

# The Silent Drama

Douglas Fairbanks, in "Down to Earth," at Peoples.

**TODAY'S FILM FEATURES.**  
Sunset—Sessue Hayakawa and Fannie Ward, "The Cheat."  
Liberty—George M. Cohan, "Seven Keys to Baldpate."  
Columbia—Enid Bennett, "They're Off."  
Peoples—Douglas Fairbanks, "Down to Earth."  
Star—Charlotte Walker, "Mary Lawson's Secret."  
Majestic—Bryant Washburn, "Skinner's Baby."  
Circle—Marjorie Rameau, "The Debt."

THE motion pictures are slowly creeping into the legitimate drama. Last year their only representative on the stage was in "Johnny Got Your Gun," one scene of which showed a moving picture studio. Already this season two plays depend either in part or entirely on the motion picture business. "The Lasso" has a last act set in the scenario department of a movie studio and the hero turns scenarist just in time to save himself from total eclipse. "Business Before Pleasure" has, of course, the entire moving picture business as a backbone of entertainment.

It is whispered that Adolph Zukor, president of Famous Players-Lasky Corporation, has put to do with the correct photoplay atmosphere found in the play. He not only suggested some of the lines, but fixed up the taking of the film exhibited in the play and put in some of the film titles. Mr. Zukor is rewarded by having his name mentioned in the play as the most prominent motion picture magnate in the country. Further reciprocity may be seen in the lobby and on the theater walls of the Eltinge, where all the Paramount stars are exhibited in posters to lend atmosphere to the play. Mary Pickford, Bill Hart, Douglas Fairbanks, David Griffith, Marguerite Clark, Pauline Frederick, Billie Burke, Lina Cavalieri and all the other Paramount and Arterart notables are there. The theater, by the way, is named for another Paramount star, the latest addition to the ranks of the silent drama, Julian Eltinge.

**One Way to Pick Plays.**  
Let photo-playwrights tear their hair over this—but this is the way one moving-picture magnate judges their product.

William Fox, head (and shoulders) of the various cinema enterprises that bear his name, is a mighty busy man. He has a private barber shop in his office. Every afternoon his staff barber arrives, and Mr. Fox retires to the barber chair. While the barber thus plies his trade, a young woman enters, and the plot begins; she brings the plot with her, and she begins it. Jack Lait, who writes the story for the American Magazine for September, has seen it and knows it to be true.

Sitting in a far corner of the room, she begins to read scenarios in a metallic unemotional voice.

"I wouldn't let an actor or a director read me a story on a bet," says Mr. Fox. "Those fellows can make anything sound good."

While the lady with the zinc throat reads on, Mr. Fox lies in the chair under the soothing touch of razor, brush or vibrator, his eyes closed, half dozing. Not until he has gone to bed, many hours later, does he turn back to the scenarios. Here is how he accepts scenarios:

"The ones I can remember when I get in bed are the ones I want. I know that those which registered on my half-sleeping brain hours before, and still stand there in relief, are the ones that will register on the brain of the audience. Those are the ones that 'stuck' with me. Those are the ones I want."

William Fox is only 23 years old, but has established himself around the world with offices in every civilized land, and attained an AAAA rating in Bradstreet's.

**George M. Likes "Flickers."**  
At last George M. Cohan has been cornered. No avenue of escape was open for Uncle Sam's pet nephew last week when the interviewer, after making sure of this fact, approached the famous Yankee Doodle comedian, author, actor and producer of the theatrical world who is scoring another brilliant success in his second motion picture effort, "Seven Keys to Baldpate." Even the red "exit" lights were many feet away. On many occasions since George M. made his screen debut in "Broadway Jones" he has successfully dodged interviewers and, strange as it may seem, his efforts in behalf of personal publicity are nil.

On being cornered, however, Mr. Cohan proved the most congenial of all democratic celebrities, of which there are only too few, and soon forgot the fact that he was being interviewed as a result of his enthusiasm over his newest field of conquest.

"I like the movies; I think they're great," he exclaimed, with a characteristic twitch of his mouth. "I learned a lot of interesting things from my first Arterart picture, 'Broadway Jones,' and in 'Seven Keys to Baldpate' I think I am a regular film actor. I would like to produce a picture myself just in order to handle the big crowds in the outdoor scenes. That must be great!"

"Don't make the mistake of judging motion pictures in the same light as theatricals. Pictures represent another business entirely. And remember that the screen director has the whole world to draw on for scenery. If he wants to take an ocean scene he can go right down to the Atlantic or Pacific and get the real thing while the stage producer has to have the water painted on a drop."

"To make good in motion pictures," Mr. Cohan continued, "you don't have to be equipped with stage experience. In fact, you have more chance if you've

never been on the stage, because if you have been a 'legit' actor you have to unlearn practically all you know about acting except how to make up—and even that's different. You have to register. Gestures with the hands and arms mean very little; it is almost all in registering emotions on the face.

"The strong studio lights are very hard on the eyes," said Mr. Cohan as one of his stage managers approached and waited for an audience with his "chief." "The screen actor has to be as careful of his eyes as Padrowski of his fingers. Before going to work in the morning it is best to cover the eyes with a film of castor oil for protection. Practically every motion picture actor has to bathe his eyes morning, noon and night.

"Another curious thing about the regular picture actor is that he can express and sort of feeling without saying a word. At first I spoke the words to correspond to what I was registering, but the others just mumbled. However," concluded the new screen star with a smile, "as modeled to his assistant, 'I too, can now register' without even making a sound, so naturally feel that I am now a full-fledged 'silent-actor.'"

**Mountain Named After "Doug."**  
Celebrities have had institutions and even trees named after them, but Douglas Fairbanks is perhaps the first to have a mountain peak bear his name.

It was during the production of mountain scenes in California recently for "Down to Earth," the new Fairbanks-Arterart picture, that the popular actor was approached by D. G. Desmond, United States Government official, who after 10 minutes of eloquence concluded by saying that it was his pleasure to announce that one of the most picturesque mountain peaks had been named in his honor in Yosemite Valley. The energetic Douglas thanked the official for the honor and proved his appreciation by doing a hand-stand on a dizzy precipice of the mountain.

Douglas Fairbanks Peak, according to the Government representative, is perhaps the most popular objective point in the whole region. On the way to this point one passes Vernal and Nevada Falls, returning down the short zig-zag road to Agassiz Column and Sentinel Rock. There is a comfortable hotel on the summit and many take the stage here for the Big Trees, breaking the all trip from Sentinel Hotel on the valley floor. The projecting rocks which mark Douglas Fairbanks Peak upon returning from his trip to the mountain top Fairbanks announced his intention of building a cabin on his new lofty lair where he will spend his time between the production of pictures.

**Storm Scene Thrills.**  
Jupiter Pluvius was outlittered at the Thanhouser studio in a miniature rendition of a storm conducted by Director John B. O'Brien under the auspices of Lloyd Lonergan, author of "Mary Lawson's Secret," in which Charlotte Walker is star.

A ship had to be sunk in Long Island Sound in a terrific gale. To work out the details of the sinking it was decided to experiment with a miniature ship, having dolls on the deck. A large tank was filled with water and dirt piled up at one side to represent the Connecticut hills. The usual overhead perforated "rain tank" and an aeroplane propeller created the driving tempest and made enormous six-inch waves.

An unusual lightning effect was obtained by making tree-like slits in half a dozen places on a black backing with a separate light back of each tree-like slit. This was an invention of Mr. O'Brien and his camera man, H. B. Harris.

The storm was made and taken at night, and the next day it—Well, old J. Pluvius was just naturally so insulted about it that he sent a northeast wind that blew down the Thanhouser storm apparatus and then buried the debris under a 12-inch snowfall.

**Enid Rides for Red Cross.**  
Never was a Jockey prouder of victory, and few received greater reward than Enid Bennett, the little Triangle star, when she ramed home to a scalding finish as the winner in the sensational race shown in "They're Off."

The race provided the Triangle star with a win the race, and she did, although she had to present a punishing finish. Her riding was good, almost professional, but her artist friends, jested with her, flouting her victory, deriding her success.

They dared and dared her to ride again. Finally they began wagering, whoever won to give the winnings to the Red Cross. Enid Bennett accepted the challenge. The horses were given a two-hour rest.

Then the test came again, this time in deadly earnest. The professional was assured he would receive a \$250 bonus if he won. Miss Bennett was riding for charity. She was astride a heady brute, almost too heavy for her arms.

And she rode him with abandon and consummate skill. It was a hot and spur finish, Enid Bennett high on the shoulders, lifting her horse at every stride. She won the race, and with it a large sum for charity.

**New Pearl White Serial.**  
The great demand throughout the country for a Pearl White serial photoplay has caused Pathé to release "The Fatal Ring," the serial in which Pearl White is starred. It starts at the Pantages Theater a week from tomorrow.

In "The Fatal Ring" Pearl White, who plays the leading part of Pearl Standish, is supported by the greatest cast she ever had in any serial. Warner Oland, who plays the part of Baron Huroki, "The Exploits of Elaine" and "The Iron Claw," while her last offering was "Pearl of the Army."

**Mary Has Special Guards.**  
If there is anyone who does not believe that Mary Pickford is a person of great importance and worthy of a great deal of attention and consideration, all they have to do is to ask Mayor James Rolph and the police department of San Francisco.

Miss Pickford and her company, under the direction of Marshall Neilan, visited the Bay City to film scenes recently. The company arrived in the evening and went directly to their hotels and in the morning when the star approached her automobile to go on location she found it surrounded by a cavalcade of 15 mounted policemen, having dolls on the deck. A large lieutenant, at first "America's Sweetheart" thought she had committed some crime which she had forgotten, but the detachment of police gave a salute and the lieutenant informed her that Mayor Rolph had heard of her arrival in the city to do some work and provided the police for her protection during her stay in the city.

Wherever Miss Pickford goes to film scenes she is immediately recognized and surrounded by huge crowds which quite frequently interfere with the work of the players. Mayor Rolph, remembering the sensation Miss Pickford had caused when she appeared in San Francisco to assist in the sale of Liberty bonds, placed the police department at her disposal.

To see "America's Sweetheart" riding up the boulevard in her automobile surrounded on all sides by the mounted police created the impression among people that royalty was in town.

The Metro Pictures Corporation wants stories for Madame Nisimova, for Ethel Barrymore, for Emily Stevens, for Francis X. Bushman and Beverly Bayne and for Emmy Wehlen. For

Madame Nisimova the stories should have modern emotion roles; for Miss Barrymore the drama of the drawing-room; for Miss Stevens the keen, mental, neurotic American young woman of today; for Mr. Bushman and Miss Bayne the great outdoors; for Miss Wehlen the ingenious melodrama that permits of swift action well dressed. In every case it is drama, and not comedy, that is desired.

So spoke Maxwell Karger, general manager of the Metro Pictures Corporation, in his studies last week. For almost three years Mr. Karger produced an average of 40 Metro features annually in the Rolfe and Columbia studios. He now is charged with the production of Metro special productions.

Earle Williams, Vitagraph's star, has been double-crossed by Fate. He doesn't get a vacation this year. Just when he should be stepping on the self-starter of his big motor and pointing for a secluded trout stream, as he had planned, he has to stick around the Brooklyn studio in makeup.

About seven weeks ago he was taken ill and spent most of the period in bed. He had his best heat off blood poison, and only recently returned to the studio. Worn by his long fight against tetanus and tired anyway, by an unintermittent season of work, he suggested to Albert E. Smith, president of Vitagraph, that he needed a vacation.

"But you've been away seven weeks," said Mr. Smith.

"But not on a vacation," replied Williams. "Lying in bed, with a sore foot, is not exactly my idea of a good time." "Well, let's finish up this picture you were working in before you were taken ill, and maybe a vacation will turn up," said Mr. Smith.

So Williams resumed his role and had worked one day when two of the girls in the cast were taken ill.

At the end of a week Mr. Smith met him and said: "Well, there's the vacation, Earle; I told you it would turn up." "Fine," replied Williams. "It's just like taking transcontinental trip in a captive balloon."

Elsie Ferguson, the popular stage star, who has just made her motion picture debut in a screen version of Robert Hichens' well-known novel, "Barbary Sheep," finished her characterization in this play last week. Conceded to be the most elaborate film production ever staged in Fort Lee, New Jersey's famous motion picture producing center, this offering is expected to create a sensation wherever it is shown.

For the big Algerian street scenes, in which 2000 persons took part, a complete village was built and on the last day of the production of the film several thousand "fans" gathered on the streets and nearby rooftops to watch the unusual proceedings. Staged under the able direction of Maurice Tourneur, this photoplay, it is predicted, will prove the greatest vehicle ever afforded Miss Ferguson. The book from which the film was adapted proved Robert Hichens' greatest success since "The Garden of Allah." The supporting cast included Pedro de Cordoba, Lumsden Hare, Macey Harlam, Alex Shannon, Maude Ford and many other talented screen artists.

**"SKINNER'S BABY" IS GOOD FUN**  
Clean, Wholesome Fun Found in Picture-Running at Majestic.

"Skinner's Baby," which opened an engagement at the Majestic Theater yesterday to hilarious crowds, is as good, if not better, than "Skinner's Dress Suit" and other stories of the Henry Irving Dodge series. It is absolutely clean, wholesome comedy drama of the best type, and as such will please any audience.

The keynote of "Skinner's Baby" is the naturalness of the acting, depicting every-day occurrences. Bryant Washburn, as Skinner, and Hazel Daly, as Honey, "act natural." They never lose sight of the fact that they are enacting very human faris.

Instead of a dress suit it is a baby that fills to overflowing the cup of

joy from which Skinner and wife, Honey, drink. A feature of the play

is the surprise climax, a decidedly unexpected twist of affairs.

Here's the story in brief: Skinner realizes that there is something lacking in his home. The head book-keeper at the office announces one morning that he is the proud father of a bouncing boy. This announcement sets Skinner to thinking. Soon afterwards, Honey, his wife, confides

her great secret. It is to be a boy. Great preparations are to be made for the arrival. He is to be named William Skinner, Jr., and he is to be President some day—in short, he is to be the most wonderful man. Skinner is at the office when he is notified that he had "better come home." He rushes out and, after a series of misfortunes,

(Concluded on Page 2, Column 1.)

Enid Bennett in Scene From "They're Off," at Columbia.

George M. Cohan, and His Pet Camera Used in Filming "Seven Keys to Baldpate" at Liberty.

Charlotte Walker, Star of "Mary Lawson's Secret," at Star.



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