



From time to time the Evening Ledger gives its readers glimpses of the inside of Photoplayland—the studios where actors and directors make the myriad pictures that later flash across the screen. Here we have the Lasky studio, in Hollywood, Cal. Note the two varieties of stages. At the right may be seen the glass roof of an inclosed stage, while at the left are the platforms of the outdoor stages and the curtains of white cloth to diffuse the sunlight that would otherwise fall directly upon the players and the settings. Both sorts of stages are used for interior scenes. Exteriors are taken under the direct light of day at appropriate "locations," some of them miles away from the studio.

A "New Theatre" That the Movies Built

A Prominent Actor, After a "Rest in the Movies" Plans a Playhouse Endowed With His Photoplay Salary

near being a success over a period of two years that I have the greatest optimism for

By HOLBROOK BLINN

Holbrook Blinn, who has varied his greated of Oscar Wilde's "A Woman of No Importance" by appearances on the green in World photoplays, announced sense line ago that he was concerned series in World photoplays, announces some time ago that he was concerned in a project for the erection of a theatre which was to bear his namedowliess, endowed by the films he has appeared in. Here are some of Mr. Blinn's ideas on the subject:

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THERE is no need for a new theatrebut there is room for one. The revolu-Benary ideas in my proposed enterprise are est numerous. I mean to have a small, comfortable theatre, seating, perhaps, 700, with a halcony, but no stry, and I mean to put on plays not summercially profitable to the ordinary manager.

to the ordinary manager.

Strangely enough, this type of play is soing very well now. When you can put on Tustice" and Shaw plays and get comfortable runs out of them. It's a sign positive that New York is getting big enough to do things in. You see, we're getting to be a centre. Tours are no longer fashionable, and people who want to see plays come to New York.

The Princess Theatre, which I started goveral years ago with a policy of one-act plays was a step in the direction I am proceeding now. The Princess was unsuccessful for the lack of \$1 seats and the small-was of the house. Admission was denied to great class of theatregoers who can and only \$1. At that, with its terrific bestoap of smallness, the Princess came so

A PARIS POTPOURRI ON YANKEE MOVIES

and by the means of excessive taxation, but it would take more than that to exclude from France the reels from Yankee land, says Faris correspondent of the New York Telegram. Pathe's host of cinema houses are packed nightly by the enthusiastic folk, who throng to renew their acquaintance with my "big time" friends, Pearl White, Araold Daly and Edward Arden. "M. Clarel" is fairly worshiped by the French
people, and when the blonde heroine seems
lest indeed, one encourages the other by
saying, "Wait, M. Clarel will save her!"

At the opposition houses Charlot (Charlie Cashin's nom Francaise) is the all-power-mi magnet which drage in the francs. In Stary revue lines are introduced anent "The teries of New York," and a Chaplin imistor. Some disgruntled lady has invaded the columns of a London newspaper and the celumns of a London newspaper and seleavors to tell why films from the United Sizes of America should be "passed up." See regents that she has not been able 'o tiew "The Black Hand" pictures, sent over the property of the Black Hand" pictures, sent over the power of the selecting, if immoral. The personnel of the filmed parties she selects to, and dishes up certain of the cast is this pedantic manner: "I can always tell an American thing directly the curtains part, for the stocky, blunt-featured 'jeune remier weare awful ready-made clothes that a curjous low-crowned hat, while his companion is an exuberant young lady in a

companion is an exuberant young lady in a dirivalst and skirt, with skimp hair down

"As for the child in the play, it is usually all pewish-loking, as though it had been led on candy and doughnuts, and no more powerful indictment of marriage could be spined, so disquieting and sinjater was appearance. One story was about a lay and a burglar, and the infant seemed be leved and cherished by its parents by a sale by night. y and by night. As they were supposed by vealthy persons, I marveled that well and the a nursemaid. After going library the nursemand of eating digner. ilrose the pantonime of eating dinner, by ratre until the thief enters, when, entermobile, they meet him and he departs satisfies, leaving the watch which he has brief in the baby's crib."



LOUISE HUFF Philadelphia girl who will be at the Stanley next week as assus Players-Paragount star Destiny's Toy.

Comedy and Melodrama, Siamese Twins of

THE "polite" or "drawing room" comedy has for a basis some novel twist in plot some unusual situation. It rarely requires any grotesque "make-up" or extraor-

Screen

I will produce only unusual plays, with, perhaps, an occasional revival of Wilde or Pinero. Then, if I get a particularly good one-act play, I shall add that to the regular performance. You see, one-act plays are a sort of hobby with me. I admit I have a leaning for them. You can get such a lot into them and such a lot out of them. But there is no home for them here. Vaudeville accepts only comedies or melodramas, and they are uniformly ill done. And if you add a one-act play to a regular play the audi-In the slapstick comedy we find that melodrama is the basis of the story, and the comedian makes up his character along burlesque comedy lines. Also we find quite often that most elaborate stage sets or "props" are needed.

The difference lies in the fundamental distinction between the two branches of comedy; i. e., the probability that the comedy might be true and the certainty, on the other hand, that such situations are a one-act play to a regular play the audience at once imagines a weakness in the main play. Now, in my theatre, I shall contrive to dissipate such suspicions. The house will have a regular policy and patrons will know what to expect. That is what I want my theatre to have more than anything—a policy. Until Grace George took over the Playhouse there wasn't a theatre in New York with a pegularly sustained policy. Department stores and shops have character, but not theatre. ment afforded. theatres. True, Belasco does not run comic opera in his theatre, and there is a certain dignity to the performances at the Empire, but it is impossible to identify any set policy. The Bandbox Theatre has a character, but it is amateur. I am glad the Bandbox has made good. I think the

yesteryear, wherein the villain ties the hero

and pleased.

I shall try to make my theatre dis-tinctive for good acting to be found in it. There will be no stars, and no actress friends of backers who have to be taken care of whether they can act or not. And there will be no type actors. - We will Impossible rescues are made, wild plots are attempted, and the "suspense" is the element that carries the play. The biggest thrill the bigger the success.

bombs, aeroplanes meeting in mid-air, sub-marines, daring falls, all are thrown into hire their company accordingly. Well, we shall never do that. All of the company will be people who act. I think it was so at the melting pot from which come the best slapstick comedies. These elements in the story make for suspense, and your comedy without suspense is just as bad as your the Princess. We tried never to place a square peg in a round hole.

I am attempting this new project because I fancy it, and because I feel that there is room for it. Not many actors would take the trouble, you know. It will be a considerable strain. That is why I have rested all year in the movies. Apparent drama without suspense, perhaps even

comedy and to show how close to drama it comes, we briefly outline the plot of a siap-stick comedy and of a melodrama. other reason for my film career is that I wanted to get some capital, for I don't expect to make much money out of the new

in a piano, so that when a certain key is touched, it will, through a connection with

Evening Ledger Scenario Lessons 12 and 13 By HARRY O. HOYT, Head of Metro Scenario Staff.

a cigar lighter, ignite the fuse of the bomb and blow the piano and the person playing it up. The bomb is planted there for the purpose of revenge by a man who desires to kill the owner of the piano. The villain is played "straight," as he would be in a drama. There is no burlesque

of the part.

dinary stage properties.

impossible and tolerated only because of the element of humor. In the "polite" comedy there must be an air of realism. The spectators should feel that what they see on the screen could have happened to them if situations similiar to those shown on the screen had arisen in their household. In slapstick the audience never is supposed to take the situation seriously, and improb-abilities are passed over for the amuse-

Melodrama offers a wide field for slapstick comedy. It is easily buriesqued or "out-melodramaed," if we may coin a word to express our meaning. The melodrama of ine to the saw wheel or drops her in his playful way from some skyscraper, offers opportunities for excellent comedy. The audience once took these "daring dramas" seriously and hissed the villain roundly. The

It would be impossible to write a play like this today and get away with it. The audience would laugh. If your comedian is obviously a comedian (witness the make-up and walk), you can play such scenes as these in a most serious manner, yet the audience feels that it is a comedy and is both thrilled

successes of the present day in slapstick are melodramatic comedies. The bigger the Railroad trains in collision, dynamite

To illustrate suspense in the slapstick

In the comedy the villain plants a bomb

the suspense starts. Several people play the plane, and we are shown "close-ups" of every key striking except the one connecting with the bomb. Here we have the innocent bystander in imminent danger of being blown up, and it is comedy. Now consider the drama. A villain endeavors to do away with the

A villain endeavors to do away with the hero. He arranges a bomb attached to an alarm clock, with the clock arranged to explode the bomb at a certain hour, when the hero will certainly be there. The little daughter of the hero is the only one near at the hour set for the explosion.

Again we have the innocent bystander in danger, and it is not comedy. The sucdanger, and it is not comedy. The sus-

ganger, and it is not comedy. The sus-pense is worked up by flashing the hands of the clock getting nearer to the appointed hour, and we look for some rescue. In the first example we have comedy suspense, and in the last we have dramatic suspense. What is the difference? Both situations are worked up without Both situations are worked up without the slightest trace of comedy, yet one regis-ters comedy and one does not. The differ-ence lies in the idea and the development of the story itself, and not in the episode

mentioned.
You must be able to feel what your situations will look like when reproduced on the screen. Melodrama to be convincing must be very real. If it isn't, you are quite likely to have comedy. The line of demarcation is very fine.

Make your plot convincing, and the melodrama will play up in a convincing manner. Make your plot comedy, and you will get a laugh with your melodramatic thrill.

There are times in comedy of the slapstick kind when you are compelled to play certain melodramatic episodes with some

stick kind when you are compelled to play certain melédramatic episodes with some decidedly comic character because the melodrama is too real, too little of the comedy plot having been given.

As a rule, however, if you establish a comedy plot you can use melodrama without stint. Indeed, to secure the proper thrill, impossible melodramatic situations are conceived until it is almost correct to say that nothing is impossible, melodrama-

in all kinds of comedies. Unlike drama, you cannot allow your story to sag in the middle. If you are writing a drama, you can bridge over a drop in interest by comedy or by characterisation or other elements, but in comedy you have a progression of comedy interest starting from the sion of comedy interest starting from the beginning of the picture and culminating at the finish. It is quite permissible to have

Continued on Page Two

The Counter-Plot-Its Importance to Films

WE have now seen how dramas and From the moment the bomb is placed paid some attention to the various elements in photoplay construction. It will be necessary to return to these elements and give them our special attention in some future articles, particularly the interrelation of one element to another.

All this sounds rather difficult, but, as a matter of fact, photoplay writing is a simple, a more or less mechanical operation, if you have the ability to conceive strong dramatic situations and to handle charac-

ters.

In order to write a play for the spoken stage, it is necessary to understand play writing. In order to write a novel, it is necessary to know how to write—to get the viewpoint or viewpoints from which your story is to be told. In order to write a scenario, it is necessary to know how to lay

out a story in scenes.

In order to lay a story out in scenes you approach nearer to the stage form than to any other kind of literary composition. On the stage you have from one to five acts, which usually means from one to five scenes. All your action takes place in these scenes, although the characters may tell in dialogue many things which occurred off scene or which have happened years be-

In the photoplay we are able to show these scenes; hence, instead of three or four acts and as many scenes, we get four or five reels, with perhaps 50 scenes to the reel. The whole object of photoplay writing is to place your action—to tell your story in scenes. In order to tell it in scenes it is necessary to analyze your plot, to treat it mechanically, for it must be subdivided nto scenes, and hence requires mechanical

treatment. To be able to perform these mechanical operations without destroying the beauty or the strength of your drama is the difficulty which besets you in attempting scenario writing.

As photoplays have improved and the art has grown, it has been found by direc-tors and writers that certain words and

ished photoplay. If we were to write a play or a novel, we would find that the same elements entered into it. We would have plot and counterplot. We would have character, atmosphere, suspense, continuity; overything that we have in the photoplay.

Indeed, if we were to study any form of literature, we would be obliged to dissect it and to discover how it was con-

structed. The difficulty in photoplay writ-Continued on Page Two

What Happens from Scenario to Screen

The President of the Mutual Describes the Processes and Tells the Cost of Making Film Productions

By JOHN R. FREULER

Being portions of an address delivered before the General Federation of Women's Clubs, in New York, by the president of the Mutual Film Corpora-tion. It will give scenario writers among Evening Ledger readers some notion of the processes that he between the script and the screen.

THE making of a five-reel production which takes about one hour and a quarter to show involves vast labor and olg expense

We must in the first place have the studio, a special equipment for lighting, scenery and various mechanical accessories. Any studio worthy of the name today represents an investment of approximately one-quarter million dollars.

Next we are concerned with our play,

which at this stage we will call a scenario the working script or skeleton outline of the photodrama, as it is being run into words by the author or more properly by a series of authors who have evolved somebody's plot into a motion picture scenario. The cost of this scenario completed may total from \$500 to \$1500 in common practice. According to the requirements of the scenario a cast must be chosen, actors and actresses em-ployed and extra people hired. In a producployed and extra people hired. In a production of this character the star will draw a salary of approximately \$1000 a week and that this star will be supported by a cast costing perhaps \$2000 in addition per week; that the director who has charge of the production or picture will receive anywhere from \$200 to \$1200 per week; that the cameraman who actually takes the picture receives \$75 to \$150 a week. Now we have our people and our place to work in. It is going to take us a minimum of five weeks to make this picture. Meanwhile we are using the expensive equipment of the studio and perhaps all sorts of accessories and incidental properties like automobiles, special trains and so forth.

Scene by scene a picture is taken until

tically speaking, in comedy.

Situations that could never be used in straight melodrama are in demand, because the very reason they are not useful in melodrama, being too impossible to be convincing as a drama, is the very reason why they are wanted in slapstick comedy.

Suspense should be worked up gradually

be taken, because many scenes are taken over to get desired effects.

In the presence of a conference of the director of the picture, a representative of the executive office of the producing corporation, probably two men from the scenario department, a cameraman, and in most instances the star, a first print or

positive copy from the negative is projected on the screen for examination.

A conference is held. Various scenes are eliminated and shortened or modified. The titles have to be written, photographed and inserted. No expense or care is spared.

various characters in the play moving about in all the scenes as though they were an actual part of the work, and not merely puppets who had no business there at all.

insured perfect light for the camera and

In "The Ne'er-Do-Well" Kathlyn Williams and Wheeler Oakman are supported by many Panamanians and natives of Central

Movie Art of the

The art form toward which moving pi tures seem to be struggling is a form of suggestive pantomime. Just what type of pantomime this will be we cannot yet say, but it seems fairly certain that it will be

on the order of a frank, naturalistic spec-tacle, such as "Cabiria." It will not lie in "screen versions" of famous novels or plays, however much this particular kind of fea-

ture film may be exploited at the present

ture film may be exploited at the present time.

For these "screen versions" are neither more or less than a book or plays, they are essentially different. Moving-picture directors, in their more honest moments, will tell you this. They know only tho well that "movie" plays are not the same in structure or in form as the regular "legitimate" plays from which they are now so often taken. "A fair average," a director said recently, "is this: one-third is taken direct from the original play, one-third more is adapted with considerable alteration, one-third is original—created."

The emotional appeal of a book or play adapted for the movies is much weaker than the emotional appeal of an original "movie" play. Compare an ordinary short film, written especially for the screen, with the photoplay version of some famous novel which you have not read (in case you have read it a fair judgment will be difficult, because associations and memories give the film a certain extrinsic value; There will be no question—the frank "movie" play will be remembered long after the fellous episadic frature film is forgotten.—The New Republic.

Future

all this was taken due advantage of.

America.

The picture is reassembled and it is projected and screened again before another conference with the titles in their proper places. If it passes this examination the negative is then cut to conform with the form and the approved positive print.

According to the scope of operations of the concern through which the picture is released or through which it is sold and delivered to the theatres, a large number of prints are made. In the instance of a certain great comedian a total of several hundred prints are made, while on the usual hundred prints are made, while on the usual five-reel production it would be fair to say that from 30 to 50 prints would be made for release in the United States.

Each of these prints will be 5000 feet Each of these prints will be 5000 feet long and will require many hundreds of dollars' worth of film stock. The making of these prints involves expensive chemical and mechanical processes. Very large quantities of chemicals, costing as high as \$50 per pound, are used. If our five-real production is run into a total of approximately 50 prints, we may say that probably not less than \$30,000 and maybe \$200,000 in capital is tied up in that production. Now the distributing organization begins its work. These prints must be shipped to the motion picture exchange from which the theatres get service. In the case of the most extensive releasing concern in the

most extensive releasing concern in the United States this means supplying prints to 68 branch offices or exchanges. There are others nearly as large. From these exchanges the positive prints are distributed to the theatres which rented or booked this production. I have not burdened you with Continued on Page Two

FLORENCE NASH WAS

THE LADY WITH THE LISP

work without a lisp in the future. To help her keep her word, Willard Mack, the author of "Pansy's Particular Punch," which Miss Nash will present at B. F. Keith's Theatre next week, has carefully eliminated all words which Miss Nash might find difficult to enunciate. He has specially tabooed the word "disgusted," whose comedy pronunciation by Miss Nash has caused all preceding writers of her roles to put it into her dialogue.

It will be remembered that Florence Nash's first real hit came when she appeared in "The Boys of Company B" as a stammering schoolgirl, who also lisped. The stammer and the lisp pleased her audience so much that managers insisted upon her continuing in this sort of role. Frank Daniels had a part written in "Miss Hook of Holland" for Florence Nash and her isp, and again she scored. Then the mangement of "The Algerian" insisted that she play a lisping soubretts. She objected, but the director had his way. However, in Thus is the entire atmosphere of the picture rendered distinctly natural—in violent contrast, for example, to the average photoplay, set in artificial surroundings and taken in some studio far removed from the locale supposed to be represented. Incidentally the brilliant tropical sun of the Isthmus insured perfect light for the camera and insured perfect light for the camera and her next role, that of a manicure girl, in 'When Sweet Sixteen," she cut out all tricky speech, and from then on she discarded her peculiarities of enunciation and spoke straight English, getting her comedy from slang, instead of stumbling speech. Talking to Williard Mack about vaudeville audiences, during a rehearsal of the new sketch, Miss Nash remarked:

"Vaudeville is a great school for actors. In the two-a-day you cannot go out and any it will dawle a bit in this scene and make it up later.' You simply cannot let down for a single minute. You've got to act up to the mark all the time you are on the stage." To all of which the dramatist heartly agreed.

PLORENCE NASH To be seen at Keith's next week in a playlet, "Pansy's Particular Puseh."

Making Movies on the Panama Canal with the Aid of Uncle Sam

contain so much picturesque history and omance as the Isthmus of Panama. And now there is added to the narrow strip of land connecting North and South America a world-wide interest in the Panama Canai —a feat of engineering that will forever remain a lasting monument to American skill, courage and enterprise.

old Princess helped launch it, and I think it will help my new theatre.

In order to establish a policy a theatre must be free. That is why we are building a new one. We must have independence. In searching about we found no theatre in the better theatrical district which did

not have alliances, and so we decided to

success in one role. You know how nagers say "That is John Drew's part,"

"That is an Ethel Barrymore part,"

have rested all year in the movies.

proposition.

the Princess. We tried never to place a

when Rex Beach wrote "The Ne'er-Do-Well," he contributed to English literature the first story written around the Panama Canal. Recently "The Ne'er-Do-Well" was made into a 10-part picture by the Selig Polyscope Company, of Chicago, producers of "The Spoilers," and in this form will be seen for the first time in Philadelphia in the Forrest Theatre tomorrow night. There the Forrest Theatre tomorrow night. There will be a symphony orchestra of 20 pieces, for one thing; a massive stage setting

Mrs. Langtry and That Gogo Sign

Report comes from Boston that Mrs. Langity, while appearing at Keith's Thea-tre there, was considerably annoyed by a joke that was perpetrated upon her unwit-

tingly.

The semaphore is in use on Boston streets these days for the purpose of regulating traffic and the Farber Sisters, recently at Keith's here, who were on the bill with Mrs. Langtry, conceived the notion of burlesquing it. They obtained a long stick and had signs painted reading "Stop and Go." These were naited on opposite sides of the stick. When Miss Farber turned the "Go" sign toward the wings the "Stop" sign showed to the audisnes. She would then blow a whistle, the orchestra would stop playing and the stage hands would run across the stone just as pedestrians do when traffic is opened up.

Mrs. Langtry preceded the Farber Sisters on the bill. While she was presenting the playlet. "Ashes." Constance Farber was practicing with her semaphore in the wings in plain view of the English actrees and her company of imported actors. When she slanced in the wings and beheld a buge sign reading "Stop" in black letters staring at her.

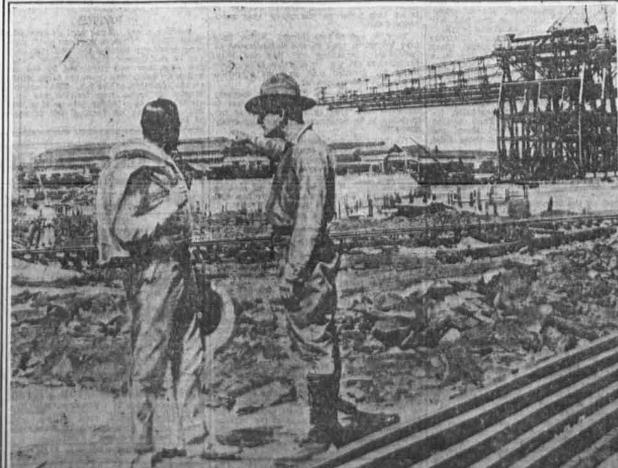
She decided that it was a new method of The semaphore is in use on Boston streets

t her. She decided that it was a new method of She decided that it was a new method of the stage manager to communicate with players without disturbing the audience. When the sign aways around and read "Go" Mrs. Langtry was even more bewildered. The moment the curtain fell she demanded indignantly the reason for these electronate signals, and man't in the least appy usual she issued the truth.

THERE are few places in the world that | representing the Pacific end of the Canal. | which serves as an atmospheric background for the film; a large crew of men, back-stage, working out sound and voice effects. and, last but not least, a Hawalian quartet to sing old Pansmanian, Hawalian and negro melodies.

All this entertainment will be in keeping with the spirit of "The Ne'er-Do-Well," siderable expense, to both these locations. Special permission of the United States Govwhich is a story of the construction of the Panama Canal, and all the scenes of which were actually filmed on the isthmus and in Central America. A company of several Canal Zone, did everything in his power to canal Zone, did everything in his power to actual part of the work, and not merely respectively.

hundred players was transported, at a con- | help the good cause along. As a result,



A bit of Rex Beach's "The Ne'er Do Well" as it was visualized on the Panama Canal Zone. Note the engineering structures in the background.