



FROM FILMLAND



Seen a Ham-Bo? Jitney Jim Finds Many—West Bound

By GENE MORGAN.

DIDN'T you just laugh yourself sick, Jitney?" chuckled Myrtle, the lovely box office girl. She was referring to that screaming tandem-reel comedy of a hobo entitled "Hungry Hank in Society, or How He Kicked the 400 as Count de Ties."

Jitney Jim refused even to spread out a grin.

"What, me laugh at that hobo?" he said as he leaned against the ticket window in the Flytime Theater. "Naw, I was ready to weep any minute. No hobo comedy is funny to me any more. My eyes are moved to tears, my dear, whenever I see a film about a poor bum who is chopping the distance between Cheyenne and Chi by massaging his ear against the axle of a freight car. You see, when I see that hobo stuff I'm thinking. I am thinking of the new kind of hobo—the rick who is beating it out to sunny, sandy California these days.

"I mean the Ham-bo, and my heart goes out to him."

"Why, what on earth is a Ham-bo?" demanded Myrtle.

Jitney Jim was willing to elucidate—that is, to get out from under the word. He opened his face with his fingers, as if it were a dictionary, and spoke:

"A Ham-bo, my dear, is a combination salad of human nature. It is a union of two, opposite types. It combines the Actor, meaning Thespians Artist, meaning Ham, and Hobo, meaning tin can tourist. Now, you must understand, the hobo isn't turning actor, but the Ham is turning hobo. Hence the Ham-bo."

Here's the Explanation:

"You see, Myrtle, it used to be different with the actor stranded out in the hayseed belt—where they don't use belts, but galluses and safety pins. Also, where they appreciate Indian medicine shows with free pills at every performance to such classics as 'East Lynne' and 'Julius Caesar,' with two Caesars and two Brutuses and a pack of real bloodhounds.

"When the show blew up, and the hotel manager attached his costumes and his other shirt, it wasn't really so hard for the actor after all. He went to a hockorium and soaked his fur-collared heater and then took the immigrant coach for dear old Broadway. Or if worst came to worst, he could tread the weary ties that led to the great city.

"He walked those ties as proudly, my dear, as if they were the carpeted boards of a great theater. He scorned to hop a freight, either to ride the rods or to dive into a box car via the stage entrance.

"Anyhow, he always got back to Broadway, where his talents were appreciated. And, though starving, he preserved his dignity, my dear, with a big, brass-knuckle D.

"It is there that they see pictures of beautiful bungalows, grassy back yards and—don't overlook this dream—themselves seated at a table groaning under a heavy weight of real food.

"There they picture themselves as drivers of their own luxurious cars, where they needn't smoke all of their cigar for fear of wasting a portion of the valuable Havana filler. It is there—but you know the rest, Myrtle.

The Place for the Actor Man.

"Ah, Los Angeles! That's the place for the actor man. That's where the jobs are, that's where the salaries grow on trees. For Los Angeles is the paradise of the star, the regular actor and the Ham. Los Angeles is Movieopolis. New York is—well, Broadway is just 3,000 miles away from the feed bag.

"Myrtle, would you believe it, there are more actors working in Los Angeles today than ever worked a manager for a pass on dear old Broadway. They are not playing two-a-day. They are eating three-a-day. They're living in swell, vine-clad bungalows instead of the hall room frankfurter dens of New York. And as for owning automobiles—say, there's a wreck or two in Los Angeles every night. You see, when they go out motoring they try to hog each other's spotlight."

"But, listen, Jitney," interrupted Myrtle. "Why are you a-weeping about actors, if they are living so grand?"

"Get me right, kid," said Jitney Jim. "I'm not dealing out sym-



pathy for the moving picture stars of Los Angeles. But my heart goes out to the great army of the thespian unemployed. They all want to hie to California, and they'll hie high or low, either under the wheels, or up on the pergola of a cattle car. Such a tourist is a Ham-bo.

"He doesn't need any money to travel, and his outfit is as simple as it can be. In fact, his raiment is closely related to the hobo's hand-wrecked raiment. The railroad detectives who poke between the wheels can tell the difference when they fish out a real hobo and a future Kerrigan who is freighting his way to Loz. You see, the Ham-bo who is bound to get to California doesn't care about the dignity of his profession. All he wants is to get there, where the movie cameras are grinding all the day and the sun is shining, and love scenes between the hero and heroine are spoiled by real estate agents trying to sell 'em a house and lot on the corner of Climate avenue and Sitting Bull boulevard.

The Ham-bo Outfit.

"Your true Ham-bo's outfit is simplicity itself. He starts out with a light summer suit which he wore through the hard winter on Broadway. Once it was a natty suit and looked every bit worth \$11.26. But now it's the kind of a suit Mary Pickford would pick to play a boy's part in. But one may be honest and still wear patches. The Ham-bo sets forth with shoes which once were trim and neat, with cloth tops and pearl buttons. But by the time he has hit the grit to Omaha the peds are very much a la Charles Chaplin, with one toe on the lookout for brakemen and conductors.

"The Ham-bo has one consolation. He doesn't need any make-up. This is kindly supplied by the Union Pacific, so he has blackened eyebrows and a face made up for the minstrel first part long before he has been kicked off a blind baggage onto a downy bed of cactus. But he doesn't linger there long. It may feel luxurious and restful, but he is pricked by his conscience, which uses size B-34 carpet tacks exclusively—and he rambles on his weary way to Movieopolis."

"Poor thing," sighed Myrtle, sympathetically. "And does he always land a job in Los Angeles?"

"He is met by twenty moving picture magnates in their limousines, and they fight for the honor of engaging his services," said Jitney Jim. "Ya-as, they do—but why should we tell him the truth and blight his young life? He'll find out soon enough, poor gink, that his star of hope is only a tall gim on the junk wago."

The Story of My Life By KATHLYN WILLIAMS



I WAS born in Butte, Mont., where I spent all of the early years of my girlhood.

It took the reverses in fortune which came to my family while I was still a senior in high school with thick blond braids hanging down my back to bring out the ability to rely upon myself which has given me a place among the actresses of the movie screen. I started out to try my fortunes before my days in the schoolroom were over and planned my career alone.

Getting a Start.

A western theatrical manager who believed that I possessed the personality and possibilities of an actress, and the visit of a stock company to Butte, proved the beginning of my success. I appeared in small parts in a Montana playhouse until one day I was seen by Senator Clark, the Montana copper king, who offered to give me the opportunity to finish my training which I longed for.

When William N. Selig wanted a leading woman for his stock company in Chicago he remembered that he had seen me and my work in the stock company of the western mining town and engaged me to create the leading roles in his Selig picture plays. My enthusiasm soon made my work valuable in the moving picture drama, and I ran the gamut of sentimental and tragic heroines.

While I preferred the possibilities of the spoken drama at the time of my affiliation with the Selig company, somewhat over five years ago, I advanced rapidly in the silent drama.

My greatest successes have been in the dramas where wild animals have figured vitally and where the jungle beasts have been focused by the camera without iron

bars between. I have been lost in the jungle. Leopards have leaped upon me only to be driven off by drastic efforts on the part of attendants. I have met savage, black-maned African lions, ridden on the back of an elephant through the jungle, made a flight in a hydroplane and fallen into the lake, and escaped unharmed in train collisions and locomotive wrecks.

Bearding the lion in his den, however, and making boon companions of savage beasts is a nerve-racking occupation. It is always a relief when a scene with a wild animal is over. At first I was timid. Now I feel positive fear. In the beginning ignorance was bliss. Now I realize the peril and have begun to fear animals.

I am always seen on the screen with wild animals who are never held in either by ropes or collars. They move as freely as they would in the jungle. I have never been in any but the Selig plays. From the studios in Chicago I went to the Pacific coast, where the exterior scenes were staged for the production of Rex Beach's novel, "The Ne'er Do Wells." I am enthusiastic over this production. It seems to me it is greater even than "The Spoilers."

As to the Dangers.

Of course I know that there are those who look at a wild animal picture and say, "Fahaw, there's no danger in that sort of thing. Those animals are trained and as harmless as kittens."

But the people who make such remarks do not know animals. Let them talk to any animal trainer in the world and hear what he has to say about the dangers of dealing with wild beasts. Animals that appear in films, of course, are not circus trained animals. They are somewhat domesticated, but still liable to any of the many freaks

that cost the lives of trainers, actors and actresses every year.

The silent drama is a real art as much as the art of the spoken drama. Famous authors, famous actors, famous players and novels all seem to be drifting motion pictureward, and the time has passed long since when the motion picture could be mentioned in a vein of contempt.

It seems that the art of pantomime, the significance of a facial expression, a gesture, a smile, a frown, is an art that may be constantly studied and improved upon. Every emotion can be realistically conveyed by the artistic actor and actress in the motion picture art.

I like the screen much better than the stage. The conditions are ideal and the incentives force an artist to throw the entire personality into the work.

Conditions Are Ideal.

When I want recreation from the pastimes in the Selig jungle zoo I work among the roses in the flower garden of my California home. I love roses of all varieties. To me they have always been the most beautiful of flowers.

If my mood is for a quiet evening at home I select a volume of the classics or a novel by Charles Dickens, who is my favorite author.

And all of my sports are those that will keep me out of doors in the fresh, open air. I suppose I acquired these as part of my Montana heritage. I can swim like a duck and have ridden over the western plains like a cowboy. I can manage a big touring car and am very fond of a game of tennis.

My favorite plays are "The Adventures of Kathlyn," "The Spoilers" and two plays which I wrote myself, "The Leopard's Foundling" and "The Young Mrs. Eames," a society drama.

Lessons for the Ambitious Young Photoplaywright

By LOUELLA O. PARSONS.

THE greatest play ever written is built on the base of a simple idea. You will find, if you dissect it, that its foundation is elementary and that it has reached its distinction by the clever treatment it received at the hands of its author.

Never overlook the commonplace things in life in your mad effort to find the unusual plot. It is these same unpretentious things that unfold for you the possibilities for a story. The hearts and minds of the people who live in the ordinary walks of life contain a wealth of valuable plot material. The warmth of human affection and the subjects that find the whole world kin are the real source of every fruitful plot germ.

"Daddy Long-Legs," the play that was dramatized from Jean Webster's serial story, had a phenomenal success. Nowhere could a lighter, less complicated story be found than this simple play.

I have always found in seeking plot material that a study of the authors who have arrived has been of untold value. Study their style, review their plots, and you will find that you can correct many of your own faults by a careful comparison.

Thomas Hardy is said to have given us the best example of pure English of any of the authors. His "Tess of the D'Urbervilles" was made into a screen adaptation by the Famous Players Company. It is plotful enough and contains sufficient action to make a most interesting photodrama, but, strange as it may seem, the stage version was far superior to the picture.

Study Good Writers.

Thackeray and Scott's books are worth studying for their plot development, though few of them will lend themselves to the screen. Thackeray has an entertaining way of telling his story, but he writes with that old-time conviction that all women are either saints or devils. All his characters are either Amelia Sedleys or Becky Sharps, and nowhere does he strike a happy medium. But in spite of the fact that he would have us believe all clever women wicked and all good women stupid, Thackeray presents in his "Pendennis," "Vanity Fair" and other novels some excellent examples of plot building.

Scott's beautiful old-time romances, while seldom screenable, still furnish plot examples. "Ivanhoe" was filmed by the Imp company and made a very pretty picture, with King Baggot and lovely Leah Baird in the leading roles.

Dickens in his stories of the poorer classes wrote with a realism that has given him a never-to-be-forgotten place in the annals of the literature of the world. His "Pickwick Papers" were immortalized by the late John Bunny, but only a few of Dickens' books are screen material for the reason that so much of their cleverness depends upon the inimitable Dickens description.

George Eliot, the world's most famous woman writer, endowed each of her stories with a birthright of individuality. She wrote of the common people and of the common things, but many of her books are imbued with touches of her own tragic life. George Eliot handles her people in a masterly fashion, playing on the emotions of her readers with all the power of her skill. "Mill on the Floss" is said to be the story of her own early, starved life.

As an example of originality of thought and plot construction George Eliot furnishes almost a textbook for the amateur writer.

Watch Good Plot Development.

I am treating the style of these writers aside from their value as photoplaywrights. A plot is a plot whether it be written for a novel, play or scenario. The reason many of these old-time masterpieces contain so little scenario value is because of the fact that most of their charm lies in the conversation—in other words, they are too talky-talky.

I do not want you to copy anyone's style of expression, any more than I want you to copy another writer's idea. All I ask is that in studying plot development you read the works of the better class of authors.

Develop your own style. Create along with your plot an originality. Make your story of such strength in plot, style and finish that it will attract the attention of the most cynical editor who ever sat behind a scenario desk.

One script sold contains far more than the money you receive. It means your entree into the field of successful photoplaywrights. Once recognized, your path is much less thorny, your way is clearer and the chance to dispose of your other photoplays looms in sight like a happy star of hope.

The greatest number of letters that found their way to my desk this week were from pupils taking me to task about my statement that there were no new plots.

I want to say my meaning is this: There are said to be exactly thirteen original plots. But there are hundreds and hundreds of ways of dressing up these plots. New clothes and new treatment of an old plot can make one of the most interesting and original photoplays ever written.

For instance, the triangle has been done since the time of the first novel, the love story of the girl whose father is unwilling to have her marry the poor suitor is another plot that has done yeoman service, yet these two plots are still used and have been dressed in a thousand different garments, and probably will continue to form the basis of other photoplays.

Answers to Movie Queries

R. B.—If you will send me a self-addressed, stamped envelope you shall have the names and addresses of the film companies who purchase scripts. I know nothing of that revision company, so I can say nothing for nor against them. I have never heard of any men connected with the company, so I do not believe they are photoplaywrights of much prominence.

P. S. P.—When a subtitle breaks a scene merely designate the return to that scene by saying "Back to Scene." Your second question is answered by the word vision. A man's thoughts expressed in a picture is called "vision." The L-Ko company is part of the Universal corporation. The questions about the players are answered in another department in the daily or Sunday movie column.

E. A.—I said that a scenario had no value in the eyes of the law and could, therefore, not be copyrighted. If you publish and copyright a story no one can adopt it for the screen without your permission. I said there are no new plots, but that the thirteen original plots have many new clothes and could be dressed so that no one could possibly recognize one as one of the thirteen original plots.

Charley Stine's Hobby

By ROSEMARY GREY.

CHARLEY STINE, the good-natured Essanay comedian, would rather play pinochle than eat. That's saying a good deal, for Charley is some eater. He likes anything from corn beef and cabbage to diamond back terrapin and broiled lobster.

But many a day when Mr. Stine is engaged in doing his best to uphold his title of champion Essanay pinochle player his lunch hour rolls past before he gets a chance to leave the game.

Charley says he has three hobbies—his family, his work and pinochle. He has a baby some 20 months old, and if you want to see Mr. Stine smile just ask after Mary Jeanette, "brightest, prettiest and sweetest baby in the world," says Essanay's fat comedian. Mr. Stine has a young wife, and as she is often taken for his daughter Charley is frequently given credit for having two children.

