



AMUSEMENT SECTION

Evening Ledger

PHILADELPHIA, SATURDAY EVENING, APRIL 8, 1916

PHOTOPLAY
THEATRES
DANCING
MUSIC

A LITTLE THING LIKE THIS IS NOTHING



Up, up, UP goes Anita King's car when it leaps from the broken bridge in "The Race." That's easy. It's the landing that counts, as you may see just across the page.

DIRECTOR'S VALUE IN DIRECT RATIO TO PUBLIC'S WISH

The Final Verdict on a Director's Work Rests Not With Himself But His Audiences

By MARGUERITE BERTSCH

Marguerite Bertsch, the director of the "Photoplay," who produced "A Million Dollars' Worth of Captivity," "My Official Wife," "Uncle Bill," "The Wreck," "The Vengeance of Durand," "Shadows of the Past," "The Painted Work," "The Master," "The Case Man," "The Dust of Egypt" and "Salvation John," is now an author-producer. She tells what she thinks makes a good director.

Defining the good director should make clear what is wrong with the picture field today, or perhaps more fairly, what is wrong with those productions that are poor, mediocre, or that in other ways fail of success.

You see, I hold the director responsible for it all, since I do not class as directors those who merely put on a script that is given them. So often we hear a director explain a failure by saying that the manuscript from which he produced it was bad. We can understand this, but we cannot accept it as an excuse. What ever manuscript may be given a director he must be able at once to analyze it for every element of strength or weakness, of failure or success. This accomplished, he must be able to so revamp his material that though it may not reach the heights for which it was never ordained, it will, at least, get by as a success; for it is a director's duty to produce successes only. This requires that the director be an able playwright. Very few directors can write their own big feature successes, but all should be able to fashion what is given them into at least a passing success.

In a popular art like that of the photoplay, I would value a director's work in proportion to its appreciation by the public. The public is what the photoplay director plays for. Where he wins their undivided interest and sympathy he has succeeded. Where he wears them he has failed. There are good plays, to be sure, of mighty import, but they are not the photoplay. Why should anything that is fine and never younger than 12. Even when it is much younger than I am now I could always sit up and converse with much older people. It seems to be a family trait, and isn't due to any effort on my part, so why should I take any credit for it?

Register despair. Mother tells me to "cultivate repose of manner," but it doesn't do any good. I have to keep moving all the time. Somebody once tried to compliment me by saying that it denoted temperament, but that's silly. I guess it's just nervousness. I'm that way mentally, too. Of course, I work pretty hard at the studio, and then I tutor in lots of things, including French and German, and what little time is left I spend out of doors if possible.

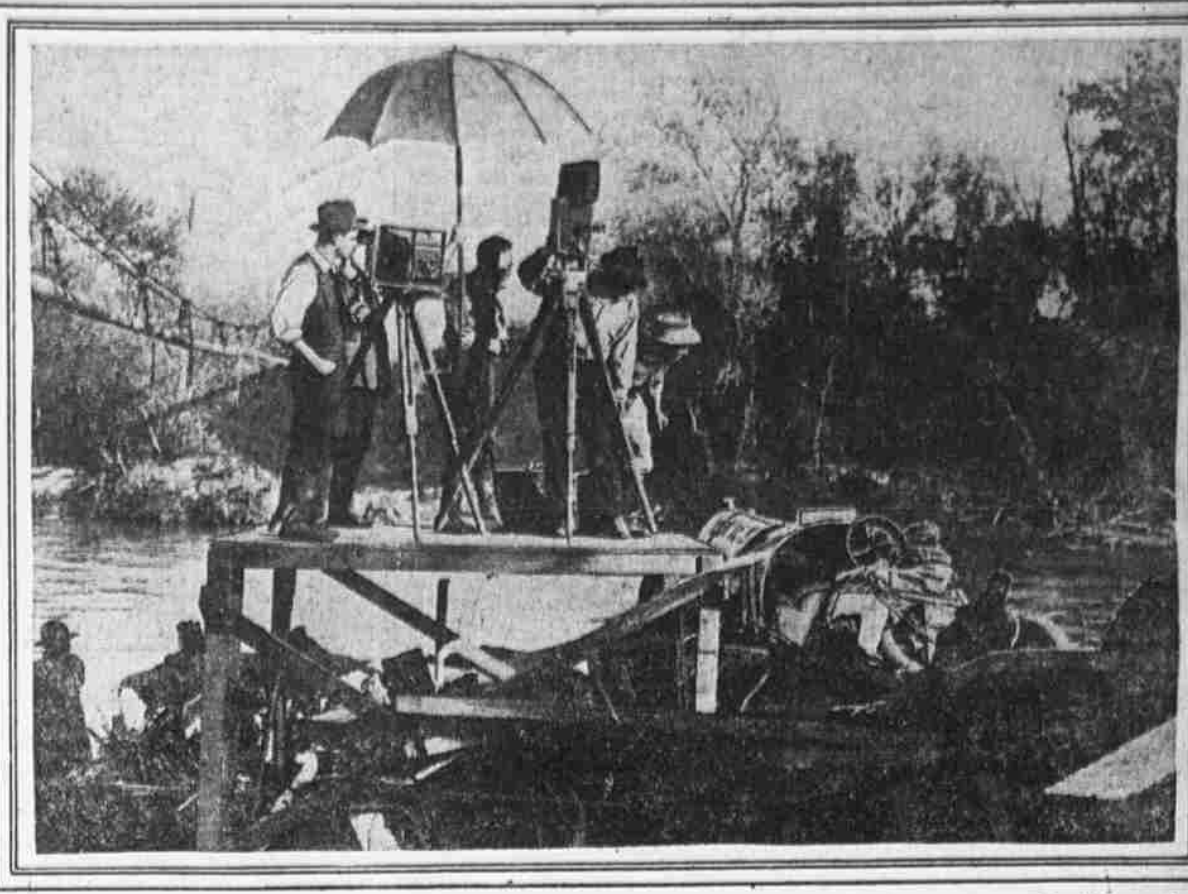
This winter I've done lots of coasting on that hill, and I'm strong enough to take the boys' sleds away from them, which is lots of fun, because it makes them so angry. You don't know how strong I am. You see, I'm crazy about Juliet, and have been taking lessons in it for some time. Also I like to box, because then I have an excuse to wave my arms about as much as I want to.

I can manage my sister Margaret quite easily, and she is 16, but there's never any reason for demonstrating that fact. We're very different, but I don't believe we've ever had a serious quarrel, only sometimes at night, when I want the light left on to read by, and she wants it off so that she can sleep; we keep popping it on and off for hours.

I appeared first on the stage, you know, and I want to get back to it. My word before the camera is very interesting, of course, but I remain true to my first love. It is really all a matter of opinion, but to me legitimate stage work is the highest form of histrionic art. I suppose it's because I was brought up to it. But there is one thing that I should like to give up my picture work, and that is the traveling. I have gone to so many places and met so many nice people, all the way from Florida to the Pacific coast, that I really have a large number of friends. The people out West are the most hospitable that I have ever met. Still, I want to go back to the stage.

The trouble is I'm too particular about parts. It is hard to find a play that suits the sort of acting I can do best, and want to do. A story like "The Littlest Rebel," in which I played with Dustin Farnum, can't be picked up every day. Margaret is cut out for comedy, but I prefer drama, but not of the gushy and sentimental kind.

THE MOVIES THRIVE ON DISASTER



When the trick is pulled off just right and the cameramen of the Lasky forces are ready, the result may be a wrecked racer, but it is also an exciting film.

A Dramatic Critic Criticised by an Humble Playwright

The Authoress of "The Fear Market" Disputes With Walter Prichard Eaton Over His Review of Her Play

By AMELIE RIVES

Princess Troubetzkoy.

FAIR play is the motto of the Anglo-Saxon, and "turn about is fair play," so I venture to hope that the EVENING LEDGER, which printed on the 25th of March an article by Mr. Walter Prichard Eaton in regard to my play, "The Fear Market," will print this article by me in regard to that of Mr. Eaton.

The dramatic critics, with some notable exceptions, smote me on the right cheek, and in silence I submitted to being smitten on the left also, but Mr. Eaton's blow comes "when patience has had her perfect work," and left me, besides, even Scriptura, does not say that one must go on offering oneself indefinitely to the smiters without resistance.

Perhaps one reason why I feel like "answering back" in this case is because I have so much liked Mr. Eaton's book, "The American Stage of Today," and look forward to an enlightening criticism from him—something that would encourage, no matter how severely it might censure. When two friends of his told me that he intended writing a criticism of "The Fear Market" I was much pleased. "Now I shall have some constructive criticism of my play," was my thought; "something that will show me where the faults are and how to mend them." This sort of criticism I call "growing pains."

"Faults" are the wounds of a friend, and criticism to be helpful should be always friendly, even when its friendliness is that of the surgeon's knife. And so cheerfully I took up Mr. Eaton's article in the EVENING LEDGER.

It began with large headlines that set forth a very bad pen in very bad taste, and it went on in the usual patronizing and facetious vein of newspaper criticism to which I have grown accustomed. He speaks of the plot of the play as "Princess Troubetzkoy's plotting," which he condemns for lack of plausibility. This lack of plausibility he sets forth in an example as follows:

"For instance, the editor of the slimy paper will not let his daughter read his publication, for he loves her and doesn't want her to find out what his business is. She, however, consumed with curiosity, is living at a house where she lies on the stand. But, of course, if she weren't told by her lover, the doubtless lawyer (sic) who is exposing her father, what the business is, the play would have to be all rewritten."

Now, from these comments one interesting, if regrettable fact, stands forth—the fact that Mr. Eaton believes that no girl is capable of keeping a promise. If the least temptation fall in her way, Sylvia (the girl in my play) has promised her father not to read a copy of his paper until he gives her permission. When I was a girl I made my father promises which I kept, though it was hard to keep some of them, and I am glad to say that the girls I knew then and the girls I know now have also the sense of honor which would keep them from breaking such promises.

Besides, Sylvia has lived in Italy since she was 5 years old, and even if she were such a little wretch as to want only opportunity in order to break her word, newspapers as that which Mr. Eaton alludes to as the "old Town Topics" are unknown in Italy. I speak with authority, for I have spent six months of almost every

The Juliet Shelby That I Know

By Mary Miles Minter

I don't think I shall ever become very conceited, because every time I start to be I get a hard knock. Either the director takes it out of me or my mother lectures me, so that whenever I am inclined to think well of myself I can be sure there's a puncture coming.

You probably don't believe a word about my age. I always hesitate about telling it when any one asks me, because it sounds as though I were proud of it, but in reality I'm not. I have always felt old, never younger than 12. Even when I was much younger than I am now I could always sit up and converse with much older people. It seems to be a family trait, and isn't due to any effort on my part, so why should I take any credit for it?

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Mr. Eaton's review of "The Fear Market" is so new to me, that I have so frequently referred to "taught him to be humble before the great problem of our speech," for to use in one sentence both the third person singular and the third person plural when referring to oneself, and to say "most that" for "most of that which" indicates the need of such humility.

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"Heads, I Am a Doctor; Tails, I Am a Singer"

In one of O. Henry's most remarkable and curious stories he narrates the adventures of a young man who reached his majority by three separate roads. Few are given that unusual privilege of taking three chances at their destiny; most of us have but one, and that one is a severe test of our discretion. John Charles Thomas, who is at present appearing with great success in "Alone at Last," which comes to the Lyric Theatre for a limited engagement, beginning Monday, April 17, realizing he had but one road to travel to his destiny, chose it by the simple and primitive method of tossing a coin. Which procedure, as the vernacular of Broadway would have it, was "passing the buck" to fate. Thus it came about that from the precise moment that the head of a half-dollar landed downward, John Charles Thomas began his career as a singer instead of a doctor of medicine. Previous to this important and portentous moment, Mr. Thomas had sung and had combed the tresses of the "Materia Medica" so that he was prepared to greet either side of the coin.

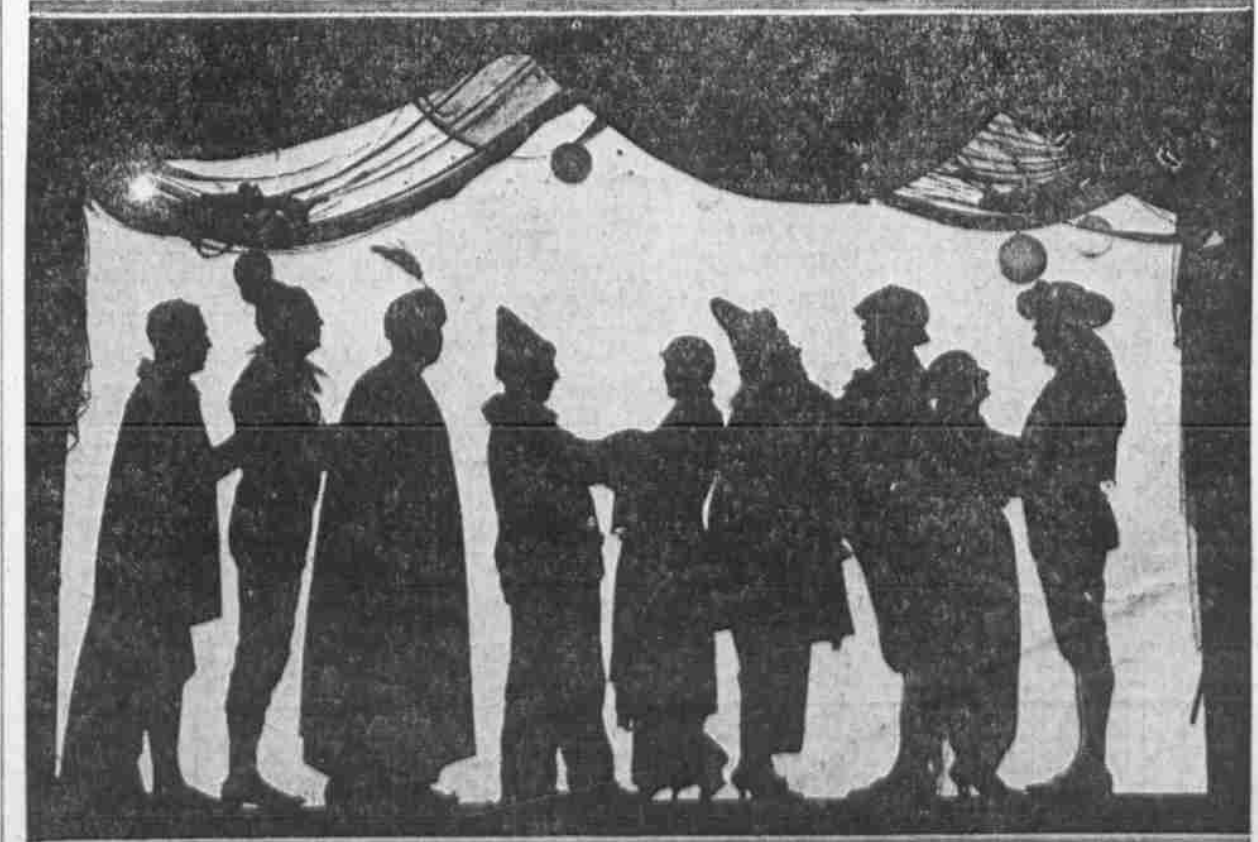
However, Thomas would have been sorely disappointed had heads turned up, for it was his ardent desire from the time he sang in the choir of his father's church in a small town in Pennsylvania to become a singer. He had only taken up medicine at his father's solicitation and had entered on his studies in a half-hearted manner. Moreover, at this time the annual competition for a scholarship to the Peabody Institute, Baltimore, was being held. Thomas entered with 60 others and won out, which was *quod erat demonstrandum* of placing one's confidence in the flipping of a coin. Since graduating from the Peabody Institute Thomas has sung himself through a half dozen productions, rolling up success in each succeeding one like a small boy rolls up a huge snowball. One could almost say that Thomas had reached the pinnacle of success when he climbed the summit of the Juniper every night, as Baron Frank, in "Alone at Last," but Thomas would promptly discourage any such statement, for he is very ambitious and determined to scale heights equally as high in the musical world.

The Third Generation of Drew

The third generation of the Drew family, so far as the American stage is concerned, is represented by Louise Drew, whose genuine distinction as a comedienne may be gauged by her sparkling impersonation of the bogus French woman in "It Pays to Advertise."

The first of the Drews was John, senior, who came from Dublin and made his American debut in New York just 70 years ago. The son in time followed brilliantly in his father's footsteps. Louise, his daughter, made her debut in her father's company in 1902. She was educated in Notre Dame Academy in Philadelphia.

FILMING AMERICA'S MOST FAMOUS ARTISTS IN SILHOUETTE



C. Allan Gilbert invented the silhouette movies now distributed by the Paramount. So what more natural than that Mr. Gilbert should bring his fellow artists and writers into the picture? From left to right, you can trace the outlines of Mr. Gilbert, James Montgomery Flagg, Owen Johnson, James Forbes, Mrs. Flagg, Mrs. Johnson, Irvin Cobb, Margaret Mayo and Edgar Selwyn.

How Griffith, the Wizard of the Photoplay, Works

The Producer of "The Birth of a Nation" Has His Own Novel Methods, One of Which Is Quietness

THE methods of a man who made "The Birth of a Nation," who is D. W. Griffith, are of great interest to all who keep pace with what is done in the movie world. Not long ago some visitors were allowed in his theatre, and give the account of what they saw under his canvas in the big studio which kept the sun's rays from the players.

We were free to wander about where we liked and for as long as we liked—so long as we obeyed studio laws. Chief of these laws: Never step in front of a camera. That rule is obeyed even by the studio dogs, of which there are sure to be several. Most of these dogs have either to be led on the set—no thorough in their understanding of the rules—or else rehearsed in the one scene till they know they belong there.

The second law has purely local application, and is not really a law at all. It is expressed by every one in about the same words: "Better not bother Mr. Griffith unless it's absolutely necessary; he's a very busy man."

We conclude that he must be, not only because every one we speak to says so repeatedly, but because during one whole busy morning we failed to catch even a glimpse of the man.

He is there; every one says that, too. He is rehearsing, or directing, or consulting, or all three, here, there, or somewhere about; but you do not see him. On the big orderly stage, crowded with sets and players and technical assistants, there is a dominant spirit that you cannot at once put your finger on. If you are used to motion picture studios you get a sense of something from a dozen different details, and they all dovetail into an individuality—the personality of the studio—which is sure to mirror accurately the personality of its director-general.

Looking for this man Griffith you wander from stage to stage of the Fine Arts studio, up and down the paved streets of this miniature city, from the group of technical buildings to one corner to the outdoor gymnasium in the court of the men's dressing room, or on to the great storehouses of furnishings and the shops. Everywhere you hear the name of Griffith. The big projection room is to be clear for his work at 5 o'clock—he suggested a certain kind of hanging for this rehearsal building, and so on. Mr. Griffith said to be there at 5 sharp and, you know, he mustn't be kept waiting.

The listening visitor becomes possessed by the conviction that this invisible director is at least five men. How else is such ubiquity possible?

We stand among the quiet watchers behind the battery of cameras. Here are directors and assistant directors, operators and their assistants, players off duty or waiting for their entrance into the scene. Occasionally a bit of vigorous, high pitched dialogue from a set marks sharply the recording of some intense moment in a play where the use of speech will help the players to an accentuation of dramatic values, but for the most part voices are subdued to ordinary conversational tone.

There is none of the traditional shouting of directors—no fine frenzy at all. These are Griffith directors. They use speech during the actual taking of a scene about as much as the leader of a symphony orchestra at a final rehearsal. A director is arguing with a somewhat self-assured player.

"Well, you know, Mr. Griffith liked it better done that way," he says, and the argument is ended.

We get it in bits like that every few minutes, and all the while we have one eye open for an extraordinarily agile man in shirt sleeves whom we expect to see come tearing across the stage, waving hands full of script and volleying orders (and probably imprecations) like a human cyclone. Oh! we're sure well know him—when he comes. But nobody volleys and no arms are waved. This might all be a drawing room scene if it were not for the motley of costumes and the blazing of the California sun overhead. There is a little subdued laughter among the gathered knots of players behind the cameras and over there a group of women and girls—some in costume and ringleaders, another in modish evening dress and still another in the short riding skirt of the plains—are working on embroidery and—talking about D. W. Griffith.

"He seldom seems to see any one," says a veteran of the studios, "unless he has business to speak of. But he sees everything and seems to know everything. They say he is the quickest and surest judge of character ever. Just one glance and—he has your number."



JOAN SAWYER
The graceful and finished dancer who comes to Keith's next week.



MARIE ATKINS
In "Bringing Up Father," at the Walnut next week.

Continued on Page Four