# Chestnut Street CARDS AND CALENDARS



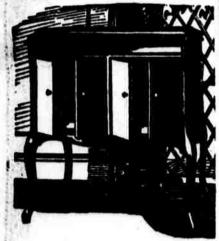


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### The Daily Movie Magazine

### THE MOVIE FAN'S LETTERBOX By HENRY M. NEELY

Jess Smith writes: "You say you ke the fans to differ, so please read our seventy-seventh letter to you, even hough the other seventy-six were never mailed (but now we're mad, been saving up for a long time), so here goes

with a medal for your patience. "Let's get it off our chest at once and say that, honestly, lately we'd like to be kind to you, give you a fishing line and let you ramble off with Mr. Reid. And we used to think you were so nice and kept you with our favorites, along with the other he-men-Mr. Meighan, Dick Barthelmess, Milton Sills, Monte Blue, James Kirkwood, etc. "No, we aren't fickle, either, and Wallie is 'back' solid and strong with

Lunt's. Are you coming 'back'? "Now, who are the 'falsely inflated stars'? And why do our realest men act in all that hokum?

"Did somebody want life as it actually is?

"Is 'The Loves of Pharnoh' life as we see it? 'Manslaughter' (speaking of problem pictures) and 'The Man Who Saw Tomorrow' aren't life as we see It-we who go to town each day to earn our livings in a manly or lady-like way, but we read the papers about the court scenes at murder trials, the millionaires' yachting parties, their divorce cases and scandals, etc., etc.

'Do we sit through a 'thriller' depicting the joys or sorrows of a newspaper office, a bank or a schoolroom, or the thrills of marketing and shop-

or the thrifts of marketing and shop-ping, or a dinner party, a week-end visit in the bosom of our own or our friends' families, or a football game or a teafight around these yere parts?

"No, we'd like life on a ranch, a moose hunt in Canada, or at a country

"Then, surely, we want the pic-turesqueness of 'The Loves of Pharaoh.' "The New Want the picturesqueness of The Loves of Pharach."

The Prisoner of Zenda. "A Fool's Paradise." 'Smilin' Through, 'Hurricane's Gal. 'Blood and Sand' (such a star, unmentionable in a letter with real people, though he was passable in that, which shows we are not prejudiced, but his posing and conceit are sickening—we are more vindictive than Heine) and 'Manslaughter' (whose faults were more in the plot than in the interpretation, or are we wrong?)

The Sheik.'

"I saw Milton Sills in 'Skin Deep' last night. Sills is a great favorite of mine and his acting and make-up were splendid in this picture, but the plot, mio Enrico, 'twas terrible! I believe with a picture of that type I lose faith in dectors.

"Before I close I wish to ask you one question. Some time ago you innterpretation, or are we wrong?) "Pictureskew! How bout the one with the top hats, the conservatories, the garden parties, the island paradise, its Viceroy, its Theodore Roberts and

its Lawrence Wheat? We, too, were sorry to see Mr. Meighan in that kind of picture—the best is none too good for him.

"Is 'The Eternal Flame' life as it actually is—or was? But we go to see it because Norma's there and some one (who likes her as much as you do-sssspishus) calls her a screen aris-tocrat, and because she and Alice Terry and Lois Wilson and Dorothy Dalton always were our pets, not alone for their beauty and talent, but for their gentility and sweet womanliness, which

shine through their portrayals.
"Was that gem 'Tol'able David' life as we see it? Yes, guess 'tis, as the ountaineers know so surel Our Leading Citizen' brass tacks, and 'Hurricane's Gal' (we never saw life on the briny deep like Dorothy Phillips gave it to us, but you did, along with the other half, so we take your word).

Anyway, it was great!
"Do spare us from too many matterof-fact, dryasdust stories that blase old men like and give us the sweet with the bitter and don't forget 'The Miracle Man' and 'Cappy Ricks' and 'The City of Silent Men.' (Always enjoy a Meighan fight.)
"Now, old friend, tell us we are for-

given and enlighten us. What shall we eek in pictures to admire and to re-

(Plausibility-that's the main thing. If the picture makes you really believe that life is lived by somebody as it is depicted on the screen, then it's plausible and has at least that merit. But naturally a story that is plausible to you may not be plausible to me, and vice versa. It hinges very largely on our own viewpoint and knowledge on what we've read and seen ourselves and how broadly we've lived. If a picand how broadly we've lived. If a picture shows a radio operator sending out an S. O. S. with sparks flying out from all shells and from all parts of his apparatus, that may be plausible to some people who don't know anything about wireless, but it isn't plausible to me because I know that it isn't true. Therefore, to be universally plausible, a picture must be true. I'll amend that; a picture may be absolutely true, but not be plausible to people who that; a picture may be absolutely true, but not be plausible to people who don't know that it is true, and doubt it. But that's the fault of the people and not of the picture. If you are convinced that sea life is, or has been, or might easily be as shown in "Hurricane's Gal." then "Hurricane's Gal' is a plausible picture to you. But, if you don't know sea life of your own knowledge, the only thing to do is to accept it as shown and believe it unless those who really do know say that it isn't true.

less those who really do know say that it isn't true.

To me. "Loves of Pharaoh" was plausible. I wasn't there when the old guv did his grand and lofty tumbling act off the reviewing stand, but nothing in the picture made me say definitely "I don't believe it." Therefore it was easy for me to put my whole subconsclous self in the hands of the director and the actors and let them do as they liked with me. If they had at any time introduced something that was not plausible, they would have jurred

any time introduced something that was not plausible, they would have jarred me out of my subconscious attitude and the jar would have made me at once actively antagonistic, skeptical and suspicious of the whole performance.

That's where Cecil De Mille almost always fails me. He gets complete control of me and then suddenly he wakes me up with a jolt and I find he has been laughing and sneering at me the whole time. Griffith the same way.

And the reverse is why I love Dick Barthelmess and Norma Taimadge and Rex Ingram and a few others.

Gosh, I'm a taikative guy!)

Patriarch writes: "I thought that I would never fall for the lure of your column, but circumstances sometimes force people to do more foolish things than writing to your column. If you are mad already, tear this letter up.

"This isn't what I aimed at when I started this letter. In today's paper there is a letter by 'Gentle Julia,' in which she says that she has yet to see a letter from a man eulogizing the talent of Valentino as a great lover. I as I'm supposed to be a man, will tell her why. Whenever a man spends his little two bits (and, incidentally, here also), he does not go there to we if hig. Guigliem knows how to make better love than Ham Hamilton; he goes to me the person in questio display his



ping, or a dinner party, a week-end visit in the bosom of our own or our friends' families, or a football game or a teafight around these yere parts?

"No, we'd like life on a ranch, a moose hunt in Canada, or at a country club on Long Island—life as the other haif lives it.

"Then, surely, we want the pic-

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(Sixteen years ago names meant nothing in pictures. So it is almost impossible to give you such information as the name of the woman in the cast with Mary Pickford in "Daisies Won't Tell." Some fan with a remarkable memory might be able to furnish the information, but it's too much for me.

for me.
Yours truly on "Skin Deep," It was too much to ask of us—far too much. As to your comment on screen acting, I have long been of the opinion that a man should always kiss a won an as though it were their last kiss. You never know, you know. And, anyhow, "last kisses" seem to be the only ones that give the girls a thrill nowadays—at least, so they tell me. Naturally, I know nothing whatever about it my-self.)

steps over to the side of sentimentality, but as a whole he remains on the safe J. E. P. B. writes: "I suppose you thought that H. E. F. had me completely bluffed with his reply to my question on Griffith's small-town viewpoint, but, if possible, I'll try to stage

comeback.
"To begin with, a statement is made To begin with, a statement is made that there is no connection between good and beauty. Here I, at once, disagree. Nothing that is really bad can be beautiful. It may be pleasing and appealing to the senses, but beautiful, no. I honestly believe that no matter how much lavishness or effort may be expected. pended to conceal something that is morally bad, the result will be distasteful to those who are not dazzled by mere display. This may sound like preaching, but take your own stand



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"Griffith is accused of sentimentality. I draw a distinction between sentiment and sentimentality; the former involves the tenderness, pathos, comedy and tragedy of life, while the latter exaggerates these phases of existence for the purpose of creating emotional effect. 'Over the Hill' is the best example that I know of sentimentality, while 'Tolia'ble David' is an excellent example of the use of sentiment. In producing plays or pictures which are merely cross sections of life at one particular time, there is always a temptation to step over the border line between sentiment and sentimentality. I must admit frankly that Griffith approaches that borderline at times and occasionally ateps over to the side of sentimentality, but as a whole he remains on the safe

"I prefer to consider Griffith as a "I prefer to consider Griffith as a

an in the cast? At that time she was known as the woman with the pretty lips and Miss Pickford was known as the girl with beautiful eyes."

(Sixteen years ago names meant nothing in pictures. So it is shinost impossible to give you such information as the name of the woman in the cast with Mary Pickford in "Dalaies Won't Tell". Some for with a sendances, and sentimentality; the former involves any one could have directed it.

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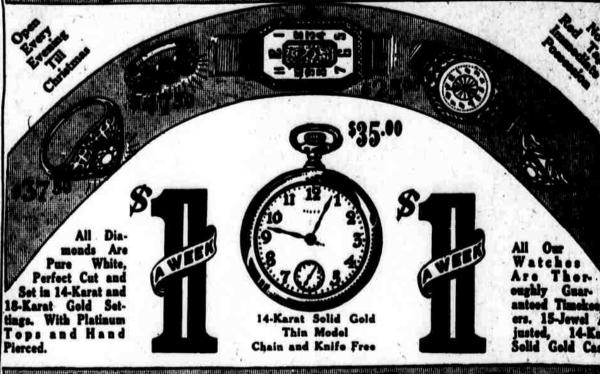
(How was this picture received? The work was not fool-proof, so that and sentimentality; the former involves any one could have produced to small-town mind? Surely, the story was not fool-proof, so that and sentimentality; the former involves any one could have produced to small-town mind? Surely, the story was not fool-proof, so that any one could have produced to such the such except the best, was that the such except the best, and therefore gives it was the forgiven. ing by occasional touches in his year tures and by whole productions like Broken Blossome' to educate the man of the public to accept the best.

"Returning to H. E. F.'s letter, is a necessary to be 'ironically cosmopolitan' in order to avoid having a small town viewpoint? I never thought so before, but I am always will have

learn.

"My idea of a small-town viewpoint is this: It means an otter incapacity to interpret phases of society outside the scope of a very limited personal experience, together with an unwillingness to understand anything outside of their own views. The small-town mind cannot create and therefore condemns creation, and tries to crush it. I might add that this type of mind is not found exclusively in small towns."

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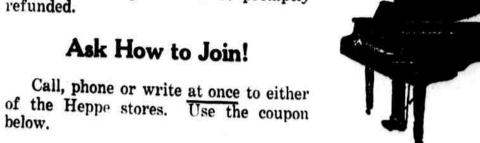
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