that is correct. Pictures have been mounted and set with unimpeachable backgrounds; costumes and accoutrements have been the result of the finest research. If history is to go only so far in our films, then "authentic" is the word for it.

**Q.**—What is your point, Dr. Bettmann?

**A.**—Just this: the re-creation of events and people has so far been approached only from the exterior. That in itself is an excellent thing, but not enough. Put a man in a Roman toga and audiences from Keokuk to Hoboken will deem him a Roman. Copy a gown from a Holbein painting and Miss Starlet will seem like Henry the Eighth's dearest spouse. And no one can deny that sparkling armour represents a medieval joust at its most alluring.

**Q.**—But you find it insufficient?

**A.**—Yes. For the gestures, the smiles, the entire spirit and stage of human emotions reveal the 20th Century poseur.

**Q.**—You mean that beneath the perfect dress and setting of the period, the people are forgotten?

**A.**—Exactly. It is like the notorious doctor who performed a successful operation but the patient died. Let us take a case. In our script we have a lovely lady of the Middle Ages confined to her castle; she is completely isolated from any touch of urban life. Yet behind the scenario facts, the historian perceives the poise and gait of our 1938 actress rushing from her cocktail party to the studio.

**Q.**—And I suppose her knight errant is fresh from a dinner party and a fling at the "Big Apple" . . .

**A.**— . . . And accordingly, is anything but medieval in mind or manner. The major fault with our films is that there is too much aping of the letter and not enough of the spirit of historic

times. In the English production of "Victoria, the Great," for instance, trains, coaches and castles used by Victoria are part of the action; speeches and dialogues of England's great statesmen are spoken verbatim. Now instead of such slavish devotion to technical accuracy, I feel that the character of the queen could have been deepened immeasurably and the real background of the times and the people emphasized much further.

**Q.**—Could you give some examples to illustrate this point?

**A.**—Gladly. We always see historic figures modishly dressed and faultlessly groomed. This is a far cry from reality. In past centuries, women were wrapped into their clothes and more or less inhibited by them. They had no such freedom of movement as our modern actresses in period roles adopt. Dressing and undressing, with its wrappings and long series of petticoats, was an activity for hours and nothing but a miracle could permit such frequent changes of clothes.

**Q.**—How about the men?

**A.**—Did you ever see a ruff caught in the rain? Well, neither has anyone in the movie industry. Yet, ruff-wearers were caught in the rain and it would be interesting to show them destarched. I think our historic films have neglected the vast possibilities inherent in the physical inconveniences of past centuries. Our heroes, who are generally glorified, could be made more human and more heroic at one blow, by portraying the realistic difficulties of cold, darkness, lack of transportation, medical aid and all the other comforting things we know today that they were forced to do without. But getting back to ruffs, at the end of the 16th Century the "cartwheel" ruff was so enormous that royal diners had to be equipped with specially-long spoons to navigate the food to their mouths. And now, Mr. Bennett, suppose I ask you a question . . .

**Q.**—Go right ahead.

**A.**—Have you ever seen a film dealing with royalty that didn't include a ten-minute dancing sequence in a magnificent ball room . . . ?

**Q.**— . . . with Strauss waltzes. No, I guess not.

**A.**—I admit they're very colorful and picturesque, but it shows a lack of directorial imagination to continue making this stereotyped scene. Research sources are full of items that would lend

(Continued on Page 29, Col. 1)



# Spirit of Times?

NO! REPLIES THE INDUSTRY . . .

**Twentieth Century-Fox, Warner Brothers, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Representatives answer charges in interviews with CINEMA PROGRESS writer.**

Vigorous were studio denials that historical pictures are sacrificing the "spirit" for the "letter" of the times, as charged by Dr. Bettmann in the adjoining article. In an effort to present both sides of a controversial question, "Cinema Progress" has contacted the research heads of such representative studios as Twentieth Century-Fox, Warner Brothers, and Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer for their comment.

Says Miss Frances Richardson of Twentieth Century-Fox:

"Mr. Bettmann, of course, being a historian, would be more apt to notice errors than would the average person. Also, he would be aware of what was omitted, as well as what was inserted wrongly.

"I'm perfectly in agreement with Mr. Bettmann that more intimate details should be used. I like to see pictures done as thoroughly as they possibly can be. The primary aim of the research department IS to capture the spirit of the times, rather than the minute, inconsequential details, such as the buttons on a coat or the particular type of fork used in a particular period."

As much as she would like to see "little incidents" included for atmospheric purposes, there must be a "boiling down" and selection for dramatic values from among the thousands of items at hand, Miss Richardson points out. Consequently, there is often deliberate twisting of historical facts in order to make good drama.

In "Stanley and Livingston," one of Miss Richardson's recently completed assignments, every effort was made to be accurate, to capture the spirit of the times.

One incident, typical of the kind mentioned by Dr. Bettmann, shows a cock fight, a popular sport of the 1850's and 60's in New Orleans, where Stanley first landed, as a youth of 15, to seek his fortune in America.

Also shown in Miss Richardson's research book of photostatted pictures from autobiographies, contemporary magazine and newspaper articles, is Stanley at his first job—stenciling cargo boxes on the New Orleans waterfront. For authenticity's sake, it was necessary to get descriptions and photographs of stencil plates and instruments of the time.

The famous meeting between Stanley and Livingston at Ujiji, Lake Tanganyika, is depicted in a photostatted illustration from the "Illustrated London News" of the period. It is the only drawing of this momentous event personally endorsed by the explorer, who underneath the picture wrote:

"... the scene is as correct as if it had been photographed.

—Stanley."

In addition to incidents, many were the colorful details to be ferreted out by Miss Richardson and her busy staff—how Stanley dressed and the type of gun he carried; conditions of the London workhouses of the period, where Stanley, deserted by his parents, was forced to grow up, a la Oliver Twist; appearance of the New Orleans of the 50's, of the London street vendors and their dress, and of Stanley at various ages.

Even data concerning an early telegraph office, wherein 539 be-ruffled women were employed as operators, was obtained. Inscription underneath the drawing in a musty tome described them as "young and generally well-bred women, an experiment which has answered to perfection."

For the story of the "New York Herald's" famous search for the lost English explorer, Miss Richardson compiled two illustrated research books, comprising hundreds of photostatted pictures, drawings, and documents

(Continued on Page 30)



Certainly Samuel Goldwyn's "The Adventures of Marco Polo" seems to have its share of the "little incidents" mentioned by Dr. Bettmann. Here we see Marco Polo (Gary Cooper) gazing in wonder as Chen Tsu (H. B. Warner) expertly conveys chop sticks full of spag-het to his mouth. Spag-het, an ancient Chinese food when Polo first saw and tasted it in the 13th century, later was introduced into Venice by the adventurer.



This photograph recreates the first military use of gunpowder. Marco Polo, unable to storm Peking with his invading army, sets off a trail of powder which leads to tons of explosive set under the obstinate gates of the Chinese capital.



And here is depicted Kublai Khan's capital, itself, when the procession of the poor, the rich, the sick, and vassal princes bearing gifts never ceased passing through the great entrance walls.



# FILMIC FLOW

By MARY JANE HUNGERFORD

Commercial development of the artistic dance film is a wide open field, but nevertheless, with the right backing, it could be made as profitable as the New York Philharmonic Orchestra is for Victor. Think of the preparation of an audience. A dance audience can make the acquaintance of an artist's work through the films before seeing an actual concert. The form of a dance can be analyzed with some accuracy and understood with some thoroughness through the continued repetition, the use of stops, and slow motion. The potential market is sufficient to give one pause: those eager to broaden their general culture, theatrical dancers wondering what the "Art Dance" is all about, and educational institutions, the fertile field where the contemporary dance movement is bursting into bloom. Above is a shot of particular cinematic graphic interest, a leap from a technical series showing two of the Johnson Group. What the motion picture has already done to develop our nation's progressive Kinesthetic sense is remarkable, but nevertheless this is scarcely begun.



The Renaissance of the dance and its development into full-fledged independence among the arts today is of tremendous significance to the motion picture. Recording the works of great artists of our time on film, like recording the voice of Caruso on phonograph discs, will mean the personal acquaintance of future generations with the finest products of our times. This is the work of Ralph Samuels of Los Angeles, showing the Virginia Johnson Modern Dance Group in "Promenade."



With the development of dance notation, together with dance films, a young dancer can cut her artistic teeth by following the motion picture sequence of a dance with notation running simultaneously at the foot. Above is more of Samuels' work. This is from the Johnson Group's "Songs of the City" Suite. No longer will the young dancer outside of New York be completely isolated and forced to depend only upon wordy description, still photographs, and infrequent glimpses of, at most, half a dozen artists on tour. With a mastery of notation, the dancer can even learn and reproduce the compositions of our leading artists and measure himself against the movie camera record. For instance, the dancer who learns Graham's "Frontier" or Weidman's "Kinetic Pantomime" will have the opportunity of comparing his or her rendition with the film record of the artist's own performance quite as the pianist can compare his Beethoven Sonatas with Schnabel's on the phonograph record.





# PITY THE LOCATION MAN!

An Unsung Hero of the Industry Gets His Due at Last

By IRVING M. MOSS

It was John Milton who said, "They also serve who only stand and wait." Not so with the Location Manager. He "also serves," but he does little standing and waiting. In fact, he is on the "go" so much that he seldom gets a chance to sit down and tell people about himself. The general movie-going public is entirely unaware of his existence, yet upon him rests the responsibility for one of the most important features of a moving picture—the selection of its background, or locale.

For his total lack of screen credit, the location manager is appeased with a traveling expense account. And this he uses to excellent advantage. So that, as the result of innumerable scouting trips, compiling and adding constantly over a period of years, he fills filing cabinet after filing cabinet with stills and descriptions of every possible imaginable place. And when a director says, "Get me a place that looks like such-and-such," (and directors certainly can imagine such-and-such places!) it's dollars to doughnuts that the location manager has on tap, not one, but several places that fit the description of such-and-such!



If, however, it happens that there may be such a place, but the location manager has no record of it, then he has this way of finding out: he calls up the location manager at another studio; For, you see, there is a Location Managers' Association, whose membership consists of the location managers of most of the big studios, and whose purpose is cooperation for greater efficiency. This is quite an ideal set-up — especially as far as the public is concerned — for it means increased entertainment value.

It means further, that the facilities of any one of these studios, when not in use, are available to any of the others. For instance, Columbia Studios has on its ranch near Burbank, California, besides permanent sets of Western Streets and typical English, Italian, French, etc., quarters, a huge water tank, balanced neatly on hydraulic jacks, and capable of creating, at the touch of a director's finger on a button, waves, storms, and even ship wrecks. In "Captains Courageous" and "Souls at Sea" this tank was used, as in a good many other pictures.

But what isn't on the set must be found. Frank Capra wanted a waterfall for "Lost Horizon," and Ralph Black, Location Manager at Columbia, spent weeks hunting waterfalls and submitting pictures of them. They were all rejected. Then one of the other location managers informed Mr. Black, who is, incidentally, president of the Location Managers' Association, of a waterfall near Palm Springs. And Palm

Springs is practically desert country. But such is the reliance of one location manager on another, and such is his devotion to duty, that Mr. Black went to Palm Springs. Five miles beyond he found his waterfall, took pictures and submitted them. The "Lost Horizon" company moved to Palm Springs.

Jane Wyatt rides into the scene on a white horse, looks back over her shoulder to see whether she is still being followed, and then rides in under the waterfall (making one of the most beautiful shots in the picture). Ronald Colman enters the scene, looks around for the path Jane took but, of course, can't find it.

There is a hail from above; the camera tilts upward; and Lo! Jane sits astride her horse at the top of the waterfall!

Well, the inside story is that it took five full days of arduous labor to make that "Lo!" happen. First, niches and ledges had to be dug out of the hill-side so that the crew could carry

enough equipment to the top to build a hoist and raise the horse. After that, all the equipment had to be dismantled and removed so as to be out of

(Continued on Page 30)

No Rheinland castle is the romantic structure in the distance. It is Castle Pathe where, on occasion, plumed knights and gentle ladies re-create history among "stone" halls and "moated" environs that are much closer to the Los Angeles River than they are to the Rhein.



Neither is this the square of an old English town. It is a section of the Columbia Ranch where whole cities and civilizations are destroyed one day and rebuilt the next.



Shangri-La? Oh cruel disillusionment! it is none other than Tacquitz Falls, just a few sage-brush miles from Palm Springs, Calif.

Columbia's "Lost Horizon" company spent several days here, shooting location scenes.



# 1812, Pictured by



Fredric March,  
1938 version of  
Jean La Fitte.

**H**ISTORY, to be used successfully by the screen, usually requires a story about a well-known popular or national character. How, then, should one handle a story about the comparatively unknown Jean La Fitte, buccaneer, an unsung hero? Specifically, how should one translate pictorially for the motion picture audience of 1938 a story of a pirate and his cut-throat band?

Of La Fitte Byron wrote:

*He left a corsair's name to other times,  
Linked with one virtue and a thousand crimes.*

Certainly the activities of this fiery leader and his men were dramatic enough. The question was: could La Fitte be made into a romantic hero? Shakespeare himself, in two of his greatest plays, portrayed Cleopatra as a glamorous Egyptian when actually she was a Greek.

## FILMIC LICENSE

"History always has been subject to alterations when conveyed to the stage, screen and novels," Cecil B. De Mille, director of "The Buccaneer," declares. "One must take certain liberties in seeing life of the times through a certain group of characters. These characters may see and do things in one way, according to the available information we have on them, while some other group of characters would have an entirely different viewpoint. History is full of controversies—even recent history—and no eye, no ear, no memory is infallible. Things hap-

Hugh Sothern's resemblance to Andrew Jackson may be due to the fact that he is descended from one of six brothers, one of whom was Jackson's father. His profile is compared to a bust of Jackson which is believed to be the only authentic likeness of "Old Hickory" of all the paintings, prints and statues that remain.



pen as they really happen only once. If you don't believe me, go to court and hear the testimony in a traffic accident case which happened a week ago. Then you'll understand the problem of being accurate concerning incidents which occurred one hundred years ago."

The stages of development in the preparation of a modern film production are too numerous to trace in an article of this nature. There may be ten or a hundred steps in converting an original idea into an external or pictorial result.

Certain problems in the art direction and costuming for "The Buccaneer" were typical of any work portraying events of the past; others were peculiar to the story itself.

## HANDSOME HEROES

In the earlier days of the screen the leading male character could make up in a manner which now would be considered heavy. Possibly Rudolf Valentino's characterizations were an influence in changing the popular conception of the romantic lead. At any rate, modern producers who have their fingers on the pulse of the box-office assert that a romantic leading man can no longer wear beard and whiskers. Such would not be tolerated by the present day audience, it is said. If this is true, the public, having become accustomed to a certain type of male beauty, prefers to have its heroes handsome. Jean La Fitte might fare badly at the box-office if he were sold as an unrefined original.

"The flavor of the period," says Dwight Franklin, artist and authority on historic costume, "is the most important quality for which to strive in historical films; exact duplication of all details obviously is not always possible nor desirable. However, the appearance of leading characters, especially in the relationship between make-up and costume, becomes a major consideration due to the great number of close-ups in the average motion picture."

One of Franklin's chief responsibilities in the preparation of "The Buccaneer" was to work with De Mille and Natalie Visart in transforming cut-throat La Fitte into a palpable, even romantic figure. Skillfully using the curly, almost tousled hair dress and costume of such men of the period, he evolved a new physical characterization for Fredric March. Miniature sculptured figures, retouched photographs, and numerous make-





# Hollywood, 1938

## Many are the problems of the art department in preparation for a historical production

By **LESTER E. LANG**

up tests, were steps in the process. Result: a departure which, for historical productions of the future, may well relieve the long succession of neatly brushed collar advertisement leading men.

### PUBLIC KNOWS HISTORY

"Whether or not it is due to the increasing leisure in modern times," Franklin states, "it is evident that thousands of people through their personal interests in hobbies and collections, are gradually developing a more general knowledge of history, of how characters from well-known periods should appear. It may be true that the public as a whole knows relatively little about historic costume in its technical aspects, but I do believe that the film audience senses correct costuming insofar as it captures the flavor of the period."

De Mille casts his pictures from "visualizations."

These most frequently are drawn by artists such as Dan Sayre Groesbeck or Dwight Franklin, at De Mille's direction. He first visualizes in this fashion, the characters as they probably looked, then tries to obtain players who in make-up resemble them.

Franklin used straight photographs of many players and painted on the hair, garb and whiskers, if any, of the historical characters for which they were being considered. De Mille desired physical resemblance as well as sound acting talent in his selections. With the aid of Franklin's retouched photographs, the field was narrowed down to March for La Fitte, Tamiroff for Dominique You, Miss Byington for Dolly Madison, among others, to complete the cast of principals.

Dwight Franklin, artist and authority on historic dress, who says that film audiences sense correct costuming insofar as it captures the flavor of the period.



### JACKSON LIVES AGAIN

Hugh Sothern, found portraying Andrew Jackson in a Hollywood Federal Theatre troupe, was chosen for the role of "Old Hickory" since he was the exact height and weight of Jackson and a distinguished actor as well.

The selection of the numerous extras required weeks. The bigger the men, the more exotic the women, the better was their chance of acceptance. Appearing on all casting sheets was the statement: "Men without stomachs and women without red fingernails."

Art directors Hans Dreier and Roland Anderson of the Paramount studios had their problems, also. Most of the scenes in the film were exteriors, scenes of the Louisiana swamps, fight scenes at sea, along the shore at Barataria, or the fight with the British at Chalmette field. Only a limited number of scenes were to be played in-doors.

All available material indicated that La Fitte and his men lived at Barataria in small mud hut dwellings, none of which seemed large enough or suitable as pictorial backgrounds. To satisfy the requirements of the dramatic action and subsequent camera angles, a larger, more integrated collection of buildings was devised, sketched, and presented to De Mille.

(Continued on Page 28)

Roland Anderson, Paramount art director, surrounded by three drawings which show successive steps in the simplification of the design for La Fitte's stronghold at Barataria.

Governor Claiborne of Louisiana, as portrayed by Douglas Dumbrille, and as recorded by an old print.





# The Great God Box-Office

Three of the Industry's Leaders Speak Their Mind

## DAVID SELZNICK



By VAL LEWTON

In David O. Selznick's career is to be noted an outstanding example of a motion picture executive's rise to fame because of his ability to create first quality pictures.

Believes improvement in manners and morals of public is quickly reflected in a demand for improved moving pictures.

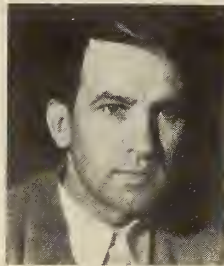
And the secret of his success in making these pictures admittedly lies in the fact that he insists on starting to build his work on the structure of an excellent story.

Selznick's favorite hunting ground for story material is among the classics. By making "A Tale of Two Cities" and "David Copperfield," Selznick proved that old stories were still good, and later, with his own company, he went on to screen successfully "Little Lord Fauntleroy," "The Prisoner of Zenda," and "The Adventures of Tom Sawyer."

Any improvement in the manners and morals of the public is quickly reflected in a demand for improved moving pictures. I think it is only fair to the industry to remark here that a consistent showing of good taste by the public is more welcome and more genuinely heeded than an occasional demand for a film product of questionable taste or doubtful ethics. Co-operation from newspapers, women's clubs and other outlets for the expression of public opinion is always welcomed by the honest producer and his faithful eyes and ears in the publicity department.

Above all, the personnel and facilities of the public schools as an influence for better pictures should not be neglected. As in most movements for the advancement of culture and public welfare, co-operation can usually be obtained from school teachers and officials, as well as from that large and impressionable section of the population that is enrolled in the schools.

## WILLIAM DIETERLE



"Not how much a picture brings from the box-office, but how much it gives to the audience should be the measure of its worth."

good or bad. This brings to my mind the remark of a famous European stage producer who, when asked about the opening night of a certain play, answered, "Well, the play is fine, but the audience flopped."

How often this could be said about pictures! To think that a work of art can be judged by the amount of money it brings is ridiculous. Imagine a "best seller" being called the best book! It can be, naturally, but it can just as well be the worst book—or the worst picture—which in the past has been proven over and over again. Not how much a picture brings from the box-office, but how much it gives to the audience should be the measure of its worth.

A bad picture will be forgotten soon, but a good picture will remain with a person as an experience. The claim that pictures of higher quality do not bring financial returns, is absurd and can be proven so. If bad pictures were to vanish, the good ones would bring fortunes, and of cleaner money than that by speculation on the lowest instincts of the masses.

Motion pictures must find their true mission—to entertain without misleading. If pictures have power to influence toward that which is vicious, they also have power to influence toward that which is constructive, and we should passionately search for ways to lead people toward the solution of social problems—that is, toward the changing of the spirit of the individual—to surrender his exaggerated pretensions for a new notion of human society.

## PETE SMITH



"... fans can ... contribute toward better productions by showing their support of these new pictures at the box-office ..."

that brains and money can create.

To its critics, if they are sincere, the motion picture industry offers a respectful bow and welcomes honest, constructive ideas for its improvement. That it is willing and eager to better itself in every conceivable direction is evident by the progress it has made in barely more than a quarter of a century of its existence.

Certainly motion pictures can use better stories. Hollywood needs approximately 700 stories a year. It spares no effort to get its story material. A successful novel, play or short story is snapped up by one studio or another the moment it appears. Studio story editors are given full rein to do nothing but look for material. The search covers the literary markets of the entire world.

One of the outstanding developments in motion pictures, tending to increase audience interest in theatres and cultivate new "fans," has taken place in short subjects. Within the last few years one and two-reel pictures have taken on a new importance. Factual types of pictures have all but shoved the old-fashioned slapstick comedies into oblivion. Historical and psychological subjects have a great audience interest.

How can the new type of "fans," who are interested not only in actors but the improvement of pictures as a whole, make their contribution toward better productions? By showing their support of these new pictures at the box-office and letting their likes and dislikes be known to theatre managers.

Greetings to the readers of "Cinema Progress."

This is the time of the year when Hollywood pledges anew its sincere intention to bring to millions of motion picture fans the best screen entertainment





# PAGING MR. MARS ... WITH THE NEWSREEL

## Wars and preparations for war occupy much footage, survey discloses



LEAGUE OF NATIONS GENEVA

THIS IS DRAMATIC . . .

THIS ISN'T . . .

By GLADYS MURPHY GRAHAM

"The Eyes of the World" is more than a slogan. The newsreel brings the swift contemporary scene and situations significantly close—in a few brief moments dramatically presents a comprehensive, understandable panorama of world events. The receiving phase is becoming an almost universal, and a rarely analyzed, experience. Only now and then in the relaxing semi-darkness, before or after the "feature" that is make-believe, do question marks come to the fore. What, out of the kaleidoscopic events that fill each caught moment in history, do the newsreels selectively bring? Do they continually emphasize one phase of the world picture to the exclusion of others? Is the influencing impression an overbalanced or a rounded one?

It is more important to put these questions into circulation than to answer them. Of the three major molders of opinion shaping reactions today—the newspaper, the radio and the motion picture—the third has the most in elements of power at its disposal, and the least likelihood of critical check by its ultimate consumers. The newspaper pressures are through the printed word and pictures; its scream is restricted to the enlarging of headlines; the radio exchanges spoken for written word and adds the color, persuasiveness and modulation of the voice; but the newsreel pyramids with the living image, studio-adapted sound effects that utilize the whole range of the emotional key board, running comment which, relieved of the responsibility of giving news, need only highlight it. It alone has the benefit of a controlled receiving situation. Power, and problem, and responsibility are inherent in the very nature of the instrument.



Norman Alley of Panay bombing fame made newsreel history for Universal when his film was given feature billing in theatres throughout the nation, earned more than \$400,000.



Such a series of realizations formed the backdrop for a study of the international content of the newsreel, carried on through systematic, recorded observation over a five-month period. The results, in their specific percentages, are given as tentative and suggestive, primarily for the problems they spotlight, and to mark a path for objective evaluation. The major relationships in the emergent pattern of content have been rechecked under variant circumstances and found to hold true, with the always high proportion of the military and political-military rising steeply with the advent of war in any part of the world.

In the course of the initial survey, one involving the newspaper and radio news as well as news of the screen, 50 newsreels from 5 different companies were analyzed in a period of comparative international normalcy—that is, when no active war situation existed. The data asked included:

Date, Producing Company, Country Concerned, Subject (synopsis of content), preceding and following sequences, Comments. Only a sample of the findings, drawn from initial and subsequently gathered data, can be given swiftly here.

Illustrative of the scope of the newsreel is the fact that in only two instances was there no international news. In 48, then, some beyond-the-country sequences were given. Of these, a shade under 16% had to do with international sports. Foreign scenes, as such, and travel sequences accounted for an additional 10%. The remainder falls significantly into the four categories used in the analysis of newspaper and radio news content—POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, MILITARY, GOSSIP—with the Military decidedly leading, taking over 26% of the total, or within less than 3% of the combined totals for the Political (22%) and the Economic (6%). To this must be added the evidence of the Subject column that some 60% of the Political news had a war outlook. Of all the items classed as international, one-fifth, or 20%, were given over to the trivial and insignificant, the Gossip of the screen news.

Classifying as to geographic area, it was found that about 68% of the international news was concerned with Europe, while a scant 10%, in what we now know to have been a pre-crisis period, dealt with the Pacific Area.

Of the significant conclusions emerging from the findings, only two can be underlined in this too skeletal account: first, that the military and political-military, even in periods of normalcy, far outweigh all else in pictured news.

The search for cause led to a second realization: that the drama of adjustment of international problems, in a world feverishly seeking a formula for such adjustment, has not yet been found by the camera. With war-making it knows how to deal—highlighting, intensifying; with the other side of the picture, it does not.

And the problem is a real one. Diplomats walking into or out of conferences aren't dramatic, aren't exciting or even, in isolation, significant. The navy, the ways of planes in the air, soldiers marching, make excellent "shots"; international conferences don't. The challenge lies in the fact that there is real drama in the fight-for-adjustment side of the contemporary world struggle, if the camera can only catch and record it.





GREAT BRITAIN

SWEDEN

RUSSIA

SPAIN

# CELLULOID DIPLOMACY

**Can the film overcome language barriers, lead to better world understanding? Yes! says representative of Swiss government, here in America to study educational possibilities of motion pictures.**

By DR. ADOLF KELLER

It seems, sometimes, as though international conflicts result mostly from difficulties of translation. Lack of mutual understanding is responsible for the growth of a war spirit quite as much as conflicts of interest, and political and economic rivalries.

Political language is, in many cases, a misinterpretation of the true character and aims of a nation, because not only words have to be translated into another language, but also feelings, ideals, deep half-conscious aspirations. Who translates the mystical enthusiasm of a young conquering nation into the terms of a mildly conservative national temperament? How can we interpret the heroic life ideal of totalitarian states into terms of traditional democracy?

The official language which we use for such purposes is, in most cases, inefficient because its logical structure is not capable of expressing those subconscious values which possess real motive power in the life of the people.

One of our commission, Lord Dickinson, was once received by the president of the French Republic. Addressing the president in moderate French, he said:

"Monsieur le President—Je parle en mauvais francais, mais le mauvais francais est le langue internationale."

Indeed, bad French, bad English, bad Italian, bad German are the international languages, leaving untranslated the best and innermost thoughts which the other would like to express. This deficiency of translation is largely responsible for the psychology of fear which is so characteristic of the present international situation. Because nothing is feared as much as that which we cannot understand.

The film complements the insufficient language of words by visual elements which are more directly understandable than concepts. The language of visual impressions is more primitive, nearer to the subconscious sources of our inner life than thought, and is charged with a dynamic power of penetration which abstract thinking does not possess. A foreign and primitive mind is more easily inclined to be identified with a life picture than with a doctrine or an intellectual challenge. Hence the instructive power of the film. Such a process of identification is certainly more persuasive than the convincing power of strong fists or of bombing.

The film has, therefore, a tremendous importance for the visualization of foreign life and, consequently, for international understanding and co-operating. Learning to know, to see one another, is perhaps the best way toward loving one another. A visual impression of inner values of a people is an avenue towards the love forces of another nation where political programs and cautious treaties have the effect of frightening ambush.

I sat, once, in a picture house in Finland and observed the sombre faces of a race which is not as ready to smile as the American people. An American film was being shown. It was delightful to observe the human propaganda of the American smile and to realize that if America would teach the sombre world nothing but how to keep smiling in a frightening situation, it would be a great lesson in peace.

The powerful systems of world propaganda know this. They try to conquer not only the political thinking of other nations, their social or economic interests, but to conquer the eyes of the world because they know that the best way to reach the intellect, according to Linne, is THROUGH THE SENSES. A translation of political ideals and doctrines into the world of pictures is today taking place, and is one of the most powerful means of international propaganda ever known.

In a central country like Switzerland, for instance, the film is the meeting place for political propaganda. A new problem is rising here which we could call: Democracy and Film. Pictures are, in themselves, a democratic method. They do not appeal to the aristocracy of intellect, but to the oldest and most general means of understanding, THE EYES. Communism, fascism, cannot only be taught, but SHOWN. And the question is, therefore, for most countries, whether democracy as a political objective, as a life ideal, as an educational method, can be MADE VISIBLE LIKEWISE.

Democracy is imperilled today. Even the French statesman, Tardieu, wrote a book on the lie of democracy. It is imperilled because it is nowhere quite realized. Democracy is an article of faith more than a reality. It is faith in liberty, in the right of men, in the wisdom of the people. This faith has an educational value. It can be visualized, expressed by the symbol of pictures.

The dictatorial states have understood afresh this dictatorial value of symbols. They have a missionary propaganda while the democracies hold a self-sufficient faith. Their public life is expressed, not only through political systems but by symbols, while democracies are satisfied with institutions and ideals.

In nearly all countries which come under the influence of the democratic ideal, we find such visualization of liberty, the right of men, the wisdom of the people. When we see it, we have not to do simply with the anonymous masses, with an avalanche of emotions. Something invisible becomes visible; an inner state of mind has been translated into the language of the eyes. A language as a linguistic system is quite as much a barrier as a bridge. The language of the eyes is universal and offers, therefore, new avenues of instructional, understanding, and peaceful co-operation which, up until now, has been lacking.





FRANCE



GERMANY



MEXICO



POLAND

# CINEMA-A WORLD FORCE

Progress of an intensive research into the international aspects of the cinema is told by the chairman of the International Relations Committee of the American Institute of Cinematography.

By J. EUGENE HARLEY

THE late Will Rogers, humorist, actor, and philosopher, was fond of saying that it is difficult to hate a person whom you really know. In the international field, it is well known that personal contacts and acquaintanceship have aided in the solution of difficult problems. Growing is the realization that there is now far too much hatred, intolerance, fear, and misunderstanding among the nations of the earth.

Aware of the importance of the cinema as a powerful factor for good or evil, the American Institute of Cinematography has created a Committee on International Relations to carry on continuous research on the international aspects of the cinema. National in scope, it includes such well-known figures as Rufus B. von KleinSmid, President of the University of Southern California and director of the Institute; Malbone W. Graham, professor of political science, University of California at Los Angeles; W. W. Mendenhall, president Whittier College; Mrs. Thomas G. Winter, Motion Picture Producers and Exhibitors of America; Walter E. Disney; James T. Shotwell, chairman of the American National Committee on Intellectual Co-operation; Raymond L. Buell, president of the Foreign Policy Association; Denys P. Myers, research director of the World Peace Foundation; Leo S. Rowe, director of the Pan-American Union; Elbert D. Thomas, United States senator from Utah and member of Foreign Relations Committee of the Senate; Kenneth W. Colegrove, Secretary-Treasurer of the American Political Science Association. A number of college presidents and professors of courses bearing upon international affairs complete the Committee.

Production and distribution of more and better films that fairly portray aspects of the life, problems, and culture of the various nations is one of the chief projects of the committee. Its influence will naturally turn against films that tend to arouse hatred, suspicion, and misunderstanding, and to foment international discord.

Attention is being given to bibliographical materials in the cinematographic field. These include books and articles, and available films (16mm., 35mm., sound, color). It is felt that one of the real needs is for an adequate system of distributing films of an educational nature which would promote better understanding between peoples of different nations. Indicative of the possibilities along this line are the new films produced under the auspices of the Pan-American Union. Dr. Leo S. Rowe, director of the Union, has recently announced the availability of a new film on Mexico, "Rollin' Down to Mexico." It records a trip over the Pan-American Highway from Laredo to Mexico City. Although this film may be secured from the Union for a small charge, covering freight and carriage, yet

few teachers or clubs know of its existence; there should be developed a plan of distribution so that such films can be accessible to all interested schools and groups.

A new film bearing upon the organization and work of the League of Nations is nearly completed. It was produced in Hollywood under the auspices of the League of Nations societies of Southern California, and the National League of Nations Association of New York. In 16mm. silent film, it is a fifteen-minute reel of about 1,600 feet.

Shown are peace scenes before the outbreak of the World War, the Archduke of Serajevo, the outbreak of the war, the fourteenth point of President Wilson providing for a League of Nations for peace, the Paris Peace Conference, the tremendous carnage, and the cost of the war in men and money, the creation and organization of the League of Nations, the work of the Council, Assembly, Secretariat, and the various humanitarian efforts in the field of health, arresting the use of narcotics, improvement of conditions of labor, and the magnificent new \$8,000,000 buildings of the League, with the \$2,000,000 Rockefeller Library. Miscellaneous scenes of the city of Geneva complete the picture which features the plaque given by the city of Geneva in honor of President Wilson as "founder of the League of Nations." A talking version of the film is contemplated soon.


Setting a new pace in the history of the subject-matter of treaties, the governments of Italy and Germany on April 10, 1937, signed the text of what is probably the first film treaty between two nations. This treaty provides for cultural co-operation in the field of motion pictures and is designed to further the distribution of the products of the film industries of the two nations.

A wholesome contrast to the unhappy events now going on in the Orient is furnished by a significant statement made in Los Angeles in June, 1937, by Haruo Kondo of Tokio, general secretary of the International Cinema Association of Japan. Kondo stated that "it is our plan to foster production of films with Japanese stories and played by Japanese actors who will speak English, the plays so presented as to be understandable and interesting to American or English audiences."


One by one the nations are ratifying the world treaty concluded in Geneva, October 11, 1933, providing for duty-free circulation of educational films.

The Committee on International Relations welcomes suggestions and comment. The world is so big, the problem is so vast, that the doors must be kept open to helpful ideas and practical suggestions from all who may be in a position to contribute their best thought.





"The Romance of Radium" . . . Taking no chances was this worker who handled the potent mineral in the first motion picture ever made of radium. He was protected not only by a shield, but by a suit of lead armour during the filming of the Pete Smith novelty.



"The Story of Dr. Carver" . . . Still on the subject of science, the two-reel "miniature feature" here portrays the life of the noted Negro savant, once a slave-child, who has discovered in peanut oil a property that can revive muscles wasted by infantile paralysis.

"What  
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# STREAMLINED MOVIES

## LAW COOPERATES

"We are receiving the utmost cooperation from J. Edgar Hoover and the Department of Justice in Washington," declared Harry Bucquet, director of the series. "Also, we are receiving valuable aid from local police and judicial officials, who have given us many suggestions, as well as access to their files."

That every effort is made to be authentic, was emphasized by Bucquet, who pointed out that while names and places are fictitious, every story is based upon fact.

In preparation for his coming film on juvenile delinquency, Bucquet spent three days on the bench with a judge in the Los Angeles juvenile hall. To study the effect of environment upon the child, he visited homes with relief authorities. In addition, a federal investigator from New York furnished further information.

"All we need is some interesting ideas or fact and we can build a story," explained Bucquet, who collaborates closely with his writers on the scripts. "For instance: Mr. Dewey cleans up the restaurant racket in New York. Immediately, two men, who do nothing but research, get all the data available on that type of racketeering. Newspaper and police files are searched. Police judges and other authorities are interviewed. Soon we have a story showing the racket in operation, the events that led police into the case, and finally, the capture of the criminals."

## INSURANCE RACKET DRAMATIZED

"Torture Money," showing the operation of the fake accident racket, which has cost insurance companies millions of dollars, was based upon an actual incident, wherein two men were beaten and thrown in front of an automobile. An undercover investigator took a licking in order to catch the gang. When the film was released, insurance companies throughout the nation cooperated in a campaign, which, according to Bucquet, "woke up the public to the facts."

"It May Happen to You" a film illustrating how criminals, through their greed and selfishness, may ruin an innocent community, is depicted through the eyes of a young man who wanted to be a "big shot" racketeer. Based, also, on fact, it shows the theft by a gang of valuable sides of beef, which they stored on ice in a warehouse, preparatory to re-selling it. But despite

**P**RODUCT of an age that believes in streamlining of ideas as well as in streamlining of machinery is moviedom's rapidly growing short-subject industry. Not only informative but entertaining—and good money-makers—the one and two-reel "miniature features" soon may spell the doom of the much-criticised double-bill program.

Living in a hurry-up century that places a high premium upon economy of space and time, people have become "headline-conscious," and want their facts spotlighted, thrown into bold relief. First to sense public demand for condensation and brevity were the newspapers. Then came radio with its terse commentators, followed shortly by the omnipresent lens of the newsreel. News and picture magazines rushed to the fore. The "March of Time" zipped to the heights.

## "ALL KNOWLEDGE IS ITS PROVINCE"

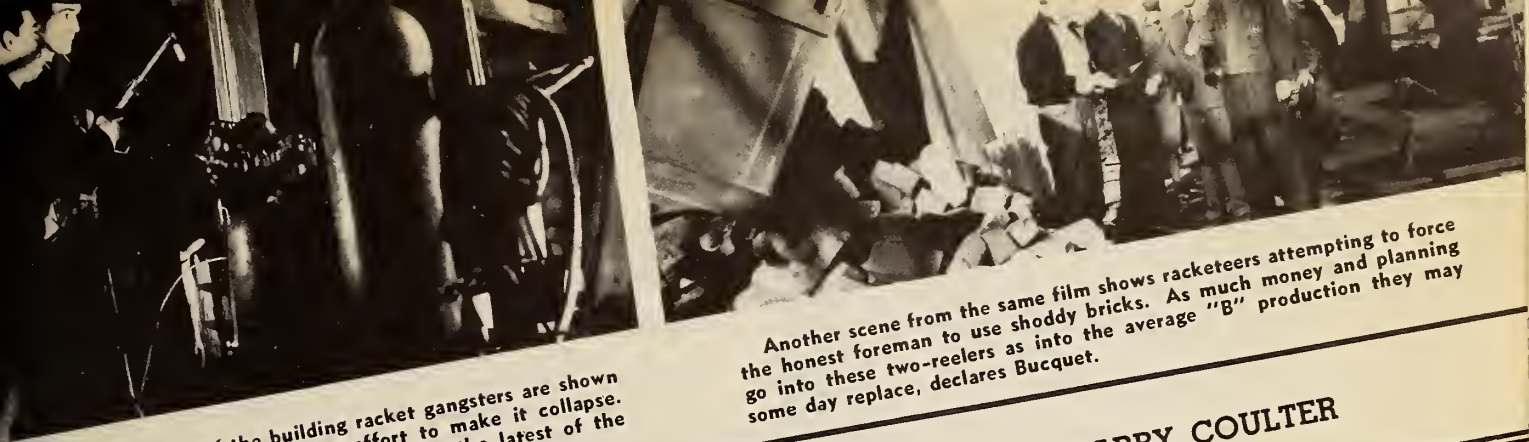
Now, delving into every field of knowledge—sociology, science, psychology, history, music, sports—has come the short subject, humanizing as it goes, literally hurling into the public consciousness a more complete understanding of ideas heretofore unknown or misunderstood.

What is radium? What is the story behind the "seeing eye" dogs that aid the blind? Why is Dr. Carver, renowned Negro scientist, so revered by his race? Who was the Man in the Iron Mask? What became of France's Lost Dauphin? Was Captain Kidd's treasure ever found—or does it exist?

These and many other questions, odd, interesting, and little-known, are today being dramatized on the screen by M-G-M, a leader in the short-subject field. Included in its 64 one and two-reelers per year are the well-known Pete Smith productions, the "Historical Mysteries," and the "Crime Does Not Pay" series.

Of great interest to a nation whose crime bill tops that of the world are the two-reel "Crime Does Not Pay" productions, which expose rackets costing the American public millions of dollars annually.





... In this expose of the building racket gangsters are shown a bridge under construction in an effort to make it collapse. Bertok and directed by Harry Bucquet, this is the latest of the series.

Another scene from the same film shows racketeers attempting to force the honest foreman to use shoddy bricks. As much money and planning go into these two-reelers as into the average "B" production they may some day replace, declares Bucquet.

By HARRY COULTER

## Will the rapidly-growing short subject industry spell the doom of the double-feature program?

precautions the beef spoiled, poisoned those to whom it was sold, and led to the gang's capture. In real life, the meat was the property of a large market. Because of improper care, the beef spoiled, poisoning dozens of persons who later bought it.

"Behind the Criminal," recently designated "Short of the Week" by BOX OFFICE, national trade publication, is the latest release. It is based on the theory that criminals cannot operate without the cooperation of smart attorneys, who are responsible, more than any other factor, for keeping law-breakers at large.

"Soak the Poor" is an expose of racketeering in relief tickets. To combat this menace, the federal government is now issuing checks, instead. But, even so, much "funny business" still goes on, according to Bucquet.

Soon to be released is "What Price Safety," which deals with the building racket. To insure accurate treatment, Bucquet visited the California Institute of Technology, getting slides and plates showing the various textures and requirements of steel.

### LABOR GANGSTERISM

In preparation now is a film on labor racketeering, showing how gangsters move in on a union, gain control, and then start an Employees' Protective Association. As Bucquet points out, they are thus enabled to "play both ends against the middle."

Another story will expose the quack doctors who prey on persons' fears, operating barely within the law, through clever advertising.

Still another deals with a bank investigator who learned so much about criminal methods that he thought he could commit "the perfect crime." It WAS "perfect"—until he began spending the stolen money too soon.

### CAUTION NECESSARY

"We always have to be careful, in this business, not to step on anybody's toes," declared Bucquet. "From the censorship point of view, we must be certain that we are not teaching methods of committing crime. We have to get our points over to the audience without seeming to be preachy, so we try to

get material that will make them think: 'That thing could happen to me.' We want to show the normal person, who perhaps may think that HE can get away with it, that he can't.

"Why did we begin the 'Crime Does Not Pay' series? Probably because of the switch in public taste from gangster pictures to the side of law and order. Also, crime is one of the most vital issues today."

Technique of directing shorts is considerably different from that of directing features, explained Bucquet, who has done both.

### ECONOMY OF ACTION

"The short subject is to the feature what the short story is to literature. We have to learn economy of action, to stage without becoming static. It is necessary to give flow and movement to the action, and to have characters speak their lines 'on the fly.'

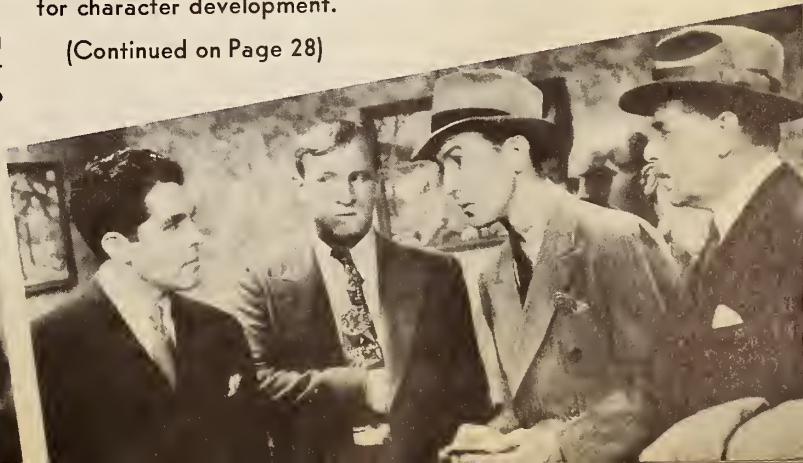
"For instance: in a recent film a delivery boy brings a package into a flower shop, gives it to the proprietor. Now, ordinarily, the person receiving the package would take it to his desk, pull out a pair of scissors, cut the strings, and open it. But in 1800 feet of film, where every word and action must progress the story, there is no time for him to do this. Therefore, as soon as he receives the package, he begins to open it AS HE WALKS TOWARD THE DESK, and by the time he gets there the contents are revealed."

Writers prepare their scripts without a sense of space or time limitation, the story being allowed to "take care of itself." However, tempo—giving scenes the proper timing, be it fast or slow—must always be kept in mind, in order to get the best effect possible. Next step is to go through the dialogue and see what can be eliminated. Every word spoken must progress the story; every technical device used must be of value. There can be no retrospects, or other fancy trimmings employed by the features. Montage is often used, however.

Occasionally it is necessary to introduce many characters—there are 19 in "What Price Safety"—but there is no time for character development.

(Continued on Page 28)

Named by "Boxoffice," national trade publication, as "Movie Short of the Week" was "Behind the Criminal," expose of crooked lawyers and the perjury racket. To the left of this scene from the prize-winning two-reeler is Harry Bucquet, director of the "Crime Does Not Pay" series.





# MUSIC IN A HURRY

By DON FISCHER and BOB BOULD

Someone once called newspaper writing "literature in a hurry." Similarly, one might term the product of Hollywood's high-speed, but efficient composers "music in a hurry." Certainly, Beethoven, Schubert, Wagner, would be amazed at the rapid-fire technique which produces the "little classics" of the motion picture. For some of them ARE classics, in their own right.

Although processes vary from studio to studio and from picture to picture, the general procedure is revealed to no better advantage than in Paramount's ambitious transportation saga, "Wells Fargo." This straight dramatic production contains a greater number of musical sequences than any non-musical film produced by that studio within recent years.

Nevertheless, music is not used except where it will assist in expressing the scene. Written by Victor Young, it is of such a character that it could be revised and used for concert purposes. The amount of time required to play just the music in "Wells Fargo" is between 80 and 90 minutes, considerably more than one would hear in an average symphony. Composition time was less than three weeks. But even this is not an unusual feat in the industry, since the time for the average picture is usually 5 or 6 days! One should not infer, however, that there is any lack of thorough, pains-taking technique. It is quite the opposite.

Music is not usually written until after the picture has been completely filmed. Main exception is the musical, where such a procedure would not be possible.

## OFFICIALS VIEW FILMS

When the picture has been completely filmed and edited, it is placed in the hands of the music department. A time is set and the picture is shown to the director of the music department, the director of the picture, the scorer, the assistant scorer, the composer, and the conductor. Other important members of the music department usually are also present. During the showing, the picture is stopped after each reel, and a discussion follows in which all express their ideas of where the picture seems to need music, and what type would be most suitable.

The picture is then divided into musical sequences. A sequence from the standpoint of the music department is a scene or group of scenes about which a central musical idea is needed to express the scene or the thought behind it. These sequences vary in length from several seconds to four or five minutes, and the music may be continuous, or it may stop and begin again, according to the needs of the scene.

The assistant scorer takes these sequences, selects stock music tracks made for previous pictures, and fits them to the scenes

In a scene like this one between Frances Dee and Joel McCrea, there is heard, of course, a "love theme."

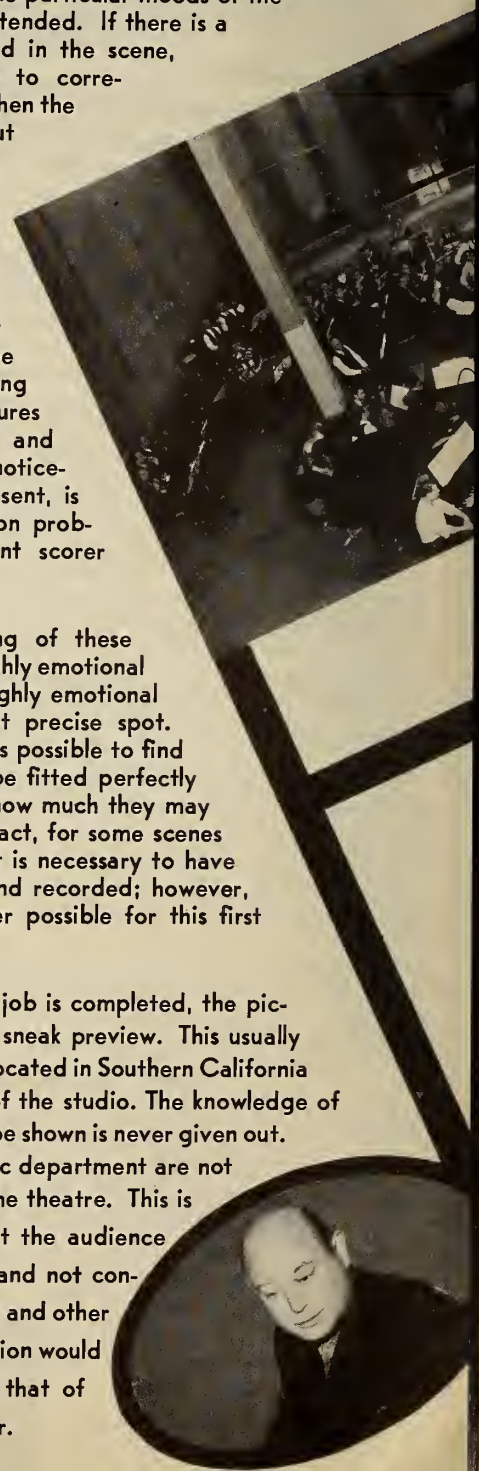
of the new picture. Music tracks are made separate from the picture itself, and a library is kept of these tracks.

## SELECTION DIFFICULT

The work of selecting sound tracks and fitting them to the scenes in the new picture often presents many difficult problems. In the first place, music is written to fit the particular actions and the particular moods of the picture for which it is intended. If there is a sudden change of mood in the scene, the music will change to correspond. Consequently, when the assistant scorer picks out tracks for his picture, he meets problems such as cutting out several measures of music in which the mood changed suddenly in the original, but does not change in the new picture. The cutting of a number of measures out of a music track and splicing it so that no noticeable music break is present, is one of the most common problems which the assistant scorer faces.

Another is the fitting of these tracks so that when a highly emotional action presents itself, highly emotional music will come at that precise spot. Of course it is not always possible to find stock tracks which can be fitted perfectly to a picture no matter how much they may be cut and spliced. In fact, for some scenes in this stock track job, it is necessary to have original music written and recorded; however, this is avoided whenever possible for this first piece of work.

When the stock track job is completed, the picture is ready for its first sneak preview. This usually takes place at a theatre located in Southern California within driving distance of the studio. The knowledge of where this preview is to be shown is never given out. Even the men in the music department are not told; they are taken to the theatre. This is kept secret in order that the audience will be an average one, and not contain press representatives and other individuals whose impression would be quite different from that of the average theatre-goer.





## Speed, good workmanship of movie composers told by writers after month and a half on Paramount lot with "Wells Fargo" Company.

Preparation of the picture for this first preview with stock tracks may appear to be unnecessary duplication of work, since original music is being written for the picture. On the other hand, it is actually a method of saving a great deal of work, and also assists in making possible a finer finished product than would otherwise be obtained. This is because it is sometimes impossible to make a smooth job of cutting music tracks if a scene has been cut AFTER the first preview. In many cases the composer would have to rewrite numbers and these would have to be re-recorded. From a financial standpoint, alone, this would be a great deal more expensive than the fitting of stock tracks to a picture.

Further, the original music that could be cut and spliced successfully would probably not have the unity that could be obtained if the music had been revised before recording.

As stated previously, during the same time that the assistant scorer is fitting the stock tracks, the scorer and composer are working on original music. The sequences which have previously been

determined generally, are now accurately decided upon by the scorer with suggestions from the picture director and the director of the Music Department.

### THE SCORER'S JOB

The scorer usually begins with the first reel, and with the script works straight through the picture. First, a section of the reel is shown in the scoring room, and the scorer, acting upon the general decision that has been reached, decides upon the exact spot for the beginning and ending of the sequences. As the picture is being shown, he indicates to the



Galloping into view comes the Wells-Fargo express—on time, as always. It is in sequences such as the above that the particular leitmotiv, known as the "on time" theme, is played for musical background. A leitmotiv is a few bars of atmospheric music which usually accompany major characters.

man in the projection room, by means of an electric buzzer, exactly where these spots are on the film. The projectionist then puts a "sinc" mark at these places indicated, so that a sequence can be easily located for future projection. "Sinc" marks are small markings on the side of the film.

With the length of the sequence now determined, it is then timed. That is, every important speech or action in the scene or group of scenes is timed to the second with a stop watch. These are all written down on a cue sheet and the time is indicated at the side.

Each sequence is given a title to indicate to the composer and others which scene is being described, and also, to suggest the type of music.

### ROLE OF CUE SHEETS

When a number of these cue sheets have been completed, they are given to the composer. The scorer, composer, and the director of music review the sequences, discussing the type of music desired. The composer then writes his music, being guided by the cue sheets. The music is written to fit the action or speech indicated at a particular second on the cue sheet. Such a task is quite complicated and takes much skill and ingenuity in composition. In composing for motion pictures extensive use is made of the device called, "Leit Motiv," a short theme or melody usually introduced when the character or idea it represents is present or indicated in any way.

This picture is a fine, modern example of the practical use of the "Leit Motiv." It is skillfully used throughout with excellent results. Though not new to motion pictures, notably few people realize the extent to which it is used.

A musical sequence of particular interest which uses this device extensively is the battle scene. In this scene we have the North and the South fighting against each other. Therefore, in the music we will find one theme typical of the North, and another representing the South. These themes appear in the music whenever a definite character of either side appears. As for instance, when Talbot, the leader of the southern troop, is seen, the theme representing the South is heard. The reverse is true when Ramsey, the northern leader, comes into the scene.

### COMPOSER'S JOB

When he has written music for the number of cue sheets given him, the composer brings in his compositions for consultation with the General Music Director and scorer. Suggestions are discussed with the composer, and necessary changes are

Right, Victor Young, composer; left, Boris Morros, musical director.





made. The composition is then ready for the arranger. Sometimes a number of changes have to be made before a composition is considered satisfactory. Other times it is accepted exactly as first presented.

The ability to compose well does not necessarily qualify one for composition in the picture industry. One not only has to write well but also turn out a tremendous amount of music in a very short time. The composition has to do more than just set the mood of the scene; it has to fit the action to a precise degree. This very often necessitates certain motives or melodic figures appearing in the music at the exact second that a certain action takes place in the film.

Of course, such action in the film does not usually take place in any kind of regularity, so that from a structural point of view the music must be adapted to the action. Nevertheless, this must not be done in a manner that would make the music sound unusually rough or irregular, since that would result in its being noticeable, and therefore unfit for use.

An example of this type of irregularity is seen in an early sequence of "Wells Fargo," "Off to Buffalo." The music begins with a rush, depicting all the excitement of galloping horses striving to reach a certain destination on time. The wagon suddenly comes to a broken-down carriage in the road and stops. The music now has to quiet down and becomes suitable for the conversation which takes place. Further, this scene at the carriage is the first meeting between the two main characters, and therefore, a fragment of the love theme is introduced when these two meet, even though no other indication of love is present.

#### DESCRIPTIVE MUSIC

The music is also descriptive of the scene in which Mrs. Prior and her daughter leave their carriage and climb into the wagon. As the wagon starts up again, the music rises and continues in the same manner as in the beginning of the scene.

These sudden, irregular changes in tempo are not usually written in pure music, but are very effective when skillfully done for accompanying such a scene.

The composition having been finished by the composer, it is then given to the arranger or orchestrator, with the instrumentation that is desired, and whatever special instructions seem necessary. Instructions are given to the arranger by the scorer, the scorer and composer having already discussed the orchestration. Of course the work of the arranger begins as soon as any of the compositions are completed and are acceptable for sequences. His task is that of straight orchestration, in a picture of the character of "Wells Fargo." The composition given him is usually written in a three-stave piano part. This includes every note which the composer desires, unless otherwise indicated. He is not to add or take anything out unless instructed to do so, but must give to the composition instrumentation that will express in the best manner the composer's intention as given in the piano part.

#### ARRANGER "ADDS LICKS"

With popular orchestration, however, the arranger is not limited, but can "add licks," counterpoint, or do anything he desires without regard for the piano part. In fact, many composers of popular songs give very little or no thought to the orchestration when they write a song. Therefore, the popular arranger is free, being limited only by the effect that is desired in the picture, or the atmosphere to be created in the scene.

After a composition has been completed and is satisfactory, the original piano part is copied off, and with a special duplicating machine a number of copies are made for the library and for future use. With the orchestration, however, the individual instrumental parts are copied, but no duplication is made of these.

All these different processes having been completed, the composition is now ready for recording.

#### FROM RECORDING TO RELEASE

The recording program is made out by the scorer a day or so in advance of the time scheduled for the actual recording, and mimeographed copies are sent to all departments co-ordinating in the recording.

Before going onto the scoring stage (recording stage), the conductor will have reviewed the musical sequences, previously, in the scoring projection room, running the film till he knows exactly on what punch-mark to begin and end, to what actions he must fit certain musical effects. (The punch-marks are holes made in the picture part of the film at regular intervals—usually 12 frames apart—causing a flash of light. Two punch-marks are sufficient for the start; the conductor counts "one" on the first flash, "two" on the second, and on the third imaginary flash actually begins.) With a stop-watch he finds the number of seconds on which the action or line of dialogue or both occurs, if not already given on his conductor's score—he uses an "orchestral piano-score," a 3 (or more) lined score somewhat like the "piano conductor" part of small concert and school orchestras. Now, having all his timings, the conductor can practice privately with stop-watch, finding a good tempo, "catching his cues." This obviously saves much wear-and-tear on the orchestra, makes unnecessary many repeats of the complete number. The conductor, scorer, and musicians will then have more time for rehearsal of the sequence as a musical selection—in fine, interpretation.

#### ON SCORING STAGE

Arrived at the scoring stage, the conductor will greet many fellow-artists and other workers if it is to be a big program of recording. The regular under-contract studio orchestra is augmented to some 36 to 45 musicians for mighty-sound scenes (e. g. "battle-music, 4 minutes"). Assisting are likely to be some 20 or more closely co-ordinated workers: conductor, composer, scorer, assistant director, assistant scorer, orchestrator, music librarians, often the general music director himself, film laboratory adviser, sound department, operations office head, projectionist, film and sound-tract messengers, grips, often the picture director, himself.

All these men gather on the scoring stage, a huge room fitted to the usual description of sound-stages ("big and barn-like"). About one-third of its length is divided off by a sound-proof partition to make a monitor-room where the mixer can hear the music through the loudspeaker approximately as it will sound later in the best-equipped theatres. The monitor-man can view the stage through the bay window of sound-proof glass (two panes with air-space between) in the partition. Above him, on a sort of mezzanine floor, is the projectionist's sound-proof booth.

The screen is suspended over the center of the orchestra at right angles to the length of the room. A telephone system permits communication from any one of these rooms to another. On the scoring stage, proper, the orchestra is set up radio-orchestra fashion; all play almost directly forward and are seated according to carrying-power with violins front, violas and cellos behind them, wood-winds next back on a riser, brass and percussion farthest-back and most-elevated. Piano and harp bring up the front flank (harp first, piano back of it). Two mikes are used, one for the wood-winds (usually six in number: flute, oboe, two clarinets, bass clarinet, bassoon. By doubling, many other combinations are available), the other for the rest of the orchestra.

(More about recording, scoring, selection of music tracks, cutting, etc., will be told in the concluding installment next issue.)



# MOTION PICTURES and BOOK COLLECTING

Interested in cinema history? Here is the second of a series of film bibliographies prepared especially for "Cinema Progress" by a London book collector

By ALFRED A. REED



none holds such a meritorious position as Thomas Alva Edison. His invention of the "kinescope" in 1889 undoubtedly paved the way for the many improvements which automatically followed, and culminated in the early "living pictures," as they were then called. But apart from this, his phonograph was on many occasions coupled with a projector, and thus were born the pioneer "talking-pictures" with which our parents were entertained during the earlier part of this century. A large amount of "Edisonian" literature exists, but the standard items are too familiar to mention. Among others, however, are "Thomas Alva Edison: The Telegraph-Boy Who Became a Great Inventor," by E. C. Kenyon, 1896; "Edison: The Man and His Work," by G. S. Bryan, N.D., and "Thomas A. Edison," by F. T. Miller, 1932.

**EDUCATION.** One of the greatest achievements of the motion-picture is its use as a medium for visual instruction, a field in which it has produced astounding results. Many schools already possess the necessary equipment for the projecting of educational pictures, and their number steadily increases. If therefore seems possible that in the near future the projection-theatre will be just as essential as the laboratory in all establishments of learning. Even the dullest person can appreciate "movies," whether documentary or otherwise, and I think that there is only one explanation for this phenomena, namely, that "seeing is believing." There are many books covering this progressive aspect, among them: "Motion Picture Education," by E. A. Dench, 1917; "The Film: Its Use in Popular Education," by M. J. Wrigley, 1922; "Motion Pictures in Education," by Don Carlos Ellis and L. Thornborough, 1923; "The Cinema in Education," by Sir J. Marchant, 1925, and "The Film in National Life," 1932 (a report on educational and cultural films).

**FICTION.** The legitimate sphere of the novel is perhaps the observation of customs and manners, and to its subject-matter there are no limits. Novelists have dealt with history, social problems, religion, science, adventure, politics, and economics. It is therefore not surprising that in recent years many works have been published, which retain as their main theme or background various aspects of the motion-picture industry. As I include such material in my collection, I will mention just a few of them: "Merton of the Movies," by H. L. Wilson, 1922; "Shoot: The Notebooks of Serafino Gubbio, Cinematograph Operator," by L. Pirandello, 1927 (translated from the Italian by C. K. Scott Moncrieff); "Blood and Celluloid," by H. E. Jacob, 1930 (translated from the German by June Head); "Monica in the Talkies," by R. Starr, N.D.; "To-Morrow's Yesterdays," by John Gloag, 1932 (an exceedingly interesting volume); "Hollywood-Nymph," by John V. A. Weaver, 1932; "Screen Star," by Jack Preston, 1932, and "Falling Star," by Vicki Baum, 1934 (translated into English by Ida Zeitlin).

**FILM ARTISTS.** Of the many forms of entertainment available at the present time, none can compare in popularity with the

"talkies," and although the "star-system" has many times been abused, it cannot be denied that film actors and actresses have contributed a great deal towards the evolution of the photo-play. "Star-worship" is not new, and the history of the drama proves quite convincingly that there has always existed a section of the public for whom the plot and story were of secondary consideration: they visited the theatre to see and hear their favorite artistes. For the benefit of this section of film-goers, many books have been published, among others: "Alice in Movieland," by Alice M. Williamson, 1927; "Star Gazing," by June Head, 1931 (this book, written with a keen sense of humour, points out that the various forms of hero, heroine, and villain of the "talkies" had their prototypes in the older silent pictures). Of a biographical nature are: "My Life Is In Your Hands," by Eddie Cantor, 1928; "Maurice Chevalier's Own Story," 1930 (as told to Percy Cudlipp); "Ronald Colman," by Roland Wild, 1933; "Doug and Mary and Others," by Allene Talmey, 1927; "The Private Life of Greta Garbo," by R. P. Palmberg, N.D.; "Leben der Greta Garbo," by C. M. Arconada, Giessen, 1930; "Greta Garbo," by Roland Wild, 1933; "Marlene en Garbo," by L. J. Jordaan, Rotterdam, N.D.; "Wallace Reid: His Life Story," as Related by His Mother, Bertha W. Reid, 1923; "The Talmadge Sisters," by Margaret L. Talmadge, 1924; "Shirley Temple," by Jerome Beatty, 1935; "The Story of Shirley Temple," by Grace Mack, 1934, and "The Real Valentino," by S. G. Ullman, 1927. For the reader who wishes for brief details of all the artistes, there are: "The Picturegoer's Who's Who," 1933; "Stars of the Screen" (published annually from 1931 to 1934), and "Who's Who in Filmland," compiled by Langford Reed and Hetty Spiers. (Three editions of this book have appeared, the last in 1931.)

**HUMOUR.** Humour is a quality for which I have profound admiration, but unfortunately there have been few attempts to survey motion-pictures from this angle. Some few years ago, however, some articles did appear in "Punch," and these were later published in book form: "Bateman and I in Filmland," by Dudley Clark. With Illustrations by H. M. Bateman. 1926. This is a delightful volume, and anyone acquainted with the stereotyped characters and plots of the "movies" of that period cannot fail to appreciate this brilliant satire. For the benefit of readers unfamiliar with this item, I will quote a few paragraphs at random:

"The principal professions open to the Filmland woman are those of the female crook, the vamp, the typist, the star actress or dancer, the cow-girl, the spoilt beauty, and the lady companion. She can also get married and become a broken-hearted mother."

"In Filmland a sheriff is a grizzled, elderly man with a pretty daughter, who, in common with most Filmland girls, can always look her best, even after being tied to a runaway horse or dug out of a snowdrift."

(In his concluding article next issue, Mr. Reed will discuss further books of interest.)



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# STARRING:

# MOLARS and FILLINGS

Even the dentist now  
uses film in his work

By HENRY A. LINEK, D.D.S.

**T**HE ever increasing numbers of motion pictures listed on the programs of dental conventions speak most adequately for the popularity of the cine film in presenting clinical operations and technical procedures. Also the continued increase in the use of motion pictures in the classrooms of our dental colleges shows that this medium is now a standard and recognized aid in education.

The advantages of modern pictures in dentistry are numerous. For instance, the very nature of dental operations and laboratory technics makes it impossible to demonstrate before large groups because of limited visibility, whereas, the same demonstration if presented by means of film affords every spectator a "grandstand" seat. Moreover, the time factor is eliminated, since most dental procedures which require from several hours to several days for their completion may be shown in their entirety on the screen within the space of an hour.

Many other advantages are obvious, such as the possibility of repeated showings, the ease of presentation, the transportation and set-up problems of dental equipment are eliminated, a permanent record is maintained always ready for reference and comparison, and last but not most important is the fact that a good motion picture is self-explanatory and imprints itself indelibly upon the memory of the spectator.

What are the requirements of a good dental picture? They are manifold, the more important factors of which are summarized in the following paragraphs.

### CONTINUITY

The picture should first be made on paper with every step and sequence planned in advance, notations made as to whether close-up, extreme close-up, etc. Even the titles should be inserted in the script although they may be revised later. Thus this working sheet acts as a guide and assures both the operator and cameraman that they will have a complete picture with the proper emphasis placed on every scene.


### CAMERA STEADINESS

It is essential that a tripod or other means of rigidly supporting the camera be used. There is no condition under any circumstances where a shot might be taken with the camera held by hand.

### CLOSE-UPS

There are no long shots indicated in any dental picture. Semi close-ups may be made in the beginning to introduce

the patient and to establish the equipment of the operating room or the laboratory. Dental pictures being made for educational purposes require that complete details of what actually is taking place should fill the screen. Therefore, to photograph areas the size of teeth, ultra closeups are used. These are obtained



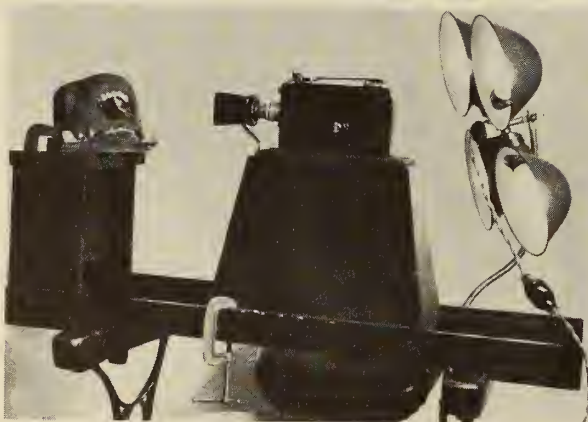
Using hinged pointer to establish center of field and the focal distance for supplementary lens in the sunshade. When the pointer is set to position the tripod is locked, the pointer is then tipped back and the camera started.

either by extension tubes on the camera lens or by the use of an auxiliary lens. The ordinary titler affords a practical method of obtaining extreme close-ups.

### FOCUSING

In the use of ultra close-ups, focusing and centering the image become the greatest problems. Cameras that have visual focusing are naturally advantageous, but since most cameras do not possess this feature other methods must be devised. One method is to construct a hinged pointer as shown in one of the accompanying illustrations. When used in conjunction with a supplementary lens this pointer establishes the camera in correct focal distance and at the same time centers the area to be photographed. These positions were first determined by means of test shots and accurate measurements and records were made, after which it was a simple matter to construct the pointer attachment. In order to photograph an area approximately  $\frac{7}{8}$  by  $\frac{5}{8}$  of an inch the telephoto lens is set at infinity, the supplementary lens (a titling lens) is mounted in front of the telephoto, the pointer is brought into contact with the object to be photographed, the tripod locked in position, the pointer lowered and the camera started.

(Continued on Page 30)



"This won't hurt a bit!" Not with this replica of the patient's mouth, which may be used in operations where the rubber dam is applied. Photographing in this manner proves more convenient and assures steadiness, sharpness, and centering of the image. The "mouth" is adjustable to various positions. By splicing with actual shots of the patient these "fakes" have proven undetectable.



# Larynx and Weather Yield Secrets to Camera

For physician and meteorologist film makes discoveries possible

By CLARK LIDDELL

**E**VEN the human larynx and the weather can no longer keep their mysteries from the prying eye of the camera. At least, scientists are now making valuable discoveries in these widely separated fields through the use of film research. Leaders in these respective projects are Dr. Joel J. Pressman, M.D., Los Angeles, and Dr. Irving P. Krick, meteorologist at the California Institute of Technology in Pasadena.

For many years doctors have been striving to make a camera

lem of no small magnitude. First it was necessary to expose the vocal cords to view, then to properly illuminate them and finally to obtain magnification and proper focus at a distance of about fourteen inches. These technical problems were solved largely through the ingenuity of Arthur Hinman. The details of the technique ultimately developed were printed in the Archives of Otolaryngology for November, 1937, to which the reader is referred. By this technique it is possible to take satisfactory but not photographically artistic motion pictures of the larynges of fully conscious, co-operative patients. It has furthermore been possible to obtain these in color."

The researches mentioned above were accomplished over a period of four years, but the discoveries made show that the expenditure of money, time, and thought was well worth while.

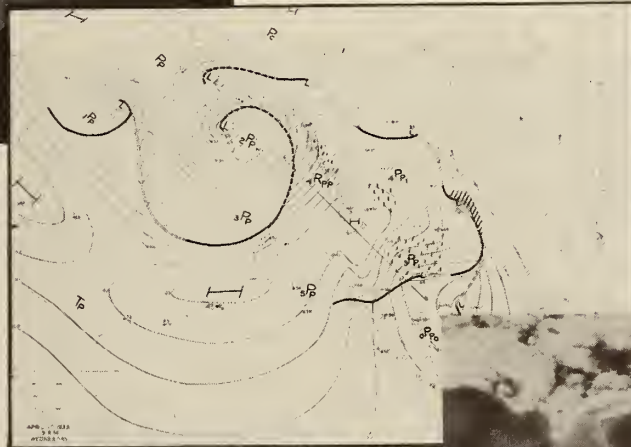
"In the first place," declares Dr. Pressman, "there has been developed the basis of a suitable technique for photographing, in motion, a functioning internal organ of the human body.

Concerning the details of its method of function, we have established certain irrefutable truths. For instance we have shown,

as no other method can, the position assumed by the vocal cords in producing its various tones. We have settled finally, the discussion concerning the role of the false vocal cords in protecting the larynx from the invasion of food during swallowing. Observations have been made of the movement of the vocal cords during respiration.



Studying cloud formations and weather conditions through the aid of the films is the continuous project of Dr. Irving P. Krick, Cal-tech meteorologist. The excerpt shows forerunners of a weak disturbance.



This weather map is similar to 400 others drawn and animated at the Walt Disney studio, under the supervision of Dr. Krick. The film is used in course work at Cal-tech, illustrates wind conditions affecting Los Angeles' disastrous New Years flood of 1934.

study of the larynx, and not until two years ago did Dr. Pressman and his associate, Arthur Hinman, make a definite comprehensive study. Chief function of the larynx is to produce sound which later is transformed into speech by the action of respiratory organs such as the palate, tongue and lips.

The normal human larynx produces a wide range of sounds varying in pitch. The mechanical processes by which these variations take place depend upon variations in the tension, functional length, and size of the aperture between the vibrating bands or vocal cords. For instance, shortening the length of a vibrating violin string elevates the pitch, but the pitch may also be elevated through tightening the strings.

Doctors were very anxious to know what changes took place in the larynx when a tone was varied from a high to a low key. Did the cords shorten or tighten? Does the space between them become smaller, and how does the larynx protect itself from the invasion of foreign matter? The problems are very many, the known answers to them, few.

Speaking of his experiments, Dr. Pressman says, "The problem of photographing the larynx was, in itself, a research prob-



A typical "tropical" sky, developed by very warm, moist air. Structure of the clouds indicates an active vertical motion which may foreshadow thunderstorms or showers. Dr. Krick finds these films valuable in teaching his students, hopes soon to study cloud formations from a "blimp."

Photographs have been obtained of many diseased conditions of the larynx for demonstration to students who would not otherwise have the opportunity to see them."

And now, the weather. Mark Twain's famous observation that

(Continued on Page 31)



# NEW FILMS FOR SCHOOLS

THE pleasure we derive from listening to the radio and from attending the movies lulls most of us into the easy conclusion that entertainment is the primary function of these miracle machines. But their importance does not stop there. They are also the most powerful forces for social influence in the world today.

Motion picture film is the record par excellence of original research. Motion picture cameras at the telescope, at the galvanometer, at the microscope are science's all-important eyes for the permanent record of scientific data in all fields of knowledge. Movements of the stars, medical operations, scientific experiments on the atom, and electrocardiographic measurements of the heart in health and disease are recorded, and yet we have seen only the beginning of this use of the motion picture in theoretical and applied research.

The educational use of the new reel is another illustration of the non-entertainment function of the movie which will undoubtedly increase in importance in school work in this country. The University of Minnesota General College edits the March of Time and all of the news reels services each week into a program of world events which is presented to the entire student body. During the last presidential campaign it was possible to present the entire campaign, week by week, in logical sequence and as a supplement to the radio programs that brought the voices of the candidates to nearly every voter. I do not know how long it will be before some national service will do that editing for the entire schools of the country (or that it will be furnished by facilities like the University of Georgia Library), but come it will, and when it does I think we will all realize its important relationship to the teaching of history, politics, and government.

Proper use of the entertainment film, itself, in schools is still a matter for future development. It is surprising that the main obstacles to the development in the past have been SCHOOL PEOPLE

AND THE MOTION PICTURE INDUSTRY. Opposition on the part of the industry to the widespread use of feature pictures in schools is, of course, fundamentally a desire not to jeopardize entertainment outlets in favor of less lucrative financial outlets. This accounts for their slowness in releasing feature subjects to schools in 16 mm. versions.

School people, themselves, have been in my judgment, the main obstacle to the proper use of the entertainment film in school work. Teachers who would otherwise strongly oppose the introduction of any extraneous material into the classroom, have disrupted school work and herded several classes of children into dark, crowded rooms to see second-class

entertainment programs and comedy and advertising films with almost studied stupidity, either from the entertainment point of view or the educational point of view.

Entertainment film should be either used as entertainment, and the time and place of the showing arranged separately from regular school work, or film material that relates to school work should be carefully selected and shown at the proper time in the regular classroom. Some object that the proper kind of entertainment material is not available in 16 mm. version, and I admit that such material has been scarce. In that connection, Films Incorporated announced recently the addition of full-length features to their library for school



Animation of a water table is demonstrated in "Ground Water," a talking film produced by Erpi Picture Consultants, Inc. All entering students at the University of Chicago are required to take introductory courses in the physical and biological sciences, where many films such as the above are employed as teaching aids.



One of the most forceful demonstrations in the picture, "Molecular Theory of Matter," is furnished by the actual recording of the force of machine gun bullets striking against a steel plate. The plate is connected with a gauge which registers the force exerted by cumulative impacts of the bullets.

distribution, includes such important films as:

"Alice In Wonderland"  
"Little America"  
"Mrs. Wiggs of the Cabbage Patch"  
"Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde"  
"Pete Ibbertson"  
"So Red the Rose"  
and similar pictures.

The showing of entertainment films in the classroom should, in my judgment, be limited to those carefully selected from the point of view of subject matter of that particular class.

Most entertainment films need to be abbreviated or edited for class room showings.

There are two very significant recent developments along this line. The Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America have recently announced access to their vaults on behalf of an Advisory Committee of Educators, headed by Mark A. May of the Institute of Human Relations at Yale University. The implication of this announcement was that, after the Committee had previewed the feature material and short subjects of commercial producers, some arrangements would be made for the release of the valuable material



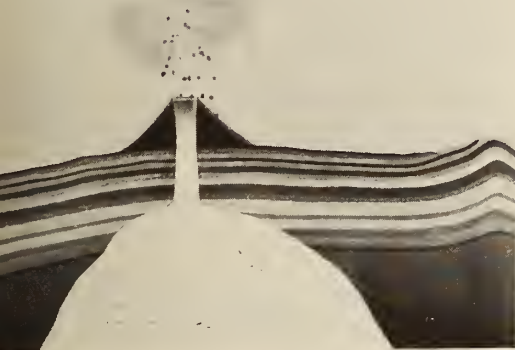
# School authorities, themselves, are often the main obstacle to proper use of the entertainment film in the classroom, says director of the University of Chicago Libraries

By DONALD P. BEAN

which they found for school use, under conditions that would not jeopardize their release to commercial exhibitors.

The other development of special interest in this connection, is the announcement by Paramount of a series of educational shorts edited for school work from current feature releases. THE SPIRIT OF THE PLAINS, adapted from the THE PLAINS-

MAN and SEEING SALEM, a one-reel, silent subject dealing with the architectural and social life of Colonial New England, adapted from the feature picture MAID OF SALEM. MEN AND



Formation of a cinder cone by solid debris from erupting volcanoes is depicted in this animated drawing from the Erpi educational sound film, "Volcanoes in Action." Schools at all levels are about to embark on wide-spread experiments with visual education, and can predict.

OIL, the third release in this series, which has recently been issued, is adapted from the current feature picture, HIGH, WIDE, AND HANDSOME. All three of the films will be useful for school work, this last one particularly so.

If Paramount continues to consult school people and to prepare films as valuable for school work as MEN AND OIL, I predict they will be widely used in school and will be sufficiently valuable as publicity to lead other producers to follow suit.

Here, again, I enter the role of prophet and predict that commercial producers will then take one additional obvious step, namely, the issuance of a series of educational shorts that do not contain advertising, but are prepared while the feature pictures are being produced. Think, for instance, what it would mean to high school social science and history if the producer of "Gone With the Wind" would ask school people to prepare continuities for several reels on plantation life, transportation, civilian life in war time, customs and early life of the 1850's and 1860's which could be produced largely from the shots taken from the feature picture plus a small amount of additional photography taken while the sets and scenery and the costumes for the feature picture were still available.

This kind of educational picture specially produced for schools by commercial studios, brings me to my fifth, and most important contribution of the movies to school work, the special educational, teaching film. When I speak of the teaching film, I am thinking primarily of films made to fit specific curriculum problems, produced to the specifications of the teaching staff, carefully integrated with the textbook material for the course, and used in such a way as to really contribute to the learning situation, either by economy of the student's time, or the teacher's, or by increasing the richness or permanence of pupil learning.

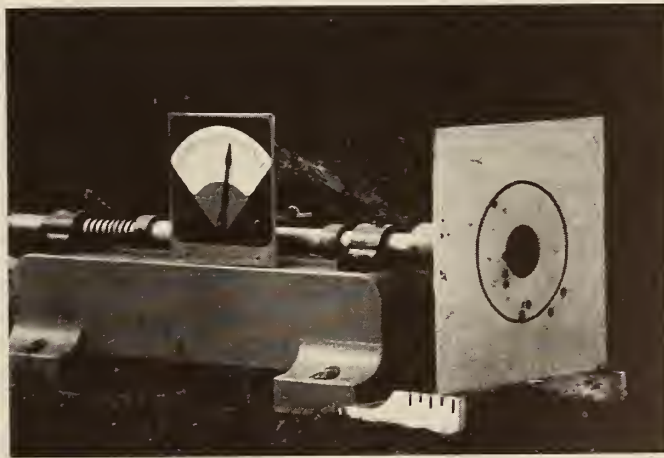
Films produced for such situations are so different in content, method of treatment and objective that they cannot be compared directly with the output of the commercial studio, unless the commercial studio would adopt the program of asking school people to supervise the kind of films that I have just referred to.

Our new college program developed a series of introductory courses which attempted to give freshmen and sophomores a much wider range of information and acquaintance with the

physical and biological sciences. The courses are prerequisites to more advanced training and are required of all entering students, so that many as 500 students may be taking each of these courses at one time. Movies seemed to offer a solution to some of the difficulties of presenting a large amount of demonstration material quickly and effectively. President Hutchins induced Erpi Picture Consultants, Inc., a subsidiary of A. T. & T. and Western Electric, which had done more experimentation in the production of educational sound films than any other organization, to produce a series of educational films to the specifications of our teaching staff.

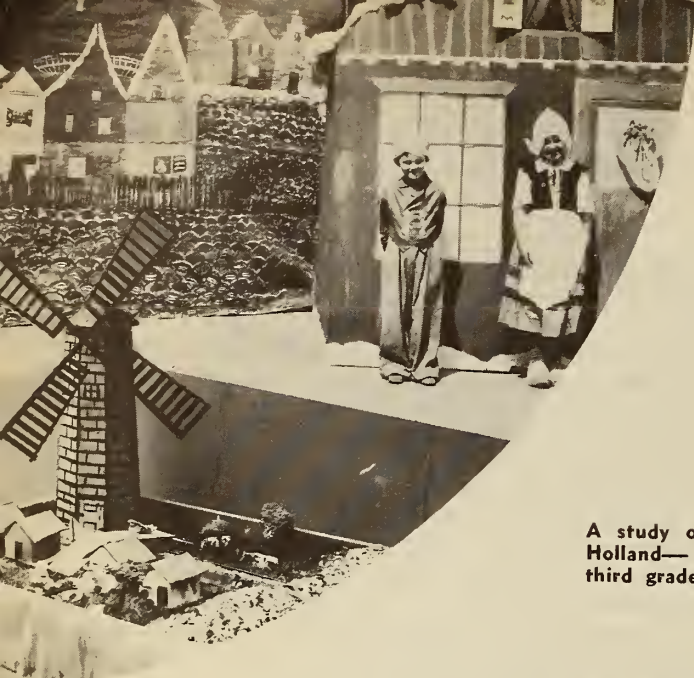
Skilled teachers have selected material which is difficult to explain and the film company has employed the rich resources of the motion picture camera to make these explanations clear and interesting.

There are now 24 reels available in our series. That many special teaching films are now available for one course. A Human Geography Series is now being produced, also, by Erpi Picture Consultants, which will provide a similar extensive series for courses in geography and social science at the elementary and secondary school levels. In my judgment there will be many enterprises along similar lines which will soon produce valuable material for many courses at all levels of school work.



Close-up of the target and gauge. This experiment aids in understanding how the continuous bombardment of gas molecules exerts pressure on the walls of its container.





A study of Holland—third grade.

# Dramatized Learning

Visual education supplement, not substitute for "three R's," believes elementary school principal

By MELBA THOMAS

I AM a principal of an elementary school. One of my main duties is to assist the teachers in improving the learning on the part of the pupils. To this end, I should like to emphasize upon my teachers the value of visual aids as educational tools that will help pupils solve their problems, stimulate their interest in gaining new knowledge, increase the efficiency of their learning and aid them to live abundantly.

I should want my teachers to realize that visual tools are not a substitute, but rather a supplement to the oral and written methods of gaining knowledge. Each type has its own particular advantages and limitations in various teaching situations and it becomes my problem to help the inexperienced teacher to determine in what stage of the learning process each will render the greatest service, remembering that no one aid can be said to be the best aid, but letting each be used conjunctively, each making its unique contribution.

Each year my teachers work out various units of work and often ask the principal for suggestions and material. Let us see briefly, for example, how the various visual aids might contribute to the understanding of a third grade unit on Holland.

On the library table are found many attractive, well illustrated books on Holland, among them "The Dutch Twins," a book all primary children enjoy reading. What is more logical or worthwhile than to introduce a few stereographs, slides, or a film which would convey clear images of Holland and its people and thus give a background for the setting of the story. The stereographs have their place because they bring out clearly the three dimensions of a picture and thus would make Holland and the Dutch seem real and lifelike. They stimulate thinking if a few pertinent questions are attached to the stereographs so individuals or a small group may view and study during a supervised study period. Never should any teacher attempt to show twenty-five or thirty views to that number of pupils at the same time for she will find pupils become restless and inattentive and no real learning taking place.

A motion picture, for example, "A Little Tulip Girl of Holland" may be used to introduce the unit, to contribute information during the development of any particular activity, or serve as a summary or review of the completed study. It will have the unique advantage of depicting action and supplying the illusion of life and reality. It will provide many vicarious experiences which could not be had in any other way. This film,

however, should not tell everything. It should not take away the work children should dig out for themselves.

Colorful slides on Holland may be purchased or better still prepared by the pupils who are interested and have talent for that kind of work. Other pupils can be granted the privilege of writing explanations for slides. Home-made slides are often crude, but they frequently stimulate more interest on part of pupils because they are the actual work of the classroom. After all, visual instruction is not an end within itself, but one means to an end.

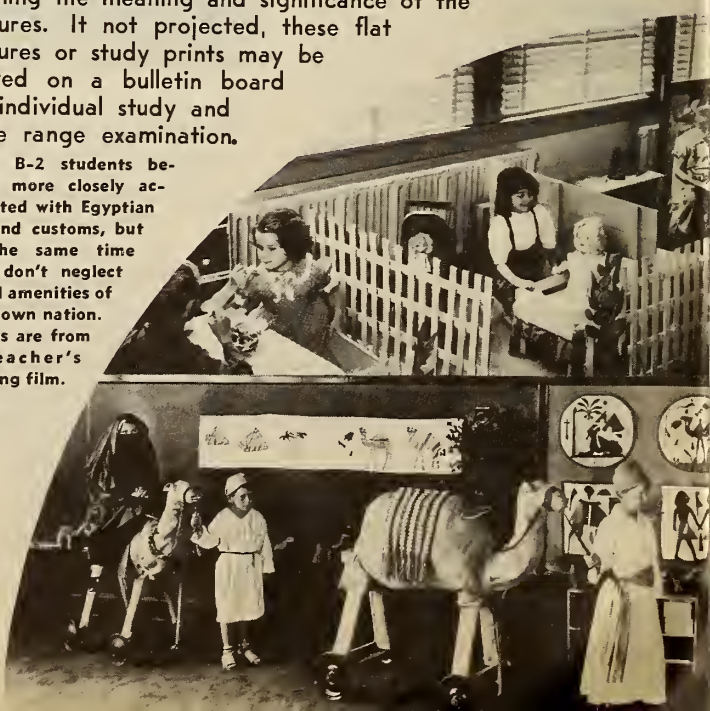
As the unit progresses creative writing in prose and verse may be reproduced on cellophane sheets to go between plain glass slides. This is for pupil appreciation, constructive comment, and motivated reading. One profits here by projection, which compels attention, by semi-darkness, which excludes distraction, and makes possible a minute study of all of the material reproduced.

An exhibit table can be arranged for a collection of Dutch articles, some brought in, others constructed in the classroom.

The sand table with its miniature models of Dutch homes, windmills, dikes, canals, tulip fields, dog carts, etc., gives opportunity to illustrate and emphasize various features of the story of the "Dutch Twins" as well as afford children an opportunity to express their ideas. It must be remembered that objects on the sand table must be in proportion and made according to scale.

The principal has returned from a trip to Holland and has brought back photographs, post cards, and other flat pictures. These if projected on the opaque machine are valuable for group study, discussion, and analysis. Committee members, in some instances, may be responsible for explaining the meaning and significance of the pictures. If not projected, these flat pictures or study prints may be posted on a bulletin board for individual study and close range examination.

Here, B-2 students become more closely acquainted with Egyptian life and customs, but at the same time they don't neglect social amenities of their own nation. Scenes are from a teacher's training film.





## PIRATES, AHOY!

### THE BUCCANEER

Cast: Fredric March, Franciska Gaal, Margot Grahame, Akim Tamiroff, Walter Brennan, Anthony Quinn, Ian Keith, Douglas Dumbrille, Beulah Bondi, Robert Barrat, Fred Kohler, Hugh Sothorn. Screen play by Edwin Mayer, Harold Lamb and C. Gardner Sullivan. Produced and directed by Cecil B. De Mille for Paramount.

Cecil B. De Mille's penchant for historical productions asserts itself again in this robust tale of Jean La Fitte, public pirate number one, whose sudden burst of patriotism saves the day for Andrew Jackson's forces at the battle of New Orleans.

While history may have been tampered with in spots, for dramatic effect, the picture as a whole is excellent entertainment, provides many thrills and laughs.

Biggest moment of "The Buccaneer" is, of course, the battle of New Orleans. Especially spine-tingling is the unswerving bravery of the Scotch highlanders who stolidly march, in close formation, to their death without a man of them reaching the cotton bale breastworks of the city's defenders.

Thrilling, also, is the mutiny of Boss La Fitte's pirate crew, the surprise raid of the United States fleet upon Barataria, the mass flight of the privateers from their stronghold, the burning of Washington by the British.

But while there are exciting moments aplenty, it remains for Akim Tamiroff, in true piratical fashion, to theft the picture's acting honors with his broad comedy. As Dominique You, erstwhile cannoneer of Napoleon, Tamiroff gives the best character performance seen in a long while.

Highest praise is due, also, to Fredric March as Jean La Fitte, Franciska Gaal as the little Dutch immigrant, Hugh Sothorn as Andrew Jackson, and others of the strong supporting cast.

While the film is overlong and gets off to a rather slow start, these are but minor points in a well-rounded production.

## PAINT-POT FANTASY

### SNOW WHITE AND THE SEVEN DWARFS

Cast: Snow White, Queen, Prince, Doc, Grumpy, Dopey, Happy, Bashful, Sneezy, and Sleepy. Also, assorted animals. Based on the famous Grimm brothers fairy tale. Produced by Walt Disney.

Not only is the pen mightier than the sword, but its powers are limited solely by the imagination.

A poetic symphony of color, fantasy, and creative daring, Walt Disney's first feature length cartoon has made cinema history, points the way to a new art form of untold possibilities. "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs" employs every technical device known to its flesh-and-blood brothers—music, montage, dramatically constructed story, beauty of setting, camera flexibility.

But this \$1,500,000 paint-pot whimsy, produced after three years of painstaking labor, is more "animated painting" than cartoon, is closer to Rembrandt than to Mickey Mouse. Especially rich in pictorial charm are the forest and mountain backgrounds, their reality being considerably enhanced by the third-dimensional effect of the new multiplane camera. And in the eerie scene where the villainous queen pilots her craft across the lake to carry the deadly apple to Snow White, one can almost feel the clammy caress of the fog.

Characters, with their interesting and clear-cut personalities, hold interest throughout, are drawn with a strict regard for naturalness. The animals are animals and do not speak, although, in some cases, they are gifted with amusing human traits. (Watch the frustrate turtle!)

Although a light fantasy spun of dream-stuff and moonbeams, "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs," in its artistic perfection, will delight adults as well as children. The cartoon has definitely come of age.

## OLD AND NEW

### IN OLD CHICAGO

Cast: Tyrone Power, Alice Faye, Don Ameche, Ajice Brady, Andy Devine, Brian Donlevy, Phyllis Brooks, Tom Brown, Sidney Blackmer, and a cast of thousands. Screen play by Lamar Trotti and Sonya Levien. Associate Producer, Kenneth Macgowan. Director, Henry King.



DARRYL ZANUCK

"In Old Chicago" is another triumph in understanding the demands of the motion picture conscious audience—a triumph that is earning its reward at the box office.

The audience is fascinated by seeing history in the making, the momentous conflict between the old forces of Chicago, representing slums, vice and corruption, and the reforming zeal of the newly elected mayor, is revived with a strange, almost invigorating vigor. It transplants us into the picturesque Chicago of the 60's and 70's: carriages sinking into the muddy streets; belles in their hooped skirts; old amusement places with their stage shows, gayety and songs; election processions and celebrations of the early days; the stirring stampede of cattle and the threatening mob which came with the fiery inferno that wiped out a third of the city.

The topical theme of the struggle for a strong and clean city is skillfully woven by screen writers Lamar Trotti and Sonya Levien into the relationship of the brothers Jack and Dion O'Leary—of this "strange tribe O'Leary."

Mr. Zanuck can talk himself hoarse proclaiming that his purpose is not art or education, but box office. We know that is what he is paid money for. However, for us it is important that in exploitation of box office topics and their treatment he consciously or unconsciously follows the trend dictated by the new constructive and cultural power which has arisen—that of the "motion picture-conscious audience."

—MARK OWEN.

## BRAVO, MR. SELZNICK

### ADVENTURES OF TOM SAWYER

Cast: Tommy Kelly, Jackie Moran, Ann Gillis, May Robson, Walter Brennan, Victor Jory, David Holt, Victor Kilian, Nana Bryant, Olin Howland, Donald Meek, Charles Richman. Screen play by John V. A. Weaver. Directed by Norman Taurog. A Selznick International Production.

Most beautiful use of color and photography yet seen is this boyhood classic brought by David O. Selznick and Director Norman Taurog "out of the heart of Mark Twain into the hearts of the world."

An episodic, swift-moving series of black-outs that build up to a climax and then suddenly snap off leaving the audience breathless, the story provides a punch-tempo that maintains interest throughout.

Lovers of Mark Twain will recognize all the essential elements of the novel—the fence white-washing, the Bible school episode, the attendance by the boys of their own "funeral," the eerie graveyard scene, the cave sequence, and many others.

Amazing was the naturalness and charm of young Tommy Kelly, an unknown, inexperienced lad from New York's Bronx, who was chosen for the role of Tom Sawyer over 25,000 applicants. Credit must be given, also, for Ann Gillis' Becky Thatcher.

Undoubtedly one of the best pictures of this or any other year, "The Adventures of Tom Sawyer" should be seen, not only by every youngster, but also by every adult who would like to re-live his own childhood and by everyone, for that matter, who loves quality screen entertainment and artistic perfection.

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## VISUALIZING THE CURRICULUM

The Cordon Co., N. Y., 1937, 320 p., \$3.50  
Charles F. Hoban, Charles F. Hoban, Jr., and Samuel B. Zisman, Authors

Reviewed by Robert F. Purinton

A new book, *VISUALIZING THE CURRICULUM*, has all the answers for many teachers who will use the material in conjunction with their functional teaching.

Chapter Four, *THE MOVING PICTURE*, undoubtedly will stimulate much interest among the many 16mm educational film enthusiasts. Note the following interesting excerpts:

"The time will come when courses of study will include references to films as well as to books, pamphlets, etc. Some day some forward looking publisher will produce films to accompany his textbooks and to portray those aspects of experience which can be better presented in the motion picture than by any other means."

Within the pages of fascinating reading on the moving picture, there are sections dealing with: Sources of Film Power, Functions of Instructional Films, Types of Films Available for Instruction, Values of Motion Pictures in Instruction, Classification of Instructional Films, Teacher-Made Motion Pictures, and Teaching Motion Picture Appreciation.

The above is a sample from but one of the nine chapters, each of which deals with a separate class or phase of visual instruction such as: The School Journey; Objects, Models, School Museum; The Motion Picture; The Still Picture; Graphic Materials; Integrating the Materials of Instruction; Administering a Visual Aids Program; and Architectural Considerations. Each chapter has a separate

Most readers will find this book to be stimulating and helpful. Many teachers, undoubtedly, will study its contents carefully and use its suggestions intelligently. The visual education field may point with pride to this new addition.

## FOOTNOTES TO THE FILM

Lovat Dickson Ltd., London, 1937, 346 p., 18s  
Charles Davy, Author

Reviewed by Frances Christeson

Not for a long time have we had a book like this one, planned as a sort of panel discussion of films and the forces that mold them. Several times lectures given at various universities have been published in an effort to give a balanced, wide view of the three great divisions of this community proposition which evolves as a film—the production element, the distribution channels, and the exhibition mediums. But these collections are long since out of print, and so a whole new collection of opinions based on wider, more recent experience of the many contributors is most welcome.

There is a nice unity about the plan for this book as Mr. Davy sets it forth in his preface and winds up with his conclusions in his own chapter, *ARE FILMS WORTH WHILE?* What goes in between his contributions rounds out in expert fashion what he contends in both places. Seventeen articles written by people who are practicing what they preach leave one with the notion that here are seventeen people with the courage of their convictions—whether or not you agree with them is beside the point. They state their premises well, and proceed to elucidate in agreeable, and in most cases, forceful prose, why they take the stand they do.

Part Three is the really exciting part. These four articles stir the imagination, rouse one's ire at the stupidity of certain groups which are retarding the film in its determination to demonstrate how it alone among the other arts can best say certain things. John Grierson, Alexander Korda, Basil Dean and Maurice Kann all speak with authority and the background of experience. They all have the wit and the foresight quality as soothsayers for the cinema.

## BUCCANEER

(Continued from Page 11)

The director's reaction to this preliminary sketch was that La Fitte's stronghold suggested a modern fort rather than a pirate hide-out. Anderson prepared a second and a third version of his idea until a design was made which was simplified to the satisfaction of all.

To further the planning of action and camera positions, a model was made of the entire settlement. Barataria, finally founded and built on Catalina Island, was effectively burnt and destroyed in accordance with the requirements of the story.

Authenticity would have required playing many other pirate sequences among oak trees covered with Spanish moss. Here Dreier and Anderson suggested, and it was agreed, that a cypress swamp, also moss covered, but with distorted forms and contrasting lights would make for better photography. Spreading oaks with moss flying, although picturesque, to be sure, might be too soft in texture. A more menacing and dramatic effect was desired. The weird, bulging trunks of cypresses offered greater opportunities for escape. Here the pirates would be at home, the townspeople out of place.

For other scenes, such as those in the Cabildo in New Orleans and the President's Palace in Washington, the usual method of reproduction from existing records and blue-prints was employed.

Preparation and production work on "The Buccaneer" indicates, that even with all the historical data, frequently controversial, at times the views of prejudiced writers, and with all the legend, a director of a historical feature picture has a difficult course to steer. He knows that in the end he must select for his use such elements as best amplify the story, that it is unwise to introduce detrimental historical quantities however authentic. Often it is necessary to insert fictitious material for dramatic construction. His film must tell a story. Ten or twelve reels of historical documentation alone might be extraordinarily dull. This is true, also, of the purely pictorial aspects: settings, costumes, properties. As photographic records of museum pieces alone they would evoke little interest from the film spectator.

## STREAMLINED

(Continued from Page 17)

"The character must come—bingo! The moment you see them on the screen you must know the 'heavy,' the hero, the heroine. They must be easily recognizable types. That is why casting is so important."

Although the average shooting time of a two-reeler is only eight days, they receive as much attention from the studio as does a feature production, Bucquet said. The best stories and casts possible are obtained, and usually they cost nearly as much as the average "B" production, which they may some day replace. Six of the "Crime Does Not Pay" films are turned out annually.

Training in the short-subject field is valuable for the prospective director of feature pictures, according to Bucquet.

"It develops in you an instinctive nose for essentials," he says. "My two years directing shorts has been the most valuable training I have had. It is much easier for me now to see things that can come out of a film, without destroying dramatic values. In fact, some omissions would aid them."

The scope of the short subject in its probe of the arts has only been touched, predicts Bucquet, who holds, however, that the function of the film is to ENTERTAIN, not to teach.



## BETTMANN

(Continued from Page 6)

interest and credence to an historic film; why aren't they utilized more often?

Q.—Could you suggest a few off-hand?

A.—I think so. For instance, in the Middle Ages, people afflicted with insomnia were lulled to sleep by the sedative strains of a hired violinist. Then, in the Elizabethan era, trunk hose were generally worn which were so tremendous as to permit a man to carry in them "a pair of sheets, two table cloths, ten napkins, four shirts, a brush, a glass, a comb and a night cap!"

Q.—That's a natural for a comic scene.

A.—And more than that, it gives an insight to the period. A film about London in the early part of the 18th Century might well include the following episode: A man is doggedly carrying an umbrella over his head while people in the streets laugh and urchins throw stones at him. Comment can be made that this man had to sign a pledge for the local government, promising to behave himself. All because he was Jonas Hanway, the first man to use an umbrella in England.

Q.—I see what you mean. Here is unusual information in amusing form, a commentary on the mechanical development of the time and a scene that fits into the action.

A.—Right. Another one might be used to supplement the railroad train sequence in "Victoria, The Great." When the first railroads were introduced in Europe, people seriously went about making protection clothes with heavy wadding as insurance against injury from these iron monsters. Again, such a scene would amuse and indicate something about the psychology of the period.

Q.—Do you have any definite suggestions as to how historical films can be improved?

A.—Yes. Mainly by a more careful study of the numerous pictorial representations of the period to be filmed. To a lesser degree, literary sources will also prove productive. Generally, though, artists drew their pictures with less equivocality and more detail than can be found in the works of contemporary writers.

Q.—How about actors and other people concerned in making such films? What should they do?

A.—Actors, scenarists and directors, in order to combat the anachronistic movements and gestures now prevalent, should make an exhaustive study of the

characters and their times. Players would then be able to approach their roles with a knowledge of physical and social characteristics upon which to build their creative portrayals.

Q.—How do you think your suggestions would work out as far as entertainment and audiences go?

A.—I feel they would make more human, more informative and better-remembered films. Contemporary anecdotes and incidents I have described would highlight the life of the times while providing amusing and educational background for the action.

Q.—What do you think historic films of the future will be like?

A.—For one thing, they will tend to dramatize and humanize, rather than glorify. History, like government, sometimes endures revision. At this time, history is changing from an overemphasis of personalities to dramatized documentation of social and cultural phenomena. I hope some day to see historic pictures, not of people like Henry the Eighth or Captain Bligh or the Prince of Wales, but people without names, our anonymous ancestors who really made history.

## LOCATIONS

(Continued from Page 9)

the picture. At long last, the camera could get in its work. Then the whole proceeding had to be reversed, the horse lowered, and the equipment carried down.

R. C. Moore, Location Manager at Twentieth Century-Fox Studios, tells of using the front of a house in a suburb of Los Angeles for the filming of a Jones Family picture. The owner of the house was being paid \$100 a day. All went well—the first day. When the crew arrived the following morning, they found one of the next-door neighbors complaining bitterly about the noise and confusion which was keeping her little baby from its beauty sleep. So the baby and its mother had to be pacified—to the tune of \$25.00 per day!

Quite obviously, then, the life of a location manager is far from passive. Every picture presents new and different problems. Every change in place or in weather must be met with resourcefulness and ingenuity. Every producer, director, star, cameraman, and sound technician presents problems to be solved by the location manager, and each must be pleased with the solution.

It's a twenty-four-hour-a-day job that these location managers have, and they are entitled most assuredly to more than the meager recognition they receive.

## CINEMA PROGRESS' PICTURES

The list below, page by page, shows the sources from which pictures in this issue were gathered: Cover—Roland Reed Productions.

- 1—Selznick-International.
- 2—T. It. to L. bm. Roland Reed Productions. L. rt. U. S. Department of Agriculture.
- 3—U. S. Department of Agriculture.
- 4—March of Time.
- 5—Columbia Picture Corp.
- 6—Bettmann Archive.
- 7—Samuel Goldwyn.
- 8—M. J. Hungerford.
- 9—U. It. Paramount; c. and bm., Columbia.
- 10-11—Paramount.
- 12—U. It., Selznick-International; cr. William Dieterle; U. rt., Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer.
- 13—U. It., Earl Thiesen; U. rt., J. Eugene Harley; L. cr., Norman Alley.
- 14-15—(1) Gaumont-British; (2) Foreign Film Exchange; (3) Grand International Theatre (Los Angeles); (4) Grand International Theatre; (5) Grand International Theatre; (6) Foreign Film Exchange; (7) Amkino; (8) Grand International Theatre.
- 16-17—Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer.
- 18-19—Paramount.
- 21—L. E. Lang and L. H. Ressegger.
- 22—Henry A. Linek.
- 23—Irving P. Krick.
- 24-25—Donald P. Bean.
- 26—U. It., Fred Orth; L. rt., Visual Education Department, Los Angeles city schools.
- 27—Twentieth Century-Fox.

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## INDUSTRY

(Continued from Page 7)

from contemporary books and magazines, including Stanley's autobiography. Four copies of each, carefully indexed, were given the director, art director, and property department. It is up to these persons, plus the writer, to make a selection from the mass of material gathered by the research department, to determine what incidents, etc., will best capture the spirit of the times and, at the same time, "point up" dramatic values, produce a well-knit, interest-sustaining story.

"The average person has no idea what pains are taken to be accurate," declared Miss Richardson. "If they only could see from OUR side how many things ARE used from the vast amount of reference material available, for every source open to the scholar and historian is open to us.

"It isn't any easier to write a perfect book than it is to produce a perfect motion picture. One can look at a particular picture and say that this and such should have been done. But how many books are perfect? Not very many. And so it is with the film."

Also quick to rise to the defense of the industry was Dr. Herman Lissauer of Warner Brothers:

"Dr. Bettmann's criticism of historical pictures is a matter of personal judgment and is not the opinion of the general public. I do not think we have lost the spirit of the times in the historical pictures of today. It seems to me that a picture striving for accuracy could hardly be over-accurate in detail. That seems to be his main charge. Warner Brothers made a thorough research into its historical pictures, and you will find the utmost accuracy in architecture and dress."

More aroused was Mrs. Natalie Bucknell, head of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer's research department, who declared:

"People are so apt to criticize because they do not know what is being done. In making pictures, we have to think of production problems, and when we change historical facts or alter situations, we do it purposefully. It is seldom that we make mistakes because of ignorance.

"What he (Dr. Bettmann) should do is come out and see how we do things."

## DENTAL FILMS

(Continued from page 22)

### LIGHTING

Owing to the fact that space is quite limited when making dental pictures it will be necessary in most instances to confine the lighting to one source for the close-ups. The writer uses a cluster of four No. 1 photofloods in a single unit. This lighting unit is home-made, utilizing desk lamp reflectors and a music stand base. Setting these lights at a distance of two feet generally calls for an F.8 stop when using Type A Kodachrome.

### EXPOSURE

No dental picture should be attempted without the aid of a reliable photometer. It is advisable and economical before starting a picture to make a few test shots with records of various set-ups and lighting arrangements to assure success.

To determine the proper exposure with a meter for very small objects it will be necessary to substitute a larger object such as a sheet of paper or fabric having similar color and brightness. When taking meter readings check the exposure at the point of interest and let the other areas take care of themselves.

### FILM

Since color plays such an important part in the esthetic requirements of dental restorations and in the true rendition of normal pathological conditions, Kodachrome seems the logical choice of film. Care should be taken when using Type A that all daylight is excluded.



## CAMERA SECRETS

(Continued from Page 23)

"everybody talks about it, but nobody ever does anything about it" no longer holds true—at least in the case of Cal-tech's Dr. Krick. Dr. Krick has made many films of cloud motions and formations, and has found them invaluable for teaching students in his meteorology classes.

Last year Dr. Krick made flights between New York and Boston, making weather charts which enabled pilots to study conditions aloft. Without such remarkable advances in the study of weather records, the aviation industry would be greatly handicapped.

Dr. Krick, who is director of the meteorological department at Cal-tech, has taken 5,000 feet of film during the past year, obtaining weather records that will be extremely important in years to come. The film consists mainly of cloud studies.

Another film, consisting of animated weather maps, was made at the Disney studio under his supervision, and is used to illustrate conditions affecting the disastrous New Year's flood of 1934 in Los Angeles. Snapped one at a time, as are the Disney cartoons, they are in analysis of various bodies of wind and their reactions to one another.

The pictures are used in course work at Cal-tech, have furnished important contributions to the weather records of our country.

Through such advancements in the study of the human larynx and the weather, motion picture photography has established for itself a most important place in medical research and teaching. Certainly, in time to come it will play an ever-increasing role in extending the scope of man's knowledge.

# VISUALIZING THE CURRICULUM

By Charles F. Hoban, Charles F. Hoban, Jr., and  
Prof. Samuel B. Zinman

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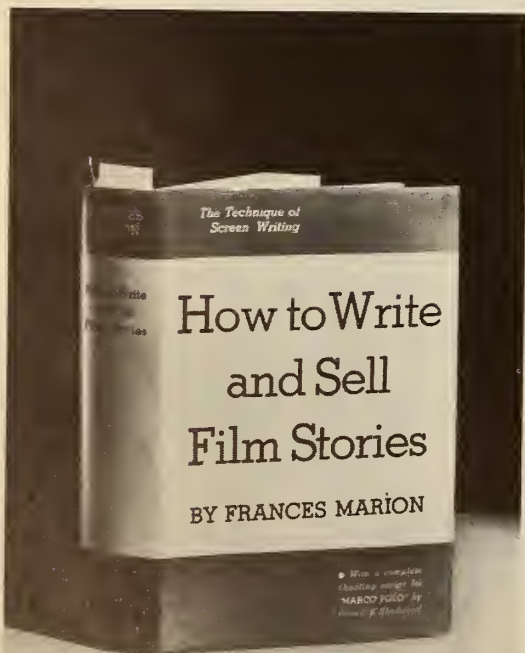
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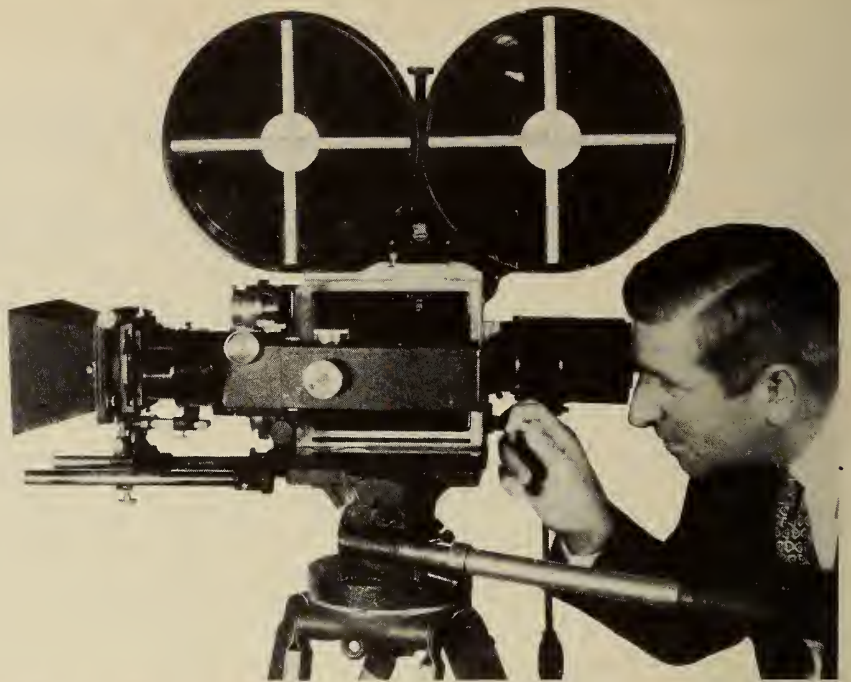
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# CINEMA PROGRESS

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MAY - JUNE

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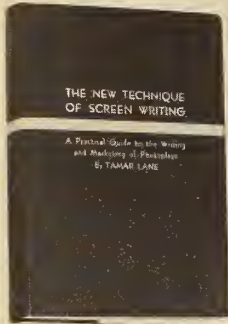


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# CINEMA PROGRESS

THE FILM AND LIFE

Vol. 3 No. 2  
MAY-JUNE, 1938

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### ARTICLES

What Makes a Showman?	2
Sound's Interesting	4
The Movies Go Upstairs	6
The Silly Cycle	8
Mysterious Mr. Hitchcock	9
Fritz Lang, Master of Mood	10
Emotions in Shorthand	12
Cooperative Imagination	14
Cold Chills and Cold Cash	16
Documentary Discovers America	18
Music in a Hurry	20

### DEPARTMENTS

With the Amateurs: So You Want to Be a Producer?	22
The Film and Education: Why Motion Pictures for Primary Grades?	23
Educational Film Production in Los Angeles Schools	24
The Film and Books	26
Picture Parade	27
Cinema Progress' Pictures	33

ADVENTURES OF ROBIN HOOD  
WARNER BROTHERS  
WILLIAM KEIGHLEY  
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DIRECTORS



## "EMOTIONAL METEOROLOGY"

"SELDOM go to the movies because they are all the same." Such letters received by the editor may seem contradictory inasmuch as producers spend millions on pictures in their efforts to give the audience variety, lavishness, and glamour. However, the opinion of our humble but insistent readers is confirmed by such a seasoned and powerful leader of the industry as Samuel Goldwyn, who recently told a New York reporter that "the public is on strike against inferior films." "It used to be that the public was afraid to go to a theatre for fear the B pictures would be bad; now it's both A and B pictures," he said.

Our readers who are carefully shopping for their pictures and who create a movie opinion in many communities and schools, want sincerity and spontaneity of emotions, not a gilded concoction of artificialities, made by formula and covered on the surface by gorgeous settings, costumes, and names.

The new audience responded very readily to such human and sincere comedies as "Mr. Deeds Goes to Town." They are amused by "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs" because in the homely gnomes they recognize humans with all their foibles, genuineness, and humor. Although it is pure fantasy, the fairy tale and the animals are only a guise under which the public recognizes the fight of present-day humanity against the haughty, violent, and overpowering forces of life. It appeals to their sense of social justice.

Box-office returns reveal that the motion picture industry can resist general depression much longer than any other industry, and can emerge from it sooner. Several pictures with vital themes and sincerity can start a new upswing. It depends upon striking a new vein of emotional interest. Therefore, a research into the trend of the "emotional weather" of the modern public would be timely and worthwhile. In cooperation with intelligent observers and exhibitors located in different types of communities throughout the nation, CINEMA PROGRESS is conducting a survey of public opinion in regard to modern trends of taste and interest. A symposium will take place at the annual convention of the Cinema Appreciation League to be held during the latter part of July in Los Angeles at the University of Southern California. Viewpoints of both audience and producers will be exchanged, and a more intensive study of the "emotional meteorology" of the audience will be launched. Findings of the symposium will be treated in succeeding articles in CINEMA PROGRESS. Persons interested in this research may receive questionnaires and material upon request.

B. V. M.

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# WHAT M

**Resourcefulness, honesty, and an understanding of human psychology are essential to success, declares this prominent motion picture pioneer.**

By LOUIS B. MAYER

LOUIS B. MAYER

Barnum was probably the greatest showman in the last one hundred years. He said on one occasion, "There is a sucker born every minute." By that he meant someone whom you can put something over on—someone who is an easy victim for your extensive and impressive advertising. But then comes the other philosophy of Lincoln, "you can fool some of the people some of the time, but you can't fool all of the people all of the time," and I believe Barnum even used that afterwards. I will show you where it, too, has good sense and where you can use both.

If you are managing a theatre and you know what your programs are, weeks in advance, you will know exactly what you are going to offer as entertainment. If you find yourself with a very weak program—and unfortunately your overhead in the theatre goes on just the same, whether the picture is a good attraction or not—it becomes your duty to try and intrigue enough people to come and see the picture you believe is weak. Also, you must strengthen that with whatever entertainment you find to support that weak picture. You have an idea that there are enough people, whom, by clever advertising, you can attract to your house during the run of that weak picture, thereby getting your investment back and meeting your expenses.

And, when you know you are getting an outstanding attraction, you know that if you advertise fine quality, whether it is picture or automobile, the better you advertise, the more clever advertising you apply, the greater will be your sales. Under that qualification you must be honest, because you can fool them only occasionally. There are just enough gullible people to take care of twenty-five per cent of the house capacity, but you want one hundred per cent, and if you fool them two, three, or four times in a row, you have lost their patronage. That is why it is good common sense never to tell a lie, because once that happens—and murder will out—they don't believe you any more. They don't know when you are telling the truth, and that is why I always claim it is foolish to tell a lie. When you tell the truth, if you told it one hundred times, you have only to give the same answer. You must be fundamentally honest with these people that you expect to follow you and believe you.

I had no experience here in California. Sid Grauman, one of the pioneer showmen—and by pioneer I mean a pioneer of fine showmen, who started to establish de luxe theatres at the time when we used to call them Nickelodeons. That was when pictures first started. Grauman pioneered on the Coast, and then, later, another man started de luxe theatres in New York. Nearly all the old-timers looked at pictures as something in the realm of side-shows. It was catch-as-catch-can at that time. But when motion pictures were shown in the Royal Opera House in Europe, people said, "I wonder if that man is absolutely crazy."

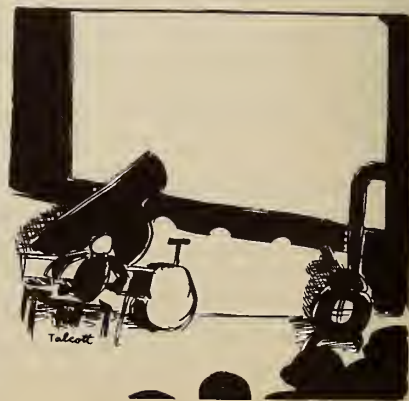
I know from my own experiences that there is another phase which is essential, and that is resourcefulness. I went to Haverhill, Massachusetts, in 1907, during the panic. A friend of mine, who had been in the theatrical business, considered me a very good possibility for a showman, but I have never had any thought of that. I read a newspaper advertisement, that a theatre was for sale in this city of 45,000 population. I forwarded my reply to a box in that newspaper office. I received a reply and took this friend, who was experienced, and inspected the house. They called it the Gem. I later found out that they had another name for it. Nice people called it the Gem. In this particular period in the industry, were men who believed in sensationalism, almost bordering on immorality. I decided to take that theatre over and, at that particular moment, ignorance was bliss for me.

I cleaned it up. There were three competing theatres in the city doing a fine business, having a fine reputation. One belonged to a chain like the Fox West Coast, but not as important as the Fox West Coast is today. One belonged to young Paul Keith and another belonged to Archie L. Shepard and went by the name of "Archie L. Shepard's Famous Moving Pictures."

I had heard that one woman had never entered the Gem Theatre. In fact, the women walked over

(Continued on Page 28)

"They used to have a piano and drummer in the corner and there was a stove to warm the house."





# ...ES A SHOWMAN?

**They are made and not born, says one of the industry's leaders, and cites some personal experiences to prove it.**

By DARRYL ZANUCK

**W**HETHER you be a producer, an exhibitor or a distributor there is one, and only one, fundamental necessity for success. That is a complete knowledge of showmanship. Everything in the entertainment industry begins and ends with applied showmanship.

It has been said that showmen are born and not made. Of course, that may be the case with such as the Great Barnum, Ziegfeld, Dillingham, and even George M. Cohan, where they have inherited a great creative ability. But it is my firm belief that there is a great opportunity today, not only in our industry, but in the theatres for showmen who are the product of ambitious study and work.

Not a season goes by but what we don't have to almost completely revolutionize certain standards of showmanship. The public is fickle. The public can very easily change its mind, and it does. What you may say is a profitable picture to exhibit, to produce, or to distribute today, six months from now could be completely out as far as the public is concerned. You may say, well, it is the ability to get the public's fancy. How can I study, that I may know what the public feels or doesn't feel? You feel if a picture is right; you feel if a story is right, and you feel as you sit in the theatre at a sneak preview out of town or at press previews in one of the big theatres, that if you hear laughter you know that the picture is

"A very few years ago the production of a picture like 'Lloyds of London' or 'The House of Rothschild' would have met with a very dubious reception from the public, which was at that time more star-conscious and more personality-conscious than today."



DARRYL F. ZANUCK

either a success or not. If it is a drama and you feel that it is too long here or it is too short here or it is too fast or that it moves too slowly—you feel the progression of the audience.

Like every business, and the motion picture business is certainly no exception, it calls for work. It is a business that can be very hard and very cruel and it can be very cruel to distributors, to exhibitors, and to producers. You can spend hours and weeks and months in working on a picture only to find when you get the picture finished that it is a flop at the box office. You can't be discouraged by that because very often, later on, that picture will find a hearty reception from the public; but usually it works the other way.

I feel that a producer is no more a showman than a distributor or an exhibitor, although our company owns a great number of theatres and is interested in other theatres. Although we are a distributing company, the last two weeks a great deal of my personal time has been taken up with distribution problems. We are now planning our program for next year and this is a program where the exhibitor and the distributor is as much a part, if not more so, than the producer. This is when the exhibitors and the distributors and producers must combine to think and try and plan a year in advance. That means a year in advance of the public's taste.

Now that makes every producer an exhibitor and an exhibitor a producer. You can't separate them. The problem of the exhibitor is the problem today, definitely, of the producer. You cannot be a successful distributor or exhibitor unless you stand basically and fundamentally on your problems, which are the problems of the production.

Today we find that the most successful pictures are the pictures that are based upon the most important or vital story material. More than ever has the public responded to this type of picture. A very few years ago the production of a picture like "Lloyd's of London," or "The House of Rothschild" would have met with a very dubious reception from the public, which was at that time more star-conscious and more personality-conscious

(Continued on Page 30)





Loren L. Ryder, inspecting film recording machine.

It has often been said that if the proper tone could be obtained on a violin, the resultant vibrations would be strong enough to shake down the walls of the strongest building. However that may be, sound is revealing more of its mysterious potencies everyday before the probings of motion picture technicians. And none of these experiments are more intriguing than those being carried on in the realm of sound effects and audience reaction by Loren L. Ryder, Paramount's director of recording.

Imagine a combination of animal sounds and foreign languages played BACKWARDS, with such a strange, vibratory effect upon the human organism that instant nausea follows! That is exactly what happened when Ryder began his delvings into a realm of sounds never before heard by the human ear. For "The Island of Lost Souls" the director asked for a strange, horrifying sound which the animal men were to use as jargon. He received more than he asked for. Ryder succeeded in blending animal cries with human language. These he played backwards, and as a "topper" he alternately speeded up the loop (a continuous piece of sound track) and slowed it down resulting in a sound much as a Victrola record would give if played slightly off center.

Now it is a well-known fact that many life processes and bodily functions have, as a physiological basis, certain rhythms of a definite frequency. Hunger, for instance, is a rhythmic contraction of stomach muscles. When a sound strikes a sympathetic sounding body, and makes that body vibrate, as does a violin string upon its frame, the resulting sound is what we hear. The body will vibrate if it is of the same frequency. Therefore, when the sound of the animal cries struck the frequency of the director's digestive tract, immediate and spontaneous nausea resulted.

This "backwards idea" was used again in "The Buccaneer" in the jail sequence where La Fitte (Fredric March) comes to free his men. Here, loops of mob noises and several foreign languages were played in reverse, while the sound of clinking metal (during the duel) accompanied the theme song of the picture normally. All of these sounds were dubbed on to one master track.

# SOUND'S *interesting*

The case of the "anticipated echo" is also very interesting. In the current "You and Me," starring George Raft, we find that prisoners in some strict institutions are so incarcerated that their only method of communication is a tapping of a secret code. The picture calls for an instance where a prisoner, going mad, imagines he hears these sounds. The effect was obtained by playing backwards the sound of a coin tapping on cement. Thus, we have a ring followed by a sharp tap. If the madness had been shown in a purely visual form, it would have been accomplished by distortion, or by putting the characters out of focus.

Further extensive experiment in "the realm of the backwards" is being conducted by Ryder, not only with all types of noises, but with music. Instead of hearing a gong, as a sharp tone followed by reverberations, there are reverberations cut short by the striking noise at the end. Pianos, Ryder says, sound very much like organs when played backwards, but, strangely enough, organs do not sound like pianos when played in this fashion. And it was very amusing to hear a song by Gladys Swarthout, in French, played in reverse. The language was recognizable, but the sound was new and pleasing.

Sometimes it is necessary to make a "wild track," which is a sound track made after the action is shot. For example, in "Paradise For Three," Robert Young and Florence Rice were required to make some toboggan and ski scenes. For obvious reasons, sound equipment could not follow them, and the stock library had no tracks of the type of wind whistle caused by rapidly moving skis and toboggans. An ice-palace was therefore rented, professional skaters were shot from tremendous catapults, past a series of microphones, and the sound duly recorded.

But suppose we visit a studio sound department, where all these miracles take place. The first impression is a bewildering one . . .

imposing phalanxes of switchboards . . . battalions of storage batteries . . . coils . . . condensers . . . generators . . . flashing tubes . . . dial-faced robots on wheels. . . all manner of complicated and myterious machinery. It is in this ultra-modern kingdom of electricity that one more fully appreciates the immense strides of science since those first lightning flickers darted from the brass key attached to Benjamin Franklin's storm-tossed kite.



Lightweight recording



# The strange experiments of Paramount's director of recording, Loren L. Ryder, playing animal sounds and foreign languages backwards, is only one of the interesting subjects discussed in this tour through a modern studio's sound department.

By CHARLES ROBERT WEINBERG

First stop is the re-synchronizing room, where sound effects for foreign releases are dubbed in. It is a highly-insulated, concrete sound stage about the size of a theater. Protecting it from outside noises are sound-proof doors two feet thick. Directors and actors are making sound effects, exclusive of dialogue, for a sequence being projected. Thus, foreign releases will have all sound ready, except the dialogue, which is added later in any language desirable.

To the rear of the stage is a control booth where several engineers are checking to see if sound is in correct volume and is synchronous with the action. In a nearby room is the portable recording machinery, consisting of stroboscopes, arrays of wet storage cells, control panels, and microphone pick-up equipment.

Next, a brief stop at the power room, a place cluttered with generators, high-voltage lines, switch panels, and more stroboscopes. The function of this latter instrument is to keep the central sound truck synchronous, by means of resistance rheostats, with as many as eight playback sound tracks. The end of the instrument has a rapidly rotating cone, pierced by light slits. When in "sync," these slits apparently stand still; otherwise, they slowly revolve in one direction or another.

There is also a large sound projection room, with at least 20 machines of four varieties, many of which are exclusively for loops. Loops are continuous pieces of sound track from 2 to 25 feet in length, which provide background noises. These films are diagonally spliced to eliminate the use of "bloops" (patches to ease sound over a splice).

In the record play-back room is equipment for instantaneous playing back of sound that has just been recorded. Thus, errors can be detected immediately, saving time and money which the development of sound track would entail. It also saves the trouble of re-takes later. The records are cut laterally and resemble Victrola records. The stylus cutting these indentations is watched through a microscope riding above the record so that the grooves do not exceed the tensile strength of the acetate or wax disk, whichever it may be.

The actual sound recording machines use a new principle involving a light-valve, but getting a variable area track instead of the usual variable density. The machines



Main amplifier room and control panel for sound recording.

are kept in an immaculate, air-conditioned room so that shrinkage and presence of dust are at a minimum. Scene-take endings are marked by a system of punches which, through light flashes or changes in density, leave no doubt as to their identity. The slit on the light-valve is turned horizontally over a vertical slit. Thus, light comes through in the shape of a small, varying square hole. The beam is magnified horizontally, only, by a specially-ground cylindrical lens. This system has an advantage over the RCA variable area because it can quickly be adapted to making variable density modulations on sound tracks, at no added expense.

Grain and homogeneousness in sound film are important—even more so than action—where errors are somewhat compensated for in the succeeding frames. But a spot on the sound track, however small, gives distortion. A synex strip, used to determine film density in any particular scene, is placed under the microscope and the density color matched to a standard. One side is calibrated in density from one to ten. The other side of the microscope base reads, inversely, in logarithmic functions from zero to infinity.

The "House of Pain," so-called because of the continuous and exacting work that goes on therein, is our last port of call. It is simply a room with the projection machine and control panels from all dubbing projectors. It is a synchronizing room where one master negative sound track is made. Each sound projector can be controlled in volume and speed, or many may be controlled as a unit. The extensive panel board must be operated by five men. Complete dubbing for a picture takes from one to ten days. The monitors selected for this position must not only understand their equipment, but since this step of production is the culmination of all sound work, they must also know music and be dramatically educated.

If the culture of mankind has advanced with science—if the cinema has grown from a nickelodeon to a world institution—so has there passed much current over the wire since that day in 1928 when a tinny voice sobbed out "Mammy!" Far past are those first crude efforts, but still experimentation goes on. To be a good sound technician, now, it is almost imperative to have an electrical or chemical engineering degree. Even to play animal cries backwards.



Microphone pick-up in operation.



# The Millers go upstairs

## Producers seemingly are becoming sky-minded, as the latest picture-cycle is ushered in with M-G-M's "Test Pilot" and Paramount's "Men With Wings."

By LEONARD INGLES

WIND screaming through taut struts . . . two men fighting desperately with the controls as a huge four-motored plane plummets toward the earth thousands of feet below. . . . A rending crash, a burst of flame. . . . Then silence, except for tongues of fire licking the crumpled fuselage. And through the darkened theater's tense audience there runs an electric thrill as the latest air-drama unfolds on the screen.

The cycle of aviation pictures appears to have recommenced. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer has recently completed "Test Pilot," and Paramount is now engaged in the production of "Men With Wings."

"Test Pilot" is the story of a flying fool whose job it is to take untold risks in order that the planes we use may be safe. The role of the test pilot is played by Clark Gable. When he is forced down on a transcontinental dash and finds a lovely Kansan, played by Myrna Loy, he believes he has made another conquest. Infatuated, they marry. She loves him yet hates his flying. She "dies" while he is in the air testing planes and comes to life again when he has safely landed. Spencer Tracy is the Man Friday to both, being mechanic to Gable and confessor to Myrna. The fast and harrowing action will grip everyone, young and old alike.

This picture was made with a minimum of falsity. The recent advances in aeronautic engineering increased the problems of production of this picture. The motors on some of the planes were Pratt and Whitney twin-row Wasps, capable of 1000 and more horsepower, and guaranteed to deliver 780 horsepower. Just try to catch dialogue near one of these motors with its short stacks. One, alone, is sufficient to blast the ears off an observer, yet the dialogue which Miss Loy and Gable carry on beside the idling ship, while proving almost impossible to record, was caught—a great tribute to the persistence of Wallace Wallace, sound engineer.

Another difficulty the sound-men met up with was also attributable to the great advances made by the aeronautical engineers. These new planes were constructed with internal re-inforcing: that is, they have no external struts or wires. This fact allowed no screaming to be heard as the air rushed past the plane. For the sound-men, the planes were a disappointment and a headache, for besides having no dramatic sounds such as the public has generally come to associate with diving planes, the afore-mentioned powerful motors taxed his instruments to the limit. Therefore, these whistling noises had to be dubbed in, because, even with a modern ship with streamlined struts, not much whine could be obtained. The solution was found in turning the strut around so that it no longer was streamlined. Then it whistled.

When it came to making these sounds appear real and not a recognizable sound effect, the engineers found only one solution. A cyclic drone and whine conveyed the best impression of realism, and that is what you hear.

The great speed these modern day planes are capable of developing proved to be almost another insurmountable obstacle for the cameraman, Ray June. How could he follow such a fast dive and keep it within the frame of his camera finder? This task was accomplished by what might be called step photography. Several planes, all at different levels, photographed the descent of the plane as it hurtled into camera range.

Producer problems also arose. Some of the action made at San Diego had to be sandwiched in between the great activity of that aerial base.

In addition to, and despite, these obstacles was the general air-mindedness of the cast and staff. Gable was apt to try to sneak in a few more hours of flying time. The sound-man, Wallace, desirous of getting in some time, had a special light-weight sound equipment unit made up. This, weighing one-half as much as the regular equipment allowed him to be in the air, too. But when the time came to preview the air saga, the contagiousness of the flyers air-mindedness must have spread to others in charge, for the picture was previewed in a giant bomber. To date, this picture is proving a great box-office attraction.

Now let us see what Paramount is doing with William Wellman's "Men With Wings," written by Wellman and Carson. This story traces the rise of aviation since 1903, carrying it up to the present day. The entire production is to be done in technicolor, and should provide excellent screen fare for those who like to sink their teeth into something meaty.

Three volumes of data were collected by Wellman. Many interesting factors of the period come to light, illustrating the thoroughness with which the whole story has been written. Among them are scenes and sketches of a fictional town in Maryland as it might have appeared in 1903. Even an observation station of the period was not too insignificant to include in this collection. In fact, it was estimated that enough material had been collected to supply data for five feature-length pictures.

Wellman has definite ideas about pictures. Holding a triple contract allowing him to produce, write, and direct, he is in a unique position to do what he desires. He prefers the contemporary scene for his material. He has done "A Star Is Born" and "Nothing Sacred," both in color, a medium he avers he will never leave. His desire to be first in introducing something new induced him to make "Men With Wings" in color.

In this story, starring Fred MacMurray, Ray Milland,





Clark Gable pulls Spencer Tracy from the flaming wreckage of a plane that "couldn't take it" in this spectacular crash scene from M. G. M.'s "Test Pilot"

Louise Campbell, and Andy Devine, the tempo was to be kept so fast that the authors were tempted to write "TEMPO" at the top of each page of the manuscript as a reminder.

Wellman strives to explain everything to the most minute detail for his audiences. It is widely known that he prefers large, fleecy, cumulous clouds such as arise following periods of inclement weather. His purpose in using these irregularly shaped clouds is two-fold. Not only are these clouds used as backgrounds because of their pictorial beauty, but they provide an orientation for the audience viewing the action. That is to say, the audience learns from seeing these clouds which is top and which is bottom. When an aeroplane flies upside down against this background, the audience is able to recognize the fact and thus orient themselves to the action.

Moreover, it is hoped that that part of the audience which hasn't flown will be able to notice the map-like regularity which rolls ceaselessly below. Truly, viewing that in color is one thrill which is apt to fade with recurring air travel.

The camera men had their troubles in the photographing of this spectacle, also. Using the very expensive and rare Technicolor cameras, new problems arose. New mounts were necessary to film some of the shots. In the most conventional set-up, the camera was attached to the airplane machine-gun mount. This enabled the camera to be swung about, raised and lowered fairly easily. As

shown in the accompanying illustrations, the camera was mounted also on the fuselage of the plane behind the cockpit—the so-called saddle mount. That illustration, shows the technicians setting the focus for action in the cockpit. The other illustration shows the wing-mount of the camera on the Stearmen camera-ship. As you can well imagine, the angles had to be decided from which there would be a minimum of interference of wings and other structural elements.

In addition to the technical difficulties the camera-men were experiencing, the sound-men were having some of their own. They noticed that the sound of a rising plane after a dive was without dramatic value such as the dive or zoom has. By reversing the sound of the dive and using that backward sound for the sound accompanying the upward climb, the whole action was endowed with the desired dramatic value without loss of tempo.

No doubt the men at Paramount will encounter similar difficulties such as were met at other studios filming air stories. However, with the aid of such advisors on technical matters as Paul Mantz and the various sound and camera technicians, not to mention that of Director Wellman, himself a flyer of no mean ability, we may well conclude that they have the situation well in hand. In fact, the aerial shots have already been completed, use having been made of the Spring weather and its beautiful clouds. And when this venture is launched, may it, too, have a happy landing.





**"Lunatic fringe" movies are on the way out, says one of the industry's best-known writers.**

By FRANCES MARION

**A**NY one who has studied the components of the films released in the past few months might reasonably arrive at the conclusion that to make a film salable at the present time it is desirable to include in it what may be called a touch of surrealism. In a number of these more or less successful pictures even the hero and the heroine are implied by the script to emulate to a flattering degree the monkeyshines of the Ritz brothers or the pie-crashing slapstick of the earlier days of the screen. Tumbling acts by the principals, jam-throwing, hair-pulling, jazzing up a wedding ceremony, all in the name of good hearty comedy, apparently were not sufficient, for beyond these we have been offered a lunatic fringe of completely insane and fatuous action with no purpose except the hope that its very lack of sanity might make an audience laugh. And it has done so, for a while, but the laughs are becoming weaker and less frequent and the audiences are noticeably bored. The silly cycle is fading out, and fading out more rapidly than those of the ever recurring cycles that had greater merit.

In any event, the writer of film stories must look to the oncoming cycles of picture fashions rather than to the present one, be it ever so popular, for the public tires easily of pictures that portray the same trimmings and are loyal only to certain fundamentals.

It is true that film production will continue to run in cycles or rounds of pictures with similar features or subject matter. Since "Gone With the Wind" was purchased by a studio and its production planned, at least five additional stories with Civil War backgrounds have been purchased for immediate production in the hope that the interest in that era that was aroused by "Gone With the Wind" will sustain the others. Thus the stage for a cycle of Civil War pictures is already set. Even the casual follower of screen releases can recall cycles of war, sea, aviation, romantic, realistic, musical, gangster, costume, adventure and mystery pictures. Some have lasted longer than others because they included pictures that were sound regardless of their relation to the fashion of the day.

The factors that initiate these cycles are varied. Some current event of importance frequently starts one. The opening of an oceanic air route is said to have revived interest in aviation pictures. A Metropolitan Opera star appeared in a successful production with the result that several studios promptly engaged opera stars for ensuing pictures. A comedian scored a success with a novel type

of comedy and the same type thereafter appears in films released by different studios. Best-selling novels with picture possibilities frequently start a cycle. Experienced scenarists watch the trade magazines and the film columns for news of the purchases of such books, but keep in mind the time that may elapse before they can be produced. Anything that starts public interest along some particular line will serve to start a fashion. And the last picture in a cycle may be better than the first but if, by the time it appears, the public is tired of that cycle, it will probably fail. The writer, therefore, cannot follow current fashions but must constantly look ahead for something new.

Nearly every successful picture has, under its extrinsic slapstick, vaudeville turns, sensation, music or costuming, one or more of the fundamentals that arouse continuing interest. And these fundamentals sometimes can be discovered by studying re-issues of old films. Motion picture theatres showing pictures made five, ten or even more years ago may be crowded to the doors while houses offering new pictures may be half-empty. The old film may be ridiculous in its costuming, it may flicker or jerk; if it is a "silent" it may suffer the disadvantages incident to the lack of speech and yet in spite of all this have something that brings the public to stand in line at the box-office. And the writer who can discern what its fundamental attraction is has found something that will out-last any cycle.

That kindly, sympathetic, and above all, intimate quality known as human interest is the best paying commodity in picture production and overcomes the risk attending a picture depending largely on a current vogue. "The Jones Family" continues its well-paying career because it presents what people like to think is a normal family in a series of suspense-arousing yet entirely possible episodes. Radio sketches written along the same sound line have met with similar success over long periods of time while smart fads have appeared and disappeared.

The fact that films run in cycles does not mean that the writer is limited in subject matter or theme. Almost any good theme may be presented in different ways. A love story theme may fit an aviator as well as a gangster or a sailor or a singer. And as all stories have not yet been told, neither have all the modes of presenting them been perceived. Stories could be far more vital than they are; could offer greater stimulation to the imagination and to the worth while emotions.

It would be unwise to venture to prophecy concerning the trend of future fashions in pictures because they may be determined or influenced by events that have not yet occurred, but it is safe to predict that sooner or later melodrama, free from sordidness, will have its swing again.

**". . . straight comedy arising from character always will have its place in public favor."**





## Strange case of a British director who has made an art of producing "penny shockers."

By EZRA GOODMAN

When Alfred Hitchcock, internationally renowned English gourmet who dabbles in shadowy psychoses on the side, arrived for a short stay in New York some time ago, a score of Gotham's movie houses took advantage of the occasion to institute revivals of such spine-chillers as "The Man Who Knew Too Much," "The Woman Alone," "Secret Agent," and "The 39 Steps."

The last named of these films, as a matter of fact, was accorded the unique distinction of being publicly advertised as follows:

It was the first instance within recent memory of a director being billed above two top-flight stars.

In order to comprehend this extensive hubbub, usually reserved only for the stars of Hollywood, it is necessary to understand both the critical and popular esteem that Hitchcock enjoys in America. His name, for one thing, is repeatedly mentioned in erudite and esoteric works on the cinema and is often coupled with that of Alexander Korda as representing the flower of the English screen. In 1936, "The 39 Steps" was not only one of the most popular films of the year, but also one of the most highly praised by the reviewers. Quite recently, the veteran critic of one of New York's leading daily newspapers cited a scene from "The Woman Alone" (the moments



Typical of Hitchcock melodrama is this scene from "The 39 Steps," one of the Englishman's best-known productions. He enjoys "shocking" people out of their normal selves, chooses crime stories because they are "the kind . . . I can turn most easily into a successful film."

When Verloc's wife discovers her husband's guilt she stabs him to death and is about to surrender to the police for his murder when, opportunely enough, another bombing wipes out the entire cinema house (including Verloc's corpse) leaving Mrs. Verloc sobbing in the arms of the sympathetic Scotland Yarder.

The quarrel is not with Hitchcock's method, but with his material. His purpose is to provide fast-paced, visually exciting melodramas for moviegoers. He intends, by his own admission, to "shock" them out of their normal selves. If one is perfectly satisfied with art that does nothing but entertain, then good and well—Hitchcock's melodramas

## MYSTERIOUS Mr. Hitchcock

leading up to the explosion of the bomb the boy is carrying) as being one of the truly memorable sequences in the entire history of the cinema and worthy of ranking with the scene where the baby carriage careens down the steps in Eisenstein's "Potemkin."

Hitchcock's melodramatic thrillers, equal in substance to the "penny shocker," quite naturally attract the average moviegoer in quest of an hour or so of exciting entertainment. What endears these films, however, to the intelligentsia is his masterful and subtle execution of material which in other hands would probably become conspicuously shoddy.

The most recent Hitchcock film shown in America, "The Woman Alone," is representative of his work. The story deviously traces the machinations of an unmotivated band of London terrorists, one of whose hirelings is a craven cinema proprietor, Verloc (Oscar Homolka). A handsome Scotland Yarder (John Loder), assigned to keeping Verloc under surveillance, falls in love with the latter's young and pretty wife (Sylvia Sidney). When the mysterious group of saboteurs give Verloc a time bomb with which to blow up Picadilly Square, the spineless Verloc gives the live bomb to his wife's little brother with instructions to deposit it at the Picadilly Station by such and such a time. Carrying the disguised bomb in a box, the boy sets out for his destination, unaware of the real nature of his mission. Enthralled by a passing parade, he lingers too long on the way, and enters a bus just as the bomb explodes, killing everyone in the vehicle.

are probably supreme in their genre. Despite the fact that he is gifted with a mastery of his medium and human insight that must ultimately lead to a greater art, if honestly pursued, Hitchcock seems to have no such lofty aspirations.

Furthermore, Hitchcock's melodramas are not of the most honest and compelling kind. Although he lavishes a keen and searching scrutiny on his characters, they remain lifeless puppets. They are unconvincing, for they are not internally conceived; they have no basic motivation, no essential humanity. The camera selects every salient detail of Verloc's murder, but the murder itself does not affect us, simply because we do not believe in Verloc. Realism, as Willa Cather once remarked, is not a matter of scrupulous, external detail, but of basically essential fidelity to the object, of underlying veracity.

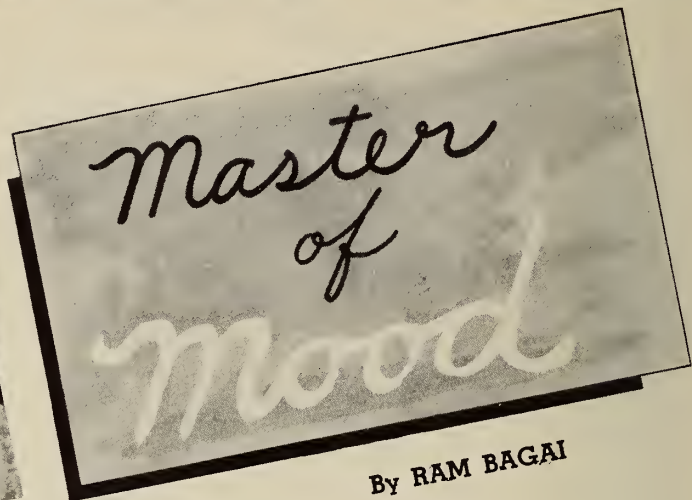
In reply to these criticisms, Hitchcock now offers a refutation in his article on "Direction" in "Footnotes to the Film" (Lovat Dickson, London, 1937). "I know there are critics who ask why lately I have made only thrillers," Hitchcock writes. "Am I satisfied, they say, with putting on the screen the equivalent merely of popular novellettes? Part of the answer is that I am out to get the best stories I can which will suit the film medium, and I have usually found it necessary to take a hand in writing them myself. I choose crime stories because that is the kind of story I can turn most easily into a successful film. I am ready to use other stories, but I can't find writers who will give them to me in a suitable form."



# FRITZ LANG



Fritz Lang looks for an effective camera angle.



hailed as the most colorful director to invade Hollywood since the advent of talking pictures, Fritz Lang is a firm believer in experimentation, loves to delve into unexplored realms of cinematic art. To paraphrase, one might say that the former Austrian army officer steps in where fools fear to tread.

His films usually contain a balanced recipe for both fan and student of the motion picture—contain ingredients that cause the average person to sit up in his seat wonderingly.

But of all Lang's innovations, none is more effective than that used in the opening sequence of his forthcoming picture, "You and Me." After the usual credit titles disappear, the screen turns totally black and a staccato voice is heard above the music, chanting grimly, "You can't get something for nothing;" a harsh music chord follows! Again, "You can't get something for nothing;" again, the discord.

Then comes a fade-in of a department store and the camera pans to the various departments therein, showing the expensive furs, jewelry, furniture, and cash registers filling with money. Over this, the man's voice, half-chanting, half-singing, "You can't get something for nothing; only a chump thinks he can."

From here the story starts and the initial situation shows the person attempting the robbery. This, in general, is the theme of the story and its effect on the audience should prove interesting to analyze.

The first shock we receive is when the screen remains blank after the credit titles disappear; at this moment we become interested, due to the surprise nature of a man's voice booming out of a dark screen and the message he emphasizes. This is something new, and we, the unsuspecting audience, aren't ready for it.

Next interest-catcher is the meaning of his statements, and finally the tone in which they are said, plus the use of the interspersed music chord to heighten the effect. Finally, the audience is shown what is meant, and shown impressively.

Lang, like few other directors, has the quality of com-

bining in his films art and mass appeal, the two most important components of the cinema. However, no artistic picture for its art sake, alone, should be made for the masses, he believes. The motion picture is made for the masses, and if it must be an art, it should be a mass art.

Lang's success in pictures is due to his thoroughness. He even goes as far as to work on the story and aid in its writing; he supervises photography, sound and music, and finally, works closely with the editor, in the cutting of the picture. His sole concern is not just in the direction of the picture, but in all the phases of preparation, including the planning of charts to aid in the timing and movement of the characters. Lang's work does not end until the film is released.

He delves into intense research and study before commencing a picture. In discussing a set for "You and Me," Lang explained that the tempo of that particular set had to be quite rapid. George Raft was to move from the center of the room to the window. Now if the window were too far away it would take him a longer time to reach it. The result would be a wait on the part of the audience till that point was reached by Raft, and so the tempo and movement in the shot would be slow and draggy. So when the set was first built, the tempo and movement of that particular shot had to be studied and charts drawn to build the set the proper distance to allow Raft to move across the room in a short enough time for the desired effect.

Some of the illustrations of "You and Me," published herein, show to what detail Lang goes for authenticity. In the department store scene, Miss Sidney is proving to some ex-convicts that the total loot of the store would amount to some \$200, and how useless a robbery attempt would be. In the store's toy department, where the action takes place, the scene shows Miss Sidney writing on a school blackboard and the ex-convicts sitting on baby school chairs with cradles and toys surrounding them. The contrast here not only provides for humor, but illustrates to these gagsters the futility of the intended robbery. Some of the stills illustrate Lang's use of low-key lighting and indirect suggestion to convey a thought to the audience.



**Always eager to explore little-known by-paths of cinematic art, Paramount's experimental director achieves a striking effect in his latest assignment "You and Me."**

An example of indirect suggestion may be found in the marriage scene of Sidney and Fonda, in "You Only Live Once." The audience knows they are to be married . . . the two walk out of the door with bags in hand; there is a dissolve to a marriage license, dissolve to a wayside hotel sign, dissolve to the signing of the register, "Mr. and Mrs." and dissolve to their room. Now, through the use of four lap dissolves the audience has been told of the marriage and the present location of the two. No marriage ceremony was necessary; it was suggested and without question, understood.

In his earlier picture, "M," to introduce the fact that there was a sex-mad maniac loose, Lang showed a seven-year-old girl bouncing a ball and playing on the sidewalk. She bounces it against a signboard which reads, "\$500 reward for girl kidnapper." Now the audience gets the significance that there is a madman loose, but the child is happily going her carefree way, unaware of any danger. Finally, the kidnapper approaches her ominously, and next we see the street empty, while the ball rolls slowly away. The audience realizes what has occurred and no more suggestion is necessary.

According to Lang, a picture is based on rhythm from the story's beginning to its end. If something is wrong with the rhythm, the audience senses it, and the picture suffers in its appeal.

An illustration of Lang's control of rhythm and tempo, is seen in his latest picture, "You Only Live Once", there is a scene where Henry Fonda escapes from his prison cell to the courtyard where he is surrounded by police. His only help in keeping hidden is a heavy fog that the police searchlights cannot penetrate. Here the use of music, combined with the stealthy movements of Fonda to seek an avenue of escape, increase the gravity of the situation; the searching police at last locate him, but Fonda has captured the police doctor, and by the use of a smuggled gun he shouts to the police and demands to arbitrate—the life of the doctor in exchange for his. Then the dramatic use of sound—police yelling to the unseen



Note the dramatic shadow effect used by Lang in this scene from "You and Me." The German director utilizes trick lighting extensively as an aid in building the proper mood and atmosphere.



Here we see Sylvia Sydney and George Raft all alone in a Chinese restaurant except for assorted varieties of lights and technical equipment, not to mention the director and scores of set workers.

convict and he to them. The dickering takes too long and Fonda's desperate position necessitates a show-down. Here comes into play one of the finest bits of direction by Lang. Fonda shrieks to the police that he will count to twenty, and if he has not been given his freedom by then the doctor will be killed. He starts to count slowly, deliberately, and grimly . . . his life is in danger . . . the doctor is pleading with the police to let Fonda go so that he can be free. Fonda's count rises slowly; the music gets stronger as the final count nears. The police at last agree. Fonda is given his freedom for the moment and the tension is released. Here rhythm and tempo created the proper mood through:

1. The situation.
2. The strong use of music.
3. The foggy atmosphere of the prison courtyard.
4. The low-key lighting.
5. The deliberateness of the acting.
6. The use of counting.

Every Lang-directed picture brings with it some new departure in the subtle use of light and shadow, in sound, and angle shots, in human touches. Some may call Lang's distinctive technique "arty," but most find it interesting and gripping. Certainly it has contributed much to the enrichment of cinematic expression.



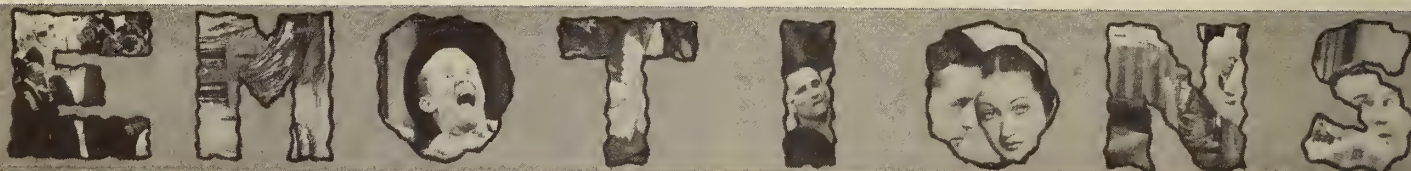
**P**RODUCERS have discovered that audiences can understand a story without being shown every detail of the action. They find that spectators get more out of a picture when they are allowed to use their own imagination and bring their own emotions into play. Or perhaps the producers have shown the public how to do this. In either case, the old, bald, obvious ways of putting a story on the screen are now as antiquated as "The Perils of Pauline." Modern technique requires that emotions be presented in a sort of shorthand method, as it were.

Banquo's ghost is received in the proper spirit, because the ghost was a recognized institution in Shakespeare's time; but ghosts have been invisible to sober persons for so many years now that Valentino's ghost in "The Four Horsemen" is too obvious a device to be accepted wholeheartedly by a modern audience. Today a more subtle method would be devised to show the erring wife's change of heart.

The technique of death in the cinema has undergone a significant change for the better. When the heavy of the old days received a .45 slug in his midriff, it happened right in the eye of the camera, and his writhing fall was spread over an impossible length of time and film. The

**Gone are the old, obvious ways of presenting a story on the screen. The subtle, modern technique operates on the theory that the part is greater than the whole—that is, when public imagination is allowed to fill in the gaps.**

of the scenes were like a five-ring circus; so much was happening at once that the audience was sure to miss some of it. Cutting to a close shot served to bring the important action to the spectator's attention, but in "Wells Fargo" a better device is used. The beginning of a shot shows the surroundings and conditions under which the action takes place; then the camera tracks toward the principal action or object that carries the story. The scene is so composed and directed that, as the camera moves forward, the spectator's eye does not follow any object out of the picture, but remains fixed on the central point of interest. The illusion is of moving toward the action, not through it. Another effective device used in this picture is that of introducing a scene with a high-angle shot setting the mood of what is to follow, and tilting down to the action. Thus the New Year's banquet scene starts



modern technique uses the intelligence and imagination of the audience. When the bandit-banker shoots his partner in "Wells Fargo," we do not see the man fall, but know it by the sudden movement of a chair and the rolling of a hat on the floor. In "M", the murder of the little girl is signified by the rolling of the ball with which she has been playing. In "Bad Man of Brimstone," Berry goes into a hut to argue with an opponent about taxes, while another man waits outside. We hear the dialogue and a shot, and the scene has been put over without recourse to gun smoke.

The indirect method of portraying tragedy is effective because it is true to human nature. There is a crash on the highway; we see a broken man loaded into an ambulance and hurried away. It is commonplace. Death comes to everyone; we are used to it. But sometimes, some little thing lying in the wreckage—the spilled fruit he was taking home, but will never eat; a broken toy, bought for a child he will not see again—these things get us.

In "The Baroness and the Butler," the wheeling of the breakfast cart to the Baroness' room is shown in a close shot of the cart and the butler's feet as he walks. This concentrates attention on the action that carries the story forward. In "Happy Landing," newspapers with headlines about the fight between the orchestra leader and manager are shown in a close shot under Sonja Heine's feet. The feet are identified by the shoes she wears, and her feelings regarding the fight are more dramatically shown by the position and crumpled condition of the papers than they could have been by facial expression or dialogue.

The use of a part instead of the whole is only one of the devices for concentrating attention on a significant character, object, or action. In the older pictures, some

with a shot showing the pillars of the banquet room wreathed in lights, and the scene after the fight in Colorado begins with a view of dark mountains against a lowering sunset.

Inanimate objects, symbolic of emotion or action, are used with good effect in putting over a scene. In "The Last Gangster," as Robinson falls into the street, his hand opens and we see his son's medal for distinguished service. This reveals the motive for the act by which the character meets his death. In "Lost Horizon," when the young Englishman loses his head and shoots at the monk, he misses, but breaks a vase from which the flowers fall, symbolizing the destructive futility of violence. In the same picture, the old Lama dies, and as his head droops, the candle burning beside it goes out.

Sound, also, is used symbolically, as in "Lost Horizon," when lightning and thunder follow the young Englishman's discovery that his girl's face has suddenly become the face of an old woman; and in "The Plow that Broke the Plains," when drum beats are heard instead of hammer blows as stakes are driven into the ground. In "Tabu," a picture with music but no dialogue, the natives of a South Sea island shout in welcome as a schooner approaches. Trumpet blasts, synchronized with their lips, symbolize their emotions. In the same picture, sound and movement are combined to symbolize the sinister influence of the old man who comes to take the girl away as a devotional virgin. While the girl sleeps in her hut, the music changes to a theme identifying the old man, and at the same time his shadow falls on the ground outside, symbolic of the shadow cast on the lives of the girl and boy by the old man. At the end of the picture, when the boy drowns after failing to take the girl from the man, the music is synchronized with his slowing stroke as he swims, as if his arms were beating time for the orchestra.



By EDWARD C. QUICK

The music, accentuating the tragedy of the scene, reaches its climax as the boy sinks in the sea.

Many devices are used for showing lapse of time; clocks, calendars, crowing roosters, milkmen, and other indicators which may or may not form an actual part of the story. In "The Good Earth," the peach tree which grows from a seed at the beginning of the picture to a mature tree at the end is an integral part of the setting. In "A Yank at Oxford," both the passage of time and the progress of a love affair are shown by a series of rapid shots. Taylor and O'Sullivan are shown walking; the autumn season is indicated by leaves on the ground. Winter follows, with snow; and the lovers walk arm in arm. March winds show the progress of the year to spring, and finally the lovers are shown canoeing, in a setting of summer flowers. Action and dialogue enliven the scenes and help to show the progress of romance.

Music, in combination with lighting and action, is prob-

ably the most effective way of communicating mood to an audience. All three are universal languages, and simultaneously appeal to two senses. In "Of Human Hearts," fast, joyous and eager music intensifies the mood of the scene in which the young man rides home to his mother. In "The Buccaneer," as Lafitte's men paddle their frail canoes toward New Orleans to fight for America, the musical accompaniment is fast, buoyant, self-assertive, and confident. Loud martial music is used, also, in "Bluebeard's Eighth Wife," when Cooper, after reading "The Taming of the Shrew," walks belligerently into Colbert's room; but, as "Bluebeard" is a comedy, the result is not victory. In this picture, sight and sound are used in counterpoint during the montage of honeymoon scenes. The picture shows the journey through pleasant surroundings, but the discordant playing of the Wedding March indicates that all is not as well as appearances might indicate.

The usefulness of sound in communicating emotion and feeling may be appreciated by contrasting this scene with many of the shots in "The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari," a silent film depicting the warped impressions of an insane man. The weird shadow patterns in "Dr. Caligari" are effective, but the effort at unreality was carried so far that some of the sets, with their grotesque buildings, suggest Mother Goose rather than insanity. If the picture had had sound as an aid to mood and emotion, there would have been no need of such violent distortion of scenery, and the effect would have been more convincing.

The modern tendency toward brevity of action and elimination of non-essentials—giving the spectator the

high points of the story selected and presented so that he unconsciously fills the gaps by his own intelligence and imagination—is well illustrated by the increasing use of montage. A simple use of this device is in placing the locale of a picture, as in "I Met Him in Paris," with its intercut scenes of Paris and the Eiffel Tower, and in "Navy Blue and Gold," with its shots of Annapolis. In "Gold Is Where You Find It," a montage not only locates the action but introduces the conflict between the farmers and gold miners, which is the theme of the story. "In Old Chicago" begins with short shots showing a covered wagon, a man being dragged to death by his horses, the man's wife and sons digging his grave, and a wooden cross over the grave. Thus briefly the audience is told the situation of the woman and her three boys, and all of their history necessary to be known. In "Behind the Mike," the difficulties of a radio announcer looking for a job are told by one shot of an actual refusal, followed by shots of his feet as he walks, while signs lettered NO flash from all directions. Such clipped and imaginative technique tells the

story clearly and without the use of any time-lapse device or dialogue.

Montage, however, may go beyond the mechanics of story telling, and portray the thought or emotion of a character or the mood of an entire picture. It works well in dream scenes such as the one in "Tabu" where the boy falls asleep thinking of finding, in the water made tabu because of the shark, a pearl that will pay his debts and thus enable him to leave the island. In the dream he sees the Chinese storekeeper fingering the bills he owes; then he sees a pearl. The storekeeper weighs it, smiles, and tears up the bills. Then the boy sees the sinister marker, "tabu," in the water.

The imagination of a character is shown pictorially in "The Life and Loves of Beethoven" when Beethoven is seen at the piano, composing. A montage of the things that are contributing to the musical idea of his composition flashes across the keys of the piano as he plays.

In "Wells Fargo," the mood of rapid aggressive movement that characterizes the entire picture is built up and carried along by fast montages. Horses' hoofs pound the road; wheels plow through dust and mud. The stage comes to a station destroyed by Indians and finds the keepers killed. A shovel turns the earth; hands pile rocks on the graves; the stage rolls away beyond the wooden crosses, and the pounding hoofs and rolling wheels are no longer mere tools of transportation, but symbols of man's daring and tenacity—or what ever it is that sends men out looking for new worlds to conquer.







WALT DISNEY

# coöperative imagination

Being a further revelation of the technical problems encountered in the making of Walt Disney's "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs."

By BORIS V. MORKOVIN

FIFTEEN years ago a struggling American youth tried hard to sell his first animated cartoon comedy, "Alice." Scarcely anybody at that time could divine in the heap of ingenious drawings a foreshadow of "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs," the ink-pot drama which has started a new epoch in the history of graphic cinema.

From a single-handed draftsman, Walt Disney has developed into a conductor of some sort of polyexpressive optical and acoustical orchestra. Under his inspirational guidance 600 enthusiastic young men and women have been orchestrating cinematic pantomime and color with the music of voice, instruments and sound into harmony, rhythm, and drama.

The huge work of co-operative imagination of writers, artists, animators and composers, which resulted in "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs," was achieved with an exactness, a minute division of labor, and the strict organization of a highly mechanized industry. And yet this mechanism was permeated, kindled and moved by the afflatus of the visionary maestro, Walt Disney.

The story was adapted and then re-adapted from Disney's conception and told visually in preliminary sketch highlights; dialogue and song lyrics were worked out by different writers; each promising "gag" situation, such as Snow White's renovation of the dwarf's home, with the assistance of animals and birds, and the washing of the dwarfs, were given over to special gag writers; hundreds of suggestions for details, gags, characterizations, and incidents, including minutia of clothes and background, were added by other workers. All these mass contributions were guided by the spirit of situations and characters which had been established previously in conferences with Disney and checked up by his directors. The five sequences were assigned to five unit directors whose work was co-ordinated again by the supervising director, who served as the immediate interpreter and collaborator of Walt Disney

Unity of vision and consistency of details were achieved by continuous conferences, with sketches popping up and down on the board. The pantomime, gestures, voice and movement of characters were impersonated by members of the conference and were reinforced by the composer at the piano, who presented his version.

After preliminary sketches and texts of lyrics and dialogue were approved, the story was laid out in precision sketches, with all important extreme positions of characters. The detailed work on backgrounds was allotted to special, background artists. Co-ordination and guidance of the animation of the action in each sequence was assigned to the unit directors, who carefully timed each movement, planned it for a precise number of drawings, and gave them to the animators. The animators are a peculiar species of actors, performing all the movements and expression of the characters with their pencils. To do so they have to be, in most cases, good actors, themselves. Therefore, in the drawing of characters—human and animal—the animators are cast for their parts like actors. Each of them has a special knack and different ability of characterization. Some of them excell in drama, subtle action, broad action, the others in elements, clouds, waves, etc.

It is physically impossible for the same animator to draw the whole character alone (sixteen drawings are necessary for a foot of film, the total footage of "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs" in its final version being 7,462.04 feet). Therefore, the same character is assigned several animators, even in the same sequence. Each animator makes only more important key sketches, the rest of the drawing being filled up by his assistant and the so-called "inbetweeners."

In order to maintain the unity and consistency of physical and mental traits of the character, a special character designer carefully worked out the models of Snow

## EVOLUTION OF DOPEY FROM GROTESQUE



1.



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# gination

White and the Dwarfs, showing the characters in every situation, from every angle, and in the throes of every emotion they underwent in the picture. These models were multiplied and given to all animators working with a particular character. Living models, also, were used in the persons of professional actors whose voices in most cases were recorded as the voices of the cartoon characters. They were carefully cast and served as inspirational material for character studies. They re-enacted different scenes, while all important emotional and comedy situations of the cartoon story were photographed by the motion picture camera. The film record of their actions was used by character designers and animators as a sort of movement guide. The animators studied with special care close-ups of lip movements in the pronunciation of vowels and consonants of different words in order to achieve a complete synchronization with dialogue and songs.

In some cases, music was written and prescored before the animation, and records of it were given the animator who had to synchronize all the movements, accents, and impacts of characters with the beats of music. In other cases, music was recorded after animation was finished. In these instances, the music served to interpret the mood of the scene and the feelings of the characters, or to emphasize certain highlights. From the beginning of the work on the picture, continuous experimentation and testing was going on with the proposed musical score, which was played on the piano by the composer during conferences, and was recorded tentatively on film as a piano track. These records were projected with the animated scenes in the "sweat-box" (small projection room where the changes are decided) over and over again till the musical score fit the scene perfectly.

Although the minute timing of action was made by the unit directors, the length of the scenes and their tempo were pre-established by Walt Disney. In establishment of tempo the writers and directors were closely following the construction of the whole story, and the emotional building up of the story to its climax. Walt Disney, himself, at the very beginning, thought through and



Animation room at the Disney studio. Animators go through the various facial contortions of the characters, themselves, in order to get just the right effect.

visualized the sequence where the dwarfs chased the queen. He saw the sequence as a mounting increase in tempo as the queen climbs the rocky crags, with music reaching a climax as she falls.

The building of all the subclimaxes and climax, with their alternating suspense and relief, was checked and rechecked in the "sweat-box" from the point of view of tempo and construction of the whole story. All parts which seemed to drag were mercilessly cut out. No consideration was given the amount of work done and the cost of different scenes—they were removed or reworked with the changed tempo if it seemed to be unduly slow. Thus, about 50% of good work was not used in the final version.

The characters in "Snow White" had more definite and strongly individual characteristics than are required in animal pictures. The most difficult character to animate was Snow White, herself. It was too close to the human being and did not give any chance for caricature or exaggeration. A new impetus was given the studio by the production of "Snow White," for the more careful study of normal human actions and reactions. A special library of drawings, photographs, and films is being collected and the study of pantomime and acting is encouraged among the members of the studio.

## ELFIN TO LOVEABLE MUTE





# COLD CHILLS AND COLD CASH

Why do we enjoy being scared to death? Bela Lugosi, star of "Dracula," offers some personal theories.

**W**HY do people enjoy being frightened almost out of their wits? Why is it there seems to be some exhilarating ecstasy inherent in the raising of goose-pimples, some primeval urge within whose lust is satiated only in proportion to the number of chills evoked and the amount of hairs made to stand on end?

Everywhere—in books, newspapers, motion pictures, and on the radio—are evidences of this macabre human idiosyncrasy which delights in the gruesome, the horrible the fantastic, which continues to baffle psychologists and to fill the purses of smart businessmen who have been quick to realize that cold shivers mean cold cash!

If you should ask the central librarian in almost any large American city, you will be told that a great share of the customers leaving the building with "that satisfied look" on their faces have a bundle of murder under their arms. For, next to love stories, (and running them a close race), the mystery novel is the most sought-after type of fiction.

Scientific advancement, instead of shedding light into dark corners, has served, in one respect at least, only to make them darker. With the advent of the radio, one has but to twirl a dial to tune in on one's favorite ghost or airways sleuth. The motion picture has brought to visible life the Sherlock Holmes, Arsene Lupins, Bulldog Drummonds, Mr. Motos, et al, of the books, while the introduction of sound has added the audibility of screams, shots, and the wail of the wind to complete an illusion of reality one would have thought satisfying even to the most hardened addict.

But such was not the case. The public clamored for more. So, taking up where the fabulous Lon Chaney left off, came Bela Lugosi and Boris Karloff, who raised goose-pimples from Maine to California with "Dracula" and "Frankenstein," respectively, starting a whole new cycle of horror pictures: "Murders in the Rue Morgue," "Night of Terror," "Mysterious Mr. Wong," "The Miracle Man," "The Mask of Fu Manchu," "The Mummy," "The Old Dark House," "The Ghoul," "The Bride of Frankenstein," "The Walking Dead," and "The Man Who Lived Again."



Boris Karloff, Universal horror man, has appeared in more than a dozen make-ups. Beginning at top-center and going clockwise, they are from "The Invisible Ray," "The Dark House," "Night Key," "The Mummy," "Frankenstein," "The Invisible Ray," "The Mummy," "The Raven," "The Dark House," and "The Bride of Frankenstein."

In this scene from the Gaumont-British Production, "The Man Who Lived Again," Karloff, who plays the part of a mad scientist, is shown about to throw the switch of a machine supposedly capable of transferring human minds from one body to another.

And as though to see how much the public could stand, Universal co-starred its two high-priests of horror in three chillers: "The Black Cat," "The Raven," and "The Invisible Ray."

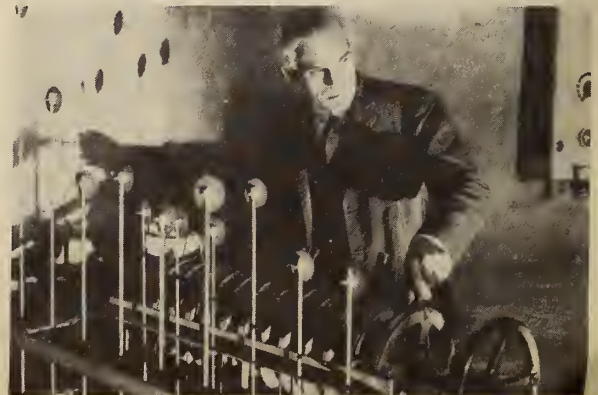
As the significance of the facts becomes apparent, again there arises that perplexing question—"Why?" Why do we Americans enjoy being scared to death? What complex, little-known factors, psychological or otherwise, lie behind it all? Or is there any rational explanation for human morbidity?

Even Bela Lugosi, one of the screen's best known "scarsers," but a charming and cultured gentleman in private life, is not sure, although he has some theories. Fear, he says, has its origins far back in the dawn of civilization.

"I think atavism has a great deal to do with it," explained the Hungarian actor. "For instance, a prehistoric man may never have been burned by fire, yet some primitive sense warns him to be afraid of it. This fear of fire was undoubtedly transmitted from some ancestor who HAD been burned."

In the same way, he believes, these inherited instincts arouse fears in us today which have never been derived from actually passing through terrifying experiences. When we go into a theater and see something horrible transpire upon the screen these long dormant fears come to life again. We get the same electric thrill which must have surged through the blood of a caveman ancestor upon suddenly being confronted by a sabre-toothed tiger. But with this difference: We enjoy all the delicious nuances of the hair-tingling, heart-pounding sensation WITHOUT HAVING TO UNDERGO THE DANGER concurrent with it. Although, for the moment, the experience is real because the onlooker has IDENTIFIED HIMSELF with the actor and suffers with him the emotion of fear, the former can, if the suspense grows too great, look around him in the theater and find solace in the safety of numbers. Taking comfort in the thought that it is only a play, he can let out a "Whew!" and grip the sides of his chair a little harder.

Theater-goers seek such entertainment for the same reason that prompts them to read newspaper accounts of crimes and trials. Also, a peculiar attraction of horror pictures is their bizarre departure from ordinary experience and the usual run of films. Lugosi believes. People are "tired of mush" and seek escape from the worries and





BY HARRY COULTER

depressions of a dull, every-day world.

"It makes a great deal of difference," a prominent psychologist says, "as to the way in which horror pictures are presented. Horror as it is shown on the screen and as it is told in news accounts is a far cry from the nastiness of reality, since, in both cases, gruesome details cannot be presented in entirety. The motion picture type of horror is made interesting, gripping, and dramatic. There is not the strict realism which in actual life makes crime loathsome and repelling."

It takes a thorough and special technique to play a horror role well, believes Lugosi.

"The more unbelievable the part the more seriously the actor, himself, has to believe in it," he explains. "The very moment he begins to play it from the 'outside,' with his tongue in his cheek, he is lost."

The one quality required, above everything else, in a good horror picture, is suspense, he says. And in every good picture there is a moment, or moments, at which this suspense has been built up to the breaking point, where pure horror has been distilled to its purest essence and the thrill is most intense.

Who will ever forget, for instance, the scene in "The Phantom of the Opera" when the heroine, trapped in the monster's underground lair, suddenly jerks the mask from the horribly deformed features of Lon Chaney?

In "Dracula," which grossed more than \$2,500,000 and started the modern cycle of horror pictures, there are several such moments, Lugosi recalls.

There is the unforgettable scene where the hero looks in the mirror and is startled to discover that Count Dracula, who is standing just behind him, casts no reflection. According to Hungarian legend, this is a unique quality possessed only by vampires.

A moment later his awful suspicion is confirmed when, cutting his finger purposely, he sees Dracula uncontrollably lick his lips as blood jets from the wound.

There is the eerie scene in the castle dungeons where the searching party begins to hunt down the vampire with magic herbs, crucifixes, and fire-blackened stakes.

In "The Raven," Edgar Allan Poe's "Pit and the Pendulum" descends, swinging slowly toward his head.

There is the moment in "The Invisible Ray" when the mad scientist (Boris Karloff), who has been poisoned by a mysterious ray, the very touch of which means death, approaches Lugosi, purportedly to shake hands, but actually, to kill him.



(Right) Here we see Karloff, again, this time in the Warner Brothers production, "The Walking Dead." He is on the tilting table, an apparatus used in reviving him after he has been electrocuted.

(Left) Mysterious doings are evidently afoot in this scene from a recent Lugosi hair-raiser. The origin of fear dates back to prehistoric times when man first faced such dangers as fire and sabre-toothed tigers, the Hungarian actor believes. Today, man can enjoy all the delicious nuances of the prickly, heart-pounding sensation without having to undergo the danger concurrent with it.



"The more unbelievable the part the more seriously the actor, himself, has to believe in it. The very moment he begins to play it from the 'outside'—with his tongue in his cheek—he is lost."

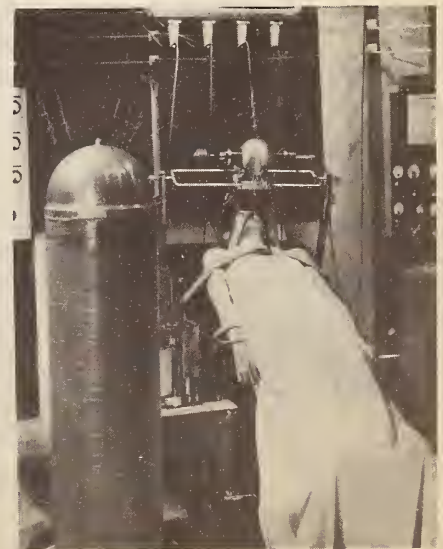
Numerous other examples of these "gems of pure horror" could be cited if space permitted. Certainly, it is at moments like these that the thrills sought in horror pictures are brought to their fullest realization. It was evidently this state of mind of which Charles Darwin, the philosopher, was speaking when he attempted to define fear:

Fear alters the rate of the heart beat and the flow of blood, breathing, tone of the muscles and their capacity for work. It lessens the energy of the body, decreasing the force of the heart, muscular endurance and digestion. . . . The skin becomes pale and produces perspiration. The hairs on the skin stand erect, and the superficial muscles shiver. Breathing is hurried and the salivary glands act imperfectly, the mouth becomes dry. There is a trembling of all the muscles of the body.

As fear increases into an agony of terror, we behold, as under all violent emotions, diversified results. The heart beats wildly, or may fail to act and faintness ensue. There is a death-like pallor; the breathing is labored; the wings of the nostrils are widely dilated; there is a gasping and convulsive motion of the lips, a tremor on the hollow cheek, a gulping and catching of the throat; the uncovered and protruding eyeballs are fixed on the object of terror; or they may roll restlessly from side to side. . . . The pupils are said to be enormously dilated. All the muscles of the body may become rigid, or may be thrown into convulsive movements. The hands are alternately clenched and opened, often with a twitching movement.

As fear rises to an extreme pitch, the dreadful scream of terror is heard. Great beads of terror stand upon the skin. All the muscles of the body are relaxed. Utter prostration soon follows, and the mental powers fail.

It is just short of this last paragraph that the horror producers stop.





# DOCUMENTARY

**"Filipino in America" heads list of films treating current sociological and economical problems, in this second of a series of articles.**

By J. LEWIS KOLLIN

During the past few months there have appeared a number of interesting films, which serve as an indication that the documentary movement is beginning to gain momentum with film groups in this country. Comparatively crude, they yet show a great deal of creative imagination, and latent ability.

Outstanding among them is a full length documentary entitled "The Filipino in America."

This film, produced in Los Angeles by James Love, Doroteo Ines, and Ellis M. Yarnell, on substandard stock, nevertheless approaches the professional standard in its every phase. As is evident from the title, the theme of the film is the Filipino's life in this country. One can not speak, however, of life without a discussion of its various problems, both large and small. The makers of the film understood that very clearly. It is not an easy task to condense into forty-five minutes of filmic time all the manifestations of the lives of several hundred thousands of people. That would not only be impossible but quite futile and uninteresting.

But one can select and emphasize the most vital and fundamental problems common to all Filipinos on these shores and eliminate the secondary and inconsequential details. The group successfully accomplished this first task. They went among the Filipinos, observed their mode of living, mingled with them, spent laborious hours in research and the reading of material compiled on the subject, and they learned a number of interesting facts concerning Filipinos.

The Filipino looks with longing eyes towards the United States. The country which has influenced his past and offers him a great future is to him a modern paradise. American motion pictures create in his highly imaginative mind the impression of unlimited, easily accessible, economic, social, and educa-


tional opportunities. Steamship companies through expert sales methods, displays and advertising pamphlets, finally induce him to leave his home and family, often at a great sacrifice of hard saved earnings.

The immigrants are roughly divided into two categories. There are those who come here to improve their economic lot, to "become rich overnight" and others who come to study for a professional career. These latter think that the professions offer them unlimited opportunities in this country. But most of the immigrants are quickly disappointed and disillusioned. They find that not only does one have to work hard and patiently for a living, even in America, but that there exists in addition, such problems as the overcrowding of trades and professions, and most disheartening of all, racial barriers.


How they react in the face of these actualities is the theme of the film.

It is obviously impossible to deal with multitudinous individual cases. And hence the film makers hit upon a clever idea. They used but two individuals to symbolically portray the two groups of Filipinos.


Doroteo is an ambitious and industrious young man, determined to study in America to become an engineer. Upon his arrival he goes to see his boyhood friend, Vincent. The latter has already "established" himself as a chauffeur in a wealthy family. With money to spend, he seeks "good times." He finds, however, that his money can not lift the social barriers set up against a person of his race. When he seeks feminine company he finds that there are 100,000 Filipino men to one Filipino woman in America, and the only white girls who will associate with him are in cheap dance halls, restaurants and saloons. But these girls are quite expensive to keep up with, and thus we find Vincent gambling, neglecting his job, and finally losing it. He has succumbed.



Doroteo, upon arriving in America, calls upon his friend, Vincent, eager to achieve success in the land of opportunity he has heard so much about. Vincent, employed as a chauffeur, and "in the money," smiles condescendingly.




In time, Doroteo attends university, studies diligently while . . .



His friend gambles away his money in various dens patronized by many of the dark-skinned islanders.



In need of funds, Vincent goes to Doroteo for assistance. Doroteo helps his friend, but the latter proceeds to ruin his life.



Doroteo graduates, a trained engineer, but finds no jobs available for one of his race. Although industrious, and a brilliant student, he has failed just as completely as has his dissolute friend, Vincent. Disillusioned, he returns to his native land, finds success among his own people.



# DISCOVERS AMERICA

On the other hand, Doroteo immediately looks for a job, but none are to be gotten in the city. Like many other Filipinos he goes to work on a farm and saves sufficient to enter a university, at the same time "improving" his lot by obtaining a job as a houseboy. Even at the university Doroteo finds the same social difficulties. The white girls ostracize him. He is unwelcome at social affairs and even in the church. But the worst blow of all comes to him upon his graduation as an engineer. The only outlet he can find for his education in America is another job as a cook. He becomes despondent and disillusioned and finally returns to the Philippines to practice his engineering at home.

It will be seen that the documentary nature of the story of the two youths is simple and on its face contains very few, if any, dramatic situations as are ordinarily found in fiction, but the truth and human quality of the material more than compensates for this deficiency.

Thus, in the opening sequence, we are introduced to the simple, idealistic student as he is welcomed by the less scrupulous Vincent. Our sympathy is enlisted by the faith and candor of the student's face. The chauffeur is made to offer an interesting contrast as he cuts pictures of girls from an "art magazine" and pastes them on the wall. Through a series of montage dissolves we are given an opportunity to follow our "hero" from one employment office to another with the invariable "no help wanted" sign staring him in the face. We share his discouragement and are jubilant when he finally obtains a job on the farm. And we silently approve his appreciation of America (which alas, we so often neglect to show) when he pins a small flag on his lapel.

Unconsciously, we are thoroughly allied with the youth and feel sorry when he is scorned by the white girl to whom he has taken a fancy. But credit for photographic bravery goes to the group for photographing, perhaps for the first time, and despite threats of bodily harm, the interior of a taxi dance hall frequented by Filipinos.

There are many real situations of intrinsic dramatic value, too numerous to enumerate. It will suffice to say that every type of cinematic device possible under the circumstances was employed by the group. As is the case in most documentary films, the "actors" and those used in crowd scenes never appeared previously before a camera, and yet one is impressed by the genuineness and smoothness of their performance. The film continuity is smooth from beginning to end.

This is not accidental, but is a result of complete co-operation between members of the group, and careful planning of every detail in advance. Little was left to chance, and unforeseen emergencies were thereby made much easier to handle.

There are many film makers who, when they acquire a camera, go out and shoot "on the cuff." Those who would engage in the making of documentaries can deduce certain indispensable rules.

First—and all important—is a clear conception of the theme of the film. Next in importance is the careful study and research of all the material available pertaining to the theme. Then follows experimentation with the embodiment of the material into dramatic form. After this is decided upon, a detailed shooting script or continuity must be prepared. The shooting, itself, presents the least of all the problems and should not entail more than the average amount of difficulty if there is sincere and wholehearted co-operation within the group. In passing it will be interesting to note that the entire film, for which some 1,700 feet of substandard stock were used, was produced for an amount well under \$200.00.

The film described above did not venture beyond an exposition of the Filipino's problems. In contrast with it, another somewhat shorter and more pointed documentary is "John Doe, Citizen," by Frances Christeson, and Harry Merrick, also of Los Angeles. This film seeks not only to show the political indifference of voters, and their lack of civic consciousness, but points a way out by

enlisting the citizen as an active voter. The story is that of a citizenry aroused to political action through a child's death, the latter caused by political corruption. The film is daring and convincing, and although made on substandard film, is of professional quality in every respect. It has been shown to many groups and has met with wholehearted approval. So great has been its popularity that a number of prints were made and sold.

Still another commendable film which neither presents problems, nor offers a solution, but is narrative in its conception, is "A Threshing Day in Iowa," produced by Terry E. Bissinger, and George Volger of Los Angeles. This film vividly portrays the work of farmers and the routine of their life. It is very interesting and has enjoyed a welcome reception wherever shown.

The films discussed are still embryonic in nature. Nevertheless the will to create and serious purpose are present. The real America is at last beginning to be "discovered." It is only a matter of time before the documentary will penetrate every walk of life.



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# MUSIC IN A HURRY

**More about recording, scoring, selection of music tracks, cutting, and previews is told as screen music technique is followed through its final stage.**

By DON FISCHER AND BOB BOULD

**A**ROUND the orchestra are movable reflecting surfaces to focus their sound, and adjustable curtains to regulate the amount of reverberation. The conductor sits on a high stool on his elevated stand in front of the orchestra so that he sees the picture backwards, since he faces the projection and monitor rooms.

With the stage (mikes, curtains, reflecting surfaces adjusted) and the orchestra set, the music copyright clear (if not original music), the stage free of all but workers and special visitors, the rehearsal begins. The procedure is like any other orchestra rehearsal—at least for a while. But when the conductor starts to fit the musical selection to the film scene, with the picture projected, the process is at once unique and fascinating. This is technically called a review. To help him with tempos, the conductor uses a guide-track for rhythm numbers—say an old-fashioned waltz party-dance scene. The guide-track here is simply the music used by the dancers during filming of the scene, recorded with the dancers' movements. From an earphone he hears the guide-track; from the other ear he hears the recording-stage orchestra—and often it is not the same music from both.

This makes little difference, however, since it is only the tempo that the conductor is listening for. To be in tempo from the start, a few clicks of a metronome, in tempo, are given the conductor in the guide-track, e. g., a waltz has four clicks—one for the down beat of each measure. The conductor can easily fill in the intermediate beats after hearing two clicks. Thus he can beat out the remaining two measures in tempo for the orchestra's benefit before they begin. This guide-track conducting seems easy—and it is, in comparison to conducting non-rhythmic (or shall we say many-tempoed), music which makes up the preponderance in straight dramatic scenes.

For conducting non-rhythmic musical sequences, the conductor has only his stop-watch and the timing marked in the score, and his memory of the cues in the picture to help him anticipate it as it is run—no earphone or other clue to tempo. His only guide this time is for the start and stop of the music of the sequence as given by the punch-marks on the picture. If no changes, or only a few, are made in the music, a good conductor can usually hit his cues in one or two reviews. Let us take an example from the Paramount Music department. A change might be suggested by the scorer, say a few measures added or omitted. On the very next review, the conductor would hit the cues "on the nose" with the new timing.

But after considering the concentration required, the multiple details to watch—timing, tempo, score, screen, interpretation, and others—one is more given to ask, "How does he do it? Of course, more rehearsal on fine points of interpretation may intervene between review and take, since the scorer is a good musician and will

not let the music pass until what he hears in the monitor room is very satisfactory. (He is responsible, therefore anxious.) "Going for takes" is practically the same as a review except, of course, the music recorded (on film for the picture, on wax for a playbook). A playback usually follows for the particular benefit of conductor, scorer and sound technicians. They listen carefully as this wax record is played, with a view to making changes for improving the next take. Ordinarily, the number of takes are from four to eight per musical selection before the scorer is satisfied, although all are anxious to achieve as perfect a take as possible.

On rare occasions—as all good brass are likely to do after a long day of strenuous high-notes, high-intensity, lip-fatiguing playing—a trumpet may crack slightly on a high note. The effect is somewhat like a grace note (Boris Morros, the General Music Director, calls it "disgrace note"). An ordinary listener might permit such a take to pass (frequent cinema-goers may recall the very fine "disgrace note" in the ending of a well-known news reel's title music). But not Paramount's Music Department; back go the orchestra men for more takes until the selection is error-tight with "thrills bedight" (which may explain a standing bet between two workers on whether the number of takes for any one selection will be odd or even!)

This is the probable personnel present for selection of an important film. For an average picture, the selecting may be done by the scorer, alone, or by a man bearing, for the moment, the title of "selector." On such a one-man job, possibly only a rough selection will be made with first and second choices marked. Some indication of the probable result when the music is added to other sound can be obtained here in the scoring projection room, since the music may be played at varying degrees of volume. If, for example, the music will be kept to a quiet background behind dialogue (called underscoring), the projectionist may be asked to play the music a few points below normal volume while the dialogue will be kept at normal. "Pulling down the music in this way gives practically the same effect as will occur in the dubbing (the mixing together of all sound-tracks—music, dialogue and effects—and re-recording them into one composite track).

Another part of the selection conference may be devoted to deciding on various versions of the same musical selection. That is, one version might run the whole length of the sequence and would be known as the "long version." The "short version" would run only up to an important part of the sequence to leave the rest to be carried by action and dialogue, alone. For example, in the newspaper office scene in "Wells Fargo," the music of the long version runs the full length of the scene, setting the office atmosphere (by machine-rhythmed music) at the begin-



ning, and bringing in the Wells Fargo theme after the reporter's announcement of the award of the government overland mail contract to Wells Fargo & Company, and during the quick scenes following public comment on the news. The short version of the same scene uses the office atmosphere music up to the editor's "Hold it!" (for the press-men to wait). Here begins the telling of the important news (the editor dictates it) and subsequent public reaction. Therefore, no more music is needed.

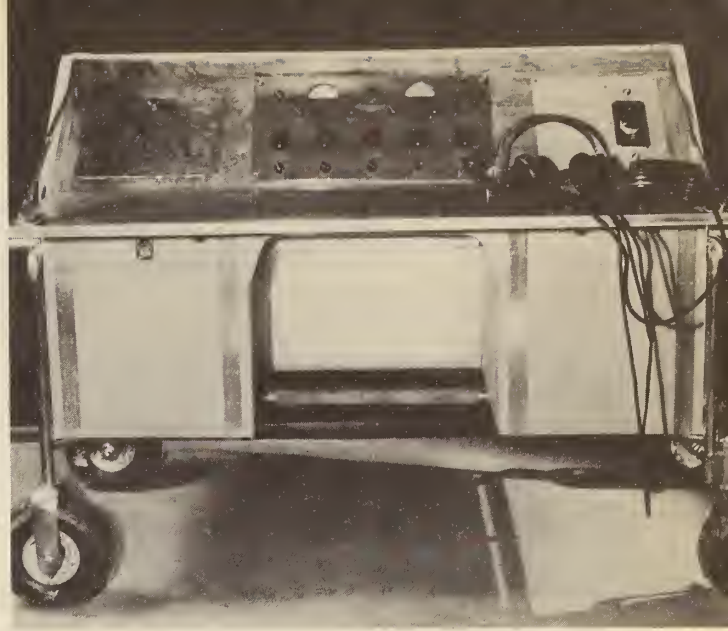
After the recording of a selection has been finished ("wrap it up" they say), the scorer makes a rough selection of the takes; he orders printed the takes he has tentatively decided are best (e. g., "Print takes 3, 5, and 6").

Recording vocal selections may be done in several ways. Most-used for fine-singing tracks is what one might call the playback method. Vocal tracks are then made separate from orchestral so that the proportionate volume of each may be controlled very finely. The order is: (1) the orchestral accompaniment is recorded; (2) the singer records his song to the accompaniment of the playback of the orchestra which he hears through an earphone; (3) on the set, the playback of this vocal track is used while the singer is photographed "going through the motions" of singing to it. The reverse—filming the scene first, then recording the voice while the singer tries to synchronize with the projected picture—is sometimes used. If a chorus is used in addition to the orchestra to back up the singer, a separate recording is made of it. Direct recording—recording voices simultaneously with the filming of the scene—is seldom done except in cases where recording need not be so fine, or where realism is preferred—(e. g., Cordelia sings "The Last Rose of Summer" accompanying herself on the piano—"Wells Fargo")

The day after recording, when the music tracks are back from the film processing laboratory, the routine known as selection begins. That is, the general music director, the scorer, assistant scorer, picture director, and often the music cutter, gather in the scoring projection room to see the picture while the different music takes are run on the track with it. The final selection of one music track is thus made, on the basis of which fits the scene best.

Various details must be looked for in selection of music takes. First, it is not only the best take, musically, that is being looked for, but it may also be the take that synchronizes best with the scene. In selecting takes of a singer's voice to be added to an orchestral track (both recorded separately), the problems are many: (1) in which take does the singer synchronize best with the orchestra? (2) which take is best vocally? (3) in which take is the volume level best for good close-up sound of the voice when the two tracks are dubbed together? (4) which take has the best general quality of recording (determined largely by what recording system was used)?

Again, the question may be one concerning the music cutter particularly. In the "Wells Fargo" musical sequence titled "The Understanding Wife," a slight transition comes between the two closely related parts of the scene. The scene briefed: Ramsay comes home from the office. Justine is waiting. They talk (underscored by



Stage pick-up unit "tea wagon," used by mixer on the production stage to control volume of both dialogue and music.

general "gallant sacrifice" music). Ramsay leaves the room to "freshen up a little before dinner." The transition comes as he goes slowly up to his room. Then follows another dialogue scene underscored by the "Wells Fargo" theme (he is going on a trip for the company) and the love-theme (she understands how much the trip means to him—"After all, it's only for a year.").

On the dubbing stage (or channel) the scorer has his final task of checking on the mixing of music tracks with other sound (dialogue and effects) and their re-recording into the final composite sound-track. Sometimes as high as 12 or 14 separate tracks will be used, and three or four men will be required to mix them (to manipulate the volume controls for relative proportions of sound desired from each). Sounds that must be synchronized in the music are left to the music cutter (see "Wells Fargo" Oliver—shoots—Slade scene—the gun shot was planned for in the music and thus creates a syncopated effect). Some interesting changes come about in the music as a result of the dubbing process.

Upon completion of all sound and music tracks the finished film print is given another preview. The outcome determines whether or not the scorer must arrange for such things as rewrites or retakes of music, shortening a musical sequence here and there (if the picture is cut in length) or perhaps find a stop for the music if the end of the reel comes at a different place than before and cannot be made longer (music cannot be carried over from one reel to the next, and 940 to 950 feet is the general maximum per reel).

Then follows one more test—the press preview. If all goes well, all that remains before public release of the film is the advance announcement to give the picture a good build-up, if it needs it.



# SO YOU WANT TO BE A PRODUCER?

**Organization of amateur production groups should be patterned, roughly, on Hollywood methods.**

By JACK V. WOOD

**S**UCCESSFUL motion picture production depends upon the complete co-operation of many talented and temperamentally inclined people. While we, as amateurs banded together in a cinema club, a school photoplay group, or as any social group wanting to record something on film, may not be temperamentally inclined, may not be as naturally talented as the studio workers, we still had best pattern our production organization roughly on the Hollywood methods. It's a system that is tried and true.

First, let the group compose itself as the Story Committee. The first production step is the complete settlement of story structure. The producer may later make changes to fit practical problems as they arise, and the Director has the right to change minor action at all times, but the main story structure must be cut and dried before any other step is made. Once the story is decided upon, no major deviations are to be tolerated.

Next the group must elect a Producer, possibly the president of the group. The Producer thereafter is the supreme authority, his is the entire responsibility for production from beginning to end. He prepares a budget and handles all business and financial matters. His decision on any controversial subject is final.

Under the Producer comes the dramatic Director, the Art Director, and the Director of Photography. The Director is in charge, but the Directors of Art and Photography have the right, in case of controversy, to appeal to the Producer for a final decision. In an amateur group the Art Director should be responsible for obtaining sets, dressing the sets, picking exterior locations, handling make-up and obtaining costumes. The Director of Photography handles all camera work. He makes the moving picture. He is in charge of lighting, responsible for processing, and produces any trick work necessary. The dramatic Director is in charge of all actors and the dramatic action they must enact. With the Producer he later cuts and edits the film, and in general the Director runs the show.

If this skeleton organization of Producer, Director, Photographer, and Art Director is followed out in amateur production it will be found that a minimum of cross controversy will arise, a maximum of efficient production will result.

For a minimum of costs the amateur producers should stick to the 8 mm. film. Not only is the equipment generally less expensive, but the film costs are about half that of 16 mm. production. In return for the lower cost, the group must realize it cannot hope to produce certain "fancy frills" of production such as lap dissolves, wipes, and most trick work. It must satisfy itself to relatively small screening images, and thus the exhibition to small groups. A good 8 mm. projector will produce an excellent show for any number up to about 200 people, but seldom is it satisfactory for larger audiences.

If costs are secondary, then the 16 mm. field should be tackled. A good 16 mm. projector is capable of an excellent showing up to as many as 2,500 people at one time. The better 16 mm. cameras offer an infinite variety of continuity devices, such as lap dissolves, dissolves, fades, etc. The best 16 mm. cameras can reproduce nearly any Hollywood trick work. It is even possible to produce talking pictures with some cameras, and most all can be run at sound speed, thus enabling a laboratory to "dub-in" a commentary and musical score after production is completed.

The minimum of equipment needed is a camera, a tripod, a titling device, a projector and a screen. Additional very desirable equipment is adequate lights for interior shots, a photo-electric cell exposure meter, and an editing unit composed of a viewer, a splicer, and a rewind. There are many more desirable items, but they are not absolutely essential to good production.

As to the subjects possible for amateur production, they are infinite in number. If the cinema group is associated with a community play group, then let it tackle a simple dramatic story. But they must be careful to reproduce CINEMATIC production and not STAGE production. Best training for this type of picture is analytical study of the Hollywood products at your neighborhood movie house.

If the cinema group is a student school organization let it tackle a school newsreel, reproducing in film the news and events of their school. If the group is mostly professional people, they may become interested in the production of some useful educational or scientific film. It does not have to be elaborate. The simple film may tell the story better than the complex, technical production.

Many camera groups are turning their hobby into general civic usefulness. For instance, before a Community Chest campaign starts they will have produced a film explaining just where the money goes **LOCALLY**, and how much real good is done with the money. The film is then exhibited to service clubs, women's organizations, and to all civic social groups possible. If a very powerful projector is available and the film rather short, then the local theatre manager can often be persuaded to "sandwich it in" between his regular program.

The same idea is carried over into raising funds for churches, hospitals, orphanages and other charitable institutions. Important civic events are permanently recorded in film and presented to the public library. Thus, these people help others in the course of pursuing their hobby. Some groups specialize in exhibition of films at orphanages, hospitals, and to invalids not able to enjoy the commercial motion picture. "The Lord helps those who help themselves," said old Ben Franklin, but the cinema group that pursues a hobby that helps themselves **AND HELPS OTHERS, ALSO**, is getting double value out of its time and money.



# WHY FILMS FOR PRIMARY GRADES?

## A Primary Teacher Offers Some Suggestions

By DOROTHY E. HAMILTON

In the modernization of education the motion picture has become our newest tool in the art of expression. Its influence is tremendous and has genuine educational significance.

Recent scientific investigations have revealed, for example, that children not only learn more rapidly from motion pictures, but retain the information longer. The motion picture has surpassed the printing press in its capacity to educate, and impressions gained are lasting and increase with time. Impressions received by the eye are 60% more vivid than those of the ear. More than that, it is estimated that the visual sense contributes 40% to our vocabulary learning while the auditory sense contributes only 25%. P. J. Rulon of Harvard University in his experiments with 3,000 to test the effectiveness of learning with moving pictures, found that when a moving picture accompanied instruction, the retention of facts was 38.5% greater than in situations where there was no moving picture. The motion picture has the power to change attitudes for or against social sanctions, political practices, religious concepts, emotional experiences, and their influence upon education is the same for both young and old.

If moving pictures are influencing children to a high degree, we have a tremendous responsibility in selecting films which will be suitable for them to see. Whether it be a commercial film or a purely educational film, we should always keep certain points in mind in fairness to the child.

First, no matter what purpose the film may fulfill, we should be sure it is in harmony with the existing objectives of the group concerned. If it is a matter of selecting a film for your school, does it coincide with your fundamental objectives of education?

Second, we must judge the suitability of the subject matter for the group. For the Primary Groups let us choose films with one important idea, few characters, and repetition which is crafty and stimulating so that our little children may have the opportunity to firmly establish the idea. It is essential, however, that in so doing the film shall stimulate reflective thinking and promote enjoyment.

Third, the picture must be technically fine. The photography must be definite and clear to eliminate any possible eyestrain. There should be many close-ups and frequent repetitions to bring the children near to real experience. The titles must be on the reading level of the children and must be in large bold print. Short sentences on one line, where possible, of course are most desirable for the primary child. There should be as few titles as possible, as an overabundance might detract from the picture sequence. The interest span of smaller children is comparatively short, therefore we must be certain of the time limit of the picture we are presenting. Let us not expect the little children to sit for a very long time.

Fourth, is the picture authentic? We want the material to be true and accurate.

Fifth, is it well organized?

Sixth, will the picture build desirable attitudes and aid the child's understanding?

The moving picture has particular adaptability because of its timeliness. It might be rather difficult to observe a spider spinning a web just when we feel the need for it. If we had access to a film library it would be comparatively easy to secure a film while interest was at a high point. The moving picture can present an insight into details by means of the animated drawing,—details which are often not discernable to the naked eye. Sound pictures, devoid of the printed word, are particularly justified since they can provide increased experiences. Is there a danger of escaping reality and active living if we employ this challenging teaching? A life full of interest and creative things to do will keep the movies in their place.

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# EDUCATIONAL FILM PRO

Teacher training, analytical, and creative films described  
by University of Southern California cinematography  
instructor.

By FRED W. ORTH

**E**DUCATIONAL film production implies motion pictures which present information or contribute understanding of subjects requiring motion to make them clear—subjects about which the learner needs to know. There are certain specific contributions which the motion picture as a teaching tool has made to instruction which have been objectively measured and conclusively proven. Scores of scientific and controlled tests, now available, show evidence that the film offers valuable educational dividends to the pupil, the teacher, and the curriculum. These records indicate that the proper use of classroom films increases initial learning, effects economy of time, aids in teaching backward children, decreases truancy, increases permanency of learning, and motivates lessons through interest, self-activity, voluntary reading, and class participation.

In order to insure these desirable results, films must be selected with care to meet the needs and interests of pupils and must be skillfully used by the teacher. Our task now is to help improve the quality of educational films and continue to work towards improved methods of using them.

The favorite stock excuse offered by educators and business managers of school systems for the lack of an adequate film library is the so-called "terrific" cost of the product. Speaking of costs, you may be interested to know that it only costs between 1½c to 5c per showing per average class of 40 pupils if 16 mm. films are purchased outright and circulated as books over a period of from three to five years, which is the average life of a film used continually. This is an exceedingly low instruction cost in comparison with other materials and methods, common in school procedure.

The motion picture industry is slowly supplying us with some excellent educational films in both silent and sound which are designed for use in the classroom. They are being produced at a considerable expense and much time will elapse before the producer will receive returns on his investment. Produced for educators, box-office receipts are lacking. It is easily understood why the motion picture industry is reluctant to enter into educational film production on a large scale.

Our school curriculum is constantly changing and there is an increasing demand upon our Visual Education de-

partment for films in the various subject areas in both elementary and secondary schools. There is a common complaint that films that are the most needed are not in existence. The Visual Education Department of the city schools is organized for the production of necessary visual aids in addition to their distribution. During the past few years, many excellent film contributions have been developed by this section and a number are now in preparation. Such films are classified as teaching films. Through the influence of the Visual Section, many teachers and administrators have produced outstanding films in color, and in black and white which compare favorably with professional results in continuity and photography. Prints of such films are made available for school distribution. The photographic excellence has been made possible



The children appear to be enjoying themselves immensely in this scene from a film entitled "Play." Demonstrations are given by grades.



Youngsters at work on a steam engine project. The scene is from a teacher training film.

sion of each type, but I shall attempt to describe at least one film of each group.

First is the TEACHER TRAINING film which presents a progressive method of teaching. Prospective teachers in training and teachers now in service who desire to learn more of progressive methods of teaching are seldom able to witness the teaching of a unit of work from beginning to end. Sufficient time for such an extensive series of observations is neither available for student or teacher. The usual "piece-meal" observations become of increased value, however, if detailed accounts of the activities observed are made available. Our Visual Edu-



# DUCTION IN LOS ANGELES

cation Department, through its research division, has "bridged the gap" and has now made available to teachers, a pictorial presentation of numerous activities from their points of inception to their completed forms. These pictures present in fifteen minutes much of the actual work of the pupils over a period of weeks, showing a natural correlation and integration of all subjects of study involved.

Films of this type are of immeasurable value for public relations. They enlighten the parents and the public concerning new teaching procedures and the work of the schools. To see the average school as it really functions throughout the week or year would require innumerable



This scene is from "A Study of Japan," a three-reel film representing a cross-section of the work of pupils and teachers throughout a half year.

brought to them in motion pictures in the form of an evening's entertainment.

One of the most popular pictures of this group is entitled, "A Study of the Engine." The film is a record of a PROJECT on the steam engine. The film recorded the high points of the unit from beginning to end and showed how a knowledge of the fundamental subjects of study was essential to the satisfactory completion of the project.

Another film in three reels entitled "A Study of Japan" represents a cross-section of the work of the pupils and teacher throughout a half year. The unit involves a large number of activities which embrace the intellectual, the social, the constructive, and the physical aspects of our modern progressive educational procedures. It shows how the subject is launched and carries one through sixteen closely related sequences of activities, to its successful completion. It involves all pupil experiences possible, making necessary the use of related subject matter, and shows how pupils made use of unlimited opportunity for creative self expression in music, art, dancing, and written expression.

"A Study of Japan" has proved to be an aid in clarifying the prevalent point of view of those interested in the UNIT OF WORK program on any level. It shows what the unit of work is, how it is put into practice and how it is differentiated from the "activity" which it absorbs.

visitations on the part of our citizens. In general, those sufficiently interested in visitings while at work are usually our staunch supporters. There are few members of any community interested in public education who would not enjoy having a cross-section of the operations of their school

Being practical and helpful, the traditional teacher will be less skeptical regarding the newer education after having viewed the film. To the formal teacher it will be extremely enlightening, while the activity teacher will gain increased confidence in the execution of her work. It is perhaps the most complete and colorful picture of its kind. In addition to its instructional value, it represents a pioneering project in an earnest attempt to interpret modern education to the public in a universal language—the motion picture.

Other films of this type for Junior and Senior High School levels are: "A Study of Egypt," "A Study of Mexico," "A Study of China," and "A Study of Dates."

A second type of film produced is the ANALYTICAL. One of the most valuable and beautiful contributions in this class is called "A Strand of Silk." Produced in color, it depicts the life-cycle of the silk caterpillar from the time that it is hatched from the egg until it passes through the various stages of caterpillar and moth. Three-fourths of the film was made microscopically, presenting essential details which could never be observed under ordinary conditions. The closing scene demonstrates a simple method of unwinding silk from the cocoon.

Another film of this type is "La Cucaracha," an analytical teaching film prepared for both teacher and pupil. A well trained group of children who danced this popular number was photographed from various angles in long "shots," semi-close-ups and close-ups. Difficult steps and body movements were photographed in slow motion. When the film is projected upon the screen, it is supplemented either by piano or phonographic music. Obviously such a film proves valuable in the interpretation of the dance. Children enjoy seeing other children like themselves doing things that they themselves can do, resulting in the creation of increased interest and enthusiasm for the dance.

A number of films of a CREATIVE nature have been produced recently, among which is a favorite of the Kindergarten level called, "Dramatic Play in the Kindergarten." It is a record of a project showing children's interest in building and furnishing a colonial house and living the life of a family in it.

A second contribution is a three-reel film produced in color called, "A Creative Rhythm Band," showing the organization and administration of an all colored rhythm band for the purpose of developing creative music, art, and dancing.

A popular film called "We Discover China," produced for the secondary level, presents a record of an integrated unit of work in social studies.

So,—whether we follow the track of the motion picture print which brings the world of nature, industry and art to the child in the form of pictorial impressions of others, or—whether we follow the track of the transparent motion picture film negative which takes the youth out to explore the world and furnishes a medium for his pictorial expression, we must concede that the motion picture film is a tool which seems directly fashioned to meet the needs of our school life.

With the advent of sound there is reason to believe that the motion picture will become one of the chief instruments in the promotion of modern educational procedures; also their interpretation to the lay public.



# Production Processes Explained

## WE MAKE THE MOVIES

By Nancy Naumberg. W. W. Norton and Co., N. Y., \$3.00.

IT is impossible to speak of this book without recalling a volume reviewed in the last number of "Cinema Progress." That was "Footnotes to the Film," a compilation of articles written by English exponents of film making, each one a representative of his field. This is a similar undertaking brought to a brilliant consummation by the excellent contributions of Hollywood exponents of the same art-industry.

Miss Naumberg has been most fortunate in her choice of persons qualified to utter the pronouncements in explanation of how films are made.

There has been a decided departure these last few years away from the old attitude so staunchly held in an endeavor to keep everyone mystified as to the processes which made it possible for one to walk into a darkened theatre and see pictures which more or less told a story. There has been a rush lately to make everything as plain as possible, an open book for him who runs to read. This volume is one of those books presented in a non-technical fashion.

Jesse Lasky leads off with the telling of how the annual program for a studio gets under way, Samuel Marx continues with a mystery story about story hunting, Sidney Howard describes the treatment accorded a story once it is purchased, John Cromwell's words pour out through the director's megaphone, Clem Beauchamp tells all about selecting the people who are to make a given film from the top down, Hans Dreier designs a few sets before your very eyes, Robert Lee makes you dizzy with a recital of the duties of an assistant director, Phil Friedman casts the production, Bette Davis play her part, Paul Muni plays the actor's part, John Arnold shoots the film, Nathan Levinson records it, Anne Bauchens cuts it, Max Steiner scores the music and Lansing Holden goes into the intricacies of designing for color. Walt Disney explains making cartoons, and then wonders if after all some one may say, "Yes, but what makes the little drawings move?"

That we may not end on a note of futility, although without studio experience it is difficult to understand how all these tangents can come together and make one film, let it be said that this is an excellent volume to give one as near an understanding of the processes whereby a story is made into a film as it is possible for a layman to have.

## THE RIVER

By Pare Lorentz. Stackpole Sons, N. Y., \$2.00.

Everyone who has seen the Pare Lorentz film, "The River," everyone who has sat under the stirring rhythm of the commentary must have felt the Whitmanlike quality of the phrases that come tumbling with the water of the steams and rivers. Gratefully, then, we turn to this book, the verbatim report of the commentary for that film accompanied by stills which have been selected with great discrimination. The steady rise in the destructive power of the river is reflected in the blank verse of the words which accompany the pictures. The cumulative effect of the fusion of words and pictures symbolize perfectly the tremendous power of the water unleashed by man's heedless deforestation of the hills and mountains at its many headwaters.

Year in, year out, the water comes down

From a thousand hillsides, washing the top off the Valley.

For fifty years we dug for cotton and moved West when the land gave out.

For fifty years we plowed for corn, and moved on when the land gave out.

Corn and wheat; wheat and cotton—we planted and plowed with no thought for the future—

And four hundred million tons of top soil,

Four hundred million tons of our most valuable natural resources have been washed into the Gulf of Mexico every year.

When we see the film, hear the spoken interpretation and feel the rush of their combined force, we realize that some fine writing, some broad objective thinking, some hard painstaking photography has gone on to make it possible. We are grateful, then, to have these words in print, to be able to turn to them in a contemplative mood and appreciate that fine writing which contributes so much to the splendid conception of the film.

By FRANCES CHRISTESON

## FILM AND SCHOOL

By Helen Rand and Richard Lewis. D. Appleton-Century Company, N. Y.

"Film and School" is one of those small books that becomes invaluable to the teacher who is enriching his classroom teaching with visual aids, correlating his work with other activities offered in the school, and building for worthwhile leisure activities among his pupils.

The source materials, problems, rating scales, methods and vocabulary lists suggested are practical, discriminating, and stimulating. The authors very aptly say in the Introduction that: "This book is not designed to be read straight through by one individual sitting alone in a corner. It is a reference book of suggestions and plans. Its method is conversational; everything it says is to be challenged, checked, supplemented, and, wherever possible, put into action."

Emphasis is placed on the evaluation of motion pictures rather than appreciation. The three aims as stated by the authors are:

"First. We want to develop the habit of thinking of moving pictures as instruments that present information, stimulate our interest, and form our social attitudes.

"Second. We want to develop an understanding of the influence of the motion picture upon the information, attitudes, and conduct of children, youths, and adults.

"Third. We want to develop the ability to evaluate moving pictures critically; we want to be able to evaluate their interpretation of life, their technique and their art."

The book does just that. First, moving pictures are treated as a social and educational force; then, on how they interpret life; third, the people who make moving pictures are treated from the standpoint of the production department and other departments; and finally, rating scales, reviews, moving-picture clubs and future possibilities are evaluated and plans suggested.

The greatest value of the book lies in its constructive practical treatment. The plans offered build for judgment and standards of judgment.

By MARJORIE DOWLING BROWN.



## PICTURE PARADE

### THE ADVENTURES OF MARCO POLO

(Goldwyn) Light and entertaining, this tale of Marco Polo's adventures in China while searching for new trade routes makes no pretensions of being seriously historical. Done in sepia tone print, there is much pictorial beauty, especially in the early montage showing Polo's making his hazardous way eastward from Venice. From the elder Polo pointing out the route on a map, there is a dissolve to the sail of a boat. A storm arises, capsizes the boat, and Polo is cast ashore. A map shows us that it is Araby. There is a sandstorm, then another map indicating Tibet. Then a snowstorm. Still another map, and superimposed legs, walking. Then, at last, in the far background—the mighty wall of China, and beyond, Peking. Polo has reached his goal! This fast, dramatic montage is one of the best pieces of technical work in the picture. Principal members of cast: Gary Cooper, Sigrid Gurie, Alan Hale, Basil Rathbone, George Baroier, Ernest Truex, H. B. Warner. (Family)

### ADVENTURES OF ROBIN HOOD

(Warner Brothers) This picture is not a "Zola" or a "Pasteur," and it bears no "great message," but it is lusty entertainment. Also, color and photography, especially in the night scenes in Sherwood forest, represent a new high in screen achievement. Script by Norman Reilly Raine and Seton I. Miller retains flavor of the old Robin Hood legends, but there are instances when the film gets too talky. Errol Flynn is robust in the title role, reminding one of a mixture of Douglas Fairbanks and Tarzan. Good comedy is furnished by Eugene Palette, while Basil Rathbone and Claude Rains make an excellent pair of villains. Others in cast: Olivia de Havilland, Patric Knowles, Alan Hale. (Family)

### BLUEBEARD'S EIGHTH WIFE

(Paramount) Again Mr. Gary Cooper goes to town, this time in a sophisticated comedy concerning an American millionaire who believes in life, liberty, and the pursuit of marriage. But Cooper has plenty of trouble, both before and after he leads the marquis' daughter (Claudette Colbert) to the altar. The famous "Lubitsch touch" is everywhere apparent, especially in the scenes where Cooper attempts to cure his insomnia by counting Czechoslovakia backwards, and later when as a hen-pecked husband, he reads "The Taming of the Shrew." gathers courage to give his wife a chastising. As he advances to battle with determined stride, martial music and trumpets sound to offensive. Edward Everett Horton, David Niven, Elizabeth Patterson, Herman Bing. (Adults)

### CRIME SCHOOL

(Warner Brothers) Starring the "Dead End" kids with Humphrey Bogart and Gale Page, most of the action of this "across the tracks" drama takes place in a reform school run by a brutal and grafting superintendent (Cy Kendall). Emphasizing the "Crime Does Not Pay" angle, the exciting story shows how slums can breed juvenile delinquents, and how these delinquents, if not handled properly, can become hardened criminals. Especially fine performances are turned in by Humphrey Bogart as Mark Braden, the honest state investigator, and by Billy Halop as Frankie Warren, leader of the youthful gang. (Family)

### HAWAII CALLS

(RKO release, via Principal Productions) Bobby Breen scores his latest and biggest triumph in this tale of an orphaned shoe-black who prevents an alien spy ring from filching Uncle Sam's valuable island defense plans. Against beautiful natural Hawaiian backgrounds, amid the charm of native songs and the expert renditions by Raymond Page's orchestra, and topped off by the lyrical voice of 10-year-old Bobby, there moves a melodrama at all times interesting, if sometimes far-fetched. Too bad the film couldn't have been in color to get the full benefit of the island scenery. Too bad, also, Bobby was made to experiment with highnote endings, which, to this reviewer, at least, was the only drawback to otherwise perfect renditions. (Family)

### KENTUCKY MOONSHINE

(Twentieth Century-Fox) If you like the Ritz brothers, then you will appreciate their inane antics here. Story concerns three unemployed radio comedians who, unable to obtain work in New York, leave for the Kentucky mountains upon learning that a big network wants to find genuine "hillbillies" and intends combing "the sticks" for them. Sure enough, they are discovered, in all their Esquireish get-up. Especially hilarious are their burlesques of "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs." Situations, of course, are unbelievable, but then what is believable where the Ritz rothers are concerned? Cast includes Tony Martin, Marjorie Weaver, Slim Summerville, and John Corradine. (Adult)

### LIFE AND LOVES OF BEETHOVEN

(World Pictures—French) A biography of a great composer and the loves in his life. The picture seems to give more of his loves than his music, which seems an injustice. The picture is best appreciated for its technical effects and music, than story—which is rather weak. When Beethoven (played by Harry Bauers, in a fine performance) goes deaf, the audience is made aware of the fact by the screen going silent; and the sounds that Beethoven listens for such as the piano, birds singing, blacksmiths pounding, and water gushing are seen by Beethoven but are not heard. The contrasting effect thus created in the audience is very powerful. (Adult)

### PORT OF SEVEN SEAS

(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer) Dramatic and absorbing is this human story of devotion and sacrifice, with its setting in the port of Marseilles. Plot has to do with a youth who loves the sea more than he does his sweetheart. When he ships away, leaving the girl an expectant mother, the elderly friend of the boy's father marries her, knowing her plight, and giving her the utmost of faith and affection. Complications set in when the young father of her child returns. There is a little too much talk, but the subject is treated with sincerity, drama, and humor. Cast includes Wallace Beery, Frank Morgan, Maureen O'Sullivan, John Beal, Jessie Ralph, and Bobby Spindola. (Adult)

### TEST PILOT

(M. G. M.) A thrilling story of an airplane tester who risks his life trying out new models for science and the progress of aviation. The cast consists of a fine threesome in Clark Gable as the test pilot, Spencer Tracy as the assistant, and Myrna Loy—Gable's fiancée, and later, wife. The anguish and suffering of Miss Loy due to sharing her husband with another and more potent rival—the skyways. Human interest, drama, thrills, laughs and tragedy are deftly interspersed throughout, and Victor Fleming has possibly equalled his last great effort—"Captain's Courageous." This is one of M. G. M.'s best pictures of the year and Spencer Tracy, through his brilliant performance, steals the show. (Family)



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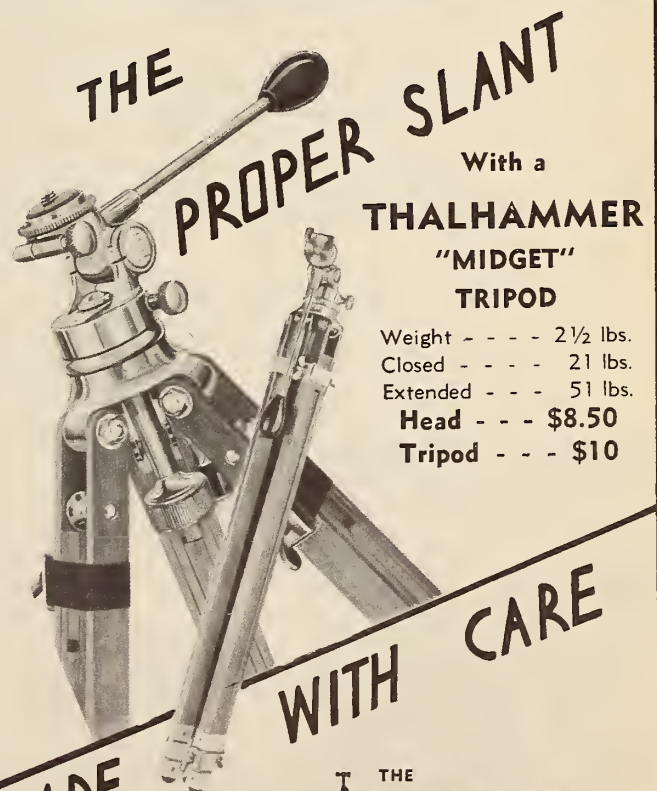
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"They used to put a great show on, for the holidays are a natural time for people to go to the theatre."

Here is what I decided to have as a program. I went out and got "The Passion Play," the life of Christ, hand-colored by Pathe of Paris. I said, "If anything will bring women into this theatre, that picture will."

I was right. We opened on Thanksgiving Eve. I rented a small organ, so you see I had the instinct of knowing how to create the proper atmosphere with the kind of picture I was showing. Instead of popular songs, I had slides. Those were the days when you had illustrated songs. You probably have heard about them. I got the "Holy City" and "The Palms." For blocks women were lined up. The elderly were there with their shawls and the young women, too. Not everyone got in and some didn't wish to be seen going in.

I re-named the theatre the Orpheum. That was the turning point for that particular house. From then on I had women coming. Instead of having men musicians, I put in a ladies' orchestra, and, without boasting, I went on record as having the first orchestra in a Nickelodeon and a 10-cent picture house. They were all young girls—all with the idea of wiping out the theatre's past. As a mother entered that theatre, she could become convinced that it was a safe place for daughter and son to come to be entertained.

As I look back at my start, I realize how grateful I must be for whatever blessings I may have of instinctive ability along the lines of showmanship. In two years I had another theatre in Haverhill, started the building of one called the Colonial, one of the finest theatres of its time. Just as Grauman's Chinese was for that period.



"You can't succeed in pictures if you don't cater to the family. You have to start with the women. Men follow like sheep."

on the other side of the street when they got to the block where the house was. I cleaned the place with my last money. They used to have a piano and drummer in the corner and there was a stove to warm the house. I renovated the theatre as best I could and made it cheerful. No woman had ever entered that theatre and I could understand why.

and Good Friday, I might as well close. "This is a very strong Catholic city, but, at least you can cut your expenses to the bone," they told me, "because you can't get any business Holy Week." Then suddenly, one day, I said, "Now, wait a minute, that sounds wrong." I kept losing money and I knew that WAS wrong. "I am going to try something else," I said. And I tried it that spring.

Early the next season, very early in August or in September, I booked an attraction for Holy Week, which was the most expensive headliner that I had booked the entire year. I got a bargain because he couldn't get a job in any other city. It was the same thing—they were cutting down, so he gave me a cut price on salary if I would book him Holy Week. My men said, "you're crazy—you'll just lose your shirt." That is a very common expression in the business.

I will tell you what happened. They came to the theatre and we had the best week's business of the entire season.

During the holidays people are naturally inclined to go to the theatre. It used to be 20 below zero, but some of them just couldn't possibly prevent themselves from coming to see that show.

Now then, let us take the opposite to this. They used



"There is nothing new today that didn't exist when Shakespeare wrote his classics . . ."

to put a great show on, for the holidays are a natural time for people to go to the theatre. Why bring out the tremendous attractions on the holidays, when that is the time for people to go to the theatre? I don't, by any means, suggest that you must give them poor attractions, but I do mean that you can give them attractions which, though not the outstandingly expensive ones, yet are of such quality and have such names that they will attract the public.

There was a time in show business when they thought that something sensational attracted the crowd. That belonged to years ago. When the Legion of Decency was formed, criticizing the films, I was standing where I have always stood, on the side of good clean pictures. I remember, I thought my finish had come, because some in pictures thought I had sold them out." I said "No," and they said "We can't make pictures about nothing. It is going to add up to nothing." But I stood my ground. Had we gone on where we were heading then, we would have had no industry, because many pictures were getting off color, more and more daring, as young men came more and more into the industry.

I started with \$600 and that theatre was two years in the building. Besides that, I had taken over another theatre, but I had worked morning, noon and night, and had never ceased working, because I was married and had two children. I was young—just 22 years of age.

Now, my next step was to show vaudeville as well as pictures. I started with the new theatre. Everyone warned me promptly that when it came Holy Week

It is remarkable how daringly, and how radically, their minds operate, and when we would say, "Wait—no that sort of scene in this picture will not look well," they would reply, "Well, Mayer is getting old." You can't succeed in pictures if you don't cater to the family. You have to start with the women. Men follow like sheep. Always keep that in your mind! You must cater to the women, and when you cater to the women, you are catering to something else. You are catering to something sensitive. I wish we fathers had the same deep



feeling of responsibility for the safety and happiness of children that mothers have.

You can make some quick money on some obscene picture, but it is temporary. It is just the same as if you stole the money: it has the same meaning. It won't last. The biggest field in the industry is for clean, wholesome pictures.

Emotions are the same today as they ever were. To give you an idea of what I mean. We made a certain picture in which there was a mother scene. This young man had forsaken his mother at home, but on the other hand, this mother—and there is no love like a mother's love—went on making sacrifices that her boy might become a doctor. He got back to this home and he found his mother down on her knees scrubbing the floor, if you please, to get a piece of bread. She is gray and she is bent, but, on the other hand, she is hale and hearty. Why, she misses her boy as any mother would have done! You see, human emotions are the same today as they were a thousand years ago. Mother love is the same.

I recall when we made "The Big Parade." That was the story of the great war through the eyes of a couple of doughboys. When that great picture was about finished, Irving Thalberg collapsed. It fell into my lap to finish it—the last drive on the Argonne which finally brought about the end of the War.

I pondered. If you could have heard what some of the young people wanted to do with the end of this picture, you then would have understood that, while we need the young people and their imagination, their daringness has to be tempered by the older men and women who have had all these years of experience. One bad scene in a picture, one scene that is offensive, will ruin a million dollars profit, as well as hurt the standing of the industry—because you have insulted mothers.

I pondered and I said, "Men, I don't know what it is that we can create from all the arguments you have here to top the greatest motion picture—the terrific sequence—the last drive of the World War, except one thing." They said, "What is that?" I said, "Pathos—emotional love."

Let me explain what I mean. We will go back and retake the first part. Instead of making the roving one of these boys the central figure, Jack Gilbert, we will remake it. You can easily shoot the second son because he has no part in the War. We will show that the mother is with the wild boy that needs help—Jack Gilbert, the wayward boy. We will show that the conniving boy, is scheming constantly how to escape the War, and then we will show how Jack Gilbert, through the march of music, finds himself enlisted in the War before he realizes what he has done. Then his return home to tell his mother that he has enlisted. She can see just her lost son!

We then prepare them for a finish. This boy comes back to her and it is her baby—just as he was as a youngster with his head on her breast. She rocks him back and forth just as a little fellow.

Mr. Vidor, the director, would have had him lose his leg in the War. I said "Fine, but be sure you protect it with a scene where he has not lost his leg, in case it is a bit too much—too horrible at the end of the picture. I don't want the horror of the loss of his leg to overshadow the pathos and the happiness of the mother when she welcomes her baby back." I was right.

(Continued on Page 32)

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# ZANUCK

(Continued from Page 3)



"... we have to get a love interest and ... a romantic pull ... the great ingredients so essential to make a great motion picture that will appeal to the masses."

bound up with mental emotions, and then you have an opportunity for physical action. You must look at the ocular possibilities of the subject. If we are to take "Stanley and Livingstone," we will say there is the story of Stanley's boyhood when he served in both the Confederate and Union Armies during the Civil War; then there is his association with the Great Bennett; his career in the Indian Wars and as the greatest reporter America had ever known and then last, but not least, his great trek after Dr. Livingstone.

You may say that obviously the field is open for an important moving picture, but then you have to stop and weigh it. You may say that is where we have to get a love interest and where we have to get a romantic pull, and which are the ingredients so essential to make a great motion picture that will appeal to the masses. By that I do not mean to say that we are going to just make pictures that will appeal to the masses; but today the production costs so much money that unless you can make a big picture you will not have an opportunity to get back your investment. You can certainly and very quickly break your company and your associates. It is not like trying out something that costs just \$20,000 or \$25,000, which, if it is a flop, is just too bad. It is a case of where you invest at least a million dollars on an important picture. Added to that is the cost of the prints and the cost of distribution to the theatres and the profit to the exhibitors and to the distributors. The prints become a problem and you must give a great deal of your time to them because this one item is the foundation and if they are not right then the exhibitor goes back to the producer. You can have certain products that add a certain moral and a certain value to your business, but if your subject matter is not correct, then there is no hope for its eventual success.

There is only one way that we can succeed in this business, and that is by the attendance of the public at the pictures. You have very often probably heard the expression, "It is an artistic failure." I may not like the picture, but it may make a lot of money and that is the idea, after all, behind the picture—to make a profit.

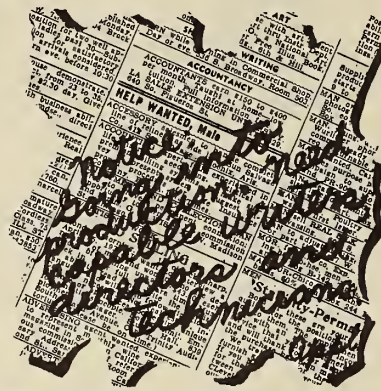
than today. Of course, they are today star-conscious. There always will be great personalities and great stars, but today it seems you have to have the right subject, too. If you take a story like "Stanley and Livingstone," you have to consider it outside of the fact that Stanley was a most interesting man. Very often you can pick a great story but that story is just not suitable to motion pictures. It is a story that is

Perhaps it is not as brilliant in some of the details as it might be but if it pleases the great majority of the public then it must be successful.

Therefore, to get back to the one little item that we have selected,—"Stanley and Livingstone." After we have found that we can photograph something that is really worth while, then we have to see about the other elements. Then we have to probe into it, into the details of the story, into the personal lives of the individuals, and very often have to stretch the imagination. We have to give sympathy to the characters so that you will root for them and we have to have that "something" so that you will not like to see them hurt or harmed. We want you to go out of the theatre and say "That picture is good." You will tell your neighbors and the exhibitor will be happy instead of hiding his face from his patrons. Once they have decided upon the story, then our first major problem is over.

Now we come to the preparation. You do not only cast pictures, you cast writers, and you cast directors and you cast technicians. The producer's job at this stage of the production of the picture is mainly a matter of careful selection of individuals. For instance, one

director might be quite capable of handling a dramatic comedy but he may not be so good for a melodrama. One writer may have the ability to sit down and handle a comedy for the Ritz Brothers but you can hardly think of him being assigned to "In Old Chicago" or a picture of that type. There are many degrees of writers; by that I mean there are many types of dramatic and many types of comedy writers. Very often the producer is called upon to get a combine. He feels he needs a man to handle the dialogue and he feels he needs another man who will appreciate the physical showmanship values. All that goes into the preparation of the subject matter.



"You not only cast pictures, you cast writers . . . directors . . . and . . . technicians."

Then we come to the technical production. We have the designing of the set and the designing of the costumes. All are most interesting. It is also very difficult and a lot of money is spent here. You must at all times carry the thoughts of the pictures and also the thoughts of the distributors in mind. He must not only merely design his production for his own personal liking or dislikes. If he does that, in most cases, he will certainly produce a failure rather than a success.

I feel in selecting whatever combination of writers, directors, technicians, set designers and costume designers that I do, that I must always look at it, as much as possible, from the eyes of what the greatest number of people would enjoy or would like to



"In the main our business is built on the story and the success or failure of Twentieth Century-Fox will be the success or failure of the material, primarily."



see. You will find that your own emotions do not run far off from this channel.

After we go through the preparation we come to the item of casting personalities, stars and players for the picture. The star is essential to a certain type of picture. There are three groups, I would say. There is the romantic comedy, the domestic drama and the intimate stories. The star is essential for these, or a combination of stars, for that matter. For the epic type of picture which we sell by the subject, let us take "Wells Fargo" or the picture which we were just discussing, "Stanley and Livingstone"—it is a subject matter and the picture needs less help from the value of the box office name or the personalities because there is so much to give in a tremendous production. It has scope that, of course, would not be called for in a more intimate type of production. It is quite easy for us to develop new talent—new personalities.

In the main our business is built on the story and the success or failure of Twentieth Century-Fox will be the success or failure of our selection of the material, primarily.

Pictures in the making cover a period of many months and it is very easy to be caught short. Therefore, as an item of protection, we usually make up our mind and go through with it. We usually try to give a varied program through the season. We have a certain number of comedies and a certain number of historical pictures so you can see we are not putting all our eggs in one basket. In any business today that you are compelled to spend as much money as we are compelled to spend, you have to keep up the standards and quality that you people expect when you go to the theatres. Even one or two failures can spoil an entire program. We investigate whenever possible. We call upon the theatres. There is hardly a theatre in the Fox West Coast group that I have not personally talked to the manager, talked to the doorman, or talked to any of the publicity men connected with the theatre, who are constantly trying to feel and gather the trend or the taste of the public. Proceeding along the adventure of this particular production, we will proceed to the photographing of the picture with its re-takes, its added scenes. We will say that all these troubles have been surmounted and we are now to the editorial point. The business of showmanship is a business of personal courage, and nowhere along the line is courage so essential as in the cutting of the film. From the time the entire picture is assembled, and you screen it time and again, you take out the objectionable things. You try to leave in the dramatic situations

and you try to give good climaxes. You try to get a good fade-out; you try to get your characters planned well; you try to feel the mood of your picture—all of that we will say we have done as we go along.

Now you come to your sneak preview. It may be in Pomona, Inglewood, Long Beach, Huntington Park, or in one of the closer theatres. We often go to San Diego, we often go to San Francisco and Santa Barbara. We usually are not anxious that the exhibitors notify the public of the type of the pictures that it is to see. We would rather that the picture be a complete surprise as we are trying it out for the reaction of the public. Very often we will find that the reaction is not to our liking. Before making any serious cuts we will try it in another theatre and you will find that the



"Very often we put our own men with the doorman to hear the comments of the people coming out of the theatre."



"The exhibitor who does not know what is wrong with the picture he plays all week long is not a very good exhibitor."

problem of exhibition becomes even more complicated. Very often a comedy will get a laugh in one theatre and won't be able to get a laugh in another theatre. You will find that a dramatic picture will have its hoped-for punch in one house and in another house it will have the same punch but not quite as strong, so then you have to take and balance it. Then comes one of the elements of courage—the element of being able to cut out complete episodes which you know have cost lots of money, but which you know, once they are out of the picture will give it the successful tempo, and that the picture is going to be a success.

Very often we put our own men with the doorman to hear the comments of the people coming out of the theatre or we get the doorman or the head usherette aside and we will say, "What do you think they thought of that picture? Did they like it?" You will get many conflicting replies but out them all you will be able to strike an average.

The exhibitor who does not know what is wrong with the picture he plays all week long is not a very good exhibitor. Of course, it is very easy to criticize. It has been

This never can be a business of indifference. It never can be a casual business. It is a business that deals in billions and you can go down very quickly. You have to believe in it. You have to be determined, to go through the long experience of study and work, or it is absolutely useless to endeavor to go into it because there is no branch or no part of the production, distribution, or exhibition that can be taken easily. I feel that we who are a part of the industry must look to its future. It is going ahead too fast. You must admit each year sees better pictures. There is no question but that the industry today is producing, generally speaking, the best type of product that has ever been produced. This must be safeguarded.



"The business of showmanship is a business of personal courage, and nowhere along the line is courage so essential as in the cutting of the film."



## MAYER

(Continued from Page 29)

There is nothing new today that didn't exist when Shakespeare wrote his classics and we have stolen most of our situations from him and the Bible—love, romance, parental love, relationship between children and parents—they all are the same as they were a thousand years ago.

I will tell you what has changed. It is the technique of putting it over to the people. Your language has changed. You get words today that the average person for a moment does not understand, but the situation explains what the thing is and what they think is meant by it.

The tempo of direction—the tempo under which artists are made to talk, the camera work. See a picture that you thought was a great picture three or four years ago. That was only a short time ago. You will start to laugh when you see that now and you won't stop laughing at it.

Yet, we take those stories and do them over again, but they are now done in the modern technique. We can put it over better than we could in that period, but there is nothing new in the situations.

When we produced "Ben Hur," there was a picture that challenged my friend, De Mille, who had "The King of Kings." He had more inspiring stories of the Christ in "The King of Kings" than we had in "Ben Hur." It was a religious picture—the story of the Christ and nothing else. If you wanted that, you got it cut and dried, but I will admit that in "Ben Hur" we gave you the most instructive melodrama of the Roman period. In "Ben Hur" you saw the complete story of the Christ through entertainment. Now then, if a person became inspired by the story of the Christ in "Ben Hur," we have not fooled him although we didn't preach to him. We didn't tell him to go to church or whether to believe in the Christ or not, but we gave him a classical piece of literature, honestly done through the screen as a medium of entertainment.

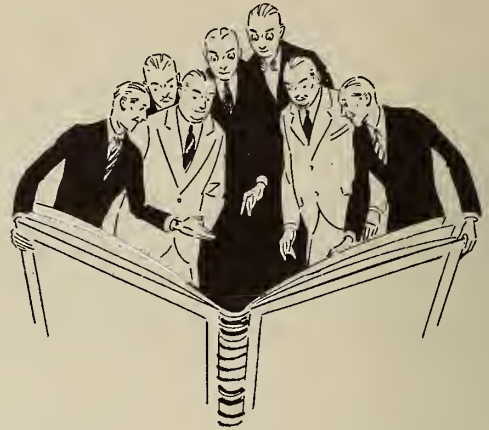
The really great pictures have a message but there is where we must not make it obvious. It must be done subtly. You can't tell a boy—"Don't forget your mother." You just show him a boy that did forget his mother. You can see what happens in "Over the Hill to the Poor House." I was sitting in the Central Theatre in New York. I am an old-timer, but if I had had a gun I would have shot him. I thought they would put me out of the theatre. I don't know why I yelled, but I got so mad that the usher had to put me down in my seat.



"I thought they would put me out of the theatre. I don't know why I yelled, but I got so mad that the usher had to put me down in my seat."

If you don't believe people, they become synthetic. There is one particular actor—I won't mention the name—who is a very good actor, but the people do not think he is a good actor. Then along comes some budding personality and the people say "There is a good actor." As a matter of fact, the person you don't like was the greater actor and not the other one.

Lack of showmanship and lack of personality is what that is



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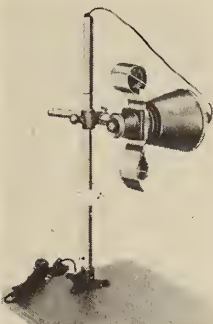
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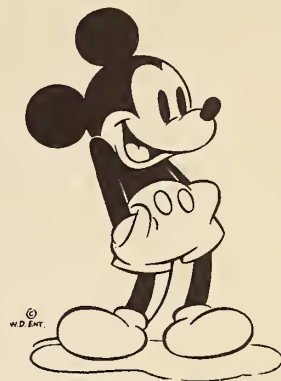
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The list below, page by page, shows the sources from which pictures in this issue were gathered. Cover—Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer.

- 1—Warner Brothers.
- 2—u. lft., Twentieth Century-Fox.
- 3—u. rt., Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer.
- 4—u. lft., Paramount; bm. cr., Paramount.
- 5—u. rt., Paramount.
- 7—Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer.
- 8—Frances Marion.
- 9—u. rt., Gaumont-British.
- 10—Paramount.
- 11—u. rt., l. lft., Paramount.
- 14—Walt Disney.
- 15—Walt Disney.
- 16—l. lft., Universal; l. rt., Gaumont-British.
- 17—u. rt., Bela Lugosi; l. lft., All-Star Features; l. rt., Warner Brothers.
- 18—"The Filipino in America" (Alan Selznick and Ellis Yarnell)
- 20—Paramount.
- 21—Paramount.
- 24—Fred W. Orth.

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# CINEMA PROGRESS

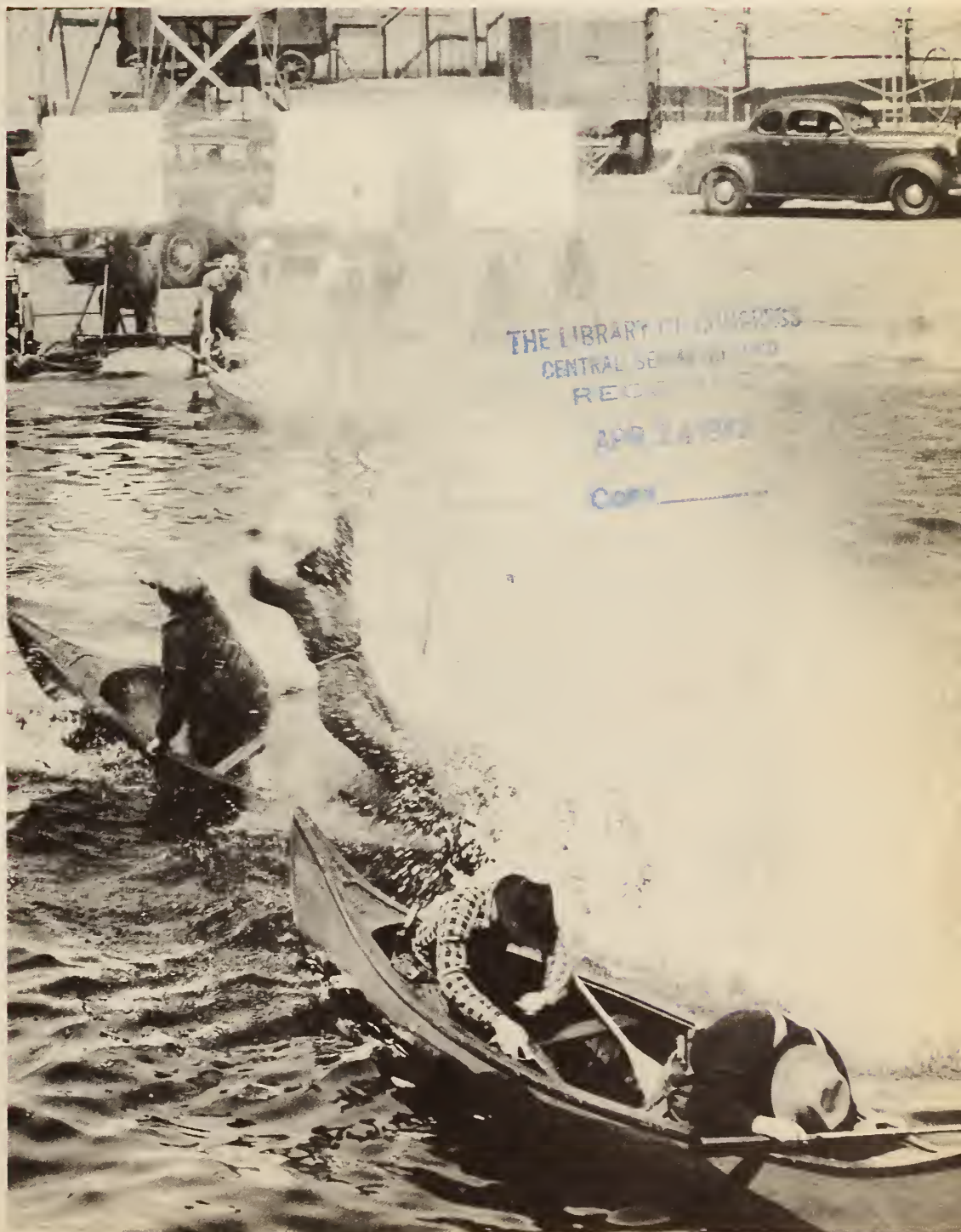
*The Film and Life*



## SPECIAL WRITERS' ISSUE

Interviews with

ZOE AKINS  
ROBERT BUCKNER  
WARREN DUFF  
BERT GRANET  
MILTON KRIMS  
DUDLEY NICHOLS  
NORMAN R. RAINE  
ERNEST VAJDA  
CRANE WILBUR  
CLARENCE YOUNG  
PAUL YAWITZ



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GUN FIGHT IN THE STUDIO POOL FOR "HEART OF THE NORTH"



# CINEMA PROGRESS

## The Film and Life

VOL. 3 JANUARY 1939 NO. 3-4

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THE NEW IMPETUS—Editorial, By Mark Owen.....	1	THE SCRIPT COMES TO LIFE—By E. Bayard. How William F. Tummel, assistant director, staged a battle scene in the picture, "If I Were King"....	15
A MOTION PICTURE WORLD'S FAIR—By Rudolf Arn- heim. Italy's International Film Exhibition praised by noted author and critic .....	2	MEN FROM MARS? THAT'S TAME —By Alfred A. Reed. The late Georges Melies, France's Jules Verne of the Cinema, pioneered in the fantastic years ago .....	16
WANTED: A STORY SPECIALIST—By J. Western Ernest Vajda explains how screen stories are adapted from stage plays .....	3	THIS "ORIGINAL" BUSINESS—By Alan Rubin Writing an assignment is no bed of roses, says Clar- ence Young, RKO writer .....	18
THE FILM AND LIFE .....	4	GUIDE POSTS FOR SCREEN WRITERS—By Zoe Akins Are there any rules to aid the writer in adapting a stage play for the screen? .....	19
TWO-GUN DRAMA—By Jack M. Clark A specialist in outdoor films, Robert Buckner, Warner Bros. writer, tells of the new audience interest in pic- tures of the great west .....	5	WANT TO WRITE? TRY THESE BOOKS.....	20
WRITING'S A GRIND—By Harry Westgate Don't wait for inspiration—just write. That's the ad- vice of Norman Reilly Raine, adapter of "Zola"....	6	PAINTING WITH A PUNCH—By Russell Birdwell. The role of art in heightening mood and dramatic effect is described by William Cameron Menzies..	21
CENSORSHIP AND THE STORY—By Russell Bledsoe If a picture is written honestly and sincerely, should there be any restrictions imposed on the writer, asks Dudley Nichols, Academy Award Winner?.....	7	FILMS FOR CHILDREN—By Harriett Genung and Harold Hilton. Should special films be produced for persons under 16? Discussion of a letter from William Farr, English educator .....	23
CRIME BY FORMULA—By Robert Bertram Simpson Box-office appeal and censorship restrictions shape stories, declares Crane Wilbur, Warner Bros. writer	8	TEACHING BY SOUND FILM—By H. A. Gray, Ph.D. The director of field studies for Erpi Classroom Films, Inc., offers some advice to instructors .....	24
WHEN WRITERS TEAM—By Harold Mount Bert Granet and Paul Yawitz, RKO writers, divide the chores .....	9	PRODUCTION FROM SCRIPT TO CAMERA—By Jack V. Wood. More hints for the amateur on the routine of making the film story .....	26
ADAPTING THE NOVEL—By Dr. Leon Zangrados Milton Krims, adaptor of "The Sisters" and "Green Light," tells why the screen version often differs so greatly from the original story .....	10	CLOSE-UPS AND LONG SHOTS—By Dr. George New- house. From the sub-standard field.....	27
SHORT STORIES PREFERRED—By Marie Bestelmeyer Too much material can cause more headaches than too little, declares Warren Duff of Warner Bros....	11	THE FILM HERE AND THERE .....	27
WILL TELEVISION AFFECT OUR MOVIES? —By Kay Reynolds. An interview with Robert Hard- ing, Jr., president of the National Television Corp. of New York .....	12	THE FILM AND BOOKS Reviews of "Trick Effects with a Cine Camera," "Management of Motion Picture Theaters," and "Documentary Film" .....	28
TELEVISION-EYES FOR THE RADIO DRAMA —By John Weisberg. Problems in producing tele- vision plays .....	14	PICTURE PARADE Film Reviews .....	29

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# THE NEW IMPETUS

(An Editorial)

The situation in the domestic and foreign motion picture market and the rising cost of motion picture production seem to have created an impasse in the motion picture industry. This state of affairs cannot be overcome just by the shuffling of a few executives or by an increase in publicity activities.

New vision, new forces, and new impetus are needed to free the industry from the reef on which it seems to be resting, while everything around it is seething and moving. We are living in a time of great emotional upheaval. The fate of millions of men and women, the existence of nations, the very fundamentals of civilization are at stake. At such a time, how can one expect to sway man's emotions even by the most ingenious tricks of showmanship? Certainly it cannot be done by synthetic superfilms, ready-made to a formula, and lacking in life and fire. How can such pictures stir the imagination of a public which is experiencing a lifetime of emotion almost each succeeding week?

The moving picture industry must welcome new, young, and intelligent leaders, men with inspiration as well as talent, capable of creating a team spirit. The films need men who are sensitive to the changing cycles of the emotional life of the people, who can bring to the studios dynamic energy with which our national life is bubbling.

In order to bring about conditions favorable to the release of new energy and enthusiasm in the industry, a closer and more sympathetic collaboration with the public should be created. The great dramatist and composer, Richard Wagner, saw that the progress of a real people's drama was possible only through the mutual effort and growth of craftsmen and the public.

## TECHNICAL PROGRESS IS NOT ENOUGH

The creative efforts of the talented are often barren because their hands are tied and their work is mutilated. Good pictures often are made unknowingly when, by some accident, the powers-that-be do not interfere with creative work. In the development of technical devices much money and energy are expended, but there is no research in the creative use and blending of these devices to express dramatically the powers of simple and spontaneous human emotions. Painstaking research work and experimentation are needed to find master keys for the coordination of sight and sound, for combining the graphic visual and auditory elements of motion pictures with the drama and dialogue. All these must be fused into a living unity. One would not attempt to conduct an orchestra unless he had studied harmony and counterpoint. Likewise in motion pictures a systematic study of the visual and auditory elements of film, and experiments in the orchestration of these elements are vitally necessary.

Every great industry except that of motion pictures trains its new generation. In the days of silent pictures, the days of the pioneers, it was possible to learn the trade in the school of hard knocks by hit-or-miss methods. Today the industry is highly departmentalized and specialized. Motion pictures, like the other arts and crafts, must thoroughly explore its medium, laws, limitations, and expressive powers, and must experiment with their workings. Further development is impossible without the training of talented youth, and the infusing of new blood to improve the creative technique of the present moving picture workers.

## SPREADING THE GOSPEL

A new impetus will be given if the industry, as a whole, will welcome efforts to establish and develop standards of excellence and public taste in both the ideas and treatment of motion pictures. New vigor will come from cooperation with the new picture-conscious audiences which are enthusiastically anxious to support every advance in cinema. Thousands of public school teachers, university professors, and lovers of cinema throughout the country are doing yeoman work in studying, teaching, discussing cinema. With the help of the Rockefeller Institute research is being conducted in the uses of motion pictures in education. The Museum of Modern Art Film Library in New York has built up a splendid collection of motion picture classics, and is renting its films to schools, societies, and institutions throughout the United States. Courses in motion picture appreciation, art, and technique are being taught in many universities and colleges: Columbia University, New York University, New School for Social Research, Yale, Harvard, Stanford, Minnesota, and others, as well as innumerable high schools. The University of Southern California, during the past ten years, has developed a complete Department of Cinematography which bestows the degree of Bachelor of Arts, and Master of Arts, and conducts experiments in its Cinema Workshop.

## COOPERATION OF THE INDUSTRY

Like Walter Wanger, who aided his alma mater, Dartmouth University, in establishing motion picture courses, the industry should give its wholehearted recognition and support to all of the efforts outlined above. Such support will give great impetus to the progress of study and research in motion pictures as an art and technique. The rejuvenation of the motion picture industry by the injection of new and vigorous blood will result, and a new tide of public interest and enthusiasm for motion pictures will be generated. The pace of the industry will then be synchronized with changing public tastes and institutions.

At a time when the nations are mobilizing all their resources to meet the world crisis and forestall Armageddon, the collaboration of the motion picture industry and the public will help to mobilize the constructive emotional and mental powers of our nation.

—By Mark Owen.



# A Motion Picture World's Fair

## Italy's International Film Exhibition Praised by Noted Author and Critic.

By RUDOLF ARNHEIM

**W**AS it not a marvelous project to establish a center where one could view periodically the best films in the world, commercial as well as documentary and educational? When Count Volpi, desiring to give the Venetian summer season a new attraction, added a motion picture show to the bi-annual exhibitions of painting and sculpture, he made possible the realization of the cinema-goers' fondest dreams. An annual survey of the best motion picture work, including films not shown in commercial theaters, would make possible very instructive comparisons.

The first exhibitions, in 1932 and 1934, left, on the whole, a very satisfactory impression. In 1932 there were many interesting films, such as "Madchen in Uniform," "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde," "Grand Hotel," "Der Kongress Tanzt," "A Nous La Liberte," and "Man of Aran." In 1934, "It Happened One Night" and "Ecstasy" were significant. Side by side with mammoth industrial productions, there appeared the very remarkable work of young experimenters. At the end of the 1932 exhibition, I felt that I had never in my life spent so strenuous nor so interesting an August.

### PASSIONATE DISCUSSIONS

The exhibition had been held, not in the environs of the painters' and sculptors' shows, but in the garden of the elegant Lido Hotel. In the seats of the hotel hall and before the screen one observed the international tourist society side by side with pipe-smoking journalists and badly haired art theorists. Apparently the sea-side public had expected good and novel entertainment, but not documentaries two hours long and incomprehensible "avantgarde" experiments. There occurred passionate discussions coupled with interruptions of the projection and protests, all of which proved the seriousness of the enterprise and augured well for the future. So often art progress begins with whistling, thrown chairs, and crushed hats.

The exhibition gained unexpected popularity and after 1934, it became an annual institution. In the course of time, the exhibition left the hotel gardens. Since 1937, its headquarters has been a modern projection palace, expressly constructed, and with a seating capacity of 1300. The Lido public has become more patient and tolerant. Its common sense counter-balances the occasionally eccentric tastes of critics and students.

### CROWDS WANTED THRILLS

In the early years, many spectators had come to the exhibition for the thrill of applauding pictures the box

office had scorned and scorning pictures which the box office had extolled, for the thrill of seeing strange, heretical, perhaps unbecoming things. Now, however, it was developing into the showroom of a factory which produced well-made solid stuff, but which held few surprises, fewer thrills, and little originality.

While these considerations apply to the programs as a whole, every year has been graced by one or two outstanding films: "The Informer" in 1935, "Mr. Deeds," "Kermesse Herioque," "The Story of Louis Pasteur" in 1936, "Elephant Boy," "Carnet du Bal" in 1937. This year, the audience view several respectable American pictures such as "Test Pilot," "Marie Antoinette," "Jezebel," but even they are not top grade. "Tom Sawyer" and the "Goldwyn Follies" made it evident that colour cinema has not yet taken the decisive step from a merely naturalistic to an expressive use of color, such as we admire in Walt Disney's Silly Symphonies. "Snow White" obtained such

tremendous acclaim that a special prize called the Big Art Trophy of the Biennial, was established. But for the purposes of the exhibition, the best American film of the year was "The River," the documentary film of the Mississippi, presented by the Government of the United States.

### MUSSOLINI CUP

Another official documentary film was awarded the Mussolini Cup for the best foreign picture, namely, the German Olympiad film. Great Britain achieved a measure of success with "Drums" (in the tradition of Flaherty's "Elephant Boy"), "Break the News" (a rather industrialized Rene Clair) and "Pygmalion," (Shaw's comedy with Leslie Howard). The highest artistic level was embodied again this year in French and Czech productions.

The directors of the exhibitions have done their best to maintain the exceptional character of the show this year by completing the programs with documentary and scientific shorts from Mexico, Argentina, Poland, Hungary, Switzerland, Norway and Japan, and by organizing a show of the past with old pictures of Emile Cohl, Max Linder, Lumiere, Clair, Feuillade, Renoir and others. But they bowed to the growing industrialization of the cinema by changing the method of selection. In the preceding years the pictures were chosen according to their artistic value by a non-partisan committee, but this year the selection was made by committees of the individual nations. As a result, the Venice exhibition has become practically an international fair of the motion picture industry.



Conreidt Veidt in the French film "Le joueur d'echecs"  
(The Chess-player), shown at Venice.



# WANTED... A STORY SPECIALIST

Ernest Vajda explains how screen stories are adapted from stage plays.

by

By J. WESTERN

## WRITE WORD PICTURES

The most difficult task of the screen writer is to pen original stories. Only slightly less laborious is the problem of adapting a novel or a play to the film. In going from literary or stage medium to that of celluloid, the question becomes: "What shall I leave out?" "What shall I change?" "What shall I add?" Often an excellent novel or stage play would make a poor picture, for the cinema requires action and movement. Some novels consist

primarily of mental processes of the characters; some plays almost entirely of dialogue with a minimum of action. And it is difficult, if not impossible, to express those types in cinematic language.

Sometimes an adaptation is difficult because the stage play is almost perfect. Vajda encountered that difficulty in working on "The Barretts of Wimpole Street." The writer doesn't wish to spoil a perfect work by leaving anything out. And if he obeys that inclination, he will probably produce a non-moving picture story.

Vajda believes it is almost impossible to teach anyone to write stage plays—not so with screen plays.

If one has the ability to write, and intelligence, that is sufficient, he says.

For with the ability to write, he is ready to make his ideas concrete, and with intelligence he can master the language of film and movement in which to express those ideas. When he came to Hollywood, Vajda spent the first few months wandering about the set, the laboratories, the cutting rooms, all of which aided him in mastering the language of film ("Ah! The film cutters; they are the unsung heroes of the cinema; they are responsible for the rhythm of the picture," he exclaims.)

What about dialogue? When sound and talking pictures first became possible, the producers believed the screen writers' problems were greatly simplified. Anyone could write dialogue, any journalist, anyone with a jot of writing ability, they thought. And the early "300%" talkies were the result of that belief. Many of the allegedly dramatic lines brought howls of laughter from the public. The producers were soon made to see that writing screen dialogue was hard work,

"HERE'S the play: we need an adaptation for filming it in three weeks." Such requests made of screen writers by producers are not at all uncommon, says Ernest Vajda, successful writer of stage and screen plays. The producer is faced with a financial problem: thousands of dollars tied up in purchasing the play, in actors' and technicians' salaries. Too often those factors outweigh his desire to give the writer all the time necessary to turn out a first class screenplay. Too often the resulting picture is only half as good as it should have been.

Some compromise between the film as industry and as art must be found.

Vajda solves the problem to his own satisfaction by refusing to be hurried, which probably accounts for his past successful screen-plays, such as "The Barretts of Wimpole Street," "Reunion in Vienna," and many Ernst Lubitsch films. His last work was on "Dramatic School," which stars Luise Rainer and is scheduled for release soon.

Vajda's forte has been the sophisticated comedy or drama.

"I would be very happy if I could have written the 'Andy Hardy' stories," he says, "but I can't. They require a different sort of talent. And different types of stories must be adapted by men with the kind of talent which suits each type. I can do a 'Love Parade,' but not for my life could I write a 'Rose Marie!'"

Many producers feel that any screen writer worthy of his salt should be able to adapt any kind of story. The fallacy of that belief is evident, says Vajda, in the many pictures which are technically excellent, but which fail to achieve greatness because the story was mishandled, not by a poor writer, but by a writer who hadn't the particular kind of ability necessary for that particular story.

ERNEST VAJDA





if the lines were to be taken as intended. There is no virtue in dialogue for its own sake. The spoken word must be used to emphasize action, not to replace it. Wherever an effect can be achieved by action, by camera, by lighting, those devices should be used rather than dialogue.

#### TOO MUCH TALK TODAY?

There is too much talking in pictures today, he believes. The silent film enabled the creation of a unity of style like a good book or poem or musical composition. Now, pictures are too "choppy." The reason is not hard to find. Movement, except when very restricted, is not possible while a character is speaking. In life one doesn't usually engage in a great deal of action while he is talking. Consequently, whenever a character is speaking, there is a danger that he will become "frozen" until his lips are closed. Then he will move and act, but only until his next lines, when he again "freezes." Of course, this does not always happen, but those are the proverbial exceptions. Subordinate dialogue to action and sound: That is Vajda's answer to the problem. "I always eliminate lines, however brilliant or witty or dramatic, if the desired effect can be achieved by another device."

Should screen stories be written with a particular star in mind? Vajda sees no objection to that, provided the result is not just a vehicle which flaunts the star's personality and which calls for no acting. After all, Shakespeare and Moliere wrote their plays for specific actors.

The screen play for "Dramatic School" was written by Vajda, specifically for Luise Rainer. To start with, he had not one play, but two: (1) a play by two Hungarians about a poor factory girl who goes to a dramatic school and who there fibs about her romance with her boss' son; (2) a somewhat similar play about a girl who works in a factory and is studying to be a chorus girl. She is a "mystic" liar, who doesn't wish to tell untruths, but molds reality to fit her desires.

#### DEVELOPING THE STORY

Building on that double foundation, Vajda proceeded to eliminate ideas, change, add, magnify, subordinate until his screen play evolved. The girl attends a dramatic school where she is in conflict with all the other students. When they ask her how she spends her evenings, she doesn't tell them; she works in a factory, but hints that she travels to important places with important personages. She is not a liar, but an incredible and incurable dramatist who romanticises everything with herself as the central figure. Thus she is always acting, not lying, and the dramatic school is a concrete symbol of her nature.

There were problems in writing such a story, the most severe of which were pictures similar in some respects, which had appeared in the recent past. A girl-fiber was portrayed by Irene Dunne in the "Awful Truth," by Deanna Durbin in "Mad About Music," and by Carole Lombard in "Nothing Sacred." "Morning Glory" of a few years ago and "Stage Door" of last season had treated the girl who wished to become an actress. The central figure in "Dramatic School" differs from all of these. She is not a liar, nor a fiber, nor even an aspirant to the acting profession; she is every inch an actress and her existence and reality are acting.

If a picture's dramatic value depends upon an institution or profession, a great deal of detail concerning it should appear. Vajda carefully shows the characters and

situations to be found in a dramatic school. He is opposed to the dragging in of jokes and comic situations which have no inherent relation to the story. They must have dramatic as well as comic value. He obeys this principle in "Dramatic School" by introducing an amusing sequence in which many of the students at the school and the old ex-actress teacher enact the balcony scene from "Romeo and Juliet."

After all the labor of writing a screen play, changes may be made by the producer or director or by the exigencies of shooting it. What of that, Mr. Vajda? Vajda shrugs his shoulders resignedly.

## THE FILM AND LIFE

### SHAW ON THE SCREEN

When George Bernard Shaw consented to a cinematic version of his play "Pygmalion" the film-producing world was astounded. Samuel Goldwyn, R.K.O. and others had, at various times, tried to persuade him but had been driven off by Shavian barbs about not wanting his plays transferred to the screen by office boys.

Gabriel Pascal, a native of Hungary, who has produced films in France, Italy, and Germany, turned the trick. He selected Leslie Howard to play the male lead and to be co-director with Anthony Asquith, and employed Harry Stradling, an American, as cameraman. Mr. Pascal produced "Pygmalion" in England after rejecting the offers of Columbia Pictures. They wouldn't permit him to "make it right" he explains.

The screen version follows the play closely and all changes were approved by Shaw. English critics have acclaimed the film and America should see it soon. Mr. Pascal is now in Hollywood—perhaps as a visitor, perhaps as a new American film producer.

### "BOYS' TOWN" BACK FIRES

The motion picture, "Boys' Town," is a box office success, but it is a pain in the pocket book for Father E. J. Flanagan, founder of the famous institution for boys. The publicity the institution received from the film boosted the list of applications to a new high and depressed donations to a new low. Father Flanagan, who received \$5000 for the film rights, is puzzled by the reaction to the picture. The portrayal of himself as a financial wizard able to pluck a few hundred thousand dollars out of thin air accounts partly for the unexpected turn of events, he believes.

### SMALL TOWNS WATCH THE WORLD

Until eight or ten months ago "March of Time" features on international affairs were a bitter pill for small town motion picture exhibitors to swallow. Some "March of Time" bookings were cancelled because, as one exhibitor put it, "the average person in a small town just doesn't give a damn about what goes on in Europe."

During the recent European crisis this attitude changed completely. Small town audiences have been intensely interested in features such as "Czechoslovakia," according to "March of Time" executives. The tastes of the small town audience have been changed in great part by the newspapers and radio broadcasts.



# Two-Gun Drama



**A specialist in outdoor films, Robert Buckner, Warner Bros. writer, tells of the new audience interest in pictures of the great West.**

By JACK M. CLARK

**R**OBERT Buckner, Warner Brothers writer, specializes on outdoor Western pictures. It is surprising to learn that Buckner, a writer of typically American stories, was graduated only ten years ago from Edinburgh University, where he studied to be a doctor. Not finding the medical profession to his liking, he decided to become a journalist. As a newspaper man he went to Russia and attended Moscow University. He then turned to short story writing, and finally arrived in Hollywood.

Buckner's successful picture, "Gold Is Where You Find It," typed him as an outdoor Western picture expert. He worked on "Oklahoma Kid" and is now writing "Dodge City." The public is becoming socially-conscious, according to Buckner. They look for wider scope in pictures than the old boy-meets-girl or eternal-triangle story. This new interest is evidenced by such pictures as "Union Pacific," "The Plainsmen," "Dodge City," "Gold Is Where You Find it," and others. Pictures of outdoor life do not run into the censorship troubles which often beset the "love interest" story.

## UNUSUAL OPENING

An example of an unusual opening for a Western picture is that used by Buckner in "Dodge City." He shows the conflict between the commandant of a Confederate prison and the prisoners. The commandant, discovering the prisoners are trying to escape by tunnelling under the walls, waits two months until the men finish the tunnel and then seizes them when they are on the verge of escape. The incident takes only seven minutes at the beginning of the story, yet it provides a unique opening and reveals the character of the Confederate commandant.

Screen dialogue should be built on action according to Buckner. It should be significant and go straight to the point, but not in a too obvious way. In "Dodge City" there is a scene of a race between a stage coach and a train. The characters on the train make bets that the train will beat the stage coach. The scene cuts to a close-up of a man who says, "Iron men and iron dollars—you can't beat them." One line of dialogue puts over the whole idea.

Characterization is difficult on the screen because no two people see a character alike. After the script is completed the director may make a character do something inconsistent with his previous acts.

## CASTING PROBLEMS

Then there are casting problems. In "Dodge City," Gary Cooper was originally cast for the lead. He was later replaced by Errol Flynn. The part had to be re-written to fit Flynn's personality. The character is a split-personality type, which makes for more suspense and more interest. The dual personality keeps the audience guessing. They can never be sure what the character will do next.

In preparing the story the writer also has to consider the methods of the director. Michael Curtiz, who is directing "Dodge City," works continually with the writer. He insists that the writer give a reason for everything that happens in the story. Curtiz wants no question in the mind of the audience as to why anything happened. He sees the script in terms of pictures rather than dialogue. In "Dodge City," Curtiz cut much of the dialogue.

Although Buckner does not believe that people can be taught to write, the procedures used by a successful writer will help the student avoid many errors. In his own case, Buckner believes he developed his writing ability by studying people and practical psychology.

The principal difference between writing magazine stories and writing for the screen, Buckner believes, is that in pictures the writer has to show the action. In a magazine story, thought processes can be described. On the screen, the character's thoughts must be shown through his actions. The writer must always keep the film editor in mind. Details and explanations which may be included in a story are ruthlessly cut in a film.

Writing students are apt to ask if film stories can be written according to a formula.

"Yes and no," Buckner says. "Some producers still have a formula in their minds. It worked in the past, and they think it is still good. They would rather use a formula than run into a blank wall of experiment. Formulas are wearing out. Institutions are now popular screen material. They are impersonal objects which will not fit into a formula."





# WRITING'S A GRIND

**Don't wait for inspiration—just write. That's the advice of Norman Reilly Raine, adapter of "Zola."**

By HARRY WESTGATE

**T**HE knack of writing for the screen comes instinctively. "One cannot learn how to write scenarios in schools, but what one can learn is how to avoid errors in writing," says Norman Reilly Raine, Warner Brothers writer. A knowledge of screen construction is an absolute necessity, and this, too, can be learned in school courses teaching the subject.

Journalism experience is invaluable, as the majority of successful screen writers claim that background. Raine's three and a half years sailing as an able seaman on a tramp ship has proven of considerable aid in writing original stories, particularly those with a sea background, such as "Tugboat Annie."

## INSPIRATION A MYTH

When a writer is at a loss for story, he doesn't sit around and wait until a stroke of inspiration comes. Waiting for that "happy day" is a waste of time. Raine imposes regular office hours upon himself regardless of how he feels. He invariably writes several thousand words a day. At least some of this day's effort is good enough to use in the story he is working on.

Laughingly, Raine said, "I have done some of my best work while suffering from a stomach ache or some such ailment. Of course, this probably was due to taking my work more seriously under these unusual conditions."

Concentration upon the story doesn't stop after office hours. Raine sometimes thinks of situations to put into his story at home, or even on the golf course. Often Raine will get ideas that cannot be used for the story he is writing at the time, so he files them away for future use.

One can visit a waterfront, logging camp, or even sit an hour in a hotel lobby and absorb enough atmosphere to give rise to a story. Raine recalled a dense fog one time in Puget Sound, in which it was almost impossible to see his hand before his face. In a sea story, he could picture such a situation by remembering his experience in a fog.

When Raine uses material with which he is unfamiliar, for instance a scene which takes place in the operating room of a hospital, he tries to visualize the atmosphere of the setting. He might recall an operation he was once subject to and in that way write from experience, or he might visit an operating room until he was thoroughly saturated with the atmosphere of blood.

## RESEARCH IMPORTANT

In writing the screenplay for "The Adventures of Robin Hood," many books were used for reference in gaining material to put into this screen version. The studio research department was constantly occupied in seeking information about even the most insignificant matters to make the story as authentic as possible. A complete knowledge of etiquette in England at that period was essential in order to portray correctly the action of the characters in the story. Too, it was a distinct advantage to know that Errol Flynn was to play the title role. Therefore, the story was written to portray a Robin Hood of the swashbuckling type at which Flynn is so adept.

There is a great deal of difference in the way such actors as Errol Flynn, Clark Gable, and Robert Taylor might play the character, so it is an aid to the writer to shape his character and action to meet the type of performance he knows the player will give. Raine maintains there is no formula including a definite amount of the ingredients of tragedy, drama, comedy, etc., to use

in writing a screenplay. The writer must have an instinctive knowledge of entertainment to be able to know where and when to place these elements of story structure. To understand these elements is an essential fundamental of story writing. After all, to become a master of the trade, one must know his tools.

Nevertheless, being armed with the mechanical implements essential to screen-play writing is no assurance that successful stories will be written. Using these tools intelligently, with a tempered combination of forcefulness and restraint, and above all, with unvarying concentration, the writer

usually can determine beforehand the success of the story if of course, he has inherent in him the ability and imagination to formulate interesting and absorbing sequences. Lacking this ability, the word "writer" becomes a term denoting physical action, with no reference to the necessary mental activity.



Scene from "The Adventures of Robin Hood"  
One of many screen successes authored by  
Norman Reilly Raine.

## THE BLIND "SEE" MOVING PICTURES

If "talking books" are enjoyed by the blind, why not give them talking pictures? William Barbour of the American foundation for the blind translated "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs" into a "talking book," a long playing disc resembling a phonograph record. A narrative translating the film's action into sound accompanies the dialogue and music from the picture.



# Censorship and the Story

**If a picture is written honestly and sincerely should there be any restriction imposed on the writer, asks Dudley Nichols, Academy Award winner.**

By RUSSELL BLEDSOE

**T**HE film writer always has collaborators whether he wants them or not, according to Dudley Nichols. In the studios everyone knows his own job—and writing. Most producers are at heart thwarted writers, and they remain thwarted because they cannot see the necessity of mixing sweat, determination, and hard work with good story ideas. A writer who has to hold a job by hook or crook will twist and bend his own personality to fit that of the producer. As a result, the writer is held in a strait-jacket of ideas which are not his own.

However, the writer seeks the aid of intelligent directors and producers. Co-operation is welcome. "Stage Coach," a script Nichols recently completed, is based on a short story director John Ford recommended. Before the script was completed Ford, the director, and Walter Wanger, the producer, conferred with Nichols.

Nichols and Ford, a famous writer-director team, try to make together at least one picture a year. In 1935 they made the Academy Award winner, "The Informer." Their present film, "Stage Coach," will be a unique treatment of outdoor western material. It is the story of a party of travelers making a stage coach trip from Arizona to Lordsburg, New Mexico. In the original story which appeared in "Collier's Magazine," the main character, modeled on Billy the Kid, is traveling to Lordsburg to kill three men for no apparent reason.

## REWRITES STORY

Nichols re-wrote the story completely for the screen. He rounded out the characters, motivated their actions, added suspense, new situations, new characters.

A motive of revenge was introduced to account for the protagonist's trip to Lordsburg. Indian fights, a beautiful prostitute traveling on the stage coach, and the hardships of the journey keep the tough young man involved in difficult situations.

"Stage Coach" will present fast, entertaining action rather than an important theme. Technically, the picture will be very unusual. Nichols wrote the script as he would for a silent picture. The camera explains everything that happens. There will be dialogue, music, and sound effects, of course, but none of the long speeches and "talky" business that slows down most pictures of action.

Nichols believes a realistic Western picture has yet to be written. Most Western pictures are fakes, and the audience knows it.

"In the early days of the West," Nichols says, "a man pulled his gun to shoot someone, not to wave it around."

Modern gangsters shoot it out in a hit or miss way. The old timers in the West either hit the first time, or were hit themselves. When they fired a revolver, they got results. Another character who is never presented realistically is the two-gun shooter.

"No one ever tried to shoot two guns at the same time," Nichols said. Some rapid fire experts did shift a loaded revolver to the hand which held the revolver just emptied. Nichols hopes to write a picture which will portray the old West as it really was.

## ARTISTRY AND DOLLARS

Nichols objected strongly to the idea that an artistically sincere picture will never be a success at the box office. "The Informer," which was highly praised by European and American critics, grossed over \$1,000,000. The production cost was only \$260,000. The student writer can draw his own conclusions when producers say honest pictures will not make money. Is it possible that some producers use this excuse to hide their inability to make a picture which has something more in it than just "a million dollars?"

In "The Informer," Nichols' script offers a valuable example of the correct use of symbolism. Gypo Nolan reads a poster advertising a reward for a fellow rebel. Gypo leaves and walks down the street. The wind blows the poster from the wall and whips it around Gypo's legs. He struggles to clear it from his feet. He walks on into the heavy fog. The poster indicates the thought of betrayal whirling through Gypo's brain, and the fog symbolizes his confusion. The audience is immediately conscious of Gypo's conflict with himself.

A symbol loses its value when an audience is aware of its use. A symbol, dragged into the story by its raw and bleeding heels, spoils its own effect and the rest of the scene.

## CENSORS RUIN STORIES?

Censorship often mangles a good story. Nichols believes that the lying, dishonest picture is the only picture which deserves censorship. If a picture is produced honestly and sincerely, the public should decide whether or not it is worth seeing. It is not the material of the story, but the presentation which should determine censorship.

In a story named "Memory of Love," Nichols wrote about the affair between a girl and a married man. The opening scene is typical of the sincere artistry of the picture. An investment banker looks through the door of his office into the adjoining room where his son is sitting. It is Spring. There are flowers in the room. The sunshine is bright. The banker starts to enter his son's office, but hesitates when a young girl walks in. She is radiant and happy. She joyously tells the younger man that what he wanted has happened. Her own happiness is the expression of the budding life and joy of Spring.

(Continued on Page 8)



DUDLEY NICHOLS



# CRIME

BY

# FORMULA

**F**ORMULAS and tricks often serve as the foundation for the plot of a crime story, believes Crane

Wilbur, Warner Brothers writer. However, the formulas change with the shifting taste of the audience. The box office and censorship restrictions indicate to the writer what formula he can use successfully.

Censorship strictly forbids the portrayal of a criminal in a favorable light. In "Hell's Kitchen," a slum neighborhood, for instance, the "Dead End" kids are reading a newspaper story about a gangster who escapes punishment.

"If he can get away with it so can we," is the thought that runs through their minds. The idea is to show that a bad environment produces a wrong angle of thought. To make a moral ending, the writer must give the plot a twist to prove that crime doesn't pay.

In searching for realistic material, Wilbur visited reform schools and jails. It is very difficult to transfer gangster lingo to the screen without the use of expletives, which are banned by censors.

### HEAVY, HEAVY, HANGS . . .

Another formula can be applied to most entertainment pictures. This formula is something like the children's game of "Heavy, heavy hangs over your head." In other words, the audience must expect a certain thing or want something to happen. Make them think they are not going to get it. Then give it to them.

In "Crime School," the crooked guard of the reformatory lets the kids escape in a plot to ruin the reputation of the new commissioner. When they are gone, the guard turns in an alarm. "Heavy, heavy hangs" over the head of Humphrey Bogart, the honest commissioner. The audience would like to see the commissioner clean up the crooked practices in the reform school, but his chances look slim when the kids escape.

By bringing them back to the reformatory before the governor arrives to investigate the escape, Bogart succeeds in ousting the crooks. The public gets what it wants.

### STUDENT OF REACTION

Wilbur often goes to the theatre to study audience reactions because story formulas change with the tastes of the public.

For example, villains are out of style now. Frank Capra in "It Happened One Night" and "Lost Horizon" showed that a picture could be produced without a villain.

Another good instance of the change in public taste is the play, "Turn to the Right." Wilbur saw it in 1918. It was naive, convincing in its time, but laughable now. The theme was that God watches over all. The play ends with an old mother folding her hands in prayer. Twenty years ago people reveled in this sort of sentimentality. Now the public is too self-conscious of sentiment.

By **ROBERT BERTRAM SIMPSON**

**Box-office appeal and censorship restrictions shape stories, declares Crane Wilbur, Warner Bros. writer.**

### DIALOGUE SUBTLE

In dialogue the same change has taken place. A writer is afraid to put the words, "I love you," in a character's mouth for fear some hard-boiled old fellow in the audience will quip out of the corner of his mouth "Oh yeah?" In modern pictures dialogue must be more subtle. People want to see realistic characters. The emotion the character feels is suggested rather than told directly by dialogue.

However, modern screen successes are still made from plays which were hits in the past. The adaptation is made by disguising the play in some way. If it is a plot of a boy and a girl, change it to an old man and an old woman. Writers call this trick a "switcheroo." Like any other trade, writing has its tricks and formulas.

A trick, of course, does not make a story. A good twist to a plot ending will not ring true if the actions of the characters are not motivated. A tough-minded public will not accept the one-sided characters which were popular with the audience of twenty or thirty years ago. The "Dead End" kids could hardly be used as good examples for a Sunday school class. In "Crime School" they were a tough bunch of little mugs until the honest commissioner proved he was doing his best to give them a break. The kids are neither all good nor all bad. They have both qualities. The modern audience wants convincing characters.

### CENSORSHIP AND THE STORY (Continued from Page 7)

The man looks up from his desk and asks the girl if she isn't getting too emotional. She is stunned. He coldly tells her to go. The bewildered girl leaves. As she closes the door, the man buries his head in his arms.

His father steps back into his own office. The picture dissolves back to a scene a year before when the young man first meets the girl.

In some obscure manner, censors decided this beautiful, moving scene was not moral enough for the motion picture audience. It would be very interesting to learn whether or not film-goers are grateful for this kind of censorship.

Nichols believes that screen writing receives more respect now than it did a few years ago. Progress is being made by sincere writers. A critical, understanding audience is lending its support to those who strive to create better and more honest pictures.





# WHEN WRITERS TEAM

## Bert Granet and Paul Yawitz, RKO Writers, Divide the Chores.

By HAROLD MOUNT

SOMEONE once said that there were only seven original plots in existence. The RKO screen-writing team of Bert Granet and Paul Yawitz is thankful there are as many as seven. They wish the public would lose its reverence for the word "original." For it is in writing the screen play from a so-called "original" story that the real work on a film story begins.

If these writers find one or two good ideas in an "original" story, they are grateful. That means one or two less ideas they must create for the particular screen story on which they are working. The next time you see a screen credit, "Original Story by Homer Shakespeare," remember that. Even if the story is completely changed by the screen writers, credit must be given to the writer of the original story to forestall lawsuits.

Let's observe how Granet and Yawitz work on specific stories. Some months ago the studio gave them a story and asked them to write a screen play from it. The story dealt with a motion picture star who went into a home as a maid to learn how to play the role of a maid in a forthcoming picture. That was fine for a literary story. But not enough for a screen play. For the screen it was just an incident. The rest had to be constructed. How did the girl get the job? Why should she stay in the job long enough for an eighty-minute film? What conflicts would arise there? How would her stay be complicated? How would the complications be solved? Granet and Yowitz developed the answers to all of those questions into the story of "The Affairs of Annabel." They involved the girl with gangsters in the house. They used her studio friends to come to her aid. They had the gangsters mistake the studio police for real police. They had a demon publicity agent complicate her existence. Beginning with one incident, they finally wove a complete plot. The incident was merely the springboard for ideas.

### SPRINGBOARD NEEDED

A screen play needs a springboard—and a good deal more. A "terrific idea" doesn't make a motion picture. The buildup, the incidents, and characters fitted to the "terrific idea" may make a picture. If adequately constructed in a screenable structure, they will make a picture. It is difficult to build a screen play around just characters. But if those characters are fully drawn and shaded, if their reactions are completely predictable, they may serve as the necessary springboard. Their qualities and characteristics may even write the play.

All of which brings up the word, "formula." Too many people sneer at stories written by "formula." But there are only seven original plots. Oh yes! There are said to be thirty-two subdivisions of those seven—but all of those were first used long ago. And many times since.

Often screen plays are adapted from stage plays. The action must be increased; the stage play hasn't enough motion. The action it has is probably too limited for the screen. The dialogue of the play is often too long and

drawn out. Screen dialogue must be more concise. Sometimes the lines and even the action of a play are dated. They must be translated into modern terms to eliminate what Granet calls "corniness." Audiences are picture-wise today and quick to detect mistakes. In melodrama, especially, the writer must push his pen carefully to avoid causing laughs which aren't intended. All of these dangers were present when the eleven-year-old play, "Crime," was fitted for the screen as "Law of the Underworld." A situation may not vary, but the stress and the points to be dramatized do change. An audience is no longer startled and excited by the mere sight of a gun. Why did the character pull the gun? What will he do with it? What will be the consequences? On those points the stress must be placed today.

### AVOID "STAR" STORIES

Let the young writer interested in writing for the screen avoid creating a story with one particular star in mind. If the studio doesn't purchase his story it may be necessary for him to discard it. Of course, the studio may purchase the story, but it is the job of the regular studio writers to write a story for a particular star of that studio.

Recently Granet and Yowitz were asked to write a story for a child actor. They cast about and found a one-act play about circus life called "What's a Fixer For?" There is no child in the play, but some of the characters, the locale and some of the situations gave a springboard. The writers are now building the structure for a screen story, stemming from the locale of the one-act play, but centering around a child.

How does a team of writers work? They may divide the work, one doing dialogue, one doing action. Or one may write the entire screen play and the other polish it. Or each may do half of the entire job. Granet and Yowitz use none of these methods. They start at the beginning and work right on through, together on every word, every bit of action, every locale. When they are finished, the shooting script has emerged. It details every scene, every camera angle, every locale needed.

From this script, cost estimates are made including wardrobe, location, shooting, extras. If these estimates exceed the budget of the picture, back to the writers comes the script. Changes must be made, scenes and characters must be eliminated. Often the story must be ready by a given date. Stars with contracts go on salary on that date and the story must be ready. The writer may not be able to spend as much time on the story as he would wish. The business and financial requirements of motion pictures make it necessary for the writer to compromise.

No writer, no producer sets out to make a bad picture. That is self-evident, but often forgotten. Every individual in a motion picture studio wishes every picture were a tremendous success. So on the writers go—fighting against time and budgets to turn out stories.



# ADAPTING THE NOVEL

**Milton Krims, adapter of "The Sisters" and "Green Light" tells why the screen version often differs so greatly from the original story.**

By DR. LEON ZANGRADOS

**A** SCREEN adaptation of a novel often puzzles filmgoers who have read the book. It is very disconcerting to find that the only resemblance between the original story and the picture is the title.

Milton Krims, Warner Brothers writer, explains the drastic changes by pointing out the difference between writing a novel and writing an adaptation for the screen. In the novel, the author can digress at any point, make his characters explain what they are thinking, describe them more fully, or make any other observations he pleases. In motion pictures these things have to be shown dramatically. The motion picture has no time to go into detailed development. Characters must be revealed by action and reaction. The spacing and timing of these actions and reactions are more difficult on the screen than in a novel.

In adapting "The Sisters," Krims had to make a tight story from a 700 page novel. He worked out his adaptation by reading the book and then setting it aside. He considered the book as a whole and tried to find the best method of telling the story dramatically in terms of action. Writers often forget that one of the first requisites of a good screen story is tempo of action. The film cannot stop for long dull pauses. It must continually move ahead. The action should not only affect what goes before, it should contribute to the progress of the picture.

## CONDENSATION REQUIRED

In "The Sisters," Krims made the character played by Bette Davis stand out above the rest because he thought her story was so much better than the others. The rest of the plot was cut because a screen story must fit a length of approximately 5900 feet of film. It is a mathematical problem of confining the story to what can be told in this footage. Many incidents that would be interesting have to be cut. Krims is more concerned in drawing the characters correctly than with the plot. If the characters are real, the story will proceed in the right direction.

"If you over-reach in your story, something goes wrong," Krims says. "You will try to make your characters do things they would never ordinarily do."

In "The Sisters," Krims wrote the story to a point where Louise was better off without her drunken husband, Frank. The original ending had Frank come back to hear Louise tell Tim that "Frank will find his place in the sun somewhere else, as their happiest moments were in the past." Frank, having heard, leaves without Louise seeing him. They never meet again.

## VALUE OF HAPPY ENDING

The picture was not released in this form because exhibitors believed it would fail at the box office without a happy ending which would reunite Louise and Frank. The "phoney ending" order came too late for Krims to rebuild the characters somewhere near the beginning of the story so that their actions would be consistent.

In the adaptation Krims says he does not write the story to fit any particular actor.

"I might let certain characteristics influence me," Krims says. "After the script is finished I have a talk with the stars. Some actors have good suggestions—some bad. If the actors are capable, I do not give definite descriptions because they will interpret their parts as they see them. Some actors, however, need to have every gesture given to them. If you give them a bowl of oatmeal, you have to tell them how to eat it."

The incidents which build up the plot are often invented by the writer. The novel tells a good story, but it is difficult to dramatize. It is often necessary to add dramatic scenes.

From the novel the adapter first prepares the treatment, which is a short story of the picture written in scenes. The treatment of "The Sisters" was about 49 pages long. No camera angles were given. Each sequence is a dramatic scene. The characters tell the story. Since the producer must be sold on the idea, the treatment is written in good prose style. The book rambled through many years. The screen play covers only four years.

When the treatment is changed into a shooting script, it is again read by the producer. He may make suggestions or changes. In "The Sisters" no suggestions were made. When the treatment gets back to the writer "he sits down with the treatment and starts perspiring." The sequences in the treatment are the dramatic incidents. In writing the shooting script from the treatment the writer must consider the camera, sound, proper tempo, dialogue, and mood.

To make an authentic setting for the story the writer must be familiar with its social, economic and political backgrounds. The plot is not complete unless it is related to the life of the era in which it takes place. The characters, also, must be part of that era. A civil war character talking in the slang of 1938 would be ridiculous. The writer should use colloquialisms of the period, but he should do it naturally. He has to assimilate the background of his story.



Bette Davis in "The Sisters."



# Short Stories Preferred . . . . .

A short story is easier to adapt for the screen than a novel, believes Warren Duff, Warner Brothers writer. Too much material can cause more headaches than too little. Probably less than half the scenes in an average length novel can be used in a screen play, yet a film fan who has read the book may be disappointed in a picture which leaves out his favorite scenes. In adapting a short story the writer develops the plot and adds new incidents. "Career Man," the Warner Brothers picture on which Duff is working, will be an adaptation from a short story by Robert Buckner.

The writer puts in many hours of research work before he touches his typewriter. "Career Man," for example, is based on the diplomatic work of the state department. In studio language, it is a "service picture," that is, a picture which uses some branch of government service, the army, the navy, the diplomatic corps, etc., as its material. The theme of "Career Man" is that the people should pass legislation which will prohibit espionage in the United States by foreign agents. Duff discovered in his research reading that there is an international ring of spies carrying out extensive espionage activity in the United States. Melodramatic as it may seem, the operations of foreign spies have been reported by observers such as Walter Duranty.

## MAKE IT REAL

It is Duff's problem to present this material dramatically and realistically, without offending foreign powers. Carried too far in the direction of inoffensiveness, the story is apt to slip into the light opera "Mythical kingdom" classification. The filmgoer may see nefarious operations of the international spy ring and then ask, "Well, what of it? It's all imaginary anyway." It is necessary to grip the audience's attention with the real menace of espionage and at the same time avoid offending other nations.

As a rule it is safe to portray history. The sabotage committed by German agents in the United States before the World War is a matter of established fact. He was able to use this incident without much change. However, when Germany marched into Austria, the story of "Career Man" had to be revised. It is risky to predict political changes which are occurring so rapidly in Europe. Yet, Duff must look into the future because the finished picture is usually released six or eight months after the story is written. The writer of a topical picture has to mix the foresight of a prophet with his skill in telling a story.

Broadway musical comedies, gangster pictures, Westerns, etc., are, of course, not affected

by world events. Nevertheless, in writing "Angels with Dirty Faces," a gangster film, Duff and John Wexley had to change important scenes for the foreign release. The American version shows James Cagney, the gangster, dying in the electric chair. England censors execution scenes. Not only that, an English audience would be puzzled by an electric chair. Before Cagney goes to the chair the leg of his trousers has been slit on one side. This realistic detail would puzzle the English audience and distract its attention from the dramatic significance of the scene.

Americans, of course, know that an electrode will be fastened to Cagney's leg when he sits in the electric chair. For Americans, this ending carries the picture to a forceful dramatic climax. In England, the entire scene might be meaningless. A different ending had to be written for the English release. "Angels with Dirty Faces" shows how greatly screen writing differs from stage writing.

## CHARACTER REACTIONS IMPORTANT

In moving pictures dialogue is important only in the reactions of the characters. In a scene from "Angels with Dirty Faces" Jerry Conolly (Pat O'Brien), the priest, lashes out at racketeers in a radio address. Rocky Sullivan (James Cagney), the gangster, hears the radio talk.

What the priest said isn't important. We've heard it before. We know what he is going to say as soon as he starts. The importance of the dialogue is in the reactions of Rocky, who is listening.

## BUILDING DIALOGUE ON ACTION

On the stage, action may be expressed through dialogue. On the screen, too much dialogue makes the picture "talky." The audience loses interest. Good dialogue gives the characters in the picture an opportunity for action. When Rocky listens to the priest's radio speech, closeups let the audience see by his expression what is going on in his mind.

The original story of "Angels with Dirty Faces" sought to create a mood rather than to present action with a strong dramatic punch. On the screen, Duff believes this dramatic drive is more successful than atmosphere or mood. "Angels with Dirty Faces" leads to a strong climax when the priest persuades the killer to turn "yellow" when he goes to the chair. The two men are friends. They have been from boyhood. The death house scene built on this situation is terrifying in its grim reality.

Dialogue, plot, characters, and interesting material are vital parts of a good story, but most important of all is the theme or the idea. In "Angels with Dirty Faces" the priest wants Rocky to die "yellow" Boys all over the country see in the gangster a modern hero. If Rocky turns "yellow" when he faces the chair, the admiration of the boys will turn to contempt. The development of the picture is focused on this scene. Here is the idea behind this story, and there is an idea behind every story. It is upon this idea that the writer builds his adaptation for the screen.

**Too much material can cause more headaches than too little, declares Warren Duff of Warner Bros.**

By MARIE BESTELMEYER





# Will Television At

Q.—Mr. Harding, before we talk about television and movies, let's discuss television. Everybody's talking about it, but nobody seems to know exactly what it is. What makes it "go?"

A.—That's a big order, but let's see if I can make it simple. Every picture is composed of practically an infinite number of points of light. To send a picture with a reasonable amount of detail, you've got to send the light values of a large number of the picture points making up that picture, for the more points that can be sent, the better will be the detail of the picture. Modern television is based on the cathode ray tube, developed by Professor Ferdinand Braun in 1897. The cathode ray tube is a funnel-shaped affair. An electron gun in the rear of the tube shoots a stream of electrons toward the enlarged end which is coated with fluorescent material. This material has the property of lighting up when bombarded by electrons. The stream of electrons, therefore, produces a spot of light on the fluorescent screen. Now this stream of electrons which I like to compare with a stream of machine gun bullets, sweeps across the screen to form one line of the picture, then back to the first side and across again to form another line, and so on, line after line, always moving lower down until the picture is completely formed. We call this "scanning." The process is similar to what happens when you read a printed page; your eye goes from left to right across the page, line by line, registering the black and white content of the lines.

Q.—What keeps the spot of light moving across the screen?

A.—A fluctuating magnetic field.

Q.—What's that?

## HOW "SCANNING" WORKS

A.—I'll show you. (Harding turned to a television set and permitted the electron beam bombarding the front of the cathode ray tube to become stationary, thereby forming a small spot of light on the screen. Then he took a horseshoe magnet and raised and lowered it above the neck of the cathode ray tube. The spot of light moved from side to side.) You see how "scanning" works. A fluctuating magnetic field will move the beam in the desired way. As the spot of light sweeps across the tube, the light goes on and off as it encounters the light and dark areas of the picture being reproduced. When it reaches a point corresponding to a black spot in the picture, it goes out, only to go on again when it reaches a corresponding light spot, until the whole screen is "scanned" and the picture is complete on the screen.

Q.—I see. The spot of light must move at a tremendous speed?

A.—Oh, yes. Our television "machine gun" sweeps fast enough to make 30 complete pictures per second. This is the same picture being retraced by the stream of electrons again and again, fast enough for the eye to register it as a complete moving picture. Each picture is "scanned" with 441 lines, which represent about 200,000 picture points per picture. When we realize that there are 30 of these pictures per second, that means there are

30 times 200,000 or about 6,000,000 picture points per second!

Q.—Whew!

## BEAM CONTROL

A.—One of the most important features in cathode ray television is the control of the beam, or "aiming" of these "machine gun" electron bullets. Our receiver and transmitter must work in unison. To accomplish this, we have an arrangement whereby certain impulses are used to control the electron beam in the camera tube, and these same impulses are sent out with the signal to be picked up by the receiver and used to control the beam in the receiver.

Q.—Are there any big names in the history of television, Mr. Harding?

A.—Yes, but there are very few basic patents. Television is such an old art; so many people have worked on it and have contributed so many small improvements that it's not the product of one or two great minds but of many men working patiently on this or that small but important detail. There was Paul Nipkow of Berlin. Some of the earliest inventors of television attempted to send all the picture points simultaneously. This was extremely impractical because it required a communication channel for every single point. Now Paul Nipkow had been thinking for a long time about how he could solve this problem by sending the values of picture points successively. In his own words, on Christmas Eve in 1883, he "leaped for joy" when the solution of this problem struck him. The result was the Nipkow Scanning Disc.

Q.—Do we still use his "scanning" process?

## CATHODE RAY TUBE

A.—Yes. But the cathode ray is another way of using Nipkow's idea of "scanning"

with successive picture points. Instead of Nipkow's mechanical rotating disc, we use the cathode ray tube which operates electronically and has no moving parts.

Q.—Can "scanning" be done faster with the cathode ray tube?

A.—Yes. Nipkow's "scanning" disc had several limitations to it. The two principal ones were the size of the equipment and the speed. A Nipkow type disc in order to produce a picture containing 200,000 points would have to be as large as the side of an apartment house, and would have to be run at an extremely dangerous rate of speed.

Q.—Any more names, Mr. Harding?

A.—Yes, there was Baird of England and Jenkins of the United States. More recently, Vladimir K. Zworykin and Philo Farnsworth have made great contributions to the advancement of cathode ray television. Ernest A. Tubbs of my own corporation has developed, in addition to many other television devices, a rather unique and very much simpler arrangement for controlling the electron beam in a cathode ray tube. Then there was Dr. Lee De Forest who in 1907 perfected the vacuum or radio tube, without which modern television would be impossible. This is the same tube that made radio possible.

## An interview with Robert Harding, Jr., President of The National Television Corp., New York City.

By KAY RENOLDS



# fect Our Movies?

So the work done in connection with radio amplifiers made television amplifiers possible, too.

Q.—Why is this amplifier so important to television, Mr. Harding?

## POWERFUL AMPLIFICATION

A.—Because with it we can multiply signals hundreds of thousands of times. Nipkow and the other early inventors had no amplification at all. Today we can amplify our signals sufficiently so that plenty of light for the picture can be reproduced. The earliest television devices required an absolutely dark room for observing the picture but today the modern cathode ray tube receiver can be operated in a brightly lighted room.

Q.—Well, I should think that will give everyone a nodding acquaintance with television, Mr. Harding. And now to our question: do you think television will have an influence on our movies?

A.—I certainly do. It seems to me that television can be guided in such a way that it will stimulate the moving picture industry. This will depend upon the selection and development of television program material. For instance, if I can see a complete moving picture in my home, I'm not going to a moving picture house. If everyone felt the same way, the industry would be affected badly, but it would be foolish for television to send movies when that work is being covered so competently in the various motion picture studios. However if my television screen showed a preview of a coming picture at my neighborhood movie theatre, I'd want to go to see that film! We could put the stars on and have them talk about their new pictures and give little scenes from them. Ob-

viously, this would stimulate the moving picture industry more than ever.

Q.—What sort of television programs would you suggest, Mr. Harding?

## NEWS EVENTS APPEALING

A.—The most appealing would be news events as they occur and sporting events. I believe that feature movies would be unsuitable to television because it would be difficult to hold people's attention in their homes for the hour and a half required to show a feature length picture. Ringing telephones, visitors, and countless household duties would interrupt the "televviewer" and distract his attention from the screen. For this reason, I think fifteen minute programs would be more suitable. We would like to emphasize educational programs that give constructive as well as entertaining ideas. We could have hobby programs such as stamp collecting and show the actual rare stamps on the screen, fashion shows, etc. . . .

Q.—That would be a boon to invalids and people who have to stay at home a great deal, wouldn't it?

A.—Yes, you can see how we could work out programs for television that would benefit everyone. We need the cooperation of the educators and thinkers in helping us to shape this program material into a worthwhile social force.

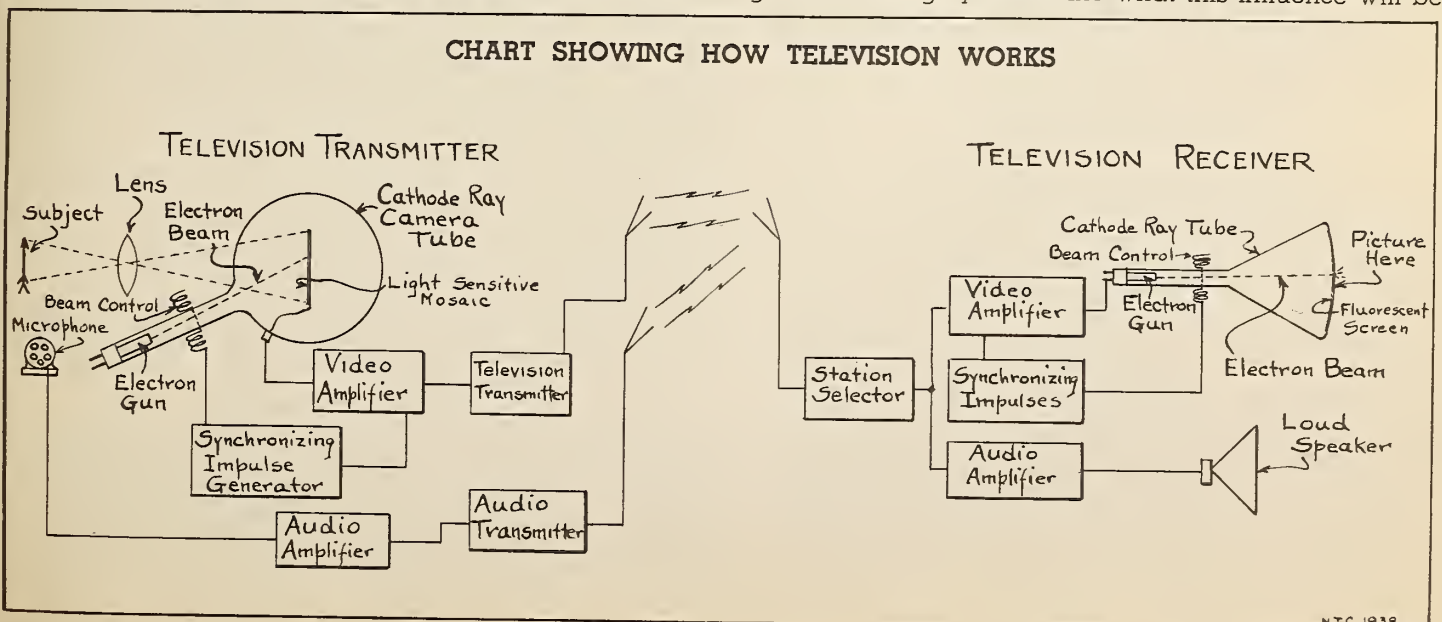
Q.—Then you think that the handling of the program material will determine whether television will be a good or a bad influence on the movies?

A.—Yes, it's inevitable that movies will be influenced in some way by television, and the character of the programs will largely determine what this influence will be.



Robert Harding, Jr., Chief of Staff.  
(Also President of National Television Corporation.)

## CHART SHOWING HOW TELEVISION WORKS



N.T.C. 1938.



# Television—Eyes for the Radio Drama

## Problems of Producing Television Plays.

By JOHN WEISBERG

**D**RAMA has become a regular feature of television. Last year the performance of "Journey's End" and this year Eliot's "Murder in the Cathedral" were acclaimed in London. New York has also witnessed telecasts of plays. The not too distant future will probably see the number of dramatic presentations multiplied many times. The problems of technique which this new art form is posing are added stimuli to the many theatrical artists and craftsmen of radio, stage and screen. Advances in cinema and radio and the competitive demands of the stage have kept these craftsmen hopping in the past. The televised drama will be an added spur in the future. The devices of the new art, as of all arts, will be conditioned by its mechanics.

In the beginning, at least, the presentations will have to be made in a restricted space, for the television camera has neither the flexibility nor the versatility of the motion picture camera. The success of the performance of "Journey's End" was attributed largely to the fact that a major part of the action occurs on one set, around a table. Actual sets will be far fewer in number than in the motion picture. Miniature sets have already been used with success in televised performances and as the practice and techniques improve, they will probably be used much more frequently. The inexpensiveness of miniature as compared to life-size sets, the extraordinary effects created with them in the film, their range in creating atmosphere will encourage their use.

Parts of films are being employed in the television drama, and it is not unlikely that a supply of stock film shots will become as essential a part of televised drama as it is of picture production. There are such technical problems as making two-dimensional shots blend with the three dimensional scenes telecast before and afterward, but these do not appear to be insurmountable. Moreover, if the stereoscopic film materializes, the solution will probably be facilitated.

### TELEVISION "CUTTING"

Changing the locale or action by cutting-in of such shots or by telecasting first from one television camera and then from another gives flexibility to the art. The development of devices similar to cinematic montage and cutting will be necessary. The similarity, of course, is of effect and not of technique. The film cutter works with film. He has a number of "takes" of a given scene from which to select; he can, if none of the "takes" are satisfactory, call for "retakes". The various sets and film shots to be used in a television performance will be prepared before different cameras. It is likely that the controls for the various cameras will be a switching panel and that for each camera a number of adjustments will be possible. Switching the proper cameras on and off will require split-second timing. Once the performance of a scene has begun, the man at the control panel will be able to do little about it if it is bad. To end or begin

a scene, the fade-out and fade-in can be used as in the film.

The television performer will need abilities not required in the film performer. He will need as good or better a memory than the stage actor for there can be no retakes of poorly played scenes, no stopping after one scene to memorize lines for the next, no dubbing in of dialogue or song afterward, and a minimum of prompting. This will probably give an advantage to the former stage player since on the stage too, "once done, it's done." And the necessity for many painstaking rehearsals will be more in the tradition of the stage play.

### TELEVISION MORE INTIMATE

There are many who believe that the televised drama will be more satisfactory to the audience than the film drama. They say it will be "more emotionally genuine" and a more natural dramatic expression. Many a film actor has bewailed the cinematic requirements that a story be "shot" by sets rather than chronologically. He complains that this practice prevents him from acquiring a feeling for his role, from expressing emotions sincerely. The televised drama will, however, restore something of the bond between the audience and the performer—traditional to the stage. Since the spectator will be viewing and the actor performing at the same time, greater intimacy between the film actor and film audience is foreseen.

### EFFECT ON RADIO

The leaders of radio, Sarnoff, Paley, Lohr, are agreed that television will not replace sound broadcasting. One can hear the radio drama while away from the receiving set or while wandering about but it will be necessary for the television observer to place himself in front of the television screen. For the immediate future the pictures on standard screens will be about 7 by 9 inches. Enlarging the images by projection on a large screen is being discussed, but there is no expectation that it will materialize this decade.

It must be remembered, too, that television reception is assured only within a radius of fifty to sixty miles from the transmitting unit. This limitation results from the fact that the ultra-short waves used in telecasting travel in a straight line. For nation-wide reception of a telecast program hundreds of sending stations would be necessary. A coaxial cable has been devised which can link stations, but the cost, estimated at \$6,000 per mile, is prohibitive for the present.

The drama form needed for television differs in important respects from radio, stage and screen drama forms. The telecast play is already calling for writers able to fit their ideas to its requirements; new dramatic technicians, lighting specialists, scenic designers, make-up men. An art form is maturing and offering new fields for the creative artist to conquer.





## How William F. Tummel, assistant director, staged a battle scene in the picture "If I Were King."

By E. BAYARD

IN shots of a battle scene with large crowds of actors the script gives us a description, but it is our job to make a picture out of it," says William F. Tummel, assistant director on the Paramount picture, "If I Were King."

A screen fight, unlike a brawl in real life, is hard to start. Usually the day before the scene is made the director and his assistant plan the action and shots. Every department cooperates, of course. The art department has prepared the settings, the costumes are made, casting is completed, props are on hand.

On the day the scene is to be shot, Tummel is on the set hours before the first take. He makes sure that 800 actors in the battles are made up and in proper costume. A wrist watch worn by an absent minded extra can ruin the entire scene in a period picture such as "If I Were King." Through long experience Tummel recognizes the men he can depend on for action with a punch. He picks them out for the foreground.

Where weapons are used, the assistant director must keep the prop wooden swords separated from the real thing, although most of the fights in "If I Were King" were enacted by experts who used steel swords.

### TUMMEL CHECKS THE DETAILS

After assembling the actors, Tummel explains the action. The ferocious, uncontrolled fighting we see in the picture is carefully planned. Here he indicates a cleared space that must open up for Ronald Coleman when he charges in with the rabble. Over there he points out the limits of camera range. He checks a hundred details.

"Too much dust will obscure the action," thinks Tummel, "All right, wet the ground down. But go easy, or we'll have everyone sprawling in the mud." Miss one simple detail like this, and the take is a failure.

Frank Lloyd, the director, arrives on the set. The cameras are ready to shoot. Lloyd gives his instructions. The attack on the gate must be shot successfully the first time. The gate will actually be splintered by a battering ram. Outside the city, Lloyd directs two cameras photographing the Burgundians pounding away at the gate. Inside, Tummel commands two batteries of paired cameras to photograph the defenders and to pick up the Burgundians as they charge the barricades.

### BATTLE BEGINS

Everything is ready. The cameras begin to turn. The action starts. A mob of soldiers surge up against the city walls. The huge battering ram thunders against the gate. From the walls, the city's defenders hurl stones, molten lead, and cauldrons of boiling oil on the heads of the attackers. Men are slugged by bolts and transfixed with quivering arrows. The gate shatters under the impact of the battering ram. Burgundians pour into the city behind movable barricades. Violent hand-to-hand fighting rages in the streets. Villon, leading the rabble, rushes to the aid of the city's defenders. After a terrific struggle, the Burgundians are pushed back through the gate. The cameras stop. The take is completed.

(Continued on Page 18)



# MEN FROM MARS

**The late George Melies, France's Jules Verne of the Cinema, pioneered in the fantastic years ago.**

**W**ITH the passing of Georges Melies early this year at the age of seventy-seven, the film industry has lost another of its pioneers. Unfortunately, few of the filmgoers of today are acquainted with the work of this enterprising Frenchman, who, in addition to his many contributions to cinematography, was the first to introduce to the public the trick film.

As director of the Theatre Robert Houdin, Paris, he was among the first to embark upon the manufacture of film subjects, and being already established as a conjuror, it is only natural that he saw in the innovation of this new medium a means of producing particularly effective stage illusions. So successful were these, that in October, 1896, he built his first studio and began to issue his series of "Star" films.

## MAGICAL PICTURES

Most of these pictures contained a "magical" element, such as furniture moving about a room, or skeletons dancing and, in fact, today one might almost allude to them as being "Disneyfied." In 1897 he made a film version of Jules Verne's "Trip to the Moon" (800 feet). This was the first long film ever issued, and the exhibitors laughed at the idea of any audience being induced to sit still long enough to witness a film of this length.

Regarding its quality, I cannot do better than quote from Paul Rotha's "The Film Till Now:"

It is curious to note how far the directors in those primitive days realized the resources of the new medium (such as the rapidity of the chase) in order to fulfill their ideas and it is interesting to watch, for instance, Georges Melies' "Trip to the Moon," made in 1897, in which were used projected negative, double-exposure and "magical" effects equal, if not superior to those employed in Fairbanks' "The Thief of Bagdad" in 1923.

Foremost among subjects especially suitable for such treatment are fairy-tales, and accordingly we find among his earlier pictures "Cinderella," "Blue Beard," "Little Red Riding Hood," and "Gulliver's Travels."

Of a more serious nature are, "Coronation of Edward VII" which included a reproduction of the interior of Westminster Abbey, and the duel scene of "Hamlet," (570 Feet) 1908.

## THOU SHALT DECEIVE

Melies looked upon the film as a means of creating illusion. He saw that if it were used merely for pictorial representation of reality, the moving picture would become a dull and lifeless art—if an art at all. "The Art of Cinematography," he wrote, "calls for so much experiment, necessitates so many different kinds of activity and requires so much sustained attention that I do not hesitate to say in all sincerity that it is the most alluring and the most interesting of all the arts, for it makes use of virtually all of them: drawing, painting, the drama, sculpture, architecture, mechanics and manual labor of every sort are all called into play in pursuing this extraordinary profession."

The enthusiastic young Frenchman was admirably equipped for his experiments with motion picture magic. At the Theatre Robert Houdin, he had given puppet shows, invented electrical apparatus to aid him in presenting marvels. He was a skilled prestidigitator. Before he embarked upon moving picture production, he had also been a caricaturist, a painter, a mechanic, a cabinet maker, a draughtsman, and a manufacturer. His interests were as wide as his experience.

## PERFORATIONS STANDARDIZED

Georges Melies was President of the International Cinematograph Congress, held in Paris in 1908 and 1909, at which the standardized perforations on film-strip were determined. Prior to this date, each manufacturer had a different distance between the perforation, and it was impossible to pass the films through projectors made by another manufacturer. This defect greatly retarded the progress of the industry.

For the benefit of color-film enthusiasts, I am prompted to quote the actual review of "The Conquest of the Poles," one of his later productions, from a trade paper of March, 1912:

One of the most grotesque and highly humorous films Mr. Geo. Melies has thus far given us—which is saying a good deal. Produced in color, we have a wonderful imaginative picture of a voyage to the Pole in a remarkable aeroplane-bus. A most amusing interlude is provided by a suffragette disturbance. There is a terrific race between hundreds of aeroplanes, collisions with occasional comets and minor planets, a passing visit to the signs of the Zodiac, and the eventual arrival in Arctic regions, where a mysterious creature of mammoth proportions rises from the depths and seizes the intrepid adventurers in his maw. The magnetic Pole is discovered, and finally the leader of the expedition again reaches



# ... THAT'S TAME!



France in safety, where he is banqueted by the Aeronautic Club. A feature film that will make your audience talk.

It would be quite impossible in this short space to mention all of the films produced by Georges Melies, but in a letter I received a few weeks before his death, he listed what he considered his most outstanding pictures. I cannot do better than let this list speak for itself.

1897	"Tunnelling the English Channel".....	1,000 feet
	"The Merry Frolics of Satan".....	1,050 feet
1898	"Chimney Sweep".....	1,000 feet
	"Rip's Dream".....	1,085 feet
	"An Adventurous Automobile Trip"....	550 feet
1900	"The Palace of Arabian Nights".....	1,400 feet
1905	"An Impossible Voyage".....	1,233 feet
	"Faust." (Gowned) With musical accompaniment .....	853 feet
1907	"Fairyland," or the "Kingdom of the Fairies".....	1,080 feet
1908	"Christmas Dream".....	520 feet
	"The Dreyfus Law Suit".....	800 feet
1909	"Civilization Through the Ages".....	1,000 feet
	"A Desperate Crime".....	1,000 feet

By **ALFRED A. REED**

1911	"Tower of London." (The Death of Anne Boleyn.) .....	500 feet
1913	"Cinderella" .....	950 feet

### WAR RUINED MELIES

The great European War completely ruined Georges Melies, and from 1923 to 1932 he was compelled to sell toys and sweets to travellers at Montparnasse Station, Paris. To use his own words, "Here I stood every day, even Sundays, from 6 o'clock in the morning to 11 at night without fire." In 1933 the French Cinematographic Press granted him a pension, which allowed him to spend the remainder of his life quietly. He also received the Cross of the Legion of Honor.

During the last few months of his life Georges Melies suffered a great deal, but even his illness could not suppress his keen sense of humor. In the last letter I received from him, he wrote in discussing his illness, "the difficulty is to kill the microbe, but not to kill the patient at the same time."

Throughout his life he always retained the keenest interest in film matters, and despite his ill-health, he held an exhibition of some of his early pictures in the Cine-Photo pavilion at the Paris Exhibition last October. It was his intention to show a similar program at Bruxelles and Lausanne in the near future. It is to be hoped that one of the Cinema Clubs of France will carry out this work.



(Left) George Melies at about the time he made his first moving picture and built the first "studio" in the world. (Right) Between 1923 and 1932. Broken and left penniless by the war, he sold toys and sweets at Montparnasse station, Paris.



# THIS "ORIGINAL" BUSINESS

THE innate genius which enables a creative writer to turn out acceptable film stories is a faculty too often seen in an incorrect light, according to Clarence Young, screen writer for R.K.O. This so-called "genius" is a combination of average intelligence and a maximum amount of concentrated work and persistence. The assignment from the producer may come in the form of an elaborate idea or the slightest of suggestions, around which the writer must build his plot, action, and characters.

The degree of collaboration and consultation with the producer is entirely dependent upon the whims of the producer and the system he deems most efficacious. One producer may assign a story and never ask to see it until the finished continuity is placed in his hands; another may demand to see the writer's sheet daily, so that corrections and suggestions may be made as the story progresses.

Upon completion of the story, the writer turns it over to the director and various technical departments and usually never sees or hears of it again until the finished picture appears.

Young first writes a treatment from a rough outline, this treatment being a detailed account of the story without dialogue or camera angles. Then he transforms the treatment into the continuity, or shooting script, which contains scenes, sequences, lighting set-ups, camera angles and distances and dialogue. He remarks that it is well for the writer to be familiar with all this technical data, but the essential factor in successful writing is the ability to mold an engrossing story.

Young writes his stories in the same fashion he would a stage play, i.e., with a series of master scenes in which all the action takes place in a single area, as if the camera were shooting from a fixed position. Later, in the shooting script, these master scenes are broken down into long shots, medium shots, close-ups, and so on, to give the scenes action and movement.

It becomes evident that screen writing is primarily a business function, and secondarily an artistic achievement. One of the main purposes of the writer's continuity is to give the technicians an idea of the number of camera set-ups so that they might make an estimate of the cost of production. Since each writer works on a production budget, he must develop his story as well as possible without the use of costly sets unless absolutely essential to the plot. Even then the technicians make frequent use of stock shots in lieu of filming the actual scene called for.

A few problems along these lines arose in the production of "Law of Tombstone," the latest picture on which Young worked. One sequence called for shots in a famous New York restaurant. Ordinarily, a cameraman would have to be sent to New York to make these shots so they could later be projected on a transparent background for a process shot. Fortunately, there were in R.K.O.'s film library a series of scenes in this same restaurant taken for a previous picture. Upon examination

of these films, however, it was discovered, much to the dismay of the staff, that a principal in the cast of the other production appeared in every scene. One was found in which the female lead was singing with her back to the camera. When this shot was projected on the background and a huge potted plant placed in front of her image on the screen, the stock shot could be used without including her in the picture.

Another production difficulty concerned the construction of an early period train, necessary to the story, but much too costly to build. By constructing the rear platform on the back of a truck and shooting against a projected background, the same result was obtained without building the entire train.

Young is a staunch believer in making the actual plot and characters bear the brunt of the story's action. Excessive use of trick shots is deplorable. Trick shots and the various cinematic devices that make the motion picture a singular medium are a necessary part of the film, but when they become obtrusive, instead of serving as an integrating agent for the picture, their value is nil as far as the story is concerned.

Young regards the prediction of a popular trend as a virtual impossibility, although it is the ambition of every writer to turn out a hit outstanding enough to institute a new cycle in pictures. It is only human nature, that makes a specialist in any line believe his own particular work to be the most difficult. Nonetheless, it is a fact that unceasing physical and mental application are attendant upon the conception and construction of a successful screen play. Maintaining a high degree of consistency in the excellence of his stories is what makes the screen writer's job one of the most trying in the industry.

## Writing an assignment is no bed of roses, says Clarence Young, RKO writer.

By ALAN RUBIN

### THE SCRIPT COMES TO LIFE

(Continued from Page 15)

The assistant director not only starts the fight, he also keeps it moving. Suppose, for example, some of the actors in the background of the battle scene decide they can pull a few punches and still look real enough to get by. More actors see them. They ease off. In a few minutes the drive of the scene has fizzled out. It is the task of the assistant director to see that the actors cooperate in giving pep and punch to realistic action. After the scene is photographed, the actors relax—but not the assistant director. He must see that the injured are treated, records written up, and preparation begun for the next scene.

All these duties are obviously an impossible burden for one man. The assistant director also has his assistants. But it is his task to plan every action, foresee all difficulties, and organize the myriad details.

Tummel believes the most important qualifications demanded of an assistant director are tact and a talent for organization. A man with these qualities can be certain that he will receive the cooperation which is absolutely necessary in motion picture production.



# Guide Posts for Screen Writers

## Are there any rules to aid the writer in adapting a stage play for the screen?

By ZOE AKINS

**H**OW does a writer work in adapting a stage play for the screen? Are there any rules, any guides which will aid him? There is no formula for successful film plays, but the method used by successful writers offers the student valuable suggestions. I prefer to work alone (although many screen stories are the result of collaboration between two or more writers). I used the following procedure in adapting "Camille," "The Toy Wife," and "Zaza" from the old French plays:

As the first step in adaptation, the writer must know the original work well, then seek out the elements in it which are universal, and relate them to modern life as effectively as they are related to the time of the play. Employ the characters, situations, and incidents which will be understandable today. At the same time the spirit of the original play and its valid emotions should be respected and retained. Above all, get the pitch at which, as a work of art, the original play was conceived.

Let us see how this method worked in a recent picture. In "The Toy Wife" we find Frou-Frou, the frivolous girl who wants all the pleasures of married life with none of the responsibilities. Would this character be familiar to modern audiences? Of course. Most of us know girls exactly like Frou-Frou.

### INCIDENTS BUILD THE PLOT

Now for the plot. In a moving picture, the plot is less important than the incidents which build it. As perfect examples, recall "Mr. Deeds Goes to Town" and "It Happened One Night." So into the plots of the old play weave refreshing new scenes which the audience doesn't expect, holding the tale together with vivid, connected incidents. In "The Toy Wife" Frou-Frou dances and sings when she sees an opportunity to obtain that most desirable thing—a husband. She is a brilliant success at a party. She charms the man who will be her husband. She selects a young negro girl to be her own slave and dresses her up. Simple incidents, but amusing, alive, actable, and freshly visualized.

The characters and the idea should motivate the action harmo-

niously, although often truthfully conceived characters make a story with no idea beyond "boy meets girl" seem real; or a good idea puts over a picture in spite of conventional characters. In "The Toy Wife" we see at once that the character, Frou-Frou, is the theme of the film.

### PROPER PROPORTIONS

It is necessary to establish the proper proportions between scenes stressing character, incident, or mood, and the plot element of the story. When shall Frou-Frou be happy and when shall Frou-Frou be sad? The first part of the picture is bright and gay. Frou-Frou is happy. Little scenes exist for no reason except to show the nature of her happiness, and the disarming nature of her love for her husband and her child. As the story unfolds, Frou-Frou leaves her husband, and is never happy afterwards; later her lover is killed in a duel with her husband. Frou-Frou is ill and suffering; little scenes continue to establish the mood of her sorrow; but the action must get on. One cannot take too long over them. Towards the end of the picture the main events of the tale must gain momentum. In the original script, however, the amusing and entertaining note of Frou-Frou's personal frivolity was not lost in the march of tragedy, which illustrates how director, producer, and writer may disagree. The mood of the final episodes was sacrificed to an unrelieved and conventional solemnity in the film. A quicker tempo and a lighter mood would have served the tragic plot just as sincerely, and been more moving and less predictable.

As for tempo—which is very important—it too often consists only of a confusing rapidity, as harmful to a picture as slow motion. Mood is lost in continual movement for its own sake. Everything is too choppy. American directors think audiences have a blind passion for tempo. This craze for speed ruins many pictures because not enough time and attention are given to establishing a mood and clarifying the premise.

### BACK TO ORIGINAL

For my adaptation of "Camille," I went back to the original French novel by Dumas, keeping at the same time the salient points of the play, which he made from his own story. In the novel I found incidents and character touches which enriched the impression of the play itself. As usual, I took from the story those elements common to its own period and ours. I also invented many scenes which lay within the scope of the story and were in its nature—the bee scene, for instance, in the country, which was gay and picturesque—characteristic of Marguerite's happy and good life with Armand; the scenes in which we see her puzzled over the spelling of a word, which remind us that the "lady of the camellias" was an uneducated girl from the country, herself; and the auction scene where Armand buys the copy of "Manon Lescant," which—in the novel—is sold after the death of Marguerite, when her own effects are auctioned off—and



ZOE AKINS



which, as in the novel, relates the story to that of "Manon," which it greatly resembles, and, in a way, acknowledges its debt to the earlier work.

#### CREATE SCENES

Also, I created the scene where Marguerite drops her glove and de Varville lets her pick it up herself—a slight in public which she feels keenly. In the screen version Armand resents this slight, and calls attention to it by picking up her glove quickly, himself, when again it falls. Thus, conflict is added to the characterization of the two men. Later, as in the play, Armand himself insults Marguerite when moved to violence by her refusal to go away with him, by flinging in her face the money he has just won.

He congratulates Armand on treating a woman as she deserves—"like the cheat this one is"—at which Armand turns on him, which leads to their duel, de Varville's injury, and Armand's flight. Thus the plot is served, but by the twist in the incident (making Armand punish de Varville for further insulting Marguerite, after he himself has just done so, instead of bringing the duel about because de Varville resents Armand's treatment of Marguerite) the characterization of the two is kept true to premise, and Armand's love for Marguerite emphasized;—he may insult her, but he permits no one else to.

#### BRIEF DIALOGUE

Writing telegrams is an excellent training for writing dialogue for the screen. Dialogue should be brief and to the point, obviously. Screen audiences give the author a certain license in condensing words and lines. People entering a room waste no time in realistic chit-chat, but begin the scene at once. Where dialogue can be discarded, the art of the screen is at its best. In "The Toy Wife," when Frou-Frou's dying lover is carried to his home and his mother closes the door in her face, only a few short lines of dialogue are used. Yet we see enormous significance in the scene; if he dies, she will be alone in the world, ostracized, and penniless.

On the stage, dialogue must explain to the audience what the actor is thinking or the reason for what he is doing. On the screen, the camera does the explaining. A close-up of an actor's face expresses the emotion which would have to appear in words on the stage . . . In dialogue as well as action, the screen selects only the high lights. A whole scene from a stage play can be packed into one line of film dialogue or a whole scene in a screen play can be visualized from one line of dialogue. In all adaptations of foreign plays or period plays I use a dialogue style which is idiomatic, avoiding colloquialisms and slang.

What about the differences of purpose in the stage and screen? The screen is most important as sheer entertainment. Interest disappears when pictures become editorial or try to preach propaganda. In writing for the screen the adapter should always remember "that children are at the table," as the screen reaches an audience of all kinds and ages far more comprehensive than the audiences which attend the legitimate theatre.

#### PEERING INTO THE INVISIBLE

Colored films of cancer cells moving through the infected patient's blood stream have been made recently at the University of Rochester. In London X-ray moving pictures have been made of the internal organs of a living person. A new method developed by Dr. Russell Reynolds shortens the time the patient must be exposed to the dangerous X-rays.

## WANT TO WRITE? TRY THESE BOOKS

1. Tamar Lane, **The New Technique of Screen Writing** 1936.
2. Frances Marion, **How to Write and Sell Film Stories** 1937.
3. Nancy Naumberg, Editor, **We Make the Movies** 1938. Samuel Marx, **Looking for a Story.** Sidney Howard, **The Story Gets a Treatment.**
4. Cinema Progress Feb.-March 1938, Robert Riskin, **The Themes the Thing.**
5. Cinema Progress Dec.-Jan., Frances Marion, **Screen Writing Forum.**
6. Cinema Progress Aug. 1937, Frances Marion, **Screen Writing Forum.**
7. Cinema Progress May-June 1938, Frances Marion, **The Silly Cycle.**
8. **Film Writing Forums;** introduction and notes by Lewis Jacobs.
9. Lorraine Noble, **Four Star Scripts** 1936.
10. Barnum, **Silver Streak.**
11. Strasser, Alex, **Amateur Films.** Planning, Directing and Cutting. Link House. 1936.
12. Strasser, Alex, **Amateur Movies and How to Make Them** (How to Do It Series, No. 14) Studio. 1937.
13. Strasser, Alex, **Ideas for Short Films.** Link House. 1937.
14. Wheeler, Owen, **Amateur Cinematography.** Pitman, 1929.
15. Babel, Isaac, **Benia Kirk: A Film Novel,** Collet's. 1935.
16. Fawcett, L'Estrance, **Writing for the Films.** 2nd ed. Pitman. 1937.
17. **Four-Star Scripts.** Doubleday Doran. 1936. The Scenarios of **Lady for a Day. It Happend One Night, Little Women, The Story of Louis Pasteur,** Edited by Lorraine Noble.
18. **Jew Suss.** Scenario from the novel by Lion Fewchtwanger, by A. R. Rawlinson and Dorothy Farnum. Edited by Ernest Betts. Methuen. 1935.
19. Lee, Norman, **Money for Film Stories.** Pitman, 1937.
20. Margrave, Seton. **Successful Film Writing.** Contains scenario of **The Ghost Goes West.** Methuen. 1936.
21. **The Private Life of Henry VIII.** Scenario by Jajos Biro and Arthur Wimperis. (Edited by Ernest Betts) Methuen. 1934.
22. Reiniger, Lotte. **The Little Chimney Sweep.** White & White. Bristol. 1936.
23. **Romeo and Juliet,** First Folio, M.G.M. scenario and articles. Arthur Barker, 1936.
24. Wells, H. G. **The Man Who Could Work Miracles: A Film Treatment.** Cresset Press. 1936.
25. Wells, H. G. **Things to Come: A Film Treatment.** Cresset Press. 1935.
26. **The Audio-Visual Handbook.** Ellsworth C. Dent. 1938.
27. **1001 Films,** Educational Screen Publishers. 1938.



# Painting WITH A

# PUNCH

By RUSSELL BIRDWELL

**The role of art in heightening mood and dramatic effect is described by William Cameron Menzies.**

"**A**RT for art's sake" is an inspiring slogan for the classroom. "Art for decoration's sake" is a satisfactory rule in the salon.

But in the drafting room of a motion picture studio, art must go to work. That it be honestly conceived and tastefully executed is not enough—it must also pay its way by helping produce dramatic effect.

Incidental art effects have been carefully employed to enforce and intensify dramatic elements of a plot in the Selznick International production "The Young in Heart" starring Janet Gaynor, Douglas Fairbanks, Jr. and Paulette Goddard, and with Roland Young, Billie Burke, Richard Carlson and Minnie Dupree.

## NO ART FOR ART'S SAKE

The supervising art director, William Cameron Menzies, declares that the artistic flavor of Selznick pictures is not the result of a dilettante "art for art's sake" attitude on the part of the studio's executive staff, but is deliberately planned to heighten various effects, and so strengthen the dramatic structure of the entire production.

"In life, people may find themselves gay in the midst of depressing scenes—in the theatre a light mood may be expressed on a gloomy stage. These apparent incongruities are often saluted as flashes of realism in an artificial world.

## BUILDING MOOD

"But no less real is the natural human impulse to be gay in sunny weather, and to feel a touch of melancholy under sombre gray skies. This is the simple basis for the art of designing scenes to influence audience moods. And when the designer is successful, much valuable film footage is saved, as we reduce whole pages of an author's description to one or two vivid scenes."

"To deceive the camera is a legitimate aim of motion picture making, because the camera has no interpretive intelligence. The expression 'photographic art' has long been a term of reproach. It refers to the work of an artist who mechanically



Russell Birdwell, director of publicity and advertising for Selznick-International Studios.

copies what he sees without regard to the emotional high lights of the scene.

## EMPHASIZE EMOTIONAL REACTIONS

"The cinematographer must do more than this. Like the modern photographer who is not content to be a mere copyist, the movie camera man must present a scene with

Victorian interior of Miss Ellen Fortune's London home and its "oppressive grandeur."



its emotional reaction elements emphasized—sometimes even made the subject of caricature.

"And so, in our current picture, 'The Young in Heart' we apply camera-fooling principles to the problem of using the settings of a picture to create artistic atmosphere and create universally understood situations."

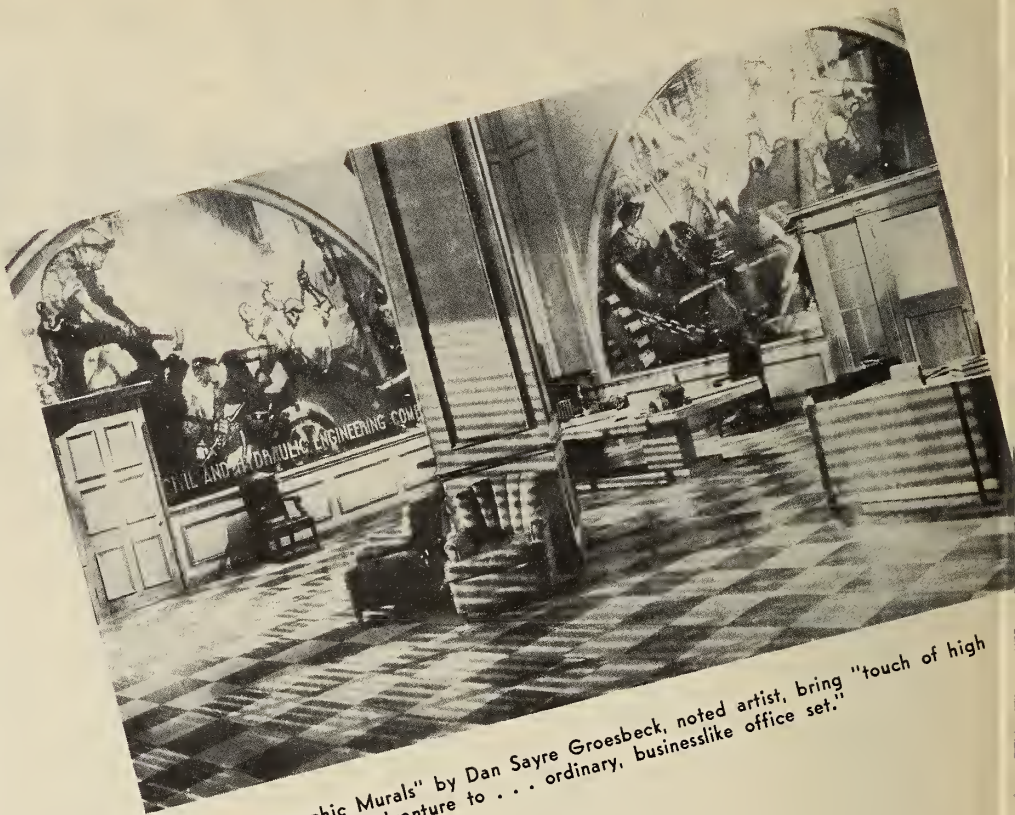
Menzies, who compares his part in production to that of a lay out man "animator" who outlines the work of the "tracers" in animating hand-drawn movies, explains that he made individual sketches of each of the 300-odd scenes in the picture. Thus is made clear the complex relation of one part of the play to other parts, and transition between scenes is more readily arranged.

"In our first scene," he points out, "we present a ball in an Italian Riviera villa. This allows a lavish display of costumes, and establishes Miss Gaynor, Douglas Fairbanks, Jr. and other members of the Carleton family in their accustomed milieu of luxury. At the same time, it sets the tone of the picture, and in a measure, predicts the atmosphere of scenes to follow.

"Full advantage is taken of marble floors, silken tapestry and giant terra cotta garden ware. In a gaming room scene, some unique furniture is introduced, and the boudoir occupied by Miss Burke is decorated with porcupine quills—an innovation our set dresser, Casey Roberts, derived from the headdress of African tribal chiefs.



William C. Menzies, production designer at Selznick-International, who had charge of art work for "The Young in Heart."



"Photographic Murals" by Dan Sayre Groesbeck, noted artist, bring "touch of high adventure to . . . ordinary, businesslike office set."

#### LONELINESS AND DESPAIR

"A subsequent scene is set in a Riviera railway station. The waiting room of the station is enlarged, to allow the camera to get a long shot. This creates a feeling of loneliness and despair—and lays the foundation for a sort of underdog sympathy for the Carletons that begins to counteract the sense of audience-antipathy that their frank gold-digging attitude has engendered.

"In the home of Miss Ellen Mortune, the 'victim' of the gold-digging Carletons, Victorian design is utilized. Our associate art director, Lyle Wheeler, established the atmosphere of oppressive grandeur with over-size doors and windows, and ceilings of vast height. This disproportionate architecture effect emphasizes quickly the small, frail qualities of Miss Fortune that the author of the book was at such elaborate pains to describe.

"The house furnishings are of the florid style known as Victorian, but with occasional deviations never imagined by a 19th century decorator. For instance, where the conventional Victorian design would

bulge in a clumsy and unsightly manner, Mr. Wheeler traced a clean and graceful line that somehow suggested the design of the period by an artistic burlesque.

"The script called for a hotel ballroom, but no London hotel has a room spectacular enough to rival the Italian villa set at the opening of the picture. So a ball room of surpassing magnificence was built to provide a fitting climax to the elegance of early scenes."

#### GROESBECK PAINTING

The scene from "The Young in Heart" upon which most artistic effort was expended, however, was a reception room in the office of a London engineering firm. After Menzies and Wheeler had collaborated on the design featuring high ceilings and spacious walls, the mural decorator, Dan Sayre Groesbeck, was commissioned to make two paintings representing the spirit of modern industry. These small murals, in water color, showed burly figures at work on vast construction schemes, with the force of human creative energy dominating the power of the machine. Enlarged by a photographic process, they cover nearly 2000 square feet of wall space.



# FILMS FOR CHILDREN

By HARRIETT GENUNG AND HAROLD HILTON

## Should special films be produced for persons under 16? Discussion of a letter from William Farr, English educator.

**S**HOULD special films be produced for persons under 16? William Farr, former Assistant Director of the British Film Institute, raises this interesting question in a letter to CINEMA PROGRESS.

In England no child under 16 may be admitted to see an "Adult Film" unless accompanied by an adult, the British Board of Film Censors classifying such films. Yet this negative method of control leaves much to be desired. Decisions of the Censors are not always endorsed by educated public opinion. Moreover, the Assistant Under Secretary of State to the Home Office has recognized the fact that it is not enough to protect children from undesirable films when the primary factor is to provide them with stimulating and enjoyable recreation.

Programs of special films for children could not be shown profitably by commercial cinemas. Cooperation between theaters and educational and social organizations was lacking and children were rarely able to pay more than 3 pence admission.

### LIST OF RECOMMENDED FILMS

The Institute decided in 1937, with the absence of special children's films, to achieve the same ends indirectly by issuing a First List of Recommended Films for children. Supplemented monthly, the films included in the List were recommended as suitable for children's performances. Selections were made for audiences of children from 7 to 14 attending school and included eighty feature length films under the headings: Comedies, Stories, Westerns.

Performing a service in America somewhat similar to that in England by the British Board of Film Censors is The Schools Motion Picture Committee, which now is entering its fourth season of recommending previewed and approved week-end programs for children and young people in New York and vicinity. Age groups covered are the "10 to 14's" and the "under 10's."

According to Mrs. Alonzo Klaw, chairman of the committee, it is "needless" to recommend for the "over 14's." Boys and girls of this age, she has found, choose the pictures they attend from reviews in the daily newspapers and from what their friends tell them. They do not merely go to the "theatre at the corner," but shop around for the movie they really want to see, and any list of their favorites would be sure to include among the first ten most of the pictures acclaimed by the critics and the discriminating adult public as the year's best.

When it comes to the committee's chief objective—the recommendation of programs for the "under 10's"—Mrs. Klaw confesses that it has gone no further than it had three years ago.

"Parents and schools sometimes ask why we encourage these little ones to go to pictures. We don't. We, too, are parents and know that the picture house is in no sense an ideal place for children's play hours. But little children do go to the movies, thousands and thousands of them. Hard-pressed mothers find that the kindly, white-aproned matron offers at a small price security from crowded streets.

### THEATRE FOR CHILDREN

"The day of the theatre for children with pictures written and directed especially for them seems still far off. Commercial producers realize the need for such pictures, but are not convinced that demand is wide enough to justify the tremendous cost of production. Once more it is up to the parents to convince the industry. WE CAN HAVE ANYTHING WE WANT IF ENOUGH OF US ASK FOR IT. And if not within the already existing commercial theatre, there are groups outside, already interested, only needing to be assured of an audience."

In England a selection of shorts, cartoons, comedies, travelogues and informative films was also made. With wide distribution, copies were sent to every cinema, every cinema licensing authority, and to every national organization of teachers, parents, and social workers.

### COOPERATION WITH THEATRES

Cooperation between cinemas and local organizations has resulted, and the list has been welcomed by cinemas already running children's performances. With educational and social organizations approaching theatres throughout the country, one of the large circuits has established a department for organizing children's performances in the houses. The full results of the program are yet in the future, but according to Farr: "If only a half of the potential audience for children's performances could be made an actual audience attending half of the cinemas in the country, then it would be possible to think of producing films specifically for children."

### EDUCATIONAL SOUND FILMS

Sound films designed for educational instruction are now available on many subjects which are ordinarily difficult or impossible to present in the class room. The Erpi Picture Consultants offer a complete library of pictures varying from the "Nervous System" in human biology to "The String Choir" in the music series. Geography, physical sciences, plant and animal life, and a primary grade series are a few of the many subjects covered by films in the Erpi lists. The Erpi Picture Consultants are located at 250 West 57th St., New York City, N. Y.



# Teaching by

By H. A. GRAY, PH. D.

**A**BOUT the beginning of the present century, the late Thomas A. Edison predicted that the silent motion picture would in time occupy a prominent place in education. It was not until some years later, however, that educators all over the country became enthusiastic over the educational potentialities of the film.

Its use led to considerable experimentation regarding instructional effectiveness. Wood and Freeman found in their controlled experiment with 11,000 school children, that the group instructed through the use of motion pictures achieved about 17% more mean gain in geography tests, and about 11% more mean gain in general science tests than the members of their control groups. Knowlton and Tilton reported gains of 19% in favor of those experimental groups having seen "The Chronicles of America" before taking tests in American History. These early experiments were substantiated by similar ones conducted in England, where Burt Spearman and Philpot concluded from their investigation that the motion picture should be an integral part of the educative process. Some time later Freeman and his collaborators in America described the motion picture as having a distinct educational value in the subjects of nature study, geography, handwork, high school science, home economics, English, health, and even handwriting, their conclusions being based on the experiments which they conducted as a further check on the film's efficacy.

## WIDE SPREAD EXPERIMENTS

With the advent of the sound motion picture, additional experimentation was undertaken. A testing project, supervised in part by the United States Office of Education, indicated that the sound film was about twice as rich in instructional values as its predecessor, the silent film. About the same time an independent investigation, conducted at Columbia University with adult graduate students as subjects, showed a twenty minute sound picture to be a significantly more effective stimulus than longer periods of time spent on discussions, writings, and lectures. A third experiment, conducted in England under the auspices of the Middlesex School Committee, indicated not only substantial learning increments on the part of the pupils but definite interest and enthusiasm from the teachers participating. The Arnspiger experiment carried on in the five American cities of Schenectady, New York City, Elizabeth, Camden, and Baltimore, and involving sixty-four schools with some 2200 pupils, showed that the groups using the pictures achieved 25.9% more in natural science, and 26.9% more in music. In addition the sound picture groups retained more of the knowledge thus gained over a period of three months. Other testing projects conducted under the auspices of Columbia, Harvard, and New York Universities have substantiated for the most part the previous findings involving the use of the sound film.

The more recent investigation, financed by the Payne Foundation, to study the effect of theatrical motion pic-

tures on children, likewise indicated the effectiveness of the medium for shaping attitudes, stirring up emotions, molding morals, and generally influencing behavior. The sound motion picture has been described as being one of the most influential forces in contemporary social life; a fact easily determined by study of the success of advertising, propaganda, and other types of films designed to mold public opinion.

## OVERCOME LEARNING BARRIERS

The many techniques of sound on film recording—natural speed, slow motion, time lapse, color, trick, animated, microscopic, telescopic, X-ray, and still photography, together with natural sounds, incidental sounds, and synchronized narration for interpreting both individual and related scenes—specifically lend themselves to overcoming many barriers to learning and account for the overwhelming evidence in favor of the motion picture, particularly the instructional sound film, as a teaching device.

The term, "Instructional Sound Film," provides a classification for an audio-visual learning aid that is distinctive both in preparation and in utilization from the usual type of motion picture. The properly prepared instructional sound film differs from the entertainment "feature" and so-called educational "short" in that it is intended primarily for formal instructional purposes in the classroom. As such, it requires particular treatment to take advantage of its power to present in a clarified manner most every type of thought possible of comprehension by the human mind.

To begin with, it will be well to note the many barriers to be surmounted before learning can progress interestingly and efficiently. Distance, for example, prevents the learner from meeting realistically the vast number of natural and man-made wonders throughout the world. Seasons restrict the type of study materials or field experience the pupil may have. Deficiencies in reading ability handicap primary, intermediate, junior and senior high school boys and girls in many learning activities. Limitations of sight prevent many wonders from coming into distinct perception. Restrictions of hearing do not allow the learner full access to the world of sound. Abstract relationships involving movement are too complex to be grasped by ordinary presentation.

The vastness of knowledge prevents even the life-long student from acquiring but a meager understanding of the total of human knowledge by conventional procedures. The printed page and spoken lecture are inadequate in their traditional presentation. The rigors of physical requirements will not allow the learner unrestricted movement or location experience. Inadequate laboratory equipment prevents the student from securing the advantage of observing many scientific experiments. The organization of traditional teaching material frequently results in laborious learning. Vocabulary diffi-

**The director of field studies for Erpi Classroom Films, Inc., offers some advice to instructors.**



# S o u n d F i l m

culties permit misinterpretation. Time prevents the learner from expanding his life experience by travel, or study of the printed word. Variations in intelligence make it certain that learnings will occur from zero to optimum degrees. Ineffective motivation fails to arouse and stimulate the learner to active participation, and mis-conception is a constant menace to be guarded against.

The many sound films available on the subjects of plant and animal life, human biology, geology, astronomy, physics, chemistry and allied subjects surmount many of the barriers of learning just described and provide classroom pupils with a comprehensive presentation and interpretation of many phenomena associated with nature, and man's efforts to adjust himself to his environment.

## TEACHERS NEED TRAINING

If the instructional sound film is to be utilized effectively, teachers must be aided to acquire skill in its use. It cannot be assumed that because such a device carries a large amount of intrinsic interest appeal, it obviates the need for teaching. No matter how excellent a particular sound film may be, it is the teacher who must fit the film presentation of subject-matter into the framework of the unit or project his pupils are developing; who must help organize learning activities growing out of the specific interests which the film has aroused in the group. To utilize the sound film effectively requires: (1) an intelligent understanding of the film's function in the learning process—the presentation of information and the stimulation of interest which activates the learner; (2) skill in introducing the film in a challenging setting—linking its presentation with past experiences and present problems; (3) the ability to devise ways and means of harnessing the film's motive power throughout the progress of the unit. It is clearly evident, therefore, that teachers should be given ample opportunity to study and make new adaptations of film units, under competent supervision.

In studying the effective use of educational sound films, the teacher will find it helpful to analyze the preparation to be made for developing a film unit. Brunstetter suggests a number of questions which may guide the teacher's approach to the use of a specific film: "Which sound film will be most helpful in achieving the objectives of the unit the students are to undertake?" "Am I thoroughly familiar with the subject-matter and the specific sequences presented in this film?" "How shall I introduce the film to focus attention upon the objectives of the unit?" "What projects or activities might be started as an outgrowth of the initial use of the film?" "How many times should I repeat the showing of the film, and for what purposes?"

Teachers should be encouraged to experiment with a variety of uses for the film. The sound film has been successfully utilized: (1) to stimulate interest and so lead into a new unit; (2) to present the major concepts or facts of the unit as a direct teaching tool; (3) to enrich a unit by opening up related areas for the student's investigation; and (4) to summarize or review. Supervisors and principals will find it advantageous to develop a record of effective procedures in connection with specific films; some supervisors make a practice of mimeographing descriptions of especially successful units or projects, for distribution to teachers.

## TEACHING TECHNIQUE

The techniques of teaching with films may be sep-

arated for study into the following classifications: (1) adjusting the film to the current interests and capacities of the class; (2) introducing the use of the film in the day's lesson; (3) manipulating the film showing in accordance with the purposes of the lesson; and (4) capitalizing the film presentation in the ensuing learning activities.

Systematic supervision for teachers beginning the use of films is essential. Principals and supervisors should be able to assist in planning the film lesson and in evaluating the effectiveness of technique which were devised. This, of course, makes it necessary for the former to become familiar with the basic principles involved in film teaching, with the content of available films, and with specific methods and procedures which have proved successful in film units.

A variety of training activities may be initiated to aid teachers in utilizing instructional sound films effectively. Teachers should be encouraged to take courses in audiovisual instruction at available training centers; in America, some eighty colleges and universities offered such instruction during the past two summers.

Local in-service training is also essential. It is suggested that faculty study projects be organized as part of the program for the improvement of teachers in service. Such projects might be developed around the objectives of discovering the most effective materials of instruction in each subject-matter area, and appraising techniques for their use in terms of specific topics. A modification of this plan is to organize special film study projects for teachers. Such local study courses should take full advantage of the training film, "Teaching with Sound Films." This picture enables the teacher to observe and analyze successful techniques with the instructional sound film in several subjects and grades.

## PROFESSIONAL GROWTH

An ideal opportunity for professional growth is presented when a local faculty combines course-of-study construction or revision with the study of materials of instruction. In this situation, as each course is evolved, materials suitable for presenting subject-matter of the course are listed in the written syllabus, and suggestions included for their use. For example, helpful sources of information and teaching aids listed under a given topic or unit might include specific films, slides, models, radio broadcast outlines, field trips to local points of interest, and reference for students and teachers.

Another device is to provide unit libraries on the sound motion picture as a teaching aid. The number of copies of each reference in the library will, of course, be dictated by the number of teachers who will be studying in the field.

A minimum library on the instructional sound film will include the following references:

Brunstetter, M. R. "How to Use the Educational Sound Film." Chicago, U.S.A.: The University of Chicago Press. 1937.

Catalogs such as the "Educational Film Catalog." New York, U.S.A.: H. W. Wilson Co.—A quarterly publication listing both sound and silent films of general and special interest.

Devereux, Frederick L. and Others. "The Educational Talking Picture." Chicago, U.S.A.: The University of Chicago Press. 1935. rev. ed.

Hoban, C. F., and Zisman, S. B. "Visualizing the Curriculum." New York, U.S.A.: The Cordon Co.



# Production from Script to Camera

**More hints for the amateur on the routine of making the film story.**

By JACK V. WOOD

IN the last issue of CINEMA PROGRESS we commented on the organization of amateur film production, stating that the producer, the director, art director, and the cameraman carried all the executive burdens of production, with the producer responsible for all phases. Now that we have this organization set up, let us turn to the actual routine of making the film story.

## THE THEME

The film theme or idea is decided upon first. Remember the idea must be cinematic; that is, it must be material adaptable to filmic narration. You must be able to clearly present the material in an easily understandable way solely by a series of moving picture scenes. An idea suitable for expression in writing may be absolutely unacceptable for the cinema and vice-versa.

The idea must have conflict of some kind. The conflict may be mental, or physical; it may be wealth and poverty, brute strength against mental prowess, honor and dishonor, popularity versus unpopularity; it may be serious or comic, dramatic or farcical, but the conflict must be present. We are speaking here, of course, of the amateur photoplay. Naturally the scientific, educational, and newsreel films have theme patterns of their own.

## THE SYNOPSIS

Next, the general idea is synopsisized. This is a highly condensed written version of the film story. There is no set length, but the synopsis should not run over a thousand words. Professional productions have often been synopsisized on one typewritten page.

A good synopsis vividly outlines the plot, setting, principle players, and contains little or no details.

From the synopsis an elaboration is made. This is known as the treatment. The story is written into scenes; generally each paragraph devoted to a different scene. If the story is fairly long the treatment may have larger divisions known as sequences. A sequence consists of complete group of scenes that are an integrated major part of the complete story. Roughly, a film story will fall into ten to twenty sequences. The treatment should be written cinematically. That is, the words should easily conjure to the mind the series of pictures that will compose the story.

## THE SHOOTING SCRIPT

The treatment is much more elaborate than the synopsis, yet still not sufficiently elaborate for each scene may be further broken down into series of camera positions. This is the shooting script. Now for the first time the photographic technical aspects of production appear. A script can hardly be written by one not thoroughly familiar with the uses and abuses of the motion picture camera.

The script is the actual blueprint of the production, and after it is written the greatest part of the work is done; yes, done, before a scene has been shot; before the camera has turned. The camera is merely a recording machine putting on film what has previously been visualized in the mind and set down on paper.

## BREAKDOWNS OF THE SCRIPT

The completed script is then carefully gone over for a breakdown. The breakdown of a script facilitates actual shooting, increases the shooting efficiency, and eliminates production delays occasioned by somebody forgetting something. The breakdown is very simple it is merely a list of items, each item followed by the script's scene numbers in which that item will be needed.

A property breakdown should be made, listing every item necessary to the action, settings, or story. If this is not done it is almost certain that time for shooting a scene will arrive, generally at a fairly distant location, and it will be discovered, 'mid director's curses, that some little item, such as a monogrammed cigarette case, is missing, and yet the whole interpretation of the sequence may depend upon the particular initials on that particular little case. This causes temperament to show up!

Another breakdown essential is the location breakdown. It merely lists every scene at each and every location. How simple, yet how important it is that no scene is missed. Again, if this breakdown is ignored it is almost certain that the forgotten scene will be at the most inconvenient location.

Sometimes actors, wardrobe, and other breakdowns are made, but their necessity depends upon the particular production, and it is up to the producer to decide what additional breakdowns may further an efficient shooting schedule.

The final breakdown is that made by the director and cameraman, and it is very essential. This is the shooting schedule. Seldom, if ever, is even an amateur photoplay photographed in the identical routine of the story. It would be most inefficient to do so and would not accomplish anything.

The director decides the routine he will shoot the various locations. And then he decides one routine he will shoot each and every scene at that location. Except for additional takes after editing, which will be covered later, the producing unit seldom, if ever, goes to one location more than once.

## READY FOR SHOOTING

That about winds up the paper work. The production is now as carefully planned and detailed as are the plans a good architect makes before erecting a building.



# CLOSE-UPS AND LONG SHOTS

By DR. GEORGE NEWHOUSE

"THE 16mm film will supplant 35mm for all motion picture uses excepting the professional entertainment field."

That is the flat declaration of one of the Hollywood officials of a large motion picture equipment manufacturer.

Not only do the majority in the industry really believe the above statement, but their companies are backing up the opinion with hard cash and intensive research work.

For instance, Bell & Howell recently announced the addition of a series of high intensity arc lamp 16mm projection machines to their already extensive line of 16mm equipment. This piece of machinery is definitely beyond the amateur field. It is professional equipment capable of throwing a 16mm film image onto a theatrical size screen with the same brilliance and quality as the 35mm standard theater projector.

## NEW PROJECTOR

Eastman, of course, has announced some months back their Kodascope Sound Special, a projection machine absolutely the last word in 16mm quality. Again, this machine is so expensive it is beyond any but the very richest of amateurs. This firm also is looking to educational, scientific, and business sources for sales.

Although at this writing the Eastman Company has made no official announcement, rumors in Hollywood technical circles have it that Eastman is now ready to duplicate Kodachrome, charging 10c per foot for this service. More important to industrial users, it is understood they will take a Kodachrome picture and a black and white sound track and make a Kodachrome sound print for 12c per foot.

Such a service would be a great step forward in the progress of 16mm educational, scientific, and industrial films. The 16mm film of the future will probably be a natural color sound product.

## PROFESSIONAL 16MM CAMERA

While we are Winchelling the sub-standard film field, we might as well make things complete and pass on another persistent rumor concerning 16mm. This is that the Bell & Howell Co., having produced a professional type 16mm projector has turned its research attention to the camera field and will soon announce a sound 16mm motion picture camera, capable of both single and double system operation to retail somewhere in the neighborhood of \$1500. This achievement, we feel, will be the last step in putting 16mm on a professional basis.

And what of the amateur? Well, for those who wish to buy and can afford it, the 16mm field is still wide open. So is 35mm for that matter. But don't forget that 8mm line. The film and equipment is today far better equipment than 16mm was just a few years back. The 8mm is not a toy, nor is it in the "brownie" class. Some

very fine pictures have been made, and are being made in the 8mm width. With the very low price for 8mm film and equipment hardly anyone need feel that personal motion picture work is beyond his reach.

And now that we've praised some of these supply companies, let us put in a protest before closing. Lately, the still photography field has been offered a finer and immensely faster film stock. This department would like very much to see some of that new, and better, and much faster film made available to the 16mm and 8mm amateur cinephotographer. How about it?

## THE FILM HERE AND THERE

### PHOTOGRAPH OF A SMELL

Anyone who claimed that he possessed photographs of the smell of a rose would ordinarily arouse our deepest sympathy. Only a person seriously ill mentally would make such a fantastic statement. Yet, Professor H. Devaux has taken pictures of many different odors.

The odor of flowers is caused by millions of tiny particles from the petals bumping against the membranes of our noses. By placing a smooth film of talcum powder on a mercury plate, Devaux obtained a record of the splotches made in the talc by the tiny particles coming from the flowers. Flowers and leaves that have no odor produce hardly any changes at all.

A picture of the smell is made by photographing the splotches on the talc film.

### FILM BROMIDES

"The body fell to the ground with a dull, sickening thud" is a bromide which will bring a groan of anguish from most readers. According to Tay Garnett, director of "Stand In," many bromides in motion pictures are every bit as bad. He lists the ten most used in this order.

1. The turning of the leaves of a desk calendar to denote the passing of time.
2. Closeup of train wheels revolving rapidly.
3. Dying petals of a flower to indicate death or disillusionment.
4. Cigarette dangling from a woman's mouth to prove her character isn't what it should be.
5. The sewing of tiny garments to indicate an unexpected addition to the family.
6. A man kicking a dog to quickly show that he is the villain of the place.
7. A couple walking smack into a sunset. A narrative device to prove that they are going to live happily ever after.
8. The turning off of the parlor lights; an invention which leaves quite a good deal to one's imagination.
9. Closeup of a tree withering, then blossoming into flower to show that spring has come to either the hero or heroine.
10. Last of all, the character cliches; gnarled hands to indicate poverty; fat paunches for unscrupulous bankers; lean cadaverous faces for undertakers and reformers; wavy hair for heroes; curls for child actresses and megaphones for directors.



# THE FILM AND BOOKS

## TRICK EFFECTS WITH THE CINE CAMERA

H. A. V. BULLEID

Link House Publication, Ltd., London, England

This edition is really a manual on the production of fantasy. Logically edited, it groups camera special effects work under different units of the camera mainly responsible for the special effect involved.

The material runs in the following order: The Camera Lens, involving alteration of exposure, alteration of focus, alteration of lens angle. Next is effects of camera speed, slow motion, fast motion, and stop motion. Use of filters and tricks with colors, as well as multiple exposure, masks and box tricks, optical distortion, diffusion, and soft focus are all described. Tricks produced by devices outside the camera include effects due to modification of the film strip independent of the photography, and finally trickless tricks or those made possible by control of the time factor.

It is not a beginner's book. Bulleid assumes that the reader is entirely familiar with an advanced type of amateur motion picture camera. Therefore he has condensed his material and eliminated simplified beginner's instructions.

Often it becomes necessary to "fake" when properly telling a story through the camera. This is the book for the person wanting to do just that. It should be read by every motion picture camera owner.

## THE MANAGEMENT OF MOTION PICTURE THEATERS

FRANK H. RICKETSON, Jr.

McGraw Hill

This is an up-to-date and authoritative manual covering every phase of the operation of motion picture theaters from the executive's viewpoint.

The material was first presented as a manual for the Fox Inter-Mountain Theater Manager's Convention. This guide is designed primarily to help all theater managers operating small or large theaters, regardless of whether they are independent or circuit exhibitors. Six fundamentals of operation are stressed and discussed: Attractions, Operation and Personnel, Advertising, Constructive Stimulation, and Corporate and Physical Structure. Under these headings are presented many effective rules, methods, pointers, and suggestions on film booking, policy determination, putting on the show, staff management, theater operation and upkeep, advertising, exploitation, accounting, etc.

Other helpful features are a whole section dealing with factors in the leasing, purchasing, and building of theaters; numerous figures and examples, typical schedules, sample forms, etc.; and a glossary of theater terms. Frank Ricketson Jr. gained his experience as a successful manager of Fox Intermountain Theaters and in building profitable business in other theaters. To those interested in the motion picture industry and more particularly theater operation, a wealth of information is available in **The Management of Motion Picture Theaters.**

## LENSES—PRISMS

SPECIAL OPTICAL PARTS MANUFACTURED

HERRON OPTICAL CO.

705 W. Jefferson

PRospect 3822

Los Angeles

## DOCUMENTARY FILM

PAUL ROTH

Faber & Faber Ltd., London

Paul Roth is both a film critic and a producer of documentary films. When he writes of the documentary, he writes from experience. The essence of the documentary method is the dramatization of life. For example, the picture, "Drifters," by John Grierson, shows the labor of the North Sea herring catch. "Cargo From Jamaica," also by Grierson, portrays tropical plantations and the loading of bananas.

The Russian documentary film usually shows political propaganda. In "Potemkin," by Eisenstein, we see a great line of soldiers marching down the broad steps of the waterfront at Odessa. The frightened people flee before them. The soldiers fire. People fall. The soldiers trample mechanically over the bodies. A wounded woman drops. She screams. A baby carriage bounces and wobbles down the steps. The soldiers move forward like a machine. In this scene Eisenstein symbolizes the heartless power of the Czar.

In Germany and France the documentary film-makers often use the life of an entire city for their material. "Berlin," by Walter Ruttmann, begins in the suburbs of the city at daybreak. Revelers return home. Workers leave for their jobs. With much opening of windows and raising of blinds, the city awakens. Heavy traffic begins. At noon the city-dwellers stop to eat. The meals of the different classes are contrasted. At night the people pursue their myriad amusements, the rich at the theater and opera, the poor at humble beer gardens and moving pictures.

Natural unrehearsed action is probably the best material for the documentary. The director creates drama from life by selecting his shots and later by arranging them in the cutting room. In "Granton Trawler," by Grierson and Anstey, the trawler is towing a net in a storm. Tension is built up by the drag of the water, the heavy lurching of the ship, the fevered flashing of birds and faces between wave lurches and spray. The trawl (large net) is hauled aboard with a strain of men and tackle and water. It is opened in a release of men, birds, and fish, images of birds wheeling high, the reaction on the men's faces, and the fish pouring from the trawl.

Sound in the documentary film may be recorded as the picture is photographed, or added later. The dialogue of a foreman shouting instructions to his men in a shipyard, for example, would be recorded on the spot. In another picture the sound of a million-volt arc was made by recording (1) tearing strips of calico cloth close to a microphone, (2) striking matches, (3) dropping pebbles on a metal plate, (4) using the peak points of another recording of a cracking stock whip.

Music is often used for creating mood or in establishing locale. In "Song Of Ceylon" a few bars of native music precede scenes of native life.

**Documentary Film** will be of special interest to amateurs because the documentary, unlike the studio film, is relatively inexpensive to produce.

In an appendix Roth lists outstanding documentary directors and their best films. There is also an excellent index.



# PICTURE PARADE

## THE EDGE OF THE WORLD

Director: Michael Powell; Photographer: Ernest Palmer.

In 1936, a young English director, Michael Powell, set out for one of the Shetland Islands, Foula, off the North-western coast of Scotland, with a group of 24 actors, cameramen and assistants. The unit remained on the island for six months and returned with more than 200,000 feet of film which was finally edited down into a feature-length fictional-documentary picture called "The Edge of the World."

"The Edge of the World" differs from most other documentary films in that it relates a complete and dramatic story, and the chief roles are enacted by professional actors who were brought from England for that purpose.

Powell first came upon the idea for "The Edge of the World" when he read a newspaper account in 1930 of the depopulation of one of the St. Hebrides islands. He determined to make a picture of "that defeat," he relates, to produce a film showing how the hardy, simple islanders were being slowly but surely forced into exile from their homelands by the failure of the crops and the encroachment of civilization. Fishing trawlers from the mainland were sweeping the seas clean. It was becoming more and more difficult to wrest a living from the stubborn land and many of the islanders were seriously thinking of forsaking their birthplace.

The theme of the film is embodied in a struggle between the older and younger generations. Peter Manson refuses to leave the island, but his son, Robbie, wants to settle on the mainland. Robbie and his friend, Andrew Gray, as representatives of the two contending opinions, decide to settle the problem by racing up a tremendous cliff. Robbie falls to his death during the climb, and Peter Manson looks upon Andrew as the cause of his son's death. He refuses to allow Andrew to marry Ruth, his daughter, and ultimately drives him from the island. Andrew returns when Ruth gives birth to his son, and Peter Manson finally realizes the futility of resisting fate any longer. As elder of the colony he signs a petition for evacuation. On the day of departure, Peter, unable to bear exile from his homeland, falls to his death over a cliff, dying as he had always lived, a son of the lonely island.

The photography for "The Edge of the World" was supervised by Ernest Palmer, English cameraman. Atmospheric and light conditions changed from scene to scene, nevertheless the finished sequences had to match. Frequently Palmer had to change the lens aperture as much as four times during one scene in order to keep pace with the varying light. Every foot of the film was photographed on the island and there were no studio re-takes later on.

"I am still making films today," writes Michael Powell, "but for a long time none can be so near my heart as "The Edge of the World." When a theme has honesty, sincerity and human as well as national importance, it is apt to last for a long time even in such a brittle and ephemeral shape as eight cans of celluloid." (Family).

## TOO HOT TO HANDLE

M-G-M; Director: Jack Conway; Screen play: Laurence Stallings and John Lee Mahin; Story: Len Hammond; Photographer: Hal Rosson; Cast includes Clark Gable, Myrna Loy, Walter Pidgeon, Leo Carrillo, Johnny Hines.

The picture is a pseudo-documentary of the newsreel profession. It deals with two rival newsreel photographers, Clark Gable and Walter Pidgeon. Both are in love with Myrna Loy. She plays the part of a woman pilot whose sole interest is to find her brother, lost in the South American jungles. The story capitalizes on current and recent news sensations: the Chino-Japanese War, an ocean liner burning at sea, a flyer lost in South America, a gun battle between police and a gangster in a New York apartment house. Plot jerkily jumps from one locale to another in its haste to get in all the material romanticizing the newsreel photographer. Photography of burning vessel from airplane and the special effects work in the explosion of the vessel and in the jungle scenes are high spots in a film characterized by excellent camera work throughout. The sequences in the jungle are exciting and revolve around a voo-doo tribe. Walter Connolly as the irate head of a newsreel concern and Leo Carrillo as Clark Gable's stooge contribute the lighter touches. (Family).

## GRAND ILLUSION

Les Realisations d'Art Cinematographique; Director: Jean Renoir; Original story and screen play: Jean Renoir and Charles Spaak; Photographers: Christian Matras and Claude Renoir; Cast includes Jean Gabin, Pierre Fresnay, Erich von Stroheim, Dita Parlo.

A very stirring French film which treats the attitudes and emotions of prisoners of war and their German captors. The story is very simple: two French lieutenants, Marechal (Jean Gabin) and Rosenthal (Dalio), are enabled to escape from a prison camp by the self-sacrifice of another French officer, de Boeldieu (Pierre Fresnay). On their way to the Swiss border they are given shelter by Elsa (Dita Parlo), a German widow with whom Marechal falls in love. He promises to return for her after the war. The film ends when the two fugitives reach Switzerland.

A new dialogue technique is attempted in the use of three different languages. Although most of the dialogue is French, the captors speak German and the English prisoners speak English. The scenes where Marechal and Elsa converse, in their native tongues and teach one another their languages are poignant but also amusing. Von Rauffenstein (Van Stroheim) the warden of the camp, speaks in English to de Boeldieu when he doesn't wish his fellow Germans to understand him. This is particularly effective when de Boeldieu is faking an attempt to escape, to enable his two comrades to escape. Von Rauffenstein begs de Boeldieu in English to come down from the walls or he will have to shoot. Then to indicate to the sentry standing by that he means to shoot de Boeldieu, he again speaks German.

The theme of the picture is the basic affection among men, whatever their nationality, and despite the fact that war has made them enemies. Thus the Frenchman, Marechal, and the German woman, Elsa, fall in love. Von Rauffenstein and de Boeldieu respect and admire one another. In the most stirring scene in the entire film, a German sentry enters the cell where Marechal is in soli-



## PICTURE PARADE (Cont.)

tary confinement. The Frenchman goes berserk, shouts, and screams, then calms down and sits staring into space. The German watches him compassionately, and offers him cigarettes and a harmonica.

Von Stroheim's characterization is much more human and sympathetic than in similar roles in past films. Gabin as the protagonist infuses both passion and restraint into his performance.

Technically the film has some flaws. The sound recording is scratchy, particularly in the songs. Spotlights are imperfectly timed with the lanterns, etc., from which the light is supposed to appear. In one scene, the foreground is out of focus and is brought into focus in the middle of the scene—a flaw in editing.

One forgives the technical defects, however. Care in pictorial composition and deft acting, as well as the sincerity of the treatment make "Grand Illusion" a welcome change from the slickness and shallowness of too many Hollywood films. (Adult).

### SPAWN OF THE NORTH

Paramount; Director: Henry Hathaway; Screen Play: Jules Furthman; Story: Barrett Willoughby; Photographer: Charles Land Jr.; Special effects by: Gordon Jennings and Farciat Edouart; Cast includes Henry Fonda, George Raft, Akim Tamiroff, John Barrymore, Dorothy Lamour, Vladimir Sokoloff, Lynne Overman, Louise Platt.

The conflict of Alaskan salmon fishermen with fish pirates is blended with a story of the friendship of two men. The friendship is broken when George Raft joins the fish pirates and his chum, Henry Fonda, devoted to law and order, wounds him in a fight with the pirates. Raft redeems by sacrificing his life in destroying Akim Tamiroff, the leader of the pirates. The documentary method is employed in the opening sequence—a rapidly paced montage of salmon on their journey from the Pacific to the Alaskan spawning grounds. Slicker, a seal with amazing abilities, John Barrymore as bombastic editor, and Tamiroff steal scene after scene from the stars. The Alaskan waters and the breaking up of the icebergs are impressingly depicted by capable camera and trick work. (Adult).

### THE AMAZING DR. CLITTERHOUSE

Warner Bros.; Director: Anatole Litvak; Screen Play: John Wexley and John Huston; From a play by Barre Lyndon; Photographer: Tony Gaudio; Cast includes Edward G. Robinson, Claire Trevor, Humphrey Bogart, Allen Jenkins, Donald Crisp.

A new twist to a crime story, with Edward G. Robinson as an analytically-minded doctor, who enters into a career of crime to determine what changes a criminal life can make in a man's physical and mental make-up. Finally caught, he is tried and declared insane after he refutes his attorney by saying that his research in crime was deliberate and well-planned, only to have the jury declare him insane on the grounds that only a lunatic would destroy testimony in favor of himself.

Never serious enough to make it a crime story, the picture has enough suspense to fortify the comedy element and round out the plot. Robinson's success as a comedian is due to his seriousness in an absurd situation. The laughs are greatly augmented by the antics of Allen Jenkins and "Slapsy Maxie" Rosenbloom. Humphrey Bogart of "Dead End" fame plays an accustomed role as the gangster menace. Claire Trevor, beautiful and blond, is sufficiently hard-boiled as a gangster's moll. A sequence which adequately outlines the tenor of the picture occurs when Bogart treacherously locks Robinson in a time vault while robbing a fur warehouse. As the

police close in, Maxie Rosebloom, his aide, cuts him out with an acetylene torch. Hemmed in by police, they come up an elevator onto the sidewalk, pretend to be police, and calmly walk away. A situation full of suspense, relieved by a humorous angle. A good comedy with plenty of thrills. (Family).

### FOUR DAUGHTERS

First National; Director: Michael Curtiz; Screen Play by J. J. Epstein and Lemare Coffee; Story: Fannie Hurst; Photographer: Ernie Haller; Cast includes Rosemary Lane, Priscilla Lane, Lola Lane, Gale Page, Claude Rains, John Garfield.

The three Lane girls and Gale Page enact the roles of four musical sisters in a middle-class family.

The picture is full of simple human affection, joys and tragedies. All of the girls are fascinated by a dashing young composer (Jeffery Lynn). The cross currents of their mutual affection and tangled loves form the basis of the story. John Garfield, a newcomer, portrays a young musician, bitter and ungracious because "they," the Fates, have given him talent, but not quite enough for him to be a success. He is a contrast to the balanced personalities of the other characters. Garfield gives a deft performance in a difficult role. Claude Rains plays the music-professor father. Curtiz' direction avoids the slushiness characteristic of this type of film in the past.

Many moving camera shots are employed and every scene is full of small movements which prevent the picture from lagging. (Family).

### ALGIERS

Walter Wanger; Director: John Cromwell; Based on French film, "Pepe Le Moko"; Screen play: John Howard Lawson; Photographer: James Wong Howe; Cast includes Charles Boyer, Sigrid Gurie, Hedy La Marr, Joseph Calleia, Johnny Downs, Gene Lockhart, Nina Koshetz.

"Algiers" is the story of Pepe Le Moko (Charles Boyer), a fugitive jewel thief, who has reigned as king of the Casbah, Algerian native quarter, for two years, secure as long as he stays within its bounds, but facing imminent capture the moment he leaves. He meets and falls in love with Gaby (Hedy La Marr), wealthy and beautiful French girl, in whom he concentrates all his longing for his beloved Paris. She prepares to leave for France, believing him dead. He leaves the Casbah, makes the ship, but is betrayed to the police by Inez (Sigrid Gurie), his native girl, and is arrested.

"Algiers" is a technical and dramatic masterpiece. The native quarter, with all its squalor, secrecy, and air of mystery, is realistically and faithfully reproduced. Charles Boyer is his usual suave self in his characterization of the fatalistic French jewel thief. Hedy La Marr walks in beauty, while Sigrid Gurie surpasses her work in "Marco Polo," making the most of dramatic opportunities offered her as a jealous tempestuous native girl. Johnny Downs is recruited from musical comedies and is convincing in this new medium as a young French crook, assistant to Pepe Le Moko.

Perhaps the best individual performance is given by Gene Lockhart as the police informer in the scene in which he is confronted by Pepe and his friends after betraying one of their group to the police. His fear of their vengeance is a living thing, and makes this scene the most impressive in the picture.

The use of low-key lighting and dense shadows to heighten the mystery of the Casbah is effective throughout the picture. The music used when Charles Boyer determines to leave the Casbah, actually makes the audience feel the finality of the decision. The photography is a high spot in cinema offerings. (Adult).



# PICTURE PARADE (Cont.)

## MY LUCKY STAR

20th Century-Fox; Director: Roy Del Ruth; Screen Play: Harry Tugend and Jack Yellen; Story: Karl Tunberg and Don Ettlinger; Photographer: John Mescall; Cast includes Sonja Henie, Richard Greene, Joan Davis, Caesar Romero, Buddy Ebsen, Arthur Treacher.

This latest Sonja Henie release has the talented and pretty young skater going to "Plymouth University" to show off the winter sports apparel line of "Cabot's-Fifth Avenue." George Barbier is the department store mogul and Caesar Romero is his laugh-provoking play-boy son. The male love interest is Richard Greene, while the punch-drunk antics of Joan Davis as a co-ed earn many a laugh. Little can be said for the story. The outdoor winter scenes are excellently staged on the studio lot. Miss Henie's dazzling routine on the ice is well handled by the cameraman. Her pirouetting is followed in such a way that the audience never loses interest. Especially impressive is the beautiful "Alice in Wonderland" sequence. (Family).

## YOU CAN'T TAKE IT WITH YOU

Columbia; Director: Frank Capra; Screen Play: Robert Riskin; Based on play by George S. Kaufman and Moss Hart; Photographer: Joseph Walker; Musical Score: Dimitri Tiomkin; Cast includes Lionel Barrymore, Jean Arthur, James Stewart, Edward Arnold, Mischa Auer, Ann Miller.

Old Martin Vanderhof stopped work thirty-five years ago to relax. Penny Sycamore, his daughter, writes plays because a typewriter was delivered to the house by mistake eight years ago. Paul Sycamore, her husband, assisted by an ice man who dropped in to make a delivery and never left, manufactures exploding fireworks in the basement. Essie, one of Vanderhof's granddaughters, makes candy and studies dancing under a wild Russian, Kolenkhov, who always arrives in time for dinner. Essie's husband spends his time delivering candy, playing the xylophone, and doing amateur printing. The other granddaughter, Alice, works as a secretary. The insane peace of this slightly mad family is upset when Tony Kirby, son of the powerful capitalist, A. P. Kirby, falls in love with Alice.

To complete one of his far-reaching financial deals, A. P. Kirby must buy the Vanderhof house. However, Vanderhof, not at all interested in money, simply refuses to sell.

Here is the beginning of the clash between two opposing philosophies. To Kirby, the capitalist, the world is still one great jungle. The sharpest claws win. Power through money is the only goal.

Old Vanderhof believes in cooperation and help. The man who falls should be aided and not trampled on. The struggle for money and power is futile and wrong if it causes suffering and unhappiness.

"You Can't Take It With You" visualizes the change which is taking place in the minds of the American people. Perhaps human beings and simple happiness are more important than Dollars and Power. Throughout the depression years these new values were crystallized into resentment and rebellion against the unprincipled use of money power.

This resentment appears on the faces of the men in the jail scene when Kirby lets them know his heartless contempt. "Scum," he calls them. Old Vanderhof flays Kirby for his vicious disregard of human beings. He says these men are better citizens than the unprincipled capitalist who destroys others to further his own ends. Kirby sneers, but for the first time he begins to doubt himself. Vanderhof apologizes for losing his temper and gives

Kirby a harmonica. This homely instrument is the symbol of the simple human values which condemn Kirby's whole philosophy of life.

Later in his conference room Kirby faces Ramsey, a man he has ruined.

"You've won for the time being," Ramsey says, "but some day you'll meet some one stronger than you, and you'll go down the same way I did."

All alone, Kirby ponders. He is badly shaken when he hears that Ramsey died suddenly after walking out of the conference room. Kirby is ready to enter the director's room when he makes his decision. The deal is not carried through.

The Vanderhof family is able to buy back its home. Their neighbors are not forced to move out of their places of business. Kirby walks dejectedly into the Vanderhof house. He sits down broken and disillusioned. Old Vanderhof cheers him up. He pulls out a harmonica and begins to play. Soon he talks Kirby into playing a duet. Kirby is at last a human being.

The change from the attitude that money can buy anything is clearly presented in the court room scene in which Vanderhof's friends take up a collection to pay his fine. Kirby, with all his money, has no friends among the people in the court. He is buffeted by the crowd as he leaves.

Such a picture as "You Can't Take It With You" would have been impossible during the prosperity years of 1923-29. Does it reflect accurately the desires and attitudes of the American people today? The answer will be found in the box office returns. (Family).

## YOUNG DR. KILDARE

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer; Director: Harold S. Bucquet; Story: Max Brand; Screen Play: Harry Ruskin & Willis Goldbeck; Photographer: John Seitz; Cast includes Lew Ayers, Lionel Barrymore, Lynne Carver, Nat Pendleton, Jo Ann Sayers.

Young Kildare is a freshly graduated doctor whose professional ideals outweigh his desire for a profitable practice. He passes up the opportunity to work with his father, a small town physician, for a less remunerative position as an interne in a New York hospital. His intense interest in research and his faith in his profession make this picture a graphic human interest story.

Harold S. Bucquet, directing his first feature length picture, skillfully interprets the struggles of a poorly paid interne without resorting to the sensationalism that usually marks this type of picture. Lew Ayers is convincing in the role of the young doctor, mainly because he retains a natural air without indulging in any flamboyant heroics. Lionel Barrymore, as the acrid but warm-hearted Dr. Gillespie, confirms his top-notch position as a character actor. Two comparative newcomers, Lynne Carver as Dr. Kildare's sweetheart and Jo Ann Sayers as a wealthy patient, bring a welcome freshness to the picture that enhances its realism.

An early sequence provides an example of skill in acting, direction, and technique. When the young graduate is expected home, his sweetheart and mother and father are moving about, happily laughing, discussing the prospect of his debut as the elder doctor's partner. The light is bright, the movements and tempo are fast and the dialogue is spirited and high-pitched. Late that night, when he decides to go to New York, the same group carries out a contrasting mood. The lighting is low



## PICTURE PARADE (Cont.)

key, the dialogue is deliberate, and the tempo is very slow, thus conveying an impression of sadness and solemnity. The same skill is noticeable throughout the picture. (Family).

### THE SISTERS

Warner Bros.; Director: Anatole Litvak; Screen Play: Milton Krims; Story by: Myron Brinig; Photographer: Tony Gaudio; Music: Max Steiner; Cast includes Bette Davis, Errol Flynn, Anita Louise, Ian Hunter, Alan Hale, Laura Hope Crews, Beulah Bondi, Jane Bryan, Lee Patrick.

The picture, taking place in the years 1904-1908, tells the story of three sisters, their varying desires and ambitions, and the divergent courses their marriage careers follow.

Bette Davis, with consummate skill, portrays the eldest sister and her undying devotion and sacrifices for Errol Flynn, as Frank Medlin, a moody reporter with a penchant for drink and travel. The conflict is between Frank's desire to make his wife happy, and his vacillating character that pulls him from a responsible home life. Bette Davis scores again as Medlin's wife, but Errol Flynn is apparently miscast as the weak-willed writer. He lacks the subtlety necessary to make the part convincing. The story spotlights this marriage, but later centers too much attention on the lives of the other sisters.

The picture is fast-moving and highly dramatic due to director Litvak's theatrical insight and Tony Gaudio's mobile camera and versatile lightings. Highlights in the picture are a brief sequence of the San Francisco earthquake, (important not for itself, but because it brings Errol Flynn and Bette Davis together after he has run away), and shots of the presidential ball.

Laura Hope Crews, in a short part, shows warmth and understanding and adds greatly to the picture with a brilliant performance. One of the most impressive bits in the picture is a poignant love scene between the disillusioned reporter and his faithful wife, in which he begs forgiveness and promises with great determination to support her as he should. Following this is a fast-moving montage of Frank's feet; closed doors, pauses, and less determined walk showing his discouragement at finding no work, then whirling flashes of bars and liquor as, beaten again, he turns to drink for solace. Not an outstanding picture, but technically excellent and containing flashes of dramatic art. (Family-adult).

### SUEZ

20th Century-Fox; Director: Allan Dwan; Screen Writers: Philip Dunne and Julien Josephson; Original Story: Sam Duncan; Photographer: Peverell Marley; Special Effects: Fred Sersen; Cast includes Tyrone Power, Loretta Young, Annabella, J. Edward Bromberg, Joseph Schildkraut.

The story of "Suez" is based on Ferdinand de Lesseps's heart-breaking struggle to build the Suez canal. Blocked by international jealousies, hindered by lack of funds, and almost whipped by the elements, he finally succeeds in digging the "biggest ditch in the world."

The plot is badly confused. The opening shots establish a love affair between Loretta Young as Eugenie and Power as de Lesseps. Through the hackneyed device of a fortune teller, we learn that Eugenie will become an empress while Power is going to dig ditches. The surprise Power shows at this statement is unfortunately not shared by the audience. To make sure that no one misses the point, the actors talk over the Swami's prediction. Later, in Egypt, Power repeats the words to himself as he looks at the desert sand.

When Power returns to Paris, he learns that Eugenie is going to marry Emperor Louis Napoleon. Power grinds his teeth together in a few close-ups, a friend lays a comforting hand on his shoulders, and Eugenie peers at him through watery eyes. Beyond that no one seems to be greatly concerned except Toni, the French girl Power picked up in Egypt. Annabella, as Toni, is of course, in love with Power. When they return to Egypt, she sacrifices her life to save Power from an approaching cyclone. The Suez canal finally is completed, Power receives a decoration from Empress Eugenie, and the film fades out to a vague ending, inconclusive and flabby as the plot.

Tyrone Power as de Lesseps is exactly that—Tyrone Power as de Lesseps. That Power is ineffective is not surprising, but why he was ever cast in a role which demands forceful, dramatic acting is hard to explain.

The principle cinematic fault of the film is its wordiness. Everyone talks and no one acts. The constant talk, talk, talk smothers the action and movement. "Suez" is a reversion to the 300% talkies of 1930 and 1931. (Family).

### AMOEBAS STAR IN ALL COLOR FILM

The amoeba, the paramecium, and an infinitesimal supporting cast recently performed for doctors at Washington, D. C. in a world premiere of the first color motion picture of microscopic life. In previous films of protozoa, the entire cast suffered an unfortunate death after being stained for colored photography. The color work in this 1600-foot film was done by lights. The actors are still alive.

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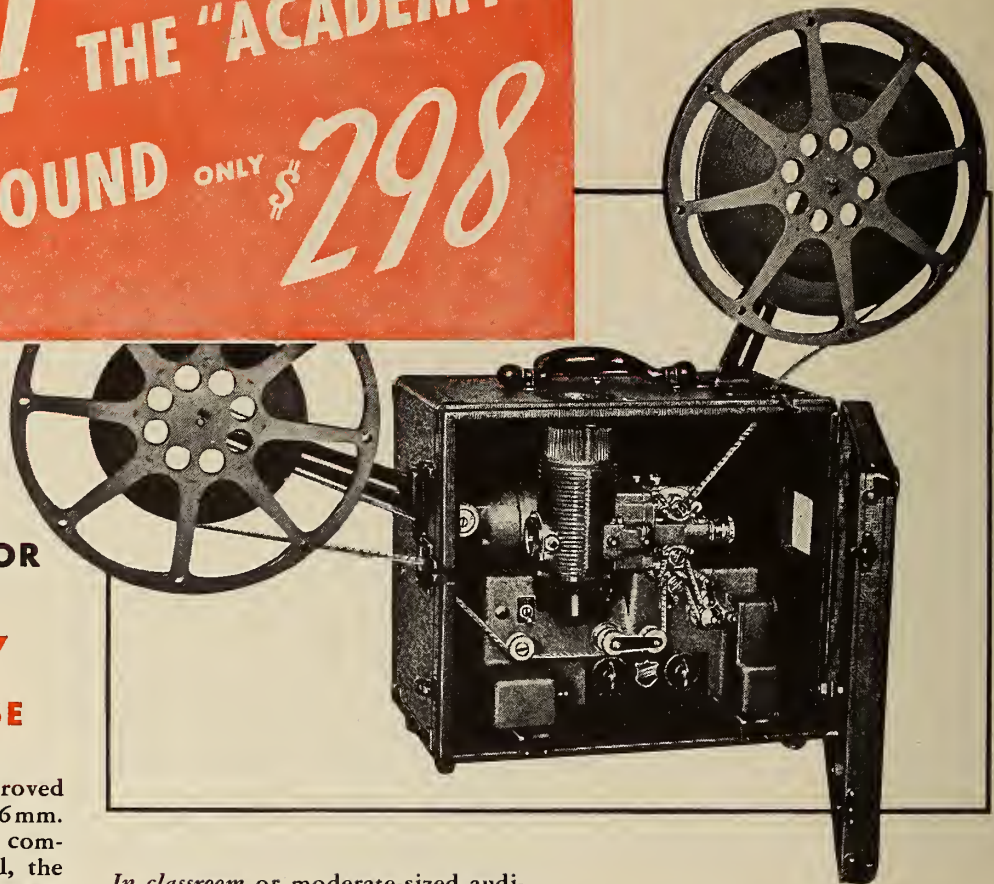
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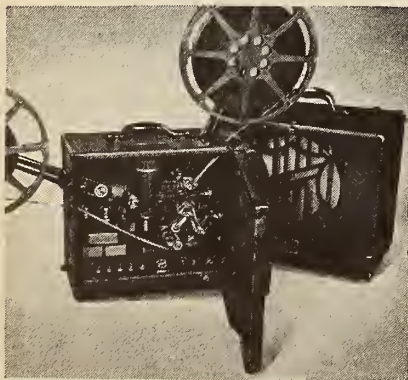
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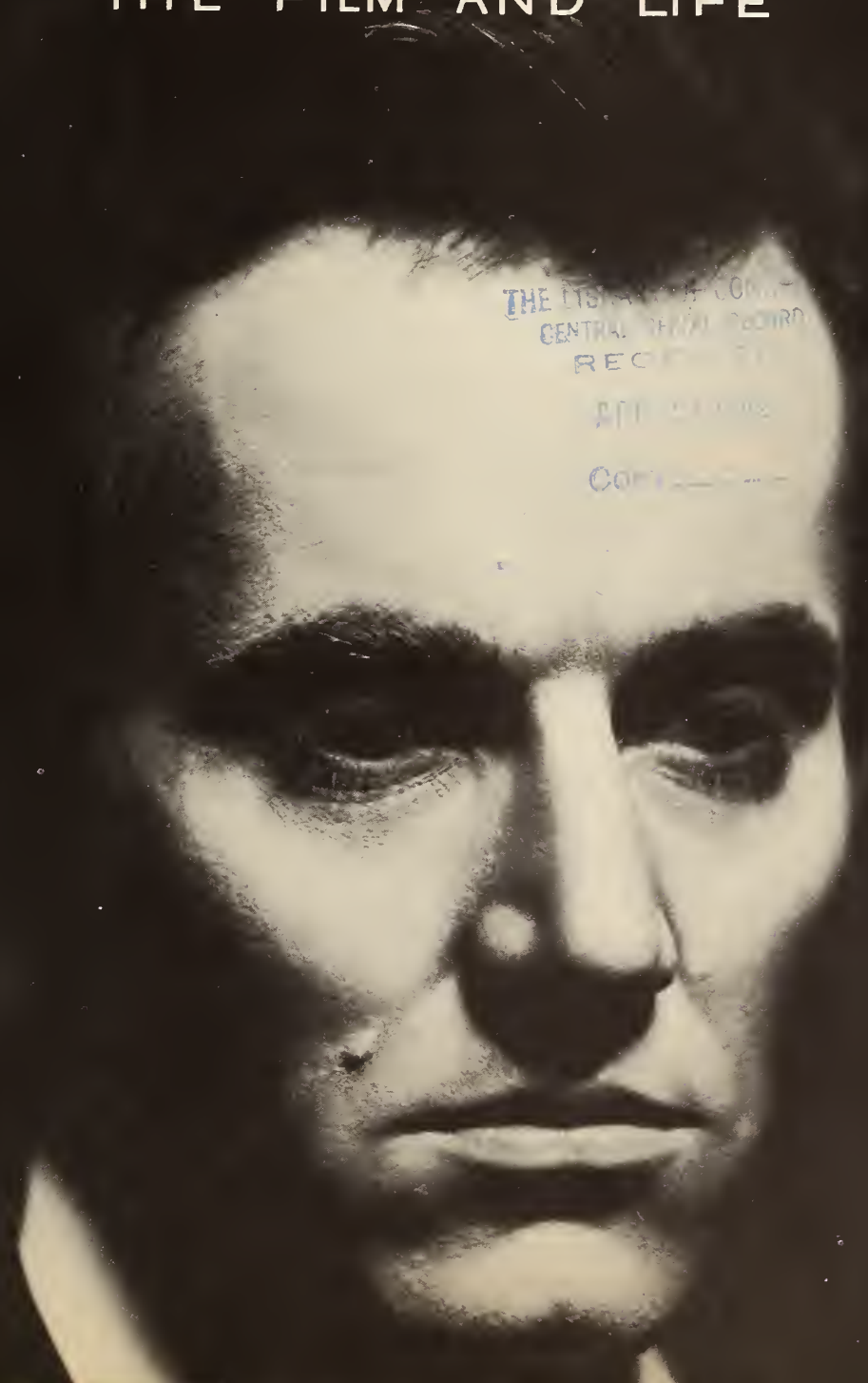
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# CINEMA PROGRESS

## THE FILM AND LIFE

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AWAKENED DEMOCRACY— An editorial .....	1	CINEMA AND STAGE—By William L. Snyder. Director Fritz Lang shows how the film developed its own methods. ....	11
DIRECTOR'S NOTEBOOK—By King Vidor. A great director gives some practical rules for the art of motion picture direction .....	2	FILMS IN CHANGING EUROPE—By Gladys Murphy Graham. Motion pictures are traced through the turbulent ways of Europe. ....	12
WHY TEACH CINEMA?—By William Wellman and Henry Koster. Two of Hollywood's foremost directors discuss the practicability of teaching cinema ..	3	NEWS OF THE DAY—By E. Bayard. The inside story of the newsreel cameraman. ....	14
TELEVISION DISPROVES A THEORY—By Kay Reynolds. John Porterfield, program director of the National Television Corporation, reveals the results of his tests to determine the public's taste in television programs .....	4	PRODUCTION REVIEWS .....	16
ENGLAND VS HOLLYWOOD—By Russell Bledsoe. Bernard Vorhaus, an American director of English films, compares the English film industry with Hollywood. ....	6	A MIRACLE OF COLOR—By Rudolf Arnheim. News scoop of an amazing new color process developed in Italy. ....	18
MUSIC TELLS THE STORY—By Jack V. Wood. Music is more than an accompaniment to motion pictures believes Boris Morros, musical director and producer	7	THE NEW IMPETUS. World wide comment and controversy over Mark Owen's editorial in the last issue of Cinema Progress. ....	20
ROUTINE OF A DIRECTOR—By Harry Westgate, Jr. An expert in directing light comedy, Mitchell Leisen, tells how carefully brilliant "spontaneous" humor must be prepared .....	8	DESIGN FOR CINEMA—By Ezra Goodman. Erno Metzner, the German art director, begins work in Hollywood. ....	22
ART AND THE BOX OFFICE—By Leigh Jason, Henry King, S. Sylvan Simon. Three directors give their opinions about good pictures, good box office, and good audiences .....	9	A DIRECTOR'S BLUE PRINT—By T. Evans. John Brahm, Columbia director, explains how the director plans a picture. ....	23
THE BOX OFFICE MAGNET—By Ted Abrams. Milton Sperling, 20th Century-Fox writer, explains the emotional common denominator .....	10	DIRECTING CHILDREN—By Serene Kassapian. Many children have produced their own plays, few their own pictures. Miss Kassapian, a student at U.S.C., describes an interesting experiment. ....	24
		THE DANCE FILM—By Mary Jane Hungerford and Donald William Duke. Production notes on the first dance appreciation film. ....	25
		AMATEUR PRODUCTION—By Jason Bascombe. The script is traced from camera to exhibition. ....	26
		THE FILM AND BOOKS—Review of "Art and Prudence." .....	27

### FRONT COVER

HENRY FONDA IN "YOUNG MR. LINCOLN"

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# AWAKENED DEMOCRACY

(An Editorial)

THE crucial period we are going through will be a turning point in our history. In our day the social, economic, and spiritual forces of the nation and mankind are being tested. It is the beginning of a prolonged process of the world's structural and geographic change in which gigantic forces are involved. There is no escape from this change, no return to the beaten tracks. A far-reaching adjustment to the new epoch is necessary.

Of the two methods of adjustment, autocratic and democratic, the majority of the American people have decidedly expressed themselves in favor of the latter. Americans refuse to replace freedom and individual rights with the worship of a superman-dictator who whips up a nation to a hysterical frenzy of fanaticism.

The grip of a profound social change, the necessity for solving internal problems, and the pressure of international economics and relationships will force democracy to a more intensive national consciousness and a more realistic and dynamic social attitude.

The power of a real democracy lies in its enormous internal reserves, in the initiative and determination of individuals awakened to the demands and obligations of the times. By reaching its deeper strata of latent energy and moral reserves, the American nation at the historical crossroad has been and will be able to harness again the underlying urge which gave rise to this great nation; it can release that great urge which inspired the heroic effort of pioneers and builders of the New World democracy.

## MOTION PICTURES AS A POTENT SOCIAL FACTOR

Lifted on the wave of a rapid social change and the amazing dramatic renaissance of the last half century, motion pictures have become the art of the masses, recreating in terms of entertainment the lifelike personal and social situations with convincing, identifiable characters. By bringing emotional responses and imagination of the masses into play, motion pictures crystallize new behavior patterns more effectively than any other agency of formal or informal education.

The race experience and cultural heritage stored in books, schools, and museums are absorbed and utilized by a minority. To unlock this treasury takes prolonged study and concentration, a gift for logic and abstract thinking. Through the medium of motion pictures this race experience and cultural heritage can be made accessible to everyone.

Motion pictures, while serving as commercial entertainment, are dealing more and more with vital problems of the nation and of individuals. Since the depression motion pictures have followed a new trend. They treat situations of modern life with realism, vividness, and artistry peculiar to the motion picture medium of expression. Even the pictures of old conventional patterns like the Westerns, pictures of "boy-meets-girl" type, historical or biographical pictures have a more imaginative treatment, and deeper themes or more significant social implications are woven into the stories, as, for example

"Stagecoach," "Love Affair," "Dark Victory," "Wuthering Heights," "Pygmalion," "The Citadel," "A Man to Remember," "Young Doctor Kildare," and others.

The historian of the development of motion pictures as a new, full-fledged, artistic, and technical medium, as well as a new potent social factor, has to give much credit to Warner Brothers. Their initiative in the introduction of sound to motion pictures brought the film technically from a mute, inarticulate state to that of a potential symphonic art, synthesizing all other arts. Their bold initiative in tackling some of the timely and acute social problems and treating them with an unprecedented directness greatly contributed to the assumption of motion pictures of a new and important social function. By the production of "Juarez," Warner Brothers revealed with sharpness and uncompromising power the spirit and invincibility of militant democracy as opposed to autocracy. At the same time the picture probed into historical and ideological ties binding Mexico and the United States, these ties being embodied in Lincoln, the giant hero inspiring both democracies.

In his last annual report, Will Hays interpreted the new socialized trend in motion pictures as an acceptance of social responsibility by the leaders of industry for their product distributed inside and outside of the country. In time of the most dangerous world crisis it is imperative not to release abroad pictures which may possibly interpret American life and characters in a distorted way, thus compromising Americans in the Orient, Latin America, and the Occident.

The credit for the new trend in motion pictures should be given, in the first place, to the pressure of the public itself and to educational and civic leaders. The motion picture industry as a commercial institution is sensitive to the public demands and to the promptings of public opinion.

## THE BEHAVIOR-SHAPING AGENCIES OF DEMOCRACY

The most effective agencies of re-education and rejuvenation of democracy are schools, the press, the radio, books, and motion pictures. By means of these agencies, the psyche of individuals and the masses is adjusted to a rapidly changing world, to new conditions and techniques.

Schools become more and more aware of the importance of their function to prepare youth for new life situations and to develop their ability to cope with new emergencies effectively. The schools, however, have to become more cognizant of the necessity for preparing a new type of leader who will master up-to-date methods and techniques of the new mind-and-behavior-shaping institutions, such as the radio and, especially, motion pictures. Motion pictures are summoned to play a far-reaching role in the development of the new democracy, in the shifting of national consciousness of the people to a higher gear.

(Continued on Page 15)



# DIRECTOR'S NOTEBOOK

By KING VIDOR

**S**UPPOSE every director uses a different method in preparing a picture. My experience shows that the result is more successful when the writer and director team. If the director does not work with the writer, he should make his own adaptation from the script the writer submits; otherwise the director cannot express his own ideas. In "The Citadel" I collaborated with my wife who wrote a part of the adaptation. During the shooting of the picture she worked with me on the set.

The film has a more closely knit dramatic form than the novel. It has stronger dramatic drive, and its tempo and pace are much faster. I spend from eight to twenty-four hours in reading a novel. A motion picture must be presented in from one to two hours. In the novel the author can go off on a tangent when he strikes something that particularly interests him. He can examine it from every side. A novel can wander, express the philosophy of the writer or his characters, pause over a beautiful bit of description, and examine at great length a psychological state. This technique in a picture would make it seem interminable.

## NEW INCIDENTS

The director must often make use of incidents which were not in the novel, or it may be necessary to change or strengthen the theme. Most important in my eyes is the treatment given the story. Quite often it is more interesting and important to stress the viewpoint and feelings of the characters about the situation than the situation itself. In "The Citadel" I tried to establish the mood and the atmosphere of the scenes to give the actors something to react to. In the sequence where the baby is born, if you remember, the doctor was forced to react to the objections of the midwife. It is through reaction that personality is expressed. In the early days of sound pictures, everything was expressed by dialogue. To me this is far less convincing than reactions. A scene is something like a volley ball game. In the game one player "sets up" the ball and another hits it over the net. In the picture, the director creates the mood and atmosphere of the scene, and the actor puts it across to the audience with his reactions.

In modern pictures the director can depend more on the audience to use its imagination. The audience naturally likes to arrive at its own conclusions without being told flatly that this man is a hero and that man is a villain.

In selecting the sets, the director of course tries to express the mood and psychology of the scenes he is trying to show. The final picture on the screen is a blend

of many factors—camera, lighting, sets, cutting, acting, in fact everything that goes into it.

In the past there has been a prejudice among some producers against pictures which carry a message. They think that a picture which is too serious will be above the heads of the people. I don't think it is the message which should be objected to. It is the way the message is put over that counts. Changing conditions have influenced people. A few years ago politics and the economic situation were boring to most people. They now find this material entertaining.

## THE BIG PARADE

It was interesting to me to find that "The Big Parade" (1925) in which I tried to show the reactions of an average man drawn into war, was labeled a pacifist picture by one group, and a patriotic glorification of the dough boy by another. I didn't feel that the main character had to be a romantic or glorified hero. It was important to present him as a part of his social group—and through him to express the attitude of this group. It isn't necessary to have a spectacular subject like war for this approach. Any life situation can be made interesting and dramatic. On the other hand it is possible to introduce too many subjects from too many angles. In over-emphasizing the collective side one may lose the intimate relationship with the characters.

After finishing "The Big Parade" John Gilbert said, "It is certainly going over well. What are you going to do next?"

I considered again the question of war. It is a great subject, I thought, but there must be other places where men can go through life as an observer—birth, engagement, marriage, death. I went home that afternoon and wrote the story of "The Crowd."

In "Our Daily Bread" I tried to show average people going through an economic depression. Instead of creating a hero at the beginning of the picture, I tried to place an average man in life situations and follow his reactions. Under pressure his character grows.

## HALLELUJAH

In making "Hallelujah" my interpretation or idea of the Negro was my Negro mammy. I was born in the South, and as a boy, one of my first impressions of Negroes was that they were being mistreated by white men. As I remembered, Negroes were kind like my Negro mammy. I based "Hallelujah" on my boyhood memories of Negroes.

(Continued on Page 28)



# WHY TEACH CINEMA?

By WILLIAM WELLMAN

DIRECTOR OF "BEAU GESTE"

So much opinion-expressing about motion pictures has gone on lately that I'm a little dubious about adding mine to the chorus. The professionals do it much better than the people actually head over heels in the business, as I am, and I sometimes think that it is better to leave it to them. Still, you might like to hear from a man who enjoys pictures.

I think that an audience which "shops" for films is definitely a better one than the audience which merely accepts anything that comes along. Show business is not notable for its charity to failures, so it doesn't make much difference whether you get your "coup-de-grace" from the critics or the consumers . . . or your associates. By the same token, there's no use taking your best shots for an audience which won't know nor care. Marquee-shopping is excellent. Discrimination should certainly come from the people who ultimately pay for the pictures. Financial judgment on our product is the final one, and we certainly should not attempt to avoid it.

## EVERYBODY KNOWS A GOOD PICTURE

The teaching of cinema in schools and universities seems quite laudable. Concerning its purpose, I'm a little ignorant. I still don't think you can train creators like you can engineers, but I suppose that's beside the point. Cinema appreciation seems a little far-fetched for a product that is distributed like canned goods. It must be rather like going to school to learn the aesthetic differences between a Pontiac and an Oldsmobile. However, I have an open mind on this, too. A good many years in this business have caused me to reach one conclusion—everybody knows a good picture, and everybody knows a bad one—whether they're a Phi Beta Kappa or an illiterate with an intelligence quotient a point or two above that of a Digger Indian. Perhaps the power of movie criticism is a primal inheritance.

As far as training the new generation for the motion picture industry is concerned, I think it will be the same as ever. It will be the same haphazard, desperate, tiresome thing it always was. The good men will rise from the ranks and mediocre men will stay there. You don't pick railroad engineers from men on the sidewalk; they rise from the hostlers and engine-wipers and firemen and other gents with dirty necks, and the reason they are engineers is because they were willing to learn. It's not quite as pleasant as in a classroom, but it's more thorough. The writers will write, the directors direct, the cameramen peer through their finders—and the producers will worry. They'll probably all try a dozen different things before they find Hollywood. When they do, they won't need any previous training to tell them this is it. You don't hand a hungry tiger raw meat and explain to him what it is.

(Continued on Page 29)

By HENRY KOSTER

DIRECTOR OF "THREE SMART GIRLS GROW UP"

I believe it is true that the audience today is demanding better pictures. However, the good directors are the same ones that have been directing for the past eight years or so. All the important directors grew up with the industry. They learned how to cut, write, use the camera—experience with practically every technique which goes to make a picture. Talented directors like Capra, Clarence Brown, La Cava, Van Dyke, King Vidor, Leo McCarey and others started from scratch. They learned how to make pictures in the ten or fifteen years they have been in the industry.

New directors lack such experience today. They come from different fields such as writing, newspaper work, the stage, knowing only a small part of motion picture technique. There is so much specialization in motion picture production today, it is difficult to gain the same experience the old timers have.

## STUDIO SCHOOL

Maybe the studios will agree to establish a kind of practical school where talented young people will learn the art of making motion pictures. There they may experiment with smaller pictures. If they show ability, they can be given an apprenticeship to work on difficult jobs under experienced directors. Finally, they may be assigned to short or less expensive pictures.

But before taking such a practical course, they should gather as much background as possible. They should have an understanding of human life, behavior, its motivation; they should understand, feel, and be able to show the real human emotions of characters who find themselves in critical situations.

With all the changes humanity is going through today, future directors should be capable of watching, following, and understanding what is going on in modern life, what affects the emotions of the average man, what the emotional pulse is. Directors must be generally educated, widely read, know what is going on in the world around him today. Technique, emotional experience, background—all these are necessary. Just to be born talented is not enough.

My own methods of directing are based on my experience here and in Germany. I worked at Ufa studios as a director cameraman, actor, writer, and painter.

## THE DIRECTOR'S JOB

I usually work from two to three months on a script. I talk to the writer, make sketches of the scenes, give suggestions to the art department, and plan the set as I want it built. I believe it is the director's job to unify the work and effects of a picture. I try to see the story and its sequences as a whole. I try to build a motion picture like a symphony, and of course I have to know

(Continued on Page 27)



# TELEVISION

**John Porterfield reveals the results of his tests to determine the public's taste in television programs.**

By KAY REYNOLDS

MUCH has been written and said about the tastes of the public. A great many things which are open to question have been repeated so often by "experts" that they are taken for guiding principles of truth in all entertainment fields. The primitive African tells himself over and over: "I am strong as the lion that roars at nightfall!" until he comes to believe it through sheer hypnotic repetition. But we call this superstition. Now let's look a little closer home to see what a strange image our entrepreneurs have conjured up in the name of THE PUBLIC. Let us investigate some of the "axioms" of entertainment appeal to see how much of them are truth and how much out-moded superstition.

## MYTHICAL MONSTER

John Porterfield

Our first glimpse of the bogey that our entertainment wisemen call THE PUBLIC is terrifying to say the least. We see a repulsive figure with dull stupid eyes and a lewd, imbecile mouth. The intelligence of this mythical monster is very, very low—in fact, comes to a full stop at the age of twelve. This in itself is not alarming because the mind of a twelve-year-old is fresh, eagerly curious and unspoiled. It delights in wholesome adventure and all forms of creative make-believe and is very susceptible to new ideas. But the entertainment authorities have not let their creation stop at that. They have attributed to their twelve-year-old Public the appetites, the desires, the jaded outlook of a tired libertine of 50 or 60. Take a look at this pitiful twelve-year-old who must be constantly prodded into jerky excitement by long rows of chorus girls with carefully matched legs that twitch in and out of the line with robot regularity. This the producers call "dancing" and they fully believe this form is about as much of the art of dancing as their hypothetical Public will endure. Yet when a real artist like Fred Astaire was introduced in motion pictures, the twelve-year-olds were entranced and begged for more. But superstition must be upheld and so the robots jerk on, the only "art" or variation in their "dancing" being in the really lovely costumes and groupings of beautiful colors

Music? Bach, Beethoven and Brahms for the mythical few. Jazz, swing and jive for the mythical many. Noise is what the Public wants, say the "experts." But a twelve-year-old has arrived at the age when a wistful tune, even a bit of "good" music, is very welcome in quiet reflective moods. If you don't believe it, recall the success of "My Reverie," an exquisite melody reminiscent of Debussy, who, as you know, was a "highbrow" among



"highbrows," as far as composers are concerned. The Public took this fragile sad song to its heart. Elevator boys whistled it at their monotonous labor; it fitted in beautifully with the rhythmic ups and downs of their work; truck drivers crooned the slow sad measures as they covered long lulling stretches of asphalt in their swaying, speeding trucks. It was a song of reflection, of dreaming, and while the words may have been sentimental the tune was immortal and strangely intoxicating to the spirit. The Public took to it like ducks to water. It gave them a chance to express those inarticulate longings of the human spirit that no jazz is reflective enough to capture. Bosh! the experts would say. Give em noise! But look at the fact and not the superstition. Well, this could go on indefinitely but you get what we mean.

## WHAT THE PUBLIC LIKES

John Porterfield, forward-looking young Program Director of the National Television Corporation in New York City, had all this in mind when he started to conduct some very interesting experimental questionnaires at his weekly television shows. He reasoned that if the Public really wanted only what the producers said they wanted, then the Public must have a bad case of recreational indigestion. He had a conviction, too, that television was the medium for injecting some much needed vitamins into this monotonous diet of entertainment. With no attempt at coercing his audiences into his own way of thinking, Porterfield presented each of his televiewers with a mimeographed questionnaire form requesting them to check the kinds of entertainment they would most prefer on their television sets in their homes. Ten choices were given. The people who attended these shows were of all classes both as to education and social status. They varied greatly from week to week and were in no sense "selected," as everyone was invited to attend the experimental shows free; numbers being restricted only by the capacity of the studio. Since the questionnaire requested the occupation of the person answering, Porterfield was able to divide his people into six rough groups: Office Workers, Skilled Workers, Housewives, Students, Professional Workers, Teachers and Educators. School Teachers and Educators were considered separately from other professional workers because it was felt they would place a greater stress on educational courses than other groups and Porterfield wanted to allow for this in checking results. Even after allowing for this, some startling results were shown as a result of this very interesting experiment.



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# DISPROVES

# A THEORY

## DRAMA

The students and the skilled worker groups gave Sporting Events their highest vote for television programs. Here's strange company! Shoeworkers, drycleaners, cooks, radio repairmen joining hands with the boys from N.Y.U., Columbia and Fordham in their favorite type of program. And if this seems a curious line-up, we move on to the Housewives and Officer Worker Groups to find them both heading their lists with a call for dramatic productions as first choice program material. Here is a really amusing situation when you realize that the questionnaire gave housewives a chance to choose Household Hints and Fashion Shows as favorites if they wished. When you think that advertising experts carefully make one type of copy for housewives and another for the office woman, supposedly with such different interests, it is startling to find both groups of women unanimous in their first choice of television programs.

These two results of the questionnaire alone show how dangerous it is to set up stereotyped reactions for occupational or social groups, to corral one section of the Public into one entertainment pen, and others into equally separate classes behind rigidly set barriers. The Public changes and shifts, one "class" overflowing into another with no predictable direction. And if this is so, as we shall prove in giving you more results of this study, why not give the Public, at least occasionally, entertainment nearer the top of its level rather than always at its lowest I.Q.?

## SPOT NEWS

"Spot News" features were the second choice programs of the Students, the Skilled Workers and the Office Workers. And who do you suppose chose Spot News features as their favorite type of program? The Professional Workers! What a juggling of "classes" this points to! "Masses" and "highbrows" fraternizing in complete unanimity for once.

But here is the most startling thing of all! Although we find most groups ranking Dramatic Productions and Variety Acts among their first three choices of programs, one group differed from all the rest and chose for a strong third choice—Educational Courses! Oh, of course, you'll say, the Professional Workers! But no. It was the gardeners, the grocers, hairdressers, cement mixers, waiters and truck drivers of the skilled working group who gave a lusty third place vote to Educational Courses. Now if that isn't a knock-out blow to the entertainment superstition, show us a better one! Still more significant, Educational Courses got **fourth** place out of **ten** in every group except the Educators and School Teachers, who naturally placed it first, as was anticipated. Now this, we think, is news, not to the few of us who suspected this state of affairs but to the many diehards and conservatives of the program makers and shapers of policy, who have always insisted on that numbing image of the twelve-year-old public, that fetish of the entertainment

moguls that is the paralyzing barrier of superstition to progress. When six groups of people composed of waiters, clerks, salesmen, secretaries, housewives, bookkeepers, educators, students, nurses, musicians, singers, photographers, school teachers, cooks, soda dispensers, show clearly that they want educational programs, then something must be done to draw their intelligent interest and awareness to the attention of the program makers.

Is it possible that the prospect of the new medium of entertainment in the home, television, has stimulated this response in so many diverse groups of people? Possibly, yes. There is no doubt that visual education is far more fascinating and attention-compelling than audio-education, which more often than not degenerates into dull fact-giving speeches. But we cannot help feeling that this desire for combining education (in its best horizon-extending meaning) with superior entertainment, has been more than latent in the public for several years past. One might dare to date it from the second or third year of the depression when America started to look into herself and examine herself as lack of money deprived her from looking constantly outside in the form of luxuries, gadgets and other distractions from the real meaning of living. At any rate, the need is there. It has been expressed. It should be heard and considered carefully by all who are planning the imminent arrival of telecasting.

Oddly enough, Opera was fifth or sixth choice of the six groups. And this is a decided tribute to the excellent educational work the broadcasting programmers have been doing in the field and to the splendid work of the motion picture producers who have presented Metropolitan stars in gay, attractive roles to the movie-going public. These groups preferred Opera Programs to Serial Stories, Political Speeches, Household Hints and Fashion Shows. That Opera should be preferred to Serial Stories is a tremendous veto to the superstitious opinion of what the Public wants. It certainly surprised us to see what a low rating Serial Stories got, although we can certainly understand it, having suffered so long ourselves from this program affliction. Porterfield's opinions and speculations on the unknown quantity of television broadcasting are worth reporting, especially since television will be in general operation by the time this article is published. The television camera, he says, is as sensitive to human personality as the microphone is to the voice. He wonders, with some amusement, how the Public will react to **seeing** full length personality portraits of politicians and self-appointed prophets whose personalities on radio have been simply the sum of their persuasive oratory. Television is a mirror for the truth. How will the prestige of certain figures who dominate the European scene be affected when the Public can sit before a television screen and watch those bulky uniformed figures in action?

(Continued on Page 29)



# ENGLAND vs Hollywood

**Bernard Vorhaus, an American director of English films, compares the English film industry with Hollywood.**

By RUSSELL BLEDSOE

**T**HAT English-made films differ from those produced in Hollywood is recognized by most film goers, but just what that difference is is not always clear. Americans accustomed to a rapid life and high-speed entertainment find English films slow, even tedious.

According to Bernard Vorhaus, an American director of English-made films, the English audience prefers a slower tempo in its motion pictures.

"The rapid fire wise-cracks in a Marx Brothers film, for example, confuses as often as they amuse the English people," Vorhaus says.

The production of English films is also strongly influenced by the stage background of most English actors, writers, and directors. Even the technicians have gained their experience on the stage. Hollywood, the colossus of motion picture production, draws new talent from workers within the picture industry.

The dependence on the stage tends to make English pictures "talky." The story is told by dialogue rather than pictures.

Studio organization is less efficient in England than in America, Vorhaus believes. The lack of technical equipment often acts as a stimulus to the ingenuity of the director. However, the haphazard organization and freedom in production is fast being replaced by the big business methods of Hollywood.

## SPECIAL EFFECTS

In "Fisherman's Wharf," Vorhaus's latest American picture, there is a scene where Bobby Breen writes on a fogged window.

"Can we get that fogged window effect?" Vorhaus asked.

"Certainly," he was told, "we spray the window with a special paint which photographs like fog."

When a man appeared on the set with the painting equipment, Vorhaus asked if he was the painter.



Bob Breen and Henry Armetta in "Fisherman's Wharf"

The man nodded and somewhat indignantly went to work on the window. Not until the job was completed did Vorhaus learn that he had committed the faux-pas of calling a "Special Effects Man" a painter.

"This amazing organization solves many of the problems which confront the director in England," Vorhaus says.

In creative as well as technical work Americans are efficient. Stories submitted to American studios are almost always slick and capable in technique.

Vorhaus found English stories amateurish but very original. Further, the director in England may change the script. Closely planned American production schedules give the director little opportunity to in-

troduce changes. To Vorhaus, the story ideas rather than the presentation are the more important.

## THE NEW CONTINUITY

Vorhaus believes that both English and American pictures are approaching a new form of continuity. There is a growing tendency to eliminate the non-significant parts of the motion picture. The director will try to present only the high-lights in action.

In "The Last Journey," for example, a picture Vorhaus directed in England, a Cockney couple are saying good-bye at a train station. Both the man and the girl are incapable of expressing the emotion they feel.

"It's almost time," the man says.

The girl nods.

The camera shows other people preparing to leave on the train, the bustling confusion of last minute departures, and then returns to the man and the girl. Looking at the crowd, they conceal their deep emotions by repeating the casual phrase, "It's almost time." The contrast of the trivial words with the strong emotions of the young couple calls into play the imagination of the

(Continued on Page 31)



# MUSIC TELLS THE STORY

**Music is more than an accompaniment to motion pictures, believes Boris Morros, musical director and producer.**

By JACK V. WOOD

**B**ORIS MORROS recently presented to the Motion Picture Forum of the University of Southern California some of the basic concepts a motion picture musical director must keep in mind when scoring modern photoplays. Morros, once a student of Rimsky-Korsakov, was first introduced to this country as composer-conductor of the famous "Chauve Souris," a presentation that permanently endeared itself in America with the unforgettable Parade of the Wooden Soldiers number. For the last sixteen years Morros has been associated with Paramount, the last three as musical director, and at the present time he is one of Hollywood's newest producers.

Most recent work of musical directing by Boris Morros was the scoring of Walter Wanger's production of "Stagecoach," and it was from this picture that most of the illustrative excerpts for the lecture were taken. "Stagecoach" received universal musical approval, a subject often overlooked by critics in the usual picture reviews.

## MUSIC ESSENTIAL

The most important function of cinema music is to fulfill spots a director fails to cover, or was unable to display. A musical score is as essential as the plot itself, for a good score adds color and interest, heightens emotional values, and characterizes players, locales, and periods.

The general pace of the photoplay may be too fast for the director to spend sufficient footage for proper characterization; then the musical director must help. The underscore even may be called upon to build up characters, locales, and period all in the same musical number; such was the case in "Stagecoach" at times.

In scoring "Stagecoach" Morros was faced with the problem of quickly and effectively taking the audience back to the time of 1883, putting them on a stagecoach filled with typical Western characters of the period, and locating the action on the desert plateaus of the American Southwest.

Basically the problem was solved by using American folk songs as a foundation for the score. Not only were the players assigned themes taken from early American folk songs, but in addition, the stagecoach itself had its own theme, as did the saloons, towns, and other locales.

## AMERICAN FOLK THEMES

In picture production, moods, settings, and character-

izations must be drawn in a very short space of time. By employing the early American folk themes Morros presented to the audience a score immediately recognizable as belonging to the period and location portrayed in the motion picture.

The theme for the stage was taken from "On the Trail to Mexico," and those who saw the picture cannot help but remember the important complement this music played to the beautiful scenes of the stage as it wound its way across the desert.

In characterizing the players, Morros took easily recognizable material and adapted it to the actors and the action. John Wayne, the "bad man" hero, was assigned music entitled "Ten Thousand Cattle," while the "bad girl" heroine, played by Claire Trevor, was musically

portrayed with "She is More to be Pitied than Censored." Lois Platte, the good girl who bore a child during the journey, was musically drawn with "Gentle Annie" and "Jeanie of the Light Brown Hair." The saloon, in one instance, was assigned a picturesquely titled folk song known as "Willie the Weeper."

Morros' choice of easily recognizable folk songs must not be confused with a choice of publicly well-known songs. Had the music been currently well-known it would have been hackneyed; the fact is the material is little known today, but it is so typical of material that actually is well known that the music ap-

peals instantly to the ear as something familiar, typical, and appropriate, and yet it is refreshing and interesting.

## MUSIC FROM THE PEOPLE

Thus for the musical score of down to earth, or real people subjects, the musical director is wise in taking his material from folk lore. Let the music come from the people themselves, and when it does, then it will most effectively portray the time, locale, and characters of the picture.

This does not signify that Morros does not believe in the use of original motion picture music; on the contrary he is best known for the outstanding original scores produced under his direction. Modern pictures demand original scores, written especially for each picture. Scoring is a new form of musical expression that reaches artistic heights in such outstanding productions as "Peter Ibbetson," "The General Died at Dawn," and "Blockade."



Entertainers presented at U.S.C. by Boris Morros



# ROUTINE OF A DIRECTOR

By HARRY WESTGATE, Jr.



Mitchell Leisen

WHEN producer Arthur Hornblow, Jr., and the front office at Paramount decided to film the romantic comedy, "Midnight", their first task was to assign a director. Because of his flair for comedy in his previous picture: "Easy Living," "Big Broadcast," "Swing High, Swing Low," "Artists and Models Abroad," Mitchell Leisen drew the directorial post. Hornblow and Leisen pored over the story, still in synopsis form, and assigned writers to make a treatment. The producer, director, and writers met in conference to exchange ideas. When the writer's first draft of "Midnight" was completed, it went to the "front office" to be analyzed, a tentative budget prepared, and for approval. The producer, director, and writers continued to collaborate on the story and subsequent scripts were written, progressing from the "yellow," "buff," "pink," to the final shooting script known as the "white."

In the meantime the production manager assigned a unit manager to supervise the problems and finances of the story. The director appoints an assistant to represent him in conferences and make a "breakdown" of the script. The cast was selected by the producer and director, a final estimate of the budget made, and the shooting script approved by the Hays Office.

By this time the director has given his approval to sets, wardrobe, properties, make-up, location, etc., and the picture is ready to go into production.

## LEISEN VISUALIZES STORY

During the writing stages, Leisen has visualized the entire story. After production starts, he consults the script only for reference before filming scenes. On the set, Leisen confers with the cameraman regarding camera angles and lighting. When the shooting has ended, Leisen

follows the film to the cutting room and collaborates with the cutter in assembling the picture. Supervising the composition of musical scoring is another of his duties. Then follows the "sneak" previews and final changes, and the picture is ready for release.

In shooting "Midnight" Leisen ran up against some unique problems. A camera crew in France was ordered to take some background shots during a rain storm. Although the French towns people insisted that it would rain in October and November, the camera crew waited impatiently for weeks, greeted every day by bright sunshine. In disgust, they hired a French fire department to wet the street, and then photographed the backgrounds. The results were surprisingly good.

## TAXI! TAXI!

Another time the same camera crew had to photograph the arrival of a train at a station. Before they could film the scenes, the exasperated cameraman had to secure permission from the railway office, the station agent, the dining car, the city, the local fire and police departments, and the Ministry of War. Leisen found there were no modern French taxi cabs in this country. The

aged ones used in previous pictures could not be used because the male lead is a taxi driver. Three modern French cabs were brought from France to make the picture authentic.

Many of the stars have peculiarities which must be considered at all times. In "Midnight", both Claudette Colbert and John Barrymore have profiles that must be photographed from the left side for the best effect.

The burdens on the director's shoulders are appreciably lightened by his highly trained staff. Assistant Director Hal Walker, Leisen's right-hand-man is



Don Ameche and Claudette Colbert  
co-starred in the Paramount comedy "Midnight"

(Continued on Page 30)



S. Sylvan Simon, M.G.M. Director of "Four Girls in White." "The Kid from Texas."

I have often said that I believe the screen audience is just as intelligent as the stage audience. In fact, outside of New York the audience for stage and screen is the same. The same people attend plays and motion pictures. If there is any difference between the two audiences, it is too small to justify producers who say they have to "play down" to the intelligence of the screen public.

The favorite argument of those who underestimate the intelligence of the screen public is that an artistic picture will not make money at the box office. In short, artistic pictures are financial flops.

This idea is wrong, completely wrong. There is no such thing as an "artistic failure." A good picture will always make money. Producers mistrust artistic pictures because the word "artistic" has been used so often as an alibi for a screen flop.

Under the present set up a good picture does not necessarily mean big box office receipts. Distribution, exploitation, and booking

Henry King, 20th Century Fox, Director of "Jesse James." "Stanley and Livingston."

The current trend in motion pictures is to bring the world home to the non-traveler wherever possible, and past experience has proven that it is mutually beneficial. It not only makes a better picture pictorially, but also stimulates everyone working on it to work on ground hallowed by tradition, story or history.

There have been numerous such instances in my own career, and at no time has it failed to thrill me. I was more excited over filming "The Country Doctor" with the Dionne Quintuplets in their home in Callander, Canada, than the natives were at seeing a Hollywood movie company work in their vicinity. It was the same when we filmed "Ramona" a couple of years ago, taking the cast and crew to the very loca-

ART

and the

BOX OFFICE

Three brilliant directors give their opinions about good pictures, good box office, and good audiences.

are just as important at the box office as the picture itself.

Leigh Jason, R.K.O. Director of "Mad Miss Mantou." "The Flying Irishman."

Critics are unfair when they judge all pictures by the standards they set up for an artistic picture. There are at least three widely differing, but overlapping types of audiences; the intelligent audience which enjoys the best artistic pictures; the middle class audience which wants light entertainment; the less intelligent audience which enjoys only western and action pictures.

A picture should be judged only in relation to the audience for which it is made.

It is foolish to criticize the technique of a picture apart from the story because the technique depends on the type of story you have to tell.

Most Hollywood pictures are deliberately aimed at the middle class audience. The box office returns prove these pictures are successful. They may not be good pictures, according to standards by which "Idiots' Delight," for instance, should be judged, but they do achieve their aim.

The industry can't be expected to raise the level of the audience intelligence, although I am sure that the audience today demands better pictures than the audience of twenty years ago.

However, under present censorship regulations, it is almost impossible to make a picture which treats a problem in an adult manner.

tions described in Helen

Hunt Jackson's novel.

It is hardly possible for a person to read "Ramona," for instance, by reading each chapter in the exact spot which it describes. Yet we are able to accomplish a like feat for the movie audience by taking the cast to Italy, locating each spot, each street, each place or river bank and filming our scenes right there. We took our audience to Florence and Livorno. They were spectators, actually, at a drama which unfolded in the Piazza Vecchio, on the banks of the Arno River and on the streets of these famed cities.

There are millions upon millions of Americans who have never seen New York, and perhaps never shall. For them we filmed "One More Spring" right in Central Park. We took them to Des Moines, Iowa, when they saw Will Rogers in "State Fair," and to the California-Nevada border for "Lightnin'". Even such a location as an Army camp, which could easily be reconstructed on a studio lot, was brought realistically to the public when we filmed "23½ Hours Leave" at Fort McArthur.

Many of these instances are of bygone years, but I have merely harked back in my memory to pictures which I have directed. There are such more modern instances as "Gold Is Where You Find It," filmed in the mining country around Weaverville, California; "A Yank At Oxford," which took you right into that ancient and famous university; and next year there will be "Stanley and Livingston" most of which has already been filmed by my colleague, Otto Brower, in Africa along the very jungle trail which Stanley took in his famous search for Dr. Livingstone.

The movies are bringing the wonders of the world, and even its intriguing commonplaces, home to whom-ever has the few cents which is the admission price of a movie theater.



# THE BOX OFFICE MAGNET

**"Give the emotional common denominator its proper place in Hollywood jargon and we will once more hear the mighty music of silver coins clinking at the cashier's window," says Milton Sperling, 20th Century-Fox writer.**

By TED ABRAMS

**W**HEN little Joe Blotz bounces his quarter at the box-office of the theater around the corner, he is doing so for a reason which every person interested in the industry should know.

Why is it that Joe Blotz spends a part of his hard-earned salary for several hours in a theater? Escape, we all know, is his main motive.

Five or six days out of every week, fifty weeks out of every year, Joe sits at his desk scribbling figures. He probably has nightmares of dollar signs jumping over fences. At any rate, the monotony of his labors could very well affect his mind and nervous system. With only the prospect of a desk, with ledgers, a pen, red ink and possibly blue ink, facing him practically every day of the year, Joe must find some outlet for his imprisoned emotions. He goes to his local motion picture theater when his working day is over, and there in the dark, confidential auditorium, he finds the emotional release that he both seeks and requires.

## GABLE AND BLOTZ

If Clark Gable is risking his neck in an effort to get a newsreel shot of a burning ship, we can just picture Joe Blotz' muscles tense. He imagines himself in Gable's shoes. Every victory of Gable's is a victory for Blotz; and likewise, every time Gable gets hit, Blotz rubs his own jaw.

The same is true of the women. When Tyrone Power embraces Loretta Young and kisses her tenderly, all the ladies in the audience sigh. Even the kids imagine themselves galloping at the head of a troop of Texas Rangers, riding to the rescue of a fair heroine whose head-dress is in great danger of going to a red-skinned warrior. Getting up at eight every morning for grammar school classes does bore little Johnny so much that he can hardly wait for dismissal when he can run over to the movie house and fight cannibals for a few hours.

## ESCAPE IS BOX OFFICE

Escape, therefore, is the box-office magnet which draws people of all ages and aspirations to the motion picture theaters. If one is to be actively engaged in the production of pictures, whether from the writer's standpoint or the director's, he must make his approach such that it will offer the public what it seeks, namely, escape.

Unfortunately, in the last few years the film industry has been disturbed by dwindling box-office receipts and theater attendance. This can be attributed to the triteness of Hollywood productions.

Returning to our hero, Joe Blotz, we must not forget that he is a movie fan who has been seeing pictures for years. Sad to relate, when Joe sits down in a theater for a few hours of relaxation today, he invariably is seeing something that he saw a year or two ago and has

been seeing over and over. The characters have different names and faces, but the plot is the same. There have been notable exceptions recently, but even those resort to old tricks and twists which tend to make the story a rehash.

## BLOTZ CAN'T ESCAPE

Joe Blotz no longer finds the escape he seeks if he knows what is going to happen next, or what the ending will be. In fact he even dislikes the background of a majority of films released nowadays. The setting, or the characters, are in most cases of the wealthy class.

The solution to the problem of avoiding triteness, and consequently preventing a decrease in box-office receipts, lies to a great extent in a phrase which should not be difficult to understand—the emotional common denominator.

We all know what a common denominator is, simple arithmetic has taught us that. Apply it to theater audiences and you will find it an important factor in bringing more people into theaters.

Take every movie-goer in the world, figuratively speaking, and keep in mind the diversity of ages, occupations, and interests; arrive at an average, or happy medium—what appeals to the great majority of people most? There you have the emotional common denominator.

## HUMAN PROBLEMS

To illustrate the phrase more graphically, answer this little question: whose problem would Joe Blotz be more interested in, that of John Jones who is out of work, or that of Margot Lottadoe, who is puzzled as to which car to use to drive to the yacht club? Or to further elaborate, the problem of a poor young couple in love and wondering how they can marry, or the problem of a wealthy man who doesn't love his wife? From these problems there is little to ponder over when considering what interests Joe Blotz most.

Most people today are a bit envious of the wealthy minority of the country. They nurse a feeling of injustice towards those who have anything and everything money can buy, while they have to worry about where the money for a pair of shoes is coming from. That feeling is a sample of the emotional common denominator, which shrewd producers have sensed and are now capitalizing on. Witness the success of "Jesse James," which is one of the greatest box-office pictures in the history of the business. This epic deals with a hero who was oppressed by the privileged and was forced to lead an outlaw's life because of an injustice done him by a wealthy, unscrupulous company. Witness, too, the ridicule which is directed at pompous millionaires and snobbish society

(Continued on Page 30)



# CINEMA AND STAGE

**The moving picture is not simply a photographed stage play.  
Fritz Lang shows how the film has developed its own methods.**

By WILLIAM L. SNYDER

**M**OTION pictures will become the art of our century, since they are made for the masses and this is a century during which the masses are coming into their own." This is the contention of Fritz Lang, Hollywood's "master of moods."

After the rise of Hitler to power and the subsequent shake-up in the German film industry, Fritz Lang came to the United States. He was among the leaders of the European directors, having been an important contributor to the expressionistic school with such productions as "Dr. Mabuse," "Destiny," "Siegfried," and "M."

According to Lang, there are many techniques that can be put into play in order to master moods in a cinematic fashion. He has always opposed the use of stage methods in the film, since he believes the film is a great art in its own right, independent of any other medium.

## FREE THEATRE

Lang is not, however, oblivious to the contributions which the theatre has to offer. Above all he envies its lack of censorship and its freedom of expression without which no true art can exist. Many trends that find their roots in dramatic literature soon manifest themselves on the screen. This influence of ideas constitutes the nexus between the theatre and the film. It is from the methods of the stage that the motion picture has divorced itself.

When an audience sees a stage play, it acts as a "peeping tom," looking into a room through a side from which the wall has been removed. The stage audience must use its imagination to delineate characters and objects. The moving camera, on the other hand puts the spectator in the place of the people in the room and concentrates the attention on what is important by means of close-ups.

If, for instance, the audience is to be confronted with a drunken man, the director does not merely photograph what occurs. He puts the audience into the mind of the



Paul Richter as Siegfried  
in the "Nibelungen."

man and by use of double exposure and revolving camera, the audience realizes that the drunk "sees" two objects where there is actually but one, and that the entire room seems to be whirling around. Such an interpretation would be impossible on the stage.

## CINEMATIC SYMBOLISM

Lang also believes in symbolism as a means of cinematic expression. In one of his silent pictures, "Destiny," there is an excellent example of the use of this device. In the film, a young girl seeks out Death to get her sweetheart back from him. Filled with pity for her, Death shows her three

lighted candles, each representing a single life span. We then see the girl with her sweetheart in Morocco, in Venice, and in China. The young man is killed in each of these lives, and each time he dies one of the candles flickers out.

"Rhythm is another important factor in the success of a picture. It is achieved as a result of effectual cutting and intelligent planning at the time the picture is made," says Lang.

A scene which lags and bores the audience can be made alive and interesting by rhythmical cutting and editing. For example, the director wishes to show a man in a hurry to catch a train, rushing here and there through the house gathering up the things he needs. If he is shown merely walking from one room to another, the tempo will lag; but if he is seen rushing into one room, grabbing what he wants, and hurrying out, all in rapid cuts, the desired quick tempo has been created.

## PLEASING RHYTHM

On the other hand, suppose the problem is to show two men hitch-hiking across the country, one starting at New York and the other at Los Angeles. Inasmuch as the spectator has an inherent visual impression of the geographical layout of the country in his mind, it is nec-

(Continued on Page 29)



# films IN CHA

By GLADYS MURPHY GRAHAM

It would be difficult to find a more interesting trail to follow than this one of the motion picture along the ways of Europe in crisis—from the Mediterranean, through the Balkans, into the pressure zone of Central Europe, along the shores of the Baltic, into Russia, and back to the Western countries again. It leads through totalitarian dictatorships; it led, to the end of last September, through a deeply rooted democracy; then to variations on both governmental forms for the growing realization that the uses and character of the motion picture vary with the political structure.

It all brings one back to America with a few generalizations, a number of problems, and some long, long thoughts concerning an instrumentality we are inclined to accept fairly lightly as belonging in the main to the entertainment field. I shall not deal with these, as such, here, but rather go behind them for the data, the findings of which they are the product, turning the spotlight here and there swiftly for a few indicative situations and instances. If each could flash its title or theme initially, the first would be

## THE FATE OF THE INTERNATIONAL IN THE CINEMA FIELD

The setting: Rome and Geneva

The Institute set up by the League of Nations in its early years to be concerned with the international aspects of the motion picture is no more. As is well known, it was mandated to Italy with Rome as the place setting, exactly as the Institute for Intellectual Cooperation was centered at Paris. After Italy left the League many wondered exactly what would be done; the assumption was naturally that the Institute would be turned back to the organization of which it was a part. But the February issue of the Italian *Cinema* still carried the by-line "In technical collaboration with." A phone call was put through, much discussion at the other end, finally an appointment; a long drive to a locked, soldier-guarded gate, innumerable forms to be filled out, an escort, and finally a long, handsome room and a most interesting discussion that buried the old and told of a quite different new structure.

In brief the pattern of thinking and information ran: since Italy was no longer a part of the League, participation in the International Institute as such was impossible; since the League "was no more" the Institute could, in Italian hands, undergo change, which was even then just being completed. The name of the emergent struc-

ture, given in loose translation, was "the organization for the outreaching of Italian culture to the Friends of Italy." The difference was recognized? It was, indeed—in place of the inclusive reach, the Axis, now a triangle with the inclusion of Japan; this had become the basic unit culturally. A highly self-conscious and calculating nationalism had taken the place of the international; a League of Nations function had given way to a Ministry of Propaganda.

The hope was expressed that America would be found among the "friends." That such has not been the case is probably indicated in recent decrees for stricter quotas and the exclusion of certain of the Disney characters. In Italy in February, 1938, I had decided that the two countries were loosely hung together by Shirley Temple, Laurel and Hardy and Mickey Mouse! Pictures of the four were everywhere. Mickey will be most greatly missed. More than once I went to the Casa di Topolino, the tiny, charming motion picture place for very little children, dropped down in a park, to see Mickey lighten and give childish joy to a program that otherwise held only its antithesis. Here is the exact content of a newsreel carefully adapted for small children, as I wrote it down on an afternoon in the Casa di Topolino: Airplanes at March Field; America building many, the air filled with them; bombing in China with no sparing of horror; Japanese children drilling; Nationalist Spain, "Reds" vs. Nationalist comrades, at San Sebastian memorial stones being laid at the bottom of the flag pole to those who had given support—Italy, Germany, Portugal—children giving the fascist salute; Hitler in a speech; Mussolini with uniformed children passing interminably in review and the recurrent caption: "Learn to be always soldiers," "Believe—obey—fight." A before and after Mickey Mouse will no longer relieve all that under the selective cultural relations pattern. It is a tangent to the passing of the international work of the League of Nations in Rome.

Turn the spotlight sharply from the fate of the international in the cinema field.

## AGAIN THE PROBLEM OF NEWS REEL "TRUTH"

The setting: Vienna and Berlin

I saw Goring enter Vienna just thirteen days after it was taken over by Germany; I saw the newsreel version of that event a few weeks later in Berlin. It would be difficult to find a wider gulf than the one separating the



Der Fuhrer



# INGING Europe

two in the real and deep "truth" of a situation. And yet there was no faking of pictures as far as I could discover, save for one possible instance of a blacking out of background. The camera had dutifully recorded all to which it was selectively turned.

It is possible that the pictorial thing that would have approached the kaleidoscopic truth of that day is too much to ask of a film—and yet what a document in history it would have made! The first flash might well have been back to the canvas-decked machines, parading the streets in the preceding days, with their inviting red, black and white "Goring Speaks"—and always, just behind each, the lorry of armed soldiers. It would have shown—that fully revealing newsreel—the holiday announcement and order, the methodical, early morning clearing of all windows above the ground level along the line of march; the soldiers as they moved methodically down the streets collecting small children to form the front line of greeting; especially it would have included, without comment, a close-up of the forever unforgettable face of an Austrian mother as the child she had thrust into a doorway for hiding was found and marched off with the rest. As the people gathered, there was the self-conscious strutting of the new uniformed, new in authority, from behind counters, the cold precision of the imported Black Guards of Prussia, the lines of them, as the guest neared, the cameraman high up on a ladder mounted on a car, and preceding him the man to signal when the cheering was to be done . . . For completeness there would have been the camera catching the turn of the heads to check the fact of attentive soldiers behind as well as in front . . . If any of that was caught, along with the scent of tense eagerness, it was not in the recorded version, only the final moment, the welcoming children, the crowds at salute, the bowing Field Marshal and the caption "All Vienna Joyously Welcomes . . ." If the documentary film that recorded itself in my mind that day could have been taken . . . .

But if it had, the pictures would never have been allowed to leave Vienna, nor would the taker of them. It is the reason behind that which takes us to the third title

**THE MOTION PICTURE AS MOLDER: THE DICTATORIAL PATTERN**  
The Setting: Rome, Konigsberg

The film as propaganda in the hands of masters in that art is a subject in itself worth, and needing, long

study. Here it comes into the spotlight only for a thought-provoking moment. Mussolini's use of it, with all the power of constant repetition, is headed by the ever-present **Chronicle of Empire**. It was in every theater, a continuing story: the things the Empire has brought, fabulous in raw materials; the glory of sacrifice for it; hate of those who opposed, the flash of the motto "Many enemies, much honor;" maps of the ancient Roman Empire, the path to glory the building of the new . . . All that and more, repeated with the steady beat of rain, variations but always on the one theme. It throws light on the recent "spontaneous" cries of "Tunisia, Corsica, Djibouti." There is power in the motion picture—for use.

In Konigsberg, as it happened—and here I am not stressing the large pageant pieces used for swift excitation, as the prolonged, high-tension Nuremberg reenactment on celluloid, but rather the constant, daily film of prescribed ideas to be stamped on the minds of a people—there was, on an April night, a film called "normal things," or things to be taken for granted: people crossing the streets and obeying the signals—that as defense; children playing in the park—police as defense; then the army, the soldiers everywhere—a natural and necessary extension of defense . . . up to the culminating thing, the defense of the Germans Beyond the Borders. More soldiers, maps, showing the areas involved, Austria already taken, the moving line absorbing . . . Here is the film in daily, self-conscious use shaping to political ends. It is typical of a whole group of films for habituation. They set a



Il Duce

pattern in a closed system that brooks no contrary portrayal.

Shift the spotlight swiftly for the antithesis of the film for pressure, of ideas to be stamped. The title can stand

(Continued on Page 15)

**Motion pictures are traced through the turbulent ways of Europe. The political government, totalitarian dictatorships, deeply rooted democracies, variations of both, change the uses and character of the motion picture.**





# NEWS OF THE DAY

By  
E. BAYARD

CABO Verde, Changchow-fu, Schleswig-Holstein, Adrianopolis, Popocatepetl and British Somaliland may be just vague tongue-twisting gazetteer names to the average person, but to the newsreel editor, who orders the cranking of the world's events as they transpire, they are spots that require no atlas consultation when anything important happens. The newsreel editors seldom can tell where the next big story is going to break. Whenever and wherever action is on tap, a visual reporter is not far in the wake. Fire, flood, battle, murder and sudden death drag the cameraman across prairies, steppes, seas, crags and military barricades, absorbed in adventures which may pack more drama in a week than five years spent on a Hollywood set, or ten at a metropolitan city desk.

## THE BLACK BOOK

About a hundred veteran cameramen are on permanent duty on various fronts, for the different newsreel companies. In a dog-eared black notebook on the desk of Walter Breedon, New York assignment editor of the Semi-weekly "News of the Day" is an alphabetical list of communities situated all over the world. Underneath each town listed is the name of one or more persons who may be called on to make a contribution in case of emergency. These newsreel men operate strictly on a free-lance basis; some of them have never sold an inch of film to the New York company but have attracted enough attention, through some past suggestion or speculative contribution, to win a place in the book.

It is surprising, according to Breedon and his aide Morton McConnachie, how many amateur or "semi-pro" cameramen have sent in five hundred, a thousand, or even two thousand feet of film made on professional-size film, with professional equipment. The two chief drawbacks are lack of skill in making the shots, and even greater lack of editorial vision in picking the subjects, which generally have limited, local appeal.

In most cases where a big news story breaks within the borders of the United States, it is considered safer to despatch to the scene one or two staff men from bureaus in New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Washington, San Francisco, Boston, Philadelphia, and New Orleans, rather than trust the free-

lance brigade. A staff was sent down from New York to cover a Florida hurricane, two more were sent surrying up to New England to get shots of flooded areas recently. When a free lance man is engaged to cover a local happening, he is paid \$35 a day, and footage.

## CORRESPONDENTS EVERYWHERE

Staff headquarters in the foreign field are in London, Paris, Rome, Shanghai, Tokyo, Berlin, and Honolulu. Head Newsreel men in these spots often engage their own free lance "correspondents" and make deals with them individually for accepted material. In other cases, cables are flashed directly to isolated spots where an amateur picture-gatherer has waited, perhaps for years, for some twist of events to give him a chance to show what he can do.

It generally takes at least five hours after a newsreel negative reaches the home base before it can be developed, edited and comment added, preparatory to rushing it to theaters. The fastest time on record was at Coolidge's inauguration when the film was developed on a train en route from Washington D. C. to New York. Only great disasters or other vitally important happenings are given "special release" of this sort. The ordinary footage goes into reels which are released twice a week. Newsreel men are taught to anticipate events before they happen, and to be ready for them. Every arrival of the Hindenburg was covered by a staff of experienced New

(Continued on Page 31)



Reconstructed newsreel shot  
from "Too Hot to Handle."



(Continued from Page 1)

## NEW DEMANDS FROM EDUCATION

The awakening of the public to the new situation at home and abroad and the assertion of motion pictures as a powerful factor in the mental household of the nation imperatively demand that educators and civic leaders assume an active and vigilant interest in the potentialities of motion pictures as a medium of formal and informal education. A systematic and exhaustive research into the possible role of motion pictures in the learning process and in the communication of knowledge and emotional attitude should be made. More organized and nation-wide practical measures for the effective utilization of motion pictures should be taken.

An urgent task is being imposed on our educational institutions, that of bringing up the new leaders who will be versed in the use of such potent instruments of mental and social control as the radio and motion pictures.

The incentive for an assumption of such responsibility has been given recently by some producers who expressed a desire to collaborate with universities in selecting, from their graduate students, special talents, and in training these students as future creative workers of the industry.

## ENTERTAINMENT AND EDUCATION

The educational value of commercial motion pictures has often been praised by studios, belittled by educators. In Illinois, Elsie Clahan, State Chairman Motion Pictures, Illinois Federation of Women's Clubs, carried out a survey to determine which pictures proved useful in the classroom.

These questions were asked:

"What five pictures of last year, September to September, were most popular, stimulated interest, and gave the best opportunity for class discussion from the following standpoints:

1. Human relationships.
2. Artistic.
3. Literary, history, and biography?

List with each picture the contributing elements, citing the particular scenes which gave the opportunity for the study.

What type of pictures should be most desirable for future production?

What types should be most avoided?"

The replies revealed that many teachers do not recommend films because as one instructor said, "Mothers even complain about certain sequences in films like 'The Covered Wagon' and 'Babes in the Woods.' They objected to a movie of Rip Van Winkle because Rip was a drunkard."

Pictures like "The Adventures of Robin Hood," the Hardy family series, "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs," "Marie Antoinette," and "The Adventures of Tom Sawyer," were popular with high school and junior high school students.

In general, the report revealed there is no great organized effort to discuss commercial entertainment pictures in schools.

(Continued from Page 13)

## THE COURAGE AND THE EXCITEMENT OF IDEAS IN MOTION PICTURE PRODUCTION

The Setting: Prague and London

It was snowing on the April morning when the car came for the trip to the AB studios just out of Prague. The old Bohemian city was completely beautiful in the midst of the storm, and again it was the documentary-that-might-have-been that unrolled—the little opera house with its motto "A Nation for Itself" caught up in the history of a period in the subjugation of a people; the well housed German university; the Parliament buildings out of which the Sudetic representatives had walked only the day before (in the front of the legislative hall the motto "Truth Conquers"); the color of the marketplace and, through it all, the quiet, natural movement of a people, calmly at the work of the day, April 9th, Greater Empire Day just across the half-surrounding boundary line now blotted out . . . No wonder the initial talk at the studio centered around the conception "What a documentary film the real life of the city would make this history-held morning!" And immediately it was caught up: Could a picture portray the reality that was the capital city of a democracy that day. Perhaps it was the film that would have been if the turn of history had not closed the door to it . . .

The production plant was on a small scale compared with many of our own, but scientific, excellent in each detail and in the productions that have crossed the screen in the little projection room. They were largely for the country itself, simple, direct, yet a number of the pictures could so well have come to America to be enjoyed and valued here. Interestingly there was then in Prague a group from the Trade Agreements Division of the American State Department, discussing exactly that potentiality.

I was initiated into much of interest that day, but the studios themselves, their sets and equipment, were not the things that gave the distinctive significance, rather the spirit that was there. A young producer caught it up with "There is little money, but there is **the courage of ideas.**" The courage of ideas! It was intangibly inherent in the work done. There was a quality that made me say "Somehow it is always about democracy" and the thoughtful response "It is not so much about it, it is democracy."

Much has been said and written concerning the power of the motion picture today: I had seen it with foreboding as a tool of single-minded, ruthless pressure; I had seen it thoughtlessly used as an instrument of profit alone; I left the Prague studios with a realization that here was something different from either—free private enterprise eagerly conscious of both itself and its country. A nation's motion picture industry of its own will a part of a whole that was a democratic nation. It was worth going rather far to see.

For the excitement of ideas—England. You would hardly guess it from the British pictures seen in the show places. In fact there wasn't too many to be seen with the major, well-filled theaters carrying mainly American films. "We all always go to the American pictures," the little hairdresser told me. "They've got **everything!**"

"Films in Changing Europe" will be concluded in the next issue of Cinema Progress.





# Proo RI

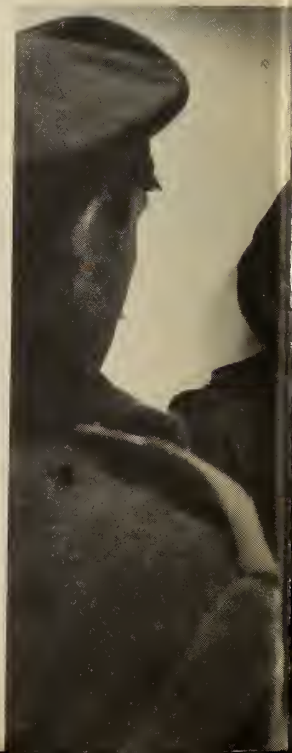


1. "ALEXANDER NEVSKY."

2. "UNION PACIFIC."

3. JAMES CAGNEY AND  
GEORGE RAFT IN "EACH  
DAWN I DIE."

4. EVELYN KEYES AND VIVIEN  
LEIGH IN "GONE WITH THE  
WIND."





# Auction VIEWS



- 5. CLARK GABLE IN "GONE WITH THE WIND."
- 6. ISA MIRANDA IN "HOTEL IMPERIAL."
- 7. GALE PAGE, JEFFREY LYNN, AND GERALDINE FITZGERALD IN "GIVE ME A CHILD."
- 8. "BEAU GESTE."
- 9. "MAN OF CONQUEST."





# A Miracle of Color

**Cinema Progress scoops the technical journals of the United States by carrying the FIRST account of a revolutionary development in color films.**

By RUDOLF ARNHEIM

WHEN I looked at the film sample which the two Italian inventors showed me I saw on it no colours at all and not even a black-and-white image. But when they put it in the projection apparatus, there appeared on the screen colours of a rare naturalness, harmony and beauty. How was this miracle achieved?

I looked inquisitively into the apparatus and saw what in Fig. 1 is schematically represented. As soon as the projection light (A) had crossed the film (B) it was split in thirty or fifty different beams. These beams after having passed the normal lens (C) hit the filter (D) on different points. It was a circular filter but instead of being horizontally banded, as I remembered from the filters of the lenticular colour processes, it consisted of six coloured sectors: two were red (F), two were green (G) and two were blue (H). Some of the light beams crossed the red parts of the filter and produced red spots on the screen (E); others crossed the green parts and produced green, and so on. Manifestly there was something in the film which deflected the light in such a way as to direct it to the different filter sectors. But for producing a coloured image it was necessary of course to deflect the light in every point of the frame in a particular way: if, e.g., in the centre of the screen there was to be the image of a tomato, it is quite plain that the projection light crossing the centre of the frame had to be directed to the red sectors of the filters. How could this difficult task be done by a film completely transparent and blank?

## COLOURS MIXED IN THE EYE

On every film strip produced by a "subtractive" system, e.g. by Technicolor, you see coloured frames. They

are very little but it is not so astonishing that if they are enlarged by the lens, they will produce the screen image. A Technicolor or Kodachrome frame consists, substantially, of three layers, each of which corresponds to one of three fundamental colours. On the contrary, in an "additive" frame the three partial images are found side

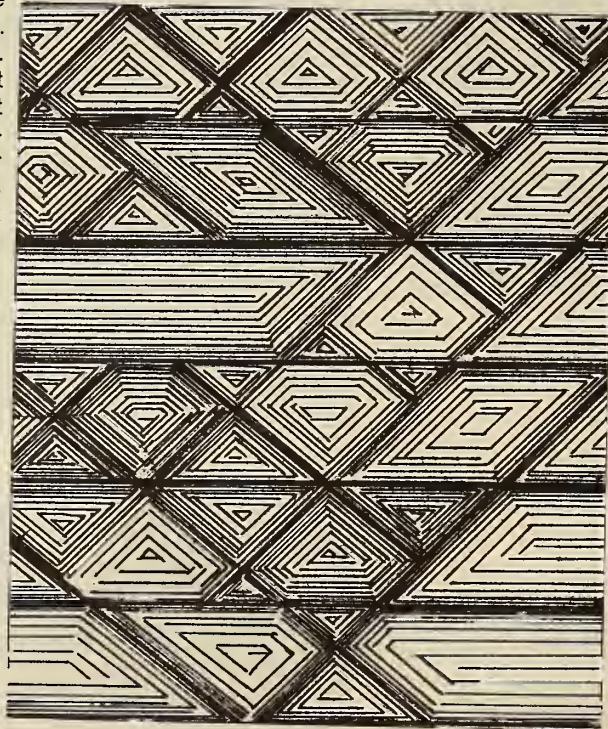


Figure 2

by side in a single plane. The principal group of the additive systems dates from Louis Lumiere's "autochrome" plate (1904). This system remembers the method of the French "pointillist" painters who obtained a physiological colour mixing in the eye of the spectator by placing side by side minute spots of pure elementary colours. Lumiere's plate is covered with a layer of innumerable red, green and blue starch-grains which serve as many very small transparent filters; the black-and-white image, on the other side of the plate, has the function of a light-sluice: it directs the production of the colour image by covering or uncovering in every point of the plate the differently coloured little filters in accordance with the colour or colour mixture to be obtained in that point.

## COLOUR IN STARCH GRAINS

Rodolphe Berthon's invention of the lenticular film (1909) presents a second and just as ingenious step in the evolution of additive colour photography. For the coloured starch-grains (unsuitable for motion picture purposes) it substitutes a series of microscopic cylindrical lenses impressed into the support side of the film. In this system, which is industrially developed in America as the Kodacolor Process, the film is colourless: the little lenses deflect the light as to cross a banded three-colour filter fitted in front of the projection lens. (The reverse proceeding takes place during the shooting). The black-and-white



image in the emulsion takes care that the light rays hit the cylindrical lenses in such a way as to be deflected in the desirable direction.

### COLOUR IN PYRAMIDS

The recent invention of a new additive colour system by two Italians, the engineer and well-known mountain-climber Domenico Rudatis of Venice and the Lombard painter Carlo Bocca, seems very important because it is a logical continuation of the course pursued by the two Frenchmen. Whereas Berthon had abolished the colour, the new system removes even the black-and-white image, and in fact this film, as I mentioned above, seems completely transparent. Instead of the cylindrical lenses, the Bocca-Rudatis film contains a relief of microscopic pyramids, which however are not mechanically impressed and therefore not identical. They are obtained by a photographic process. The illustration Fig. 2 may give an idea of what I saw when the inventors showed me their apparently black film under the microscope. The drawing corresponds to about the thousandth part of a square millimetre of the film.

In this new "stereotypical" system, as it is called, the coloured image is produced by the light-refracting side-faces of the little pyramids. In fact every facet deflects the light rays in the direction required for colour at that point of the image. Thus the visual qualities of the image are translated into plastic qualities, and it is plain that in this way the photographic black-and-white image becomes superfluous.

### AMAZING NEW SYSTEM

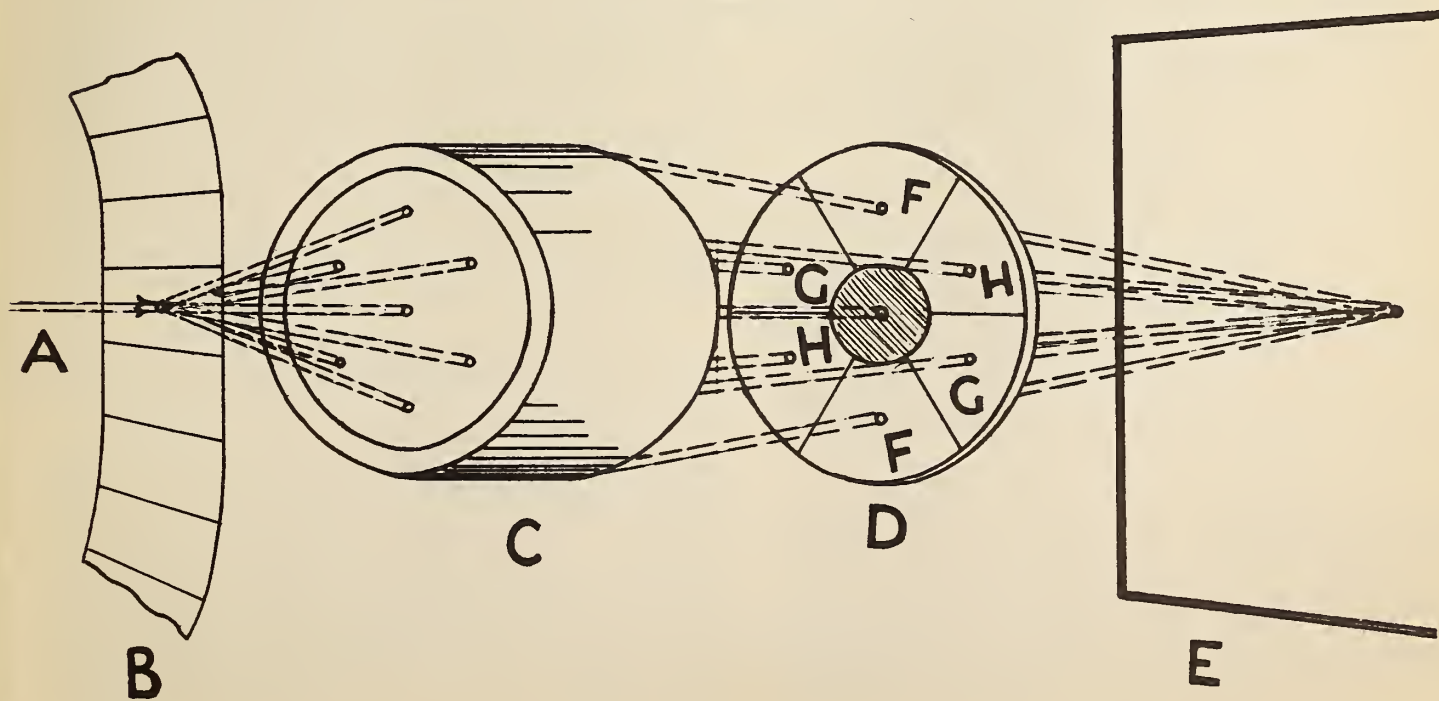
Up to this moment, the new system is used not for shooting but only for obtaining colour prints. It proceeds from a positive colour image produced with any system whatever, from which in the optical printer a print is made through an inserted striped screen. This photographic image is chemically transformed into the pyramid relief

and from this moment the process is free from photographic elements: in fact this first print serves as a mould from which further copies are obtained by mechanic pressing exactly as it is used in making copies of records. These prints can be made not only with celluloid but with any transparent and flexible material as e.g. with cellophane, and of course without any emulsion coating. In my presence the inventors produced a print ready for projection within two minutes and by full light simply by pressing one film strip on another. No dark room and no developing baths are needed.

The Bocca-Rudatis stereotypical system seems to me not only very ingenious from a scientific point of view but also of the utmost practical importance. As there is no light-absorbing black-and-white image in the film, the screen image is very bright, and no reinforcement of the light source is needed. The relief reseau is photographically and not mechanically produced and therefore it is incredibly minute: whereas Berthon's lenticular film contains about 30 lenses per one millimeter of the film width, on the stereotypical film there are at least 50,000 refracting facets per square millimeter. Therefore the screen image is very detailed and soft. Finally, the new system allows the motion picture director a very far extending modification of the original colours. During the production of the mould every colour can be completely and independently changed as to shade, brightness and saturation. This is essential as it renders the colour reproduction less mechanical and gives the artist a certain power to influence the mood and expression of the image and to create a harmonious assimilation between adjacent scenes.

The satisfactory results obtained in the laboratory experiments with the stereotypical system make me believe that the victory of the subtractive colour processes such as Technicolor is perhaps not so definite, and that the additive methods, though up to now not too successful, may offer us an agreeable surprise for the future.

Figure 1





# T H E N E W

**Terry Ramsaye, Editor of Motion Picture Herald, Rockefeller Center,  
New York City, N. Y.:**

"Patient observation, sometimes impatient observation, and some thumbing of history tend to convince me that there are some developing phenomena about which no one can purposefully and intentionally do anything. Among them I would include climate, the so-called human race and its popular arts, including the motion picture. The movement and impetus, if there is one, represented here is one of the myriad components represented in the sum total of public taste and audience demand. If this component develops and presents enough buying power, it will tend to get what it seeks in the way of screen merchandise. Personally, I am not inclined to think there is important merit in a notion making pictures for persons who think, because the process is rather costly and totally unnecessary for those who can manage the complex intellectualizations of the art of reading. It would probably be just as well to leave pageantry, dance and the various ritual and literal dramatic processes for the recreation of events to those who really can receive communication in no other way. In other words, I have no sympathy with the cook who would hamburger a porterhouse, or the reverse."

**Germaine Dulac, Convener of the Cinematograph Committee of the  
International Council of Women, Paris:**

The public, and this holds true in every country, is more conscious of cinematographic language and drama and more refined in its choice of films today than it has been during the last few years.

Invariably, if a select few get together and detach themselves from the masses, the latter, entirely ignorant, passes its entire heavy load onto the production.

The action of this smaller group does not manifest itself in an effective enough form and does not counter-balance the retarding effect of less enlightened public which continues to impose its taste.

Thus, the films, in order to achieve financial success must always maintain an honest artistic and intellectual average, at a more or less halfway mark.

The select few have their preferences, but also begrudgingly accept work which they do not particularly like. The masses mark their preferences, but never accept productions which they do not understand.

Between "accepting" and "not accepting," this is the cause of all the hindrance which surrounds cinematographic creations and the artistic spirit. Instead of submitting, the select group must educate.

The understanding public often scorns places where the less understanding public gathers. This is wrong. The efforts of those who want a higher type cinema should be found there.

We believe in this peaceful and direct crusade, but in order to attain this, it is necessary to create groups who "do not accept" and who are imbued enough with the cinematographic cause to devote themselves to it. Instead of being a silent spectator, be an active spectator.

We must put into play written words, unified action, and special projections, all supported by clever publicity. The effort is worthy of a trial.

The instruction of cinema in schools and universities is the only means of educating the visual and auditory sense of the young generation if the proceeding plan must be applied to those less easily educated. The cinema is an art and must be considered as such in the schools and universities. Instruction in the art and technique of motion pictures is as fully justified for example as the instruction of literature.

And yet must it be feared that the ignorant professors would falsify this instruction? The cineaste does not want this. Instruction in the art of the cinema must be done by professionals only.

Shouldn't we advocate for the present generation of adults attractive evening courses replacing the instruction they were not able to receive when they were young?

**Pablo Martinez del Rio, Dean of the Summer School, National University of Mexico:**

"I do believe that a tremendous use could be made of the cinema in connection with the teaching of history. I personally make copious use of slides in all my history courses and surely moving pictures ought to be infinitely more effective."

**N. D. Golden, Chief, Motion Picture Division, Dept. of Commerce  
Washington, D. C.:**

"In reply to the questions which you ask, it is my opinion that motion picture audiences today are choosing their pictures and seeking the greatest amount of entertainment for the monies that they are expending. In the old silent film days, and this also applies to the early days of sound, movie-goers paid very little attention to the contents or story value of the picture. Today they are depending more widely upon criticisms of their local newspaper dramatic critic. I believe that the depression was responsible more than any one factor in making movie patrons more conscious of the entertainment they desire to see. Limitation of income was one of the factors that led to the movie-goers' desire to secure the greatest amount of entertainment out of his investment in same.

"With reference to the teaching of motion pictures in public schools and universities, this field has developed greatly in the past few years and unquestionably will have wider expansion as school systems secure the necessary budgets for equipping their auditoriums with equipment, and a more increased assurance of suitable pictures with definite educational value. Surveys have already proven that the use of the motion picture as an educational medium has far surpassed the use of the textbooks. I believe the motion picture industry has realized the necessity of training young blood to take the place of oldtimers in the motion picture industry. Studios in Hollywood are proving this by encouraging motion picture classes in some of the large universities throughout the country."



# IMPETUS

**Roy E. Robinson, Principal, Liberty School, Highland Park, Michigan:**

"Cinema appreciation should be taught in schools. This should cover not only what constitutes a good picture, but how pictures are made, social implications of screen presentations, auditory background effects, relation between screen situations and reality, propaganda in pictures, effects of organized pressure groups on picture, censorship v.s. **self-control**, problems of motion picture distribution, etc. It is noteworthy that in a field which occupies more of the average student's time than any other single commercial source of amusement except radio we do little or nothing about creating an understanding of it on the pupil's part."

**Leon J. Bamberger, Sales Promotion Manager, RKO Pictures, New York:**

"Replying to your letter of November 23, I may say that our company has been very much interested in the development of the teaching of photoplay appreciation in public schools and universities since this movement was first started several years ago by the National Council of Teachers of English.

"While we believe that the place to learn to make motion pictures is in a motion picture studio, we feel that a very fine ground work can be laid in the school through the study of both the scenarios and completed pictures.

"We think it is a recognized fact that the public today shops for its pictures instead of accepting merely any film, and this hardly requires any further comment."

**Frederic M. Thrasher, Professor of Education, New York University:**

"I believe the teaching of the cinema in public schools and universities is tremendously important not only from the standpoint of developing a public taste which will result in better box office and better pictures, but also from the standpoint of the educator who wishes to utilize interest in the motion picture in his work.

"It seems to me that your idea of training young people with new points of view, new enthusiasm and new talents for the motion picture industry is an excellent one. The time is probably more nearly ripe now than ever before for moves of this sort. I am, therefore, in hearty accord with the sentiment and belief you have expressed in your editorial on 'The New Impetus'."

**Campton Bell, President, Denver Motion Picture Council, University of Denver:**

"I have just read your editorial entitled 'The New Impetus' and I heartily agree with your criticism of the motion picture industry. The inferior quality of films released during the past six months makes the problem take on an added significance at this time, it seems to me. In my classes in Motion Picture Council, I find that movie-goers are passing from the stage of fans to the critic level. No longer deceived by colorful advertising they are beginning to shop for good films, and undoubtedly this factor will have some reaction in the industry within the near future."

**James A. Brill, Director of Production, Epri Classroom Films, Long Island City, N. Y.:**

Teaching of Cinema in public schools and universities. "This should be encouraged from the appreciational side in order to develop the trend for shopping mentioned above. It should include the study of techniques and should encourage the students to be critical of story and story handling. Such courses should be aided in an informational way, (particularly through source material) by the producers, but should be entirely free from propaganda. Wherever sufficient resources are available, these courses should include actual film making, both as a talent developer and as a device to heighten appreciation. Unfortunately, at the present time, the expense involved in such ventures prohibits their development in most schools."

**William C. Park, Mount Vernon, N. Y.:**

"This note is but half of my greeting. The rest is in Paramount News No. 42 (Review of the year 1938) which is a documentary film dedicated to the youth of America. I do want you, and all others sincerely devoted to the screen, to see this picture—primarily as Americans, secondarily as film people. I am not going to tell you what it's about. I wish merely to assure you that this all came from my heart."

**J. W. Studebaker, Commissioner, U. S. Dept. of Interior, Office of Education, Washington, D. C.:**

"An answer to your last letter has been delayed in part because I have been out of the city off and on. I read your editorial 'The New Impetus' with a great deal of interest. I am glad to know that you feel a new impetus is being created. I hope it will not only be new, but that it will be truly impetuous."

**George J. Cox, Chairman of the Art Department, University of Calif.:**

"I believe that the audience you mention is growing, and the 'shoppers' represent the intelligent minority who, in any sound society, give direction to educational forces. Unfortunately their growth scarcely keeps pace with the religious, political and commercial censorships which both overtly and covertly hamstring the efforts of the more socially responsible producers—for I take it that you look to the Cinema for a reasonable quota of thought provoking food."

**The New Impetus, Mark Owen's editorial in the last issue of Cinema Progress, excited world-wide comment and controversy.**



# Design

# FOR CINEMA

**Erno Metzner, associate of the great German director G. W. Pabst, begins work in Hollywood.**

If there is anyone who can lay claim to being the foremost European screen designer, it is Erno Metzner, who is now associated with Cedric Gibbons in Metro-Goldwyn Mayer's art department after a fruitful sixteen year career in European studios.

Hungarian by birth, Metzner has designed notable motion pictures in Berlin, Vienna, Paris and England. His chief claim to fame, however, rests upon his lengthy affiliation with George William Pabst, the eminent German director, now an exile in France. Metzner collaborated with Pabst on such outstanding pictures as "Kameradschaft," "Secrets of the Soul," "Diary of a Lost Girl," "The White Hell of Pitz Palu," "Comrades of 1918," and "Atlantis," pictures as memorable for their striking design as for their dramatic content.

## MODEST METZNER

To meet Metzner in Hollywood today, is to meet a man at once modest and slightly overwhelmed by the enormity and complex organization of the West coast studios. He has been in this country for almost a year, and is first becoming acclimated to his new surroundings and the intricate method of procedure of Hollywood's art departments.

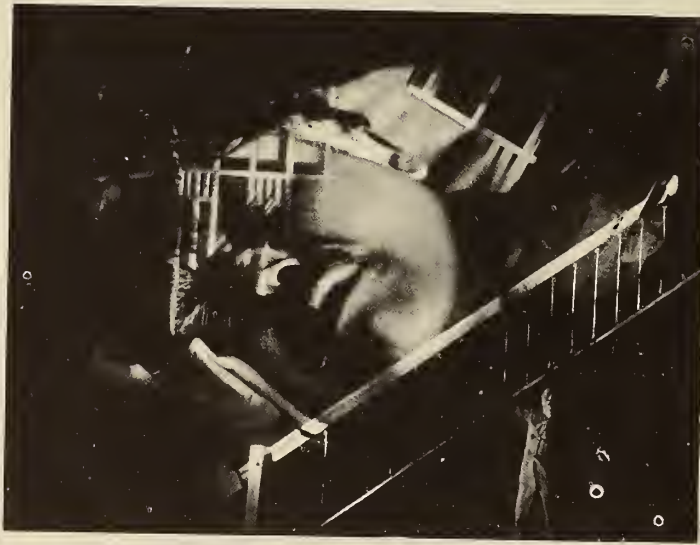
There is no essential difference, in his opinion, between the function of the designer in the Ufa studios of Berlin, in 1921, and the Hollywood studios of today, beyond a certain refinement. The designer still serves the same purpose: to create backgrounds for a motion picture exterior or interior with the camera viewpoint always firmly in mind. The worth of a setting is not determined by its beauty and decorativeness alone, but is also by the simple, utilitarian standard of whether it will photograph equally well from the required distance and camera angles. The most beautiful setting in real life will frequently be ineffective for screen purposes, while the most striking background on the screen is quite un-

impressive when seen in reality on the studio set.

## HOLLYWOOD ORGANIZATION

The chief difference between Hollywood and European designing, apart from Hollywood's superior resources, is one of organization. In Europe the art designer has a more personal and complete control of all the facets of his department and usually supervises all the work personally. He must be a combination architect and artist. He originates the ideas for the sets, makes

sketches (Metzner makes as many as 50 for a picture), confers with the carpenters and cameraman, and even devises the interior decoration. In Hollywood, however, these various functions are relegated to separate people. The head of the art department assigns a unit art director to each picture, and sometimes two or more on a more ambitious production. The unit art director confers with his chief on the general design for the film and then goes about executing these ideas. Under the unit director's supervision, the precise designs for each set are sketched out by an artist, then developed into de-

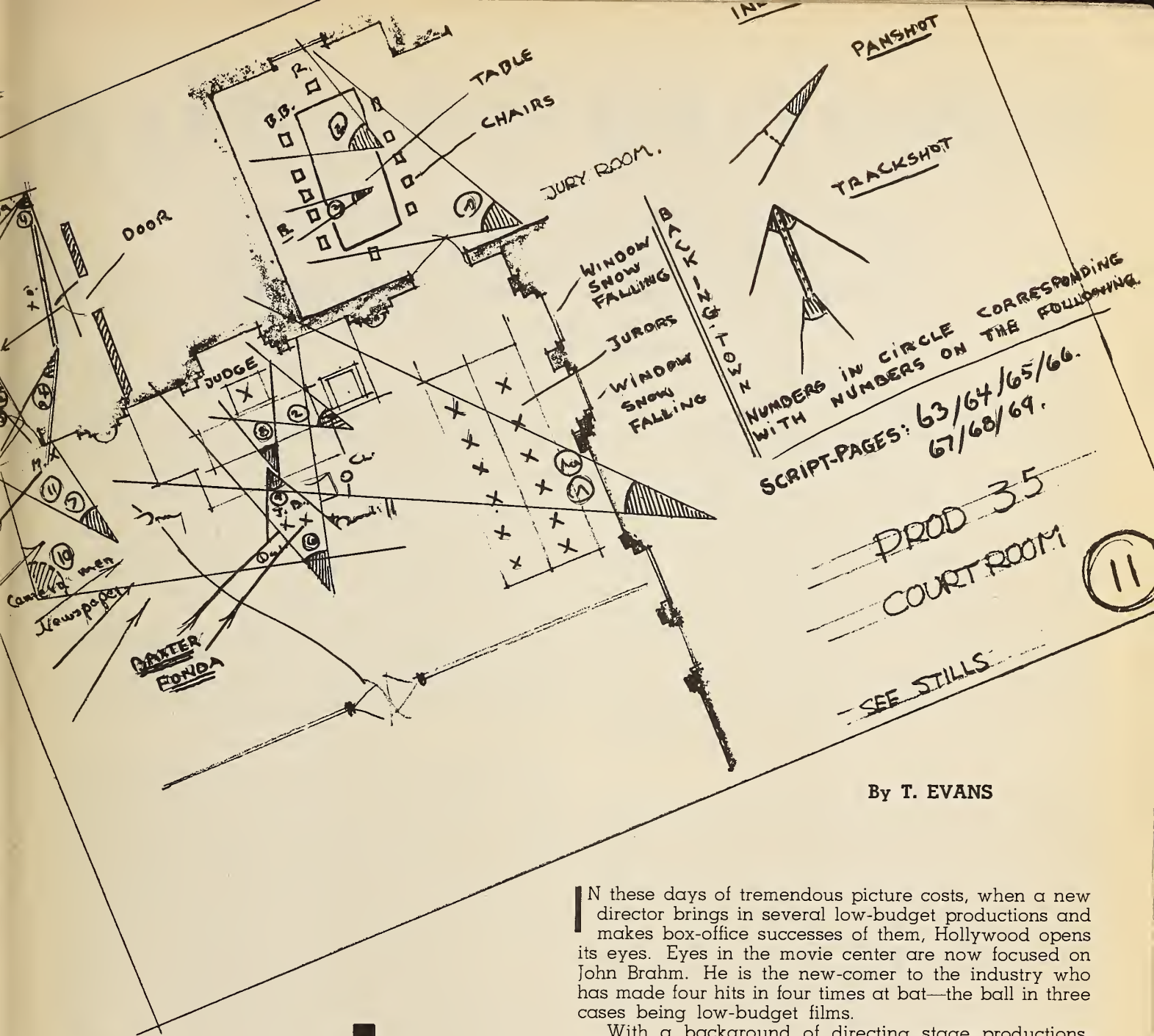


"Secrets of the Soul."

tailed plans by an architect and the blueprints given to the construction department. Finally, after the set has been constructed, the interior decorator gives it the finishing touches of tables, chairs, lamps, curtains, etc.

Motion picture sets must be fundamentally simple and easily assembled or taken apart. The usual room that is seen on the screen has at the most three walls and no ceiling in order to facilitate the lighting. If camera angle is desired showing the fourth wall of the room, the wall is temporarily put up and then as quickly removed. The chief materials used in the construction of sets are wood and plaster and the results obtained are so realistic that it is sometimes difficult to realize that the sets are not the

(Continued on Page 32)



By T. EVANS

# A Director's BLUEPRINT

IN these days of tremendous picture costs, when a new director brings in several low-budget productions and makes box-office successes of them, Hollywood opens its eyes. Eyes in the movie center are now focused on John Brahm. He is the new-comer to the industry who has made four hits in four times at bat—the ball in three cases being low-budget films.

With a background of directing stage productions, Brahm was called to direct "Broken Blossoms" at the Twickenham, England, studios. His wife, Dolly Haas, played the leading role. Harry Cohen, president of Columbia Pictures, was in Europe at the time and happened to see the picture. He was very much impressed by the acting of Miss Haas and the directing technique of Brahm. As a result, both were invited to the Columbia studios in Hollywood.

Brahm's first American picture was a low-cost production, entitled "Counsel for Crime." The film showed some excellent touches of direction which netted the studio more than was expected at the box-office.

The front-office thought this first American attempt of Brahm's a case of beginner's luck, so he was given a second program picture, "Penitentiary." This, too, was successful and the front-office began to take notice.

## "LET US LIVE"

To discover if Bham's talents were limited only to

(Continued on Page 28)



# DIRECTING CHILDREN

**Many school children have produced their own plays, few their own motion pictures. Miss Kassapian, a student at U. S. C., describes an interesting experiment.**

By SERENE KASSAPIAN

**Y**OUTH took a hand at the John Muir Junior High School when it gained the cooperation of the faculty and Principal this year in presenting a motion picture instead of the inevitable annual senior play. I was called upon to write a scenario. Here was a problem—what type of story would and could be appropriate as well as entertaining. My desire was to get away from the documentary and educational film and give the kids a story that would be "fun!" I did not go far for a story. First of all John Muir has a "Youth Day" at which time activities are run solely by the student body. So I realized possibilities of using this youth day for a floor plan and building the situations on it—that is, creating characters, giving them leisure time activities and then following through to see how great an effect it would have on their future vocations and hobbies. A very simple plot was woven. The characters in the "Masquers Club" were bait. I was extremely fortunate in finding a class full of talent and personalities which would make fascinating cinema.

After developing a skeleton plot, I read it to the class and explained to them the Hollywood procedure of breaking down the scenario into sequences and each sequence into details, etc. They swallowed this up eagerly and within a few days I found them talking "shop." Each suggestion was discussed before the class—showing possibilities of the scene or criticizing camera-angles, limited sets, etc.

The rest of the production was pretty much as a stage play. Appointing of wardrobe chairman, "props" manager, make-up, etc. The new additions were a time-keeper, script girl, and assistant cameraman and assistant director.

## EVERYONE WORKS

Not to enlarge on too much detail which would curtail numerous pleasant episodes and organization, I would like to mention that our whole procedure has been that of using the class as a production "Unit." Everybody has been working; everybody is important; and everybody is cooperating. Our script girl is constantly correcting us on such minute details and calling our attention to the fact that "Butch had on striped socks yesterday." Ram Bagai, who is doing the cinematography, constantly has some boys following him with exposure meters, tape measures and what-not. Each student has his costume in his locker, and we're on location every morning from 9:45-10:45 and all of Friday afternoons. The actual dramatic period is used whereby classes are not interrupted. We have divided our story into two scenes. We were careful of course, to limit our story and locale to the school grounds with only one construction set off campus. Since we have an hour a

day we have impressed them with the timing of scenes, and generally keep a few steps ahead of ourselves by shooting scenes which have been rehearsed and timed.

This much may sound a great deal like any other adventure of similar dealings with students and productions. However, I dare say that at this point the similarity ends. When projecting the "rushes," I had never imagined such keen enthusiasm could be aroused, nor so much benefit could be derived. The main purposes in my mind for having dramatics in the curriculum is to wipe out all traces of shyness, to teach the children to face an audience without being self-conscious, and at its worst or least dramatics should develop poise, graceful and natural gesticulation and a clean-cut speech. True, I had read these words somewhere and was a solemn believer in them, but if such be the case, where but on the screen can these best be pointed out and proven?

## THE CAMERA EYE

First of all the camera is a wizard at picking up and mocking and exaggerating grossly, affectations, mannerisms, and clumsy gestures. It does worse than disgrace the round-shoulders or knockknees of the student, and completely ignores the one who insists on facing away from it. And the students were the first to notice these.

We actually discussed the values of motion pictures in the schools, and it was amazing to note that the students were unanimously in favor of pictures. We showed their film to them reel by reel (uncut) explaining how the bad parts could be cut or eliminated, and they were relieved to find that some over-exposed shots could very easily be taken over. And as far as the value of good acting and pantomime is concerned, there is no better way of showing to them their actions as others see them.

If the public schools were more concerned in bettering the teaching of dramatics they could easily adopt the motion picture. In the long run production would be less. After months of excruciating labor they would have a perfect production to be shown over and over for entertainment, study, criticism, and improvement. The only difference would be that instead of talking in back-drops, aprons, etc., they would talk (as our "Masquers" are doing) in "Dissolve re-takes, fade-outs, montage and—CUT!"

## COLLEGIATE CINEMA

In an effort to establish values and standards in films approaching those already realized in the legitimate stage and other allied arts, Smith College plans and exhibits its own weekly programs. Such outstanding films as "The Pearls and the Crown," "The Eternal Mask," "Baltic Deputy" are shown in the college's auditorium.



# THE DANCE FILM

by Mary Jane Hungerford, Dance Instructor of U.S.C., and Donald William Duke, student in the U.S.C. Department of Cinematography.

**D**URING the fall semester of 1938, an ambitious student in the Cinematography Department of the University of Southern California, and the Dance Instructor at that same institution commenced the conversations which led to the planning and eventual filming of the first dance appreciation film. For others similarly lured by this glittering goal, these two adventurers have recorded some of the specific problems encountered during the unfolding of this fascinating, but often difficult production.

First, there was the matter of equipment. We were limited in certain ways, but rather fortunately situated generally. The Cinematography Department permitted the use of its Bell and Howell 70DA camera with a Cooke F 1.5 lens. Besides this, we had an Eastman with an F 1.9 lens and a Victor 5 with a Wollensak F 1.5 lens, for which we substituted a Cooke F 1.8 after using it a short time.

## LIGHTING DIFFICULT

Lighting was one of our greatest problems and it would have been difficult to obtain satisfactory control of the lighting with less equipment than we used. The Cinematography Department assisted again with ten No. 2 photoflood reflectors. We used 16 No. 2 photofloods (1500 watt output each) in one shooting. In addition, the University Newsreel provided No. 4 photoflood reflectors, (the output of each 3000 watts). These give more concentrated light than regular stage floods, of which we used four (with No. 4 photoflood bulbs in them), with mobile bases. For shooting the hundred and fifty feet of colored film, we found it necessary to add even more lighting equipment. Diffusers for all the photofloods, very fine organdy screen in circular frames, were available and used for certain effects. Besides all this, regular stage borders and footlights were used for most of the filming, plus baby spots for special effects.

Although financial limitations forced us to use 16 millimeter film, there are several factors which readily persuade one of the superiority of the 35 millimeter width. First and foremost, the cynex test for density of printing is not available for the narrower film, consequently an even density throughout cannot be assured. Furthermore, processing laboratories on the west coast have little respect for anything but the professional widths of film which constitute the bulk of their trade. Finally, the 35 millimeter camera commands a broader range of shooting adaptation and the reprints can be readily reduced to 16 millimeter for distribution to schools and to other purchasers using only that width.

A neutral velour backdrop helps a great deal in absorbing rather than reflecting light, thus cutting the number of shadows. Space is a vital factor, not only floor space, so that the camera can be distant enough to include a good-sized group in action, but also height for maximum control of lights and camera angles. Platforms are needed for angle shots. Ideally, dressing rooms with showers should be available because the falls and floor work in Modern Dance require bathing the feet and hands and retouching the make-up after a rehearsal and before final shooting.

Probably, no one item is more important to the final product than cutting. If good, it can camouflage a multitude of evils. If poor, it can ruin the best photography and direction. Here the superiority of using negative-positive film is evident, in permitting cutting latitude. Some rules which we found apply in our film in cutting and titling are: 1. cut on action not on a pause, to insure correct timing and avoid breaking the rhythm; 2. changing the angle on each cut will make it less conspicuous; 3. never cut from one background to another or from group to soloist or vice-versa; 4. simple titles are most effective; 5. action covered by a title should last more than twice as long as the reading time for the title.

Superimposed titles are permissible when it is necessary to point out what is going on, and how to look at it intelligently. All material for superimposures should be shot on separate reels. The action should continue longer after the title fades than the length of time it is visible. In filming action which is to carry a superimposure, the lower part of the frame should be gauzed-off. By that, we mean that instead of making it completely black, use a thin gauze in the matte box to dim the light and darken the lower quarter so that white lettering will show up well.

## PLANNING IMPORTANT

Probably no one factor is more responsible for success or failure than the amount and quality of the planning which precedes the work. It is wise to make as accurate a script as possible first, then test the lighting and angles by snapping a quantity of stills before typing the final shooting script. This final script, a copy of which should be in the hands of the Director, the Script Girl, the Dance Director, each of the Cameramen and the Lighting Director, should contain detailed directions of every sort. It should describe the action, give the accompanying title, its number and whether it is to be inserted or superimposed, the camera angles, the main light source, the camera speeds, the fades, cuts, dissolves, the number of performers and the space requirements, and finally the approximate amount of film in terms of both seconds and feet for each bit of action.

In experimenting with camera angles, we chanced upon a few generalizations which seemed to apply in our situation, although we hesitate to make guarantees regarding others. A low camera or a head-on angle seemed to give the effect of speed, and we found it necessary to increase the camera speed to avoid a rushed effect in either case. Placing the camera fairly close and rather high was most effective to bring out restricted or subtle movement. A distant and fairly low camera seemed to aid in capturing a slow sustained quality.

Even after all these hurdles have been cleared successfully there is still one more. If copies are to be made, they must be made so that the printing and development will not destroy the lighting effects but enhance it. A good laboratory is a necessity to keep the film in harmony with the quality and efforts of the production.



# AMATEUR PRODUCTION

The script is traced from camera to exhibition.

By JASON BASCOMBE

In the last issue of Cinema Progress the production steps from story selection up to actual shooting of the picture were traced for those interested in amateur production. This time we will carry the production process through to its completion.

First the director will take each day's shooting schedule, break it down into scenes, and then diagram on a set chart the angle desired for each scene. When he goes on the set, the action of the various scenes will already be clearly in his mind. He will hand his set chart with its attendant scene angles, together with the shooting order, to his cameraman. The cameraman will then relieve the director of any further attention to the photography of the day's work.

## ON THE SET

The general practice, and most efficient, is to start with the long shots and then go progressively to medium longs, mediums, medium close, and finally the close-ups. Sometimes the cameraman is able to shoot a number of scenes from the same camera position, varying his angles by different lenses. The routine should be so constructed that the cameraman is never asked to go back to any camera angle more than once, unless there is a very good, and unforeseen reason for it. Efficiency is the essence of proper motion picture production.

While the cameraman sets up from the desired position and lights his set, the director will be rehearsing his actors in the particular scene to be shot. Sometimes the cameraman will require a separate rehearsal for proper photography. When both cameraman and director are satisfied, the scene is marked as to number by photographing a slate with the scene number. A few frames are sufficient, for the purpose is to identify the scene later in editing the picture.

A take is then made. If the action is satisfactory to both director and cameraman, that is all. If not, another take of the same scene is made, in which case the slate mark will record the scene number and the additional take number. This is continued until a satisfactory take is made. In amateur production, rehearsals should take the place of repeating scene takes, excepting in cases of actual scene error, for a rehearsal costs nothing in film used, a take does. Avoid retakes whenever possible.

## VIEWING RUSHES

As each roll of film leaves the camera it is sent to the laboratory by the cameraman. On return to the production unit the processed film is screened. This is known as the "rushes," and the cameraman, editor, director, and cast should see these rushes. The director may not be satisfied and retakes may be ordered, but again it must be remembered that the making of retakes is expensive and denotes inefficient production.

After the film is viewed as rushes, it goes to the editor, who assembles all the "good takes," that is, all the scenes that will actually go into the finished picture. This

assembly is made in continuity order. In addition the editor generally inserts blank film where titles, inserts, or incompleting scenes are still missing. Gradually the editor builds up an assembly that contains all of the film usable in the picture.

Once the scenes are assembled in continuity order, the slate, or identifying marks at the beginning of each scene may be eliminated. Next the editor removes all obviously superfluous action. What he has now is known as a "rough cut."

## HOW TO CUT

By this time the rest of the producing unit will have finished their work and the director is free to work in conjunction with the editor on the final cut of the picture. They must watch for a number of things, the most important being that they must match their action and they must get a definite tempo to the picture as a whole.

By matching the action we mean, for instance, not repeating a movement, and not letting it jump. As an example, one of the characters starts to open the door. Do not end one scene with the door half way open only to cut to the next scene, at another angle, and have the door start again from a completely closed position; or again, do not have the door half way open, only to cut to the next shot and have the door completely open and the character through it for some distance.

In tempo watch the action. Do not make it too fast to be confusing, and don't let it bog down and bore everyone by being too detailed and obvious. Avoid scenes having no motion in them. Keep the thing going all the time, both in story and action.

## ADDING MUSIC

After a final cut, which should have the approval of the producer, an attempt should be made to add some sort of musical score. Some scores are a tremendous help to the picture, and any sensible score is far better than dead silence during exhibition. Generally amateurs use stock phonograph records for their scoring, the more serious scorers going in for double turntable phonographs that the music may be continuous throughout the screening.

In exhibiting the picture, make it a good show. Music helps tremendously and such details as comfortable seats, absolute darkness, efficient projection, and other adjuncts of the professional exhibitor go far in making the amateur production a successful show.

## JAPAN ON THE SCREEN

50,000 feet of film, as long as five feature pictures, were shot for the March of Time's film on Japan. Out of this tremendous footage Time's film editors cut the shots needed for the 20 minute film.



# THE FILM AND BOOKS

## ART AND PRUDENCE

MORTIMER ADLER

Longmans, Green and Co., New York, N. Y.

It is probable that few men have said as many things that apply to the motion picture as did Aristotle; and it is probable that few men have said as many things that apply against it as did Plato. For both in its structure and in its place in public life the ancient Greek drama was strangely akin to the movie; and the practical philosophers of Greece found this aesthetic problem-child a matter of absorbing interest. Now that the brat has been reborn, present day philosophers and aestheticians would do well to give it a like attention.

This is not, to be sure, quite what Professor Adler has done in "Art and Prudence," for this is not so much a book about the movies as it is a book about practically everything that has been said about them, or that might conceivably apply to them. Quite naturally this heroic task begins with Plato and Aristotle who set the problems of prudence and art so well. For, by and large, Plato's aesthetic concern was with "prudence," that is, with what to do with art once you get it. Realizing the power of art, and fearful of it, Plato's answer was censorship, or for the young, prohibition. But Plato was never very sure of himself on this matter since his prejudices and his basic philosophy led him away from any very close study of "art" itself. This task left to his pupil Aristotle, and his findings, recorded for the most part in the unfortunately fragmentary "Poetica," are the basis of Professor Adler's aesthetics of the cinema.

### BEGINS WITH CENSORSHIP

Professor Adler begins his book, however, with Plato's problem of censorship, and like Plato he realizes the right of the state to judge and censor the art that is produced within it. For, says Adler, there is "internal" and there is "external" criticism of art. Both are valid, and both are necessary. The essential thing is to keep one's moral and aesthetical criteria properly separated, and to know what one is doing in either case. This presents two obvious tasks, (1) to examine the moral and political criteria of motion picture criticism (the task of prudence), and (2) to examine the aesthetical criteria (the task of art analysis).

### PRUDENCE IS CHIEF CONCERN

It is with the task of prudence that this book is chiefly concerned, and it is here that it is most successful. That task, says Adler, involves three main questions "(1) What are the effects or influences of the motion pictures on moral character and conduct? (2) If there are any effects, to what extent are they good, bad, or indifferent? (3) If there are bad effects, what should be done about it?" (p.259) The most famous of the answers to question one is the findings of the Payne Fund. Yet, with the possible exception of the Thurstone-Petersen study, the Payne Fund results, according to Adler, are naive, unscientific, and inconclusive. However the fact that they are so, (and Adler's opinions on the matter seem sensible) does not constitute the clean bill of health for the movies that might seem to follow; it merely constitutes an indictment

of the methods of the Payne Fund researchers. And there, apparently, the matter rests. Thus the answer to question one is that the effects of the motion picture are undetermined. From this it follows that the answer to question two is also undetermined; and, with no sure information to go on, there obviously isn't much to do about it.

### WHAT CAN HE DO?

What, then, IS the prudent man to do? He does, says Adler, "what he can;" as for that matter he always has. One might hope that some prudent man would undertake some further research on this matter. The findings of the Thurstone-Petersen study on the effects of motion-pictures on the racial attitudes of children are alarming, and need more investigation. And certainly one of the most important things that the prudent man, and his children, can do is to concern themselves as much as possible with the aesthetic criticism of the movies. Such a concern, as Professor Adler shows, would be likely to lead in two fruitful directions, (1) by separating moral and technical criteria, moral judgments would be clarified and sharpened, and (2) aesthetic criticism, if at all general, could hardly lead elsewhere than to better art.

It is with the technical and aesthetic criteria that the last section of the book is concerned. It is by far the least successful part, for the "cinematics" proves to be an attempt to combine Aristotle, Arnheim, Pudovkin, Spottiswoode, Munsterberg, Seldes, and in fact nearly everyone that has written on cinema aesthetics. The result is neither very clever nor useful, and it makes a dull end to a book that is already much too long. Surely there can be few less useful things in the world than an unilluminating series of possibilities, such for example as that devised by Professor Adler when he solemnly informs us that the following possibilities are exhaustive, "(1) the motion picture will cease to be a living growing art, . . . (2) the art of the motion picture will grow by the addition of new species . . . (3) the art of the motion picture will continue in its own line."

Yet there is much good sense in this book, and there will be few to disagree with its central thesis that the aesthetic and the moral aspects of motion picture criticism should be separated and refined. Unfortunately the good sense is so buried in mountainous masses of words, categories, dialectics, and repetitions, that it is not likely to be much heeded. Reviewed by Dr. Vincent Evans.

### HENRY KOSTER

(Continued from Page 3)

how it will look on the screen.

In the beginning of the picture, it is necessary to watch the exposition. As complications enter, cutting is important. After a day's shooting, my cutter has each scene cut, and the next day I see the thing as a whole. On the rhythm of the action, and the pacing of each scene according to its emotional significance depends the movement of the picture.



## A DIRECTOR'S BLUE PRINT

(Continued from Page 23)

crime pictures, he was assigned to "Girls School." When this delightful story of young romance also clicked at the box-office, the executives at Columbia couldn't overlook the German-born director who was making gold-mines from low-budget films. Brahm was given his first "A" picture, "Let Us Live," starring Henry Fonda, Maur-  
een O'Sullivan, and Ralph Bellamy. The dramatic situations of this picture were well-fitted to the skill of the former stage director.

One of the greatest problems facing a director is that of pleasing the public, believes Brahm. It is the duty of the director to observe the trend of public taste and guide his pictures accordingly.

"The director must sense the desires of the audience," states Brahm. "The change in tastes should be reflected in stories. My secret ambition is to direct a picture which I feel the American people would particularly take to their hearts, the story of Valley Forge."

"Pictures are being made more exclusively for the American market, because of the contraction of the foreign markets," says Brahm. When asked what he thought of foreign films in comparison with American products, he answered, "Motion pictures are a very much commercialized business here. Studio production is geared to a high speed schedule, and therefore pictures sometimes suffer." Brahm believes that "Pygmalion" and "The Citadel" are two definitely superior foreign pictures.

Another detriment to Hollywood creators is the block-selling system, wherein less incentive to creative genius is offered because of a prior knowledge that the pictures are sold before they are made. A director loses much sleep trying to make a picture successful from both the artistic and box-office standpoints. A satisfactory compromise must be reached.

### THE BLUE PRINT

Brahm is one of those directors who sticks to his picture from beginning to end. He makes his own "blue-print" of the construction of shots, action, and lighting which he desires. Every last detail is planned before he gets on the set. Every scene is diagrammed on a card which looks similar to a floor plan. On it each camera position is plotted in relation to the set. A small mark indicates the locations of each person in the shot. This is what he studies and plots before one of his pictures goes into production. In addition to this, an artist creates drawings in collaboration with the director so that he can see just how a scene will appear before sets are ever constructed. This is valuable in that much time is saved once the picture has gone into production, it offers an inducement to make more artistic pictures, and is at the same time a "springboard" for new ideas and situations. After the picture is filmed, Brahm works on it in the cutting room. These methods are typical of most top-flight directors.

"In movies the story should be told in pictures," Brahm says. "If there were no dialogue, the story should still be clear. Dialogue should only be used to top a situation. Stage technique is very difficult from that of motion pictures. The material represented in the cinema seems more realistic than on the stage."

Brahm believes that "Let Us Live" is his best American picture.

## DIRECTOR'S NOTEBOOK

(Continued from Page 2)

The picture met greater success in Europe because the Negro is more acceptable there than here. There is more race feeling in this country. People are afraid of familiarity with the Negro. The general public sees in the Negro a janitor, a cook, a bootblack. My idea was not that, but a kind of motherly person. There was strong prejudices against that picture. In fact I had to give up my salary while making it. Well, the money would have gone somewhere else anyway. It was worth it.

The technical details in making certain scenes of "The Big Parade" may be interesting. We had a sequence of men approaching a battlefield. It was my idea to make the front line invisible. I wanted to express the mood, "Well, here we are finally, and it is death." I wanted to get over the idea that the soldiers were marching to their death—a funeral. We used a metronome and a base drum to time the march of the soldiers through the woods. They marched on the suspended tempo of a drum beat. That rhythm gave the premonition of death. We had to express music in terms of visual tempo.

In "Our Daily Bread" the ditch-digging scene was acted in a 4/4 double time. It was unrealistic of course. The stylization in "The Citadel" was more modified and less apparent. The birth of the baby is an example of a stylized sequence.

### TECHNICAL ACCURACY

Pictures of the medical profession have often been criticized—because they are technically incorrect. Sometimes it is more important to establish the feeling of the characters about the scene than to be technically correct. In the mine disaster in "The Citadel" men were standing by just watching the doctor, risking their lives. In reality a doctor would make a diagnosis by taking the injured man's pulse, temperature, looking at his finger nails, etc. The power of the scene would be lost in the details if they were all included in the film. One strives after the impression of reality, not a photographic duplication.

In the days of silent pictures we had the imagination of the audience to help us. With the coming of sound I thought we would lose that contact. The audience for the early sound pictures was expected to do nothing. Dialogue repeated the action. I believed that with sound or music the audience still could be given a chance to supply the missing part—imagination. With this idea in mind I tried to suggest things psychologically in "The Citadel." I am convinced that the audience is intelligent and imaginative enough to interpret feelings and emotions which are suggested in the picture.

### THE BLIND "SEE" MOVING PICTURES

If "talking books" are enjoyed by the blind, why not give them talking pictures? William Barbour of the American foundation for the blind translated "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs" into a "talking book," a long playing disc resembling a phonograph record. A narrative translating the film's action into sound accompanies the dialogue and music from the picture.



## CINEMA AND STAGE

(Continued from Page 11)

essary to photograph the New Yorker walking from right to left and the other man in the opposite direction. In this manner a rhythm is achieved which is pleasing and does not disturb the onlooker.

All stories can be presented in a cinematic way although certain situations are more photogenic than others, that is, more easily adaptable to motion picture technique. The cinematic treatment of a weak story must be judiciously limited since the framework of the story structure is often too weak to carry the creative ideas that the director would like to bring into play.

Upon his arrival in America, Lang found himself faced with new types of audiences which differed greatly from those of Europe. Abroad, a two hour film is customary, but a picture of that length is not looked upon with favor by American audiences. Lang also believes that the people in this country do not like symbolism or what they think is symbolism. It is necessary to present abstractions to them in concrete form.

"The American audience today is a younger audience, faced with the pressing problems of life, and it is in pictures that deal with these questions that I am particularly interested."

"You and Me," Lang's last picture dealt with the problem of social and economic rehabilitation that faces the ex-convict in a world loath to give him an opportunity. Unfortunately, there are not sufficient stories being written concerning the pertinent problems that trouble the American people today. Among the stories that are submitted, a great many adaptations of old novels and plays are found. The majority of these have to be rejected since they are so outdated that they cannot be modernized and injected with present day reality.

### CENSORSHIP LIMITS STORIES

The chief reason for the absence of stories that are really thought provoking is the rigorous censorship which binds the films. This prohibits the filming of stories dealing with such subjects as war, marital maladjustments, kidnapping, political ideologies and other problems of social significance.

But the censorship barrier would fall if the American audience would demand pictures of this type. The problem facing the producers is whether to give the audience a pipe dream or something to think about. In the past, it has seemed that the majority of the public want the motion picture as an escape mechanism—a relief from their daily trials and tribulations. Recently, however, there have been indications of the desire for pictures that are more profound and stimulating.

Until the American audiences can congeal this demand into a direct and potent force, the producers are chary of taking a chance since they cannot afford to experiment.

### TELEVISION DISPROVES A THEORY

(Continued from Page 5)

#### COMPLEX ART

Television dramatics, Porterfield feels, will require some stage technique, some screen technique, some radio technique and yet in itself will be radically different. In part it will combine the camera placing and natural act-

ing of the screen, the reality and immediacy of radio, and the continuity of acting of the legitimate stage. A very complex and new art, as you can see!

Another very interesting reaction is that the televiewer in the privacy and quiet of his own home, will be more critical, more individualistic in his attitude toward what he sees, than if he were part of a movie audience in a large theater where mass emotion plays so large a part in determining the success or failure of the entertainment offered. Obviously, this should tend to make the standards of television entertainment more exacting than others.

The objection has been voiced that television will not be an extensive new field because it requires too much of the televiewer's time in his home. It is felt that the constraint of sitting before a television screen will not be as attractive as radio entertainment which requires far less concentration and permits the listener freedom of movement about his home. This objection, Mr. Porterfield feels, is the result of limited imagination as far as the program possibilities of television are concerned. He can foresee an elastic program schedule. For instance, one type of program would be a spot news telecast such as a spectacular wharf fire telecast on the scene as it occurs. This would require full concentration of the televiewer on the screen. But why shouldn't this be followed by a program where **sound** is dominant and where the presentation of a beautiful singer or actress on the screen may lure the televiewer's interest, but would not necessarily detract from the unity or enjoyment of the program if only his hearing attention were available? One can see the possibilities of an elastic program of this type in which the visual action is dominant in some programs while in others the sound would be dominant with the added attraction of sight at the televiewer's option. Symphony telecasts furnish a good example of the latter. To many music-lovers, the opportunity to see the magnificent groupings of the instruments, the sensitive faces of the performers, and the fascinating gestures of the conductor as he directs the great tides of music, would be a rare treat, but it would not compel attention at the screen for complete enjoyment of the program.

### BETTER PROGRAMS

But to return to the subject of this article, the problem of shaping television programs, let's all see that in television the twelve-year-old public is recognized for what it is—a fiction and superstition and not a fact. We'd like to see the real public get what it wants in the new medium—intelligent, thought-provoking programs as well as stream-lined entertainment.

### WILLIAM WELLMAN

(Continued from Page 3)

#### DOWN WITH MRS. GRUNDY!

In conclusion, let me add my little knock to the shackles that are binding us all—censorship. We won't ever have a vivid, vital and compelling screen medium until we get rid of that gigantic Mrs. Grundy we have erected ourselves that waves an admonitory finger every time we try to tell a story that has any thing in the plot that Hans Christian Anderson wouldn't have liked. Love is a wonderful theme for motion pictures and it's served us well. But—after twenty years of it—maybe we need a new plot.



## ROUTINE OF A DIRECTOR

(Continued from Page 8)

often Leisen's representative in conferences. He assists in the estimation of the budget of the picture while it progresses in script form and makes the breakdown. He arranges the shooting schedule in which he tries to use the maximum number of players in the first scenes to be filmed, decreasing to the minimum number in the subsequent scenes. At the same time he arranges for all scenes utilizing a certain set to be filmed in series. Other duties are to requisition "extras," to coordinate all studio departments on the set, to see all players and properties are on the set, etc. In large scenes, he'll be in charge of background action. Occasionally when a second unit is required, the assistant director is in charge of it. At the end of the day, he'll file a work report with the "front office."

Miss Cora Palmatier, Script Clerk, checks dialogue, rehearses players and provides cues, matches action, dialogue, costumes, mood, properties, and times each "take." She is custodian of the script and when changes are made on the set, she types them and sees that the players' scripts are brought up to date. She makes notes for the cutter and fills out a work report for the assistant director. She advises the director regarding cover or protective shots, that is, scenes which should be made in case the original might be censored and subsequently deleted. At the moment she reminded Francis Lederer that his cigarette had burned down between "takes," and he promptly inserted a new cigarette into his holder.

### CUTTING MIDNIGHT

Doane Harrison, who is cutting "Midnight," always remains on the set during production. In this way he sees the picture being filmed and is in a position to collaborate with Leisen. He may suggest certain close-ups or ways to break up a scene. By having the cutter on the set to advise, the added expense of retakes is eliminated. Occasionally the cutter will be called into conference before production begins, to express an opinion of a script. Primarily his work is in the cutting room with his assistant making a rough cut of the picture. In this, he always leaves the film flexible. When the period of production has ended, the director assumes a major role in the final cutting of the film. Previews after the final cut are very important. The director and cutter attend primarily to watch the audience reaction. They observe a number of things: to see if the audience will react to comic or tragic scenes, to see if they respond in the places the emotion has been anticipated, to see if a laugh might cover a line of important dialogue, to see if the correct mood and tempo are maintained, etc.

### FILM CREW AT WORK

It is the duty of Cameraman Charles Lang to determine the camera angles and supervise the lighting in collaboration with Leisen. Mickey Cohen, set wardrobe man, must see that each costume is authentic and is distributed to the proper player and that it is kept in repair. Bob McCrellis, property man, is responsible for the custody and placing of all properties called for in the script break-down. At the moment he was setting a table for breakfast in the scene to be photographed. Soundman C. A. Hisserich sits behind his control panel with ear-phones. His duty is to inform Director Leisen if players voices get outside of limitations of the recording equipment and to advise him if outside noises prevail. Primar-

ily his work is to adjust the sound recording so that it fits the scene so the audience will not become conscious of the sound itself. Miss Eleanor Broder, Director Leisen's personal secretary, does everything from handling his personal affairs to decorating his home. Often Leisen discusses a story with her for an opinion.

### BIRTHDAY GAG

Good humor and hard work mix well on Leisen's sets. One of the latest gags was a birthday party. It seems that it was Director Leisen's birthday and the cast and crew of the picture he was working on had arranged a party for him during their noon hour. A cake had been prepared, the music department had been contacted to supply music during the interval. Leisen was late in announcing the noon hour because he was anxious to get a scene made that was giving him difficulty, and at the same time making him a bit angry. Dorothy Lamour was before the camera and Shirley Ross on the sidelines. Suddenly Miss Lamour shouted, "I can't do this scene with Shirley making wise-cracks at me." Director Leisen promptly "blew up" and the party was sprung on him.

### THE BOX OFFICE MAGNET

(Continued from Page 10)

women in recent pictures. The audience laughs heartily at such ridicule, because their own viewpoint is expressed on the screen rather than that of the persons of the Social Register, who are but a sad minority.

### EMOTIONAL COMMON DENOMINATOR

The desires of the majority of people tend to converge at a focal point at which all have a common interest. A wife of a truck-driver is as interested in the picturization of a distraught parent whose child has been kidnapped as is the wife of a college professor. There are innumerable basic interests which appeal to millions of theatergoers. The emotional common denominator is a tangible standard for determining those interests.

The students and devotees of the cinema should be impressed with the importance of the factor described in this article. The emotional common denominator, when universally understood, will make for better Hollywood products. To understand the public is to be able to satisfy their wants. Therefore, it is indisputable that to produce successful pictures it is vital to emphasize the interests of the people.

Turn to the Joe Blotz sitting next to you in the theater. Ask him why he is enthralled by the action unfolded on the screen, or why he wears that frown of disbelief. If the picture is one of those rare ones which recognizes the emotional common denominator, Joe's answer will probably be: "It's human," or "It's happened to me," etc. Should Joe's countenance express disapproval, his answer might well be: "There's nothing to it," or "Those things don't happen to me and can't possibly happen to me or my friends." That would be the general idea of his reasons for dissatisfaction with a run-of-the-mill picture.

The reader well knows how simple, human actions on the screen are appealing because they are within the realm of the reader's own experience.

It is an innate desire of the individual to observe how the other half lives. The difficulty is that the more simple "half" has been neglected in film plots.

(Continued on Page 32)



## ENGLAND VS HOLLYWOOD

(Continued from Page 6)

audience. The effect of the scene is strengthened by showing only what is dramatically important.

There is rich opportunity for the director in a strong, melodramatic situation which he can "throw away." In "Fisherman's Wharf" Bobby Breen runs away from his home. He is leaving everything he loves. A neighbor very casually makes Bobby return. The suffering Bobby feels is heightened by the matter of fact attitude of the neighbor.

From the same picture another sequence, which was cut out to avoid censorship difficulties, is hardly tragic, but it does show how the director builds up a gag situation. Bobby has a pet seal who heartily dislikes Lee Patrick, the woman who comes between him and Leo Carillo, his foster father. She does her best to get rid of the seal. When she leaves, after failing in her effort to destroy the affection of the fisherman for his adopted son, she unwisely turns her back to the seal as she walks out of the door. The seal takes full advantage of the opportunity. The unexpected attack from the rear makes Lee Patrick's exit something less than dignified.

Another set-up for a director is a situation where a dramatic scene can be made from a trifle. For example, the loss of a spool of thread may be a tragedy to a little girl.

A scene from one of his English pictures, "The Ghost Camera" illustrates Vorhaus's belief that a special technique should be used only where it aids in portraying the idea of the story.

In "The Ghost Camera" one of the characters finds a camera in the back of a car. When the pictures in it are developed, they show what seems to be a murder of a girl.

With a flash-back Vorhaus told the story of the girl in the photograph as it would be seen through her eyes. For this reason, Vorhaus placed the camera in the position of the eyes of the girl, who is the narrator. The action is photographed as she sees it. When she is struck on the head, the camera falls backward and the picture goes dark. The camera takes the audience into the mind of the character.

"I believe we are on the verge of a new technique. When it comes, like most discoveries, it will seem simple, and all of us will wonder how we missed it," Vorhaus says.

Film devices such as flash-backs and the subjective use of the camera are an expressive means of telling a story, but they cannot be used for their own sake. Also, the audience must be prepared for their introduction. In the future, according to Vorhaus, more and more of these cinematic techniques will be seen in motion pictures.

## NEWS OF THE DAY

(Continued from Page 14)

York men, so that when catastrophe arrived, while no one expected it, everyone was prepared. As a result some remarkable recordings were made of the actual destruction of the dirigible.

A fraternity exists among newsreel men which might be compared to the camaraderie or the reporters of a couple of decades ago. Most of the staff men of all companies are personally acquainted with each other, and

a friendly competitive rivalry is carried through all assignments. There have been cases—one of them the Hauptmann trial in Flemington, New Jersey—where all newsreel concerns pooled resources, and took turns at using the concealed box-like structure where the courtroom action was photographed from the balcony; these shots became the joint property of all companies. Practically all the action of the first World Series' game, and the big football games of the year are photographed. Five or six thousand feet are then cut down to a hundred and fifty for release.

## NEWSREEL MEN DEFY DEATH

Newsreel men continually risk their lives on adventures involving travel in hazardous areas. One veteran cameraman last year chartered a plane to cover a flood area, and, investigating his pilot after a series of hops, skips, and bumps, found he had already consumed three quarters of a quart of Scotch. How he ever got to the ground two hours later remains a mystery to him to this day. Another cameraman just escaped decapitation while riding on top of a truck making scenes of a football practice. The driver put on the brakes just before the truck reached the goal posts' crossbar. John Bockhurst, covering a submarine testing off New London, barely escaped with his life when some water leaked into the battery and the equipment refused to function. Jack Whipple, who began his newsreel career when Theodore Roosevelt was still president, and who cranked Wilson's inauguration, can recount imperturbably a score of hairbreath escapes. "We don't think anything about them till they're over, then it doesn't matter," is his comment.

These musketeers of the movies have often assisted the police in obtaining important evidence, and in at least one recent case—that of the five Brooklyn boys who killed an elevated cashier—cameraman Rody Green recorded a full impromptu confession on his sound track.

## A CLASSIC FAUX PAS

Sometimes faux pas are committed by gentlemen of the lens. A classic example is that of an anonymous cameraman, at Albany, who was "shooting" an interview with Gov. Alfred E. Smith, in his office. Gov. Smith arrived, and one of the men in the room rushed forward to pick up a mink coat which lay over the arm of the executive chair. "Some sucker must have paid a lot of money for that," remarked the cameraman jovially. "Yes, I'm the sucker," Gov. Smith said, "that's my daughter's coat."

Newsreel men often become world celebrities. Norman Alley became famous for his films of the bombing of the U.S.S. PANAY in China. Ariel Varges landed time and again on the front pages for his exploits in the Ethiopian War, and for photographing the first scenes ever made in the Vatican. His protege, H. S. (Newsreel) Wong, whom he hired as a youngster to assist him during a series of camera campaigns in China, has turned out to be one of the most skilfull newsreelers of the present day. One of his recent pictures, that of a Chinese tot deserted and crying helplessly amid the havoc of a bombarded village, was reproduced on the front cover of LIFE. As for the ace newsreel performers of the future, they may be now putting their savings into a \$98.50 movie set, out in some mid-Western farming town. It's like writing; there's no guaranteed way to break into the business except to go out and do it.



## DESIGN FOR CINEMA

(Continued from Page 22)

real thing, even when observing them at first hand.

### I. N. R. I.

When Metzner first began his screen career in Berlin, designing was in its embryonic stages. The late Robert Wiene had completed his "Cabinet of Dr. Caligari" (1919) which created a storm in the film world with its grotesque, expressionistic design. Metzner worked with Wiene on "I.N.R.I.", a picturization of the life of Christ, with Asta Nielsen, Henny Porten and Werner Krauss in the cast. This film is still shown today at religious holidays as "The Crown of Thorns." "I.N.R.I." had several large sets and much of the picture was shot in one of Ufa's largest stages, a remodeled zeppelin hangar.

In 1920, Metzner collaborated with Ernst Lubitsch on "Pharaoh's Wife" and a year later on "Fredericus Rex." He designed the first screen version of "A Midsummer Night's Dream," the sets of which are as good, if not better, than those of Max Reinhardt's recent production.

The Ufa studios in the early and middle twenties were the world's foremost screen center. Here, with unparalleled resources at their command, directors such as Lubitsch, F. W. Murnau and Fritz Land, turned out pictures of lasting achievement. There was practically no limit to the technical ingenuity of the Ufa craftsmen. Entire streets, and portions of cities were constructed inside the studio, with remarkable fidelity to the original when necessary.

### SECRETS OF THE SOUL

Metzner first met Pabst in 1924 and a year later did the sets for "Secrets of the Soul," the first psychoanalytic film, written by two pupils of Freud. Werner Krauss, of "The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari," played the leading role, that of a middle-aged man, who tormented by jealousy of his wife's attentions to her cousin, is finally cured of his phobia by psychoanalysis. The film was remarkable for a dream sequence of associative images. At this time, Metzner also directed a picture of his own, "Uberfall" (Accident), 20 minutes long, partially visualizing in distorted design and photography a man's dream of a physical conflict.

Metzner also collaborated on the first picture in which Elizabeth Bergner starred, "Nju."

In Metzner's opinion, the designing of sets for a picture is not a mechanical routine, divorced from the main creation of the film, but an integral part of the picture. Metzner always does his best work when he believes in the picture he is working on. He has always preferred working with Pabst because he is in sympathy with his ideas and method of procedure.

In 1929, Metzner did the sets of Pabst's "Tagebucheiner Verloreneu" (Diary of a Lost Girl). That same year, he designed "The White Hell of Pitz Palu," an open-air, action film in the snow-capped Swiss mountains, which Pabst did together with Arnold Fanck. Despite the fact that most of the picture was done on location, Metzner did extensive designs. Exteriors had to be changed and adapted to the film's purpose and Metzner supervised all this.

In 1930 came "Westfront 1918," one of the finest of the war films, and Pabst's first talking picture. A year later, Metzner again collaborated with Pabst on the mem-

orable "Kameradschaft," one of the most stirring films ever made. The action of the picture occurs on the Franco-German border, with the people of both nations uniting to rescue their comrades in a mine disaster. Almost every foot of the film was done inside the studios, but the result was so realistic that the average spectator usually comes away with the belief that it was actually photographed in a mine.

### FANTASTIC SETS

After "Kameradschaft," Pabst did "Atlantis," one of his poorest films from the viewpoint of story construction, with a fantastic plot occurring in a hidden city under the Sahara desert. Metzner's tremendous and fantastic plaster settings for "Atlantis" were the most memorable feature of the picture.

In 1933, Metzner left Germany together with Pabst when the Nazis came into power. In Paris, he worked with Pabst on "De Haut En Bas" and in Austria with Robert Wiene and Friederich Feher on "The Robber Symphony." The next five years were spent in England, designing chiefly for Gaumont-British such spectacles as "Chu Chin Chow" with its elaborate, oriental sets, and "Transatlantic Tunnel" with intricate, futuristic back-grounds.

As yet, Metzner has not designed any picture here, but he is enthusiastic about the Hollywood studios and looks forward to his first assignment for M-G-M.

### THE BOX OFFICE MAGNET

(Continued from Page 30)

At this point it would be appropriate to clarify something related earlier in this article. We have emphasized the fact that the appeal should be directed more towards the majority of the people. That should not be construed as meaning that minority groups should not be picturized. On the contrary, the emotional common denominator **can** be applied to pictures with a limited appeal providing that Joe Blotz' viewpoint be considered in the telling of the story. Millions of theater goers would be interested in stories of the smart set—if those stories were related from the angle of the millions of people rather than the hundreds of the social register.

If a social problem is to be presented on the screen it should be told from the angle of the people it would help. Close on the heels of popular appeal pictures will come artistic, controversial films which would seek to correct evils and right wrongs.

Give the emotional common denominator its proper place in the Hollywood jargon and we will once more hear the mighty music of silver coins clinking at the cashier's window of every theater in the civilized world. It cannot be denied that what deals with the majority is well-received by the majority. With that theorem in mind, the movie industry cannot help but climb to greater heights—artistically and commercially.

The emotional common denominator and a stronger box-office magnet—both terms are synonymous.

### BARNARD GOES HOLLYWOOD

Barnard College students recently completed a color film to record the academic and extra-curricular activity of their college. The feature length picture will be distributed to colleges, clubs, and preparatory schools throughout the country.

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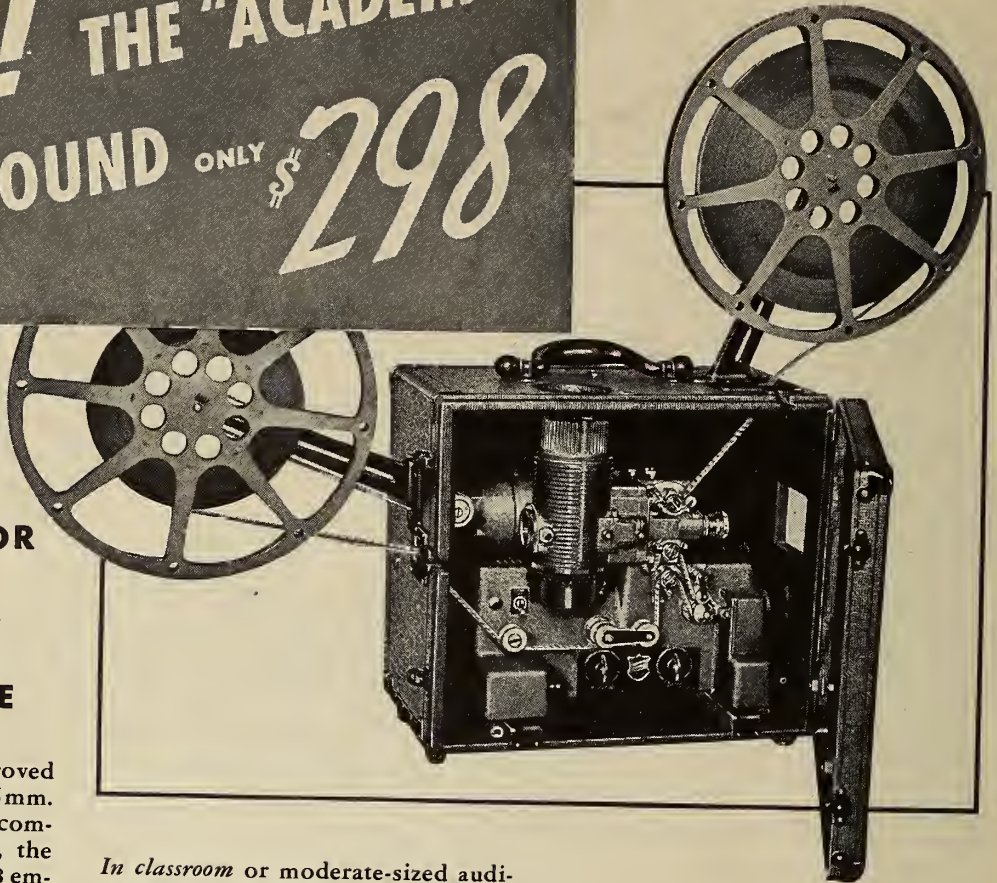
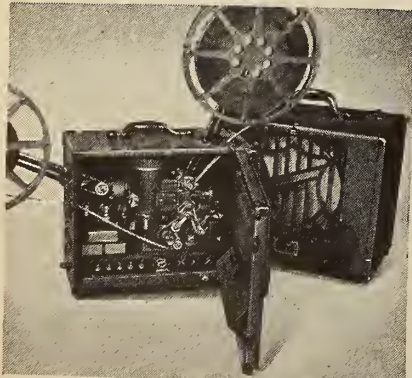
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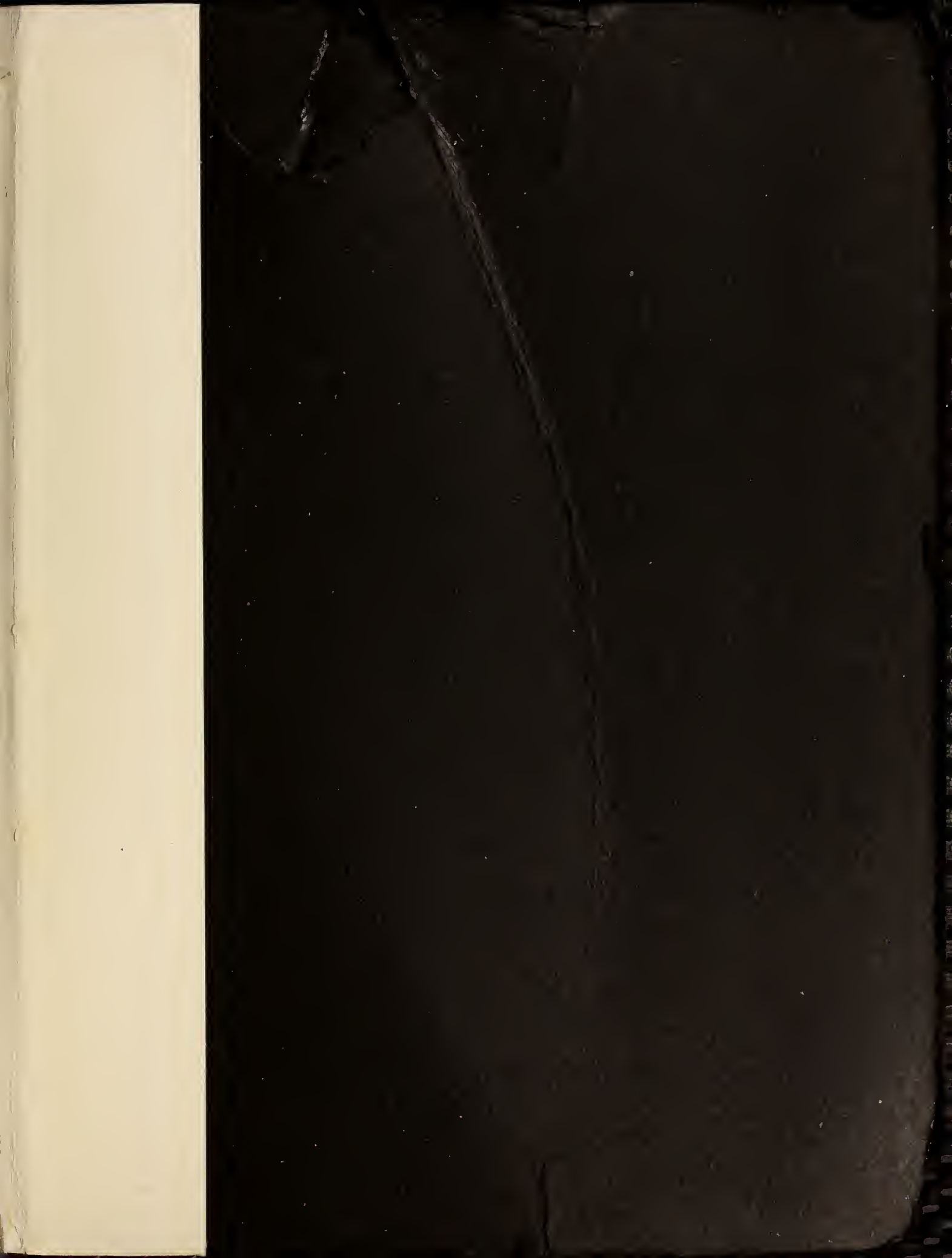
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