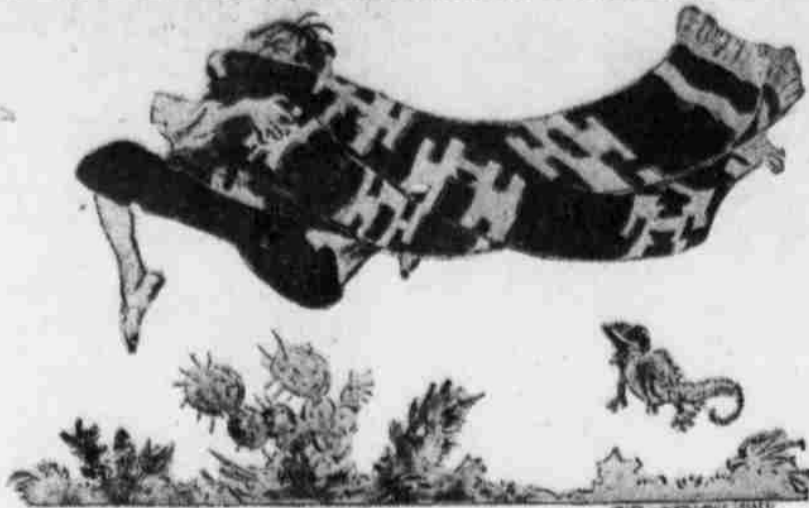


PHOTOPLAY CULTIVATES POSTER ART



Here is the way James Montgomery Flagg thinks Douglas Fairbanks looked in "The Lamb."

THE poster art has been looking up since the feature photoplay happened. Popini's designs for the Vitagraph films are to be backed up by a campaign for art on the part of the new Triangle Corporation.

The average theatrical manager, in his attitude toward posters, has been described as "He who knows not, and knows not that he knows not." While this characterization may be a little rough, it certainly applies to a great many old-time showmen who regard posters as a purely commercial proposition, and who consequently do not give the subject the same kind of attention as they devote to artistic staging.

The Frenchman of the theatre and the music hall is notably keen about posters. The poster, it has been said, should seize

a moment, exploit a situation, with one daring sweep of pencil or brush. It should give a flash of line or a sweep of color, catching the eye at once, and conveying directly, clearly and pictorially the very spirit of the attraction. Jules Cheret with his wonderfully vivid poster portraits of Yvette Guilbert; Alphonse Mucha, who presented so vividly the series of Bernhardt heroines; Theophile Alexandre Steinlen and Eugene Grasset are among

the great Frenchmen who virtually created the art, proving that genius could be as worthily employed on commercial work as on purely "art for art's sake." Aubrey Beardsley, Walter Crane and Gordon Craig in England are the famous names, while in America some pioneer work has been done by such men as Hamilton King, with his "Pink Lady" poster; Hy Mayer, with his "Floradora" and Zeigfeld's "Follies" designs; C. B. Falls in clever vaudeville posters, and Jean Paleologue's Valeska Suratt's portraits.

The Triangle people asked the following artists to contribute each something to the Triangle poster designs: James Montgomery Flagg, C. B. Falls, Tony Sarg, Arthur S. Covey and Harry Townsend. Mr. Flagg has responded with some exceedingly vigorous and spirited designs of the agile and funny Douglas Fairbanks in "The Lamb." One of the most amusing shows Mr. Fairbanks in full flight through the Arizona desert, dodging cacti and a gila monster, and clutching a flaming colored Navajo blanket that trails behind him like the tail of a comet. Those who remember the exceedingly delightful Fairbanks light comedy at the Chestnut Street Opera House week before last will recognize at once that "Jim" Flagg has caught the essential spirit of the thing, as distinguished from mere literal reproduction. That literal reproduction has been the bane of poster work in America—the effort of the lithographer's "artist" to copy a photograph held in front of him.

YEH, BO!

Charlie Chaplin was not the first to realize the dramatic value of rickshaw pie, but he has developed it. Certainly, no one will deny that he wears plastic pastry to more humorous advantage than any living actor. It is a bit of a shock, then, to find that in "Shanghai," the latest Essanay comedy, the art of Chaplin has retrograded, prudentially speaking. The man of the minute has substituted soup for pie. Fortunately his comic touch is just as firm in the softer medium.

Mr. Chaplin also has discovered that it is more amusing to kick a man off a ship than to kick him downstairs. Not only is the fall longer, but the splash alone is worth the difference in cost between a staircase and a schooner. In addition to messing about in soup and impelling persons overboard with either foot, Chaplin, in his new picture, deals in the effects which pork is calculated to produce upon travellers at sea.

The vulgarity of the Chaplin pictures cannot be denied. They are altogether lacking in subtlety and their appeal must be directed toward a low order of intelligence. They are a scathing indictment of public taste, these Chaplin pictures, and that is why we blush for shame in confessing that we laugh our heads off whenever we see one.

From Haywood Brown and the New York Tribune.

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