

MADAME NAZIMOVA FAILS IN EMOTION

'The Red Lanterns' Described by New York Literary Critic.

EARLY REELS DELIGHTFUL

Less Sensationalism in Scenes and Finer Recognition of Values on Part of Star Desirable.

NEW YORK.—By popular demand Nazimova and "The Red Lantern" had a return date at the Rivoli last week; a fact, we are informed, without precedent.

For the earlier reels are so good that we thought we had found in them the rainbow's end. The street in Peking; the cobbler, Mahlee; the slip on a girl who stops to have her shoe mended.

The Death of the Grandmother. However, as a half caste, Mahlee has at least never had her feet bound and we seen are diverted by the old Chinese grandmother who in her bed on the top of the stove, lies longing for death and yet discovers through some dark magic that, though the owl has called three times, death will not accept the grandmother of a girl with big feet.

Theft and superstition, the homeliness and simpleness mingled with the fantastic, the fine dignity of most ordinary actions, such as the washing of a dish, each activity having its own place in a long established civilization, these are made by Madame Nazimova's economy and simplicity of motion and by a photography almost as creative as Tourneur's into an expressive whole. Capote has made sincere and typical, like legend, like the very face of a people. This, now, is what we call direction.

From then on there is not sincerity enough for one more paving stone. It is as though the work of one man stopped and another began. Well, when we tell you that the half-white girl, fainting from a swoon across her ankles is found by a handsome all-white youth from the mission, then, surely, we need tell you no more. You know already that Mahlee is taken to the mission, that she becomes its favorite daughter, that she falls in love with the handsome youth and he with her, that, as he is struck by the half-whiteness of the hand locked within the all-whiteness of his own—a circumstance which up to that moment he apparently has not happened to notice, you know the murky whisper that thrills through the audience. "It's yellow." The mission shares the hero's shock at one-half of the heroine's nationality and things begin to happen; things that might have made one of the great pictures of our day.

The "War Maid." For Mahlee, in her passion for revenge, flies to the Boxers, who set her impersonating the goddess of the red lantern, the Chinese war maid, returned to earth that she may rouse her people to drive out the foreigners. Finally, when her own father has refused her offer of peace, if only he will acknowledge her, the goddess vouchsafes to appear to the empress of China and enlist her sympathies on the side of the Boxers by predicting that a great victory shall sweep the foreigners from the land. The prophecy failing and the goddess being deserted by her own people, she takes poison; the victorious foreigners, among them the all-white lover, enter the palace only to find her dead body, seated on the forsaken throne.

Now is not this an ideal story for a picture? An ideal story for a picture of Mme. Nazimova's somewhat sinister variety and force? We cannot resist calling attention to the fact that, whereas we are sick to death of always complaining of picture stories and always paying homage to picture acting, here is a story worthy of the best acting there is, a story upon which the acting, the direction and the scenario all turn their backs for the sake of nothing more nor less than some street scenes.

Well, take the street scenes. They are effective, but their effectiveness is that of a ballet—of a hippodrome, and not a Russian ballet, if you please. There are a lot of beautiful settings, of beautiful rushings and tumblings in picturesque lightings—crowd splendor, as Vachel Lindsay calls it, which survive as best they may amid the hustle and the hubbub, amid the masses of people strenuously obeying somebody's idea that the brass must cry and the trumpet blare, and we'll cut a dash as one of the most lavish and opulent productions ever made. You have the sense of multitudinous activity of workers working like coillies, of directors and assistant directors shouting all day through megaphones, of care and toil and conscientious consulting with costumers and decorators and of multifarious expenditure.

A "Mobby" Mob. But as for any sense of a people set afire, not one flash. There is no mob, no patriotic or national sentiment, no atmosphere of religion frenzied to fanaticism; there are only crowds running up and down planes, most pictures starting out to be "big pictures, this one contains congregations of scenes, congregations more or less disorderly, instead of what is being themselves toward a satisfying great. Those who saw the uprising of the people around the cathedral in J. Gordon Edwards' direction of "The Hunchback of Notre Dame" will remember the gathering together of restive individuals, the growth of a mysterious, convulsive agitation, the tension of all personal feeling into the tossing of a furious, pent-up sea, until the solid wall of high-piled ocean sweeps at last into the outraged but still ominous and engulfing shadows of the great cathedral; they know what can be done in crowd-splendor that is drama and not ballet. The loss of heart-breaking, but of all losses we wonder what Mme. Nazimova thinks of the loss of her part.

turn should develop into the goddess dictating terms to an empress, then to the vanquished war maid, defiant to death. Instead of the novelty of incident and circumstance, the emotions, the psychology which these personages might offer her, what does the scenario offer her? Well, what we might call in the movies the regular thing.

In Mme. Nazimova were a helpless employe we should rather praise than blame her for giving to this nonsense only second-rate effort; it is worth nothing better than the stereotyped emotions or lack of emotions which she employs in it. But she is not helpless in the hands of either director or scenarioist; she is not a person whom one easily sees weep with delight when they give her a smile nor tremble with fear at their frown. She might surely have had any development of the scenario she liked. Why does she treat the war maid like a highly decorative scrap picture? Or if she wants to keep Mahlee a mere peasant with no race pride and race despair save as she snivels about herself, what is she doing that death? What point is there in the defiance of that thronged corpse unless it is also the defiance of China?

BANKERS' AID NOT NEEDED

Grain Corporation Announces Agreement With Millers.

NEW YORK.—With a total of \$1,150,000,000 at its disposal for financing the purchase and carrying of wheat purchased from the farmer under the government guarantee, the United States Grain Corporation, which is handling the crop again this year, is not expected to call upon the banks for any large loans to help carry the crop.

A letter sent out by Julius H. Barnes, United States wheat director, to more than 300 banks all over the country with regard to the new form of contract between the grain corporation and dealers and millers and its bearing on credit that banks may advance to dealers and millers, says:

"The wheat director, in order to make effective the congressional guarantee of wheat prices, proposes to make this effective to the producer by trade contracts, particularly with those trade agencies reaching the producer, rather than by license regulation. With this in view, after numerous trade conferences, we have devised contracts which we expect to execute with probably 2000 mills, 15,000 grain dealers, 2000 flour jobbers and 15,000 bakers. Through these contracts is constructed a machinery to reflect a lower resale price of wheat products in this country should that become necessary, and with the least possible chance for misrepresentation or abuse. It is an essential feature of these contracts that those facilities that buy from the producer should pay the guarantee price as named in the president's proclamation, or a fair reflection thereof, and contracts with these two trades are framed accordingly. It is important that there be the fullest understanding and confidence that credit extended to those facilities on basis of their contract obligations to pay the guarantee price will be properly secured."

Peas Known as "McAdoo's"

WASHINGTON.—Farmers who want to buy quantities of the variety of field peas introduced several years ago by the United States department of agriculture from Germany, and then known as the "Kaiser" pea, will save trouble by not using that name any more. These peas are now known as "McAdoo's" and they are as widely distributed through the northwest as liberty bonds, which caused the substitution in name.

PRESIDENT'S WIDOW FIRST AS HOSTESS

Mrs. Benjamin Harrison Heads Entertainment Bureau.

HOMES OPENED TO MEN

Constant Stream of Young Men From the West Pours Into Parlors of New York Mansion.

NEW YORK.—Mrs. Benjamin Harrison, widow of President Harrison, has won the distinction of entertaining more officers of the American army and navy during the present war than any other hostess in New York. As head of the entertainment bureau of the officers' service department of the New York War Camp Community Service she has afforded clean amusement and entertainment to 1400 officers a week. Of course, many of these are "repeaters," who found in Mrs. Harrison's department just the sort of pleasure they were looking for.

Perhaps the most striking phase of this bureau's work is the quiet manner in which it sent the officers from all parts of the country into the homes of the social elite. There has been a constant stream of young men from the west pouring into the parlors of the mansions of the city for afternoon tea, dinners and dancing parties. And all this through the efforts of Mrs. Harrison.

"These men have seen a side of life that they would never have seen in any other way," said Mrs. Harrison. "Sometimes I wonder if it won't spoil them when the time comes for them to go back to their old life, but then I reason out that the experience will have broadened them, made them better and will help them in their lives."

"The houses which have been opened to them generally welcome none but those whose names appear prominently in the society columns of the newspapers, but during the war they were opened to hundreds and hundreds of men from all parts of the country who had heard of New York's social life as a thing never to be seen."

In addition to seeing the homes of these wealthy people, the officers have had an opportunity to meet the debutantes of the season—have danced with them, dined with them and eaten with them. The girls whose pictures have appeared in the fashion magazines have become "chums" of the men from the west.

The "golden horseshoe" of the Metropolitan has been thrown open to these men, too, and this came about as the result of Mrs. Harrison's efforts. During the winter season Mrs. Harrison had a desk at the Pershing club tickets left there by boxholders who found some other engagement interfering with their pursuit of the opera. These tickets were turned over to the officers who wandered into Mrs. Harrison's office looking for the day's entertainment. And a touch of olive drab was visible that night in the box tiers of the opera house.

"How the boys have loved to dance!" exclaimed Mrs. Harrison, as she told of the work of her department. "We arranged dances for them at the Imperial and the Holland House, and the girls who attended were the best in the city." There were innumerable dances in the private homes of the hostesses who had used Mrs. Harrison's bureau as a means of getting in touch with the lonesome officers, and these were as well attended as the bigger affairs at the hotels. Despite the arguments of the theater managers that they had turned over all their spare tickets for the enlisted men, the hostess-general talked and

worked until she completed arrangements whereby the officers could purchase seats in almost any theater at half-price. This arrangement still holds good, and the officers are applying for the tickets every day.

Outdoor Fields Enjoyed. But winter has gone, and the season for outdoor sports has set in, so Mrs. Harrison has centered her efforts now on securing good places for golf, tennis and yachting for the officers. Already she has lined up several courts and links for the men, and in many cases is able to offer them the girls with whom they danced through the colder months as partners in the games in the open air.

Motoring has always been an appealing invitation to the men, too, and many parties have been supervised by Mrs. Harrison. She tells with pride of some of the men who were started on the trips early in the day and finished with a dinner in one of the big homes of the city.

"The officers are just as human as the enlisted men," she says, "and we ought to provide just as wholesome amusement for them while they are in this city. That is why I have been making this bureau my contribution to the war work. I thought we could stop when peace was declared, but the demand is just as great now as it ever was, and I think we will have to keep it up for several months."

Read The Oregonian classified ads.



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