

# The Daily Movie Magazine

NO, THIS IS NOT MARY PICKFORD!



This is Gwynedd Vernon, a little English actress, and generally called the "English Mary Pickford." She recently visited this country.

## THE MOVIE FAN'S LETTERBOX

By HENRY M. NEEDY

W. S. S. writes: "The first purpose of the motion picture play is entertainment, but this does not mean that all instruction, philosophy or other than ephemeral thought must be eliminated before the entertainment point is reached."

"Earbourn" was a picture crammed full of almost sensational dramatic material and yet it put forth plausibly a theory regarding an after-life condition which upon first thought would seem to be presented entertainingly. My means of motion pictures. The spiritual teaching remains, no matter what detail of the story has been forgotten.

"But it is true that a play such as 'Earbourn' is dull and stupid to a large movie-going public. People must be given the entertainment they wish—it is their right, and if they do not get it they will cease to pay for that which is offered. Often people do not know the good until they see the bad, and if the bad is always kept from them and they fail to see the beauties of the good they are merely going to lose interest entirely.

"I remember an old doctor in the little town in the West where I was born who was the despair of all the 'uplift' movements in the village. He was on the public library board and insisted that since people paid the tax they were entitled to find on the library shelves such books as gave them pleasure. So he placed 'Ager' books there, and Mary T. Holmes was represented, together with others of that same school; books which do not particularly elevate, perhaps, but which, with certain people, do entertain.

"Next of us is largely to the fact that motion pictures are an infant industry, are not well acquainted with the authors, producers, directors or players. Therefore we have little but the names of the pictures to guide us when we see a play advertised, and as for motion picture names—

"In the legitimate theatre a 'Belasco play' is a 'Wood' farce, a 'Theatre Guild production'—all these are mentally catalogued by the theater-goer and a Theatre Guild devotee would likely before hand than attend a 'Wood' farce; he would not enjoy it. Perhaps much adverse criticism of photoplays comes from people who often see the wrong picture—a mistake they would not make in the legitimate theatre. Even theatres establish reputations for a certain type of play; the movie-goer has not even this to guide him.

"The solution, of course, is greater publicity of the producing and directing sides, and in this your department fills a true need.

"Beyond the Rocks is a vicious picture, presenting an ugly story in sickly sweet terms. Gloria Swanson cannot act, but this is not her fault entirely—it is the fault of the people who starred her and her director.

"I am convinced that many asinine things done by our actors and actresses come about through unskilled directors and Elite Ferguson. I wonder if the acting art of the motion picture has not been somewhat exaggerated—the scenes so very short and little more than tableaux in most cases. However, it seems the best players have had stage experience. Such, to me, appears to be almost necessary for an actress to fully portray the character in the brief intervals allowed."

Samuel Glasman writes: "In the last few months I have been delightfully surprised by the quality of some of the films. The German films sort of start the parade. Do you think that their example might have been the 'copy' to American directors?"

"I saw a few weeks ago a picture of a Fanny Hurst story. It was not her name, it was the story of a girl who, working as an usher, was being courted, or rather kidded, by a good-for-nothing ticket scalper. He promised things 'tomorrow.' Her father, a sickly woman, wanted to see the girl follow before she died."

a reader of your column for quite some time, but have never before entered the 'lists,' as I am not a movie fan. But Hector's letter—heaven forbid!—is enough to call into play my old army vocabulary.

"It probably has never occurred to 'Hector' that the column is not conducted for his sole benefit. Therefore, we must not be too severe with him, as he has been very patient in not mentioning his disapproval long ago. But please don't answer his questions—the regular movie magazines thrive on such stuff.

"Now that I've started, I would like to voice my approval of your stand regarding the 'Hun,' Von Stroheim. But enough has already been said on this subject, so I'll pass it up.

"I notice that Gloria Swanson receives quite a bit of 'panning,' and while I think that she certainly has been a failure recently, my opinion of the opinion that she couldn't be otherwise, since she has become so closely associated with Elinor Glyn. Glyn certainly has put a crimp in the chances for any possible career as an actress that Gloria may have had.

"I have noticed that it seems to be the custom for a 'first-timer' to name their favorites. Here are mine: Harold Lloyd, Jack Holt, Milton Sills, Charles Chaplin, Harrison Ford, 'Doug,' Buster Keaton and Elliott Dexter. As for the females—I like 'em all, with a few exceptions, like Pickford, Normand, Con, Talmaage, Clara K. Young and Mrs. Sidney Drew.

"I certainly enjoy your column and hope you will continue to run it as is."

## BEBE GIVES PROOF THAT ACTING IS MATTER OF SKILL

WHETHER an actor should "feel" his part and act accordingly, or whether he should retain perfect control of his own presence and make his acting entirely a matter of skill, is a question which will probably never be settled as long as there are actors to dispute it. The question boiled up again not long ago when David Warfield visited the Lasky studio in Hollywood. Warfield is probably the best known and most enthusiastic advocate of the latter method in this country. The story is told about him that to prove his point that he retained perfect control over himself, he took a friend backstage with him and made comment on what he saw when he turned to the audience. The scene was highly emotional and the audience was in tears—but Warfield could still act and play the clown.

During lunch hour at the Lasky studio, Gloria Swanson and Thomas Meighan, his host, argued against him. Bebe Daniels favored his method, and said that she always retained control of every faculty she possessed—the more emotional the scene, the more perfect her control.

"To prove it, she staged an emotional scene then and there—a scene over the sad fate of a dish of ice cream she was eating.

"Poor little ice cream," she sobbed. "So cold and pale, and when Bebe gets through with it, there won't be any more." Two large tears formed in her eyes and ran down her cheeks. Her voice and expression had all the trappings of a mother hovering over a dying child. More tears. "Poor, innocent ice cream—good-by!"

Warfield applauded. "There you have the art of acting," he said. "It's easy to feel things, but it takes skill to act."

## TWO QUAKES RECORDED

Georgetown Observatory Reports Heavy Shock at Midnight Washington, June 12.—(By A. P.)—A heavy earthquake shock was recorded at the Georgetown University seismological observatory last midnight and a less severe tremor, probably more distant, was recorded about 6 o'clock this morning.

The first quake began at 11:54 o'clock last night and continued until 1 o'clock this morning, with the greatest intensity about five minutes after midnight. The center of the disturbance was estimated at 2100 miles from Washington in a southerly direction.

The second quake lasted about half an hour.

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