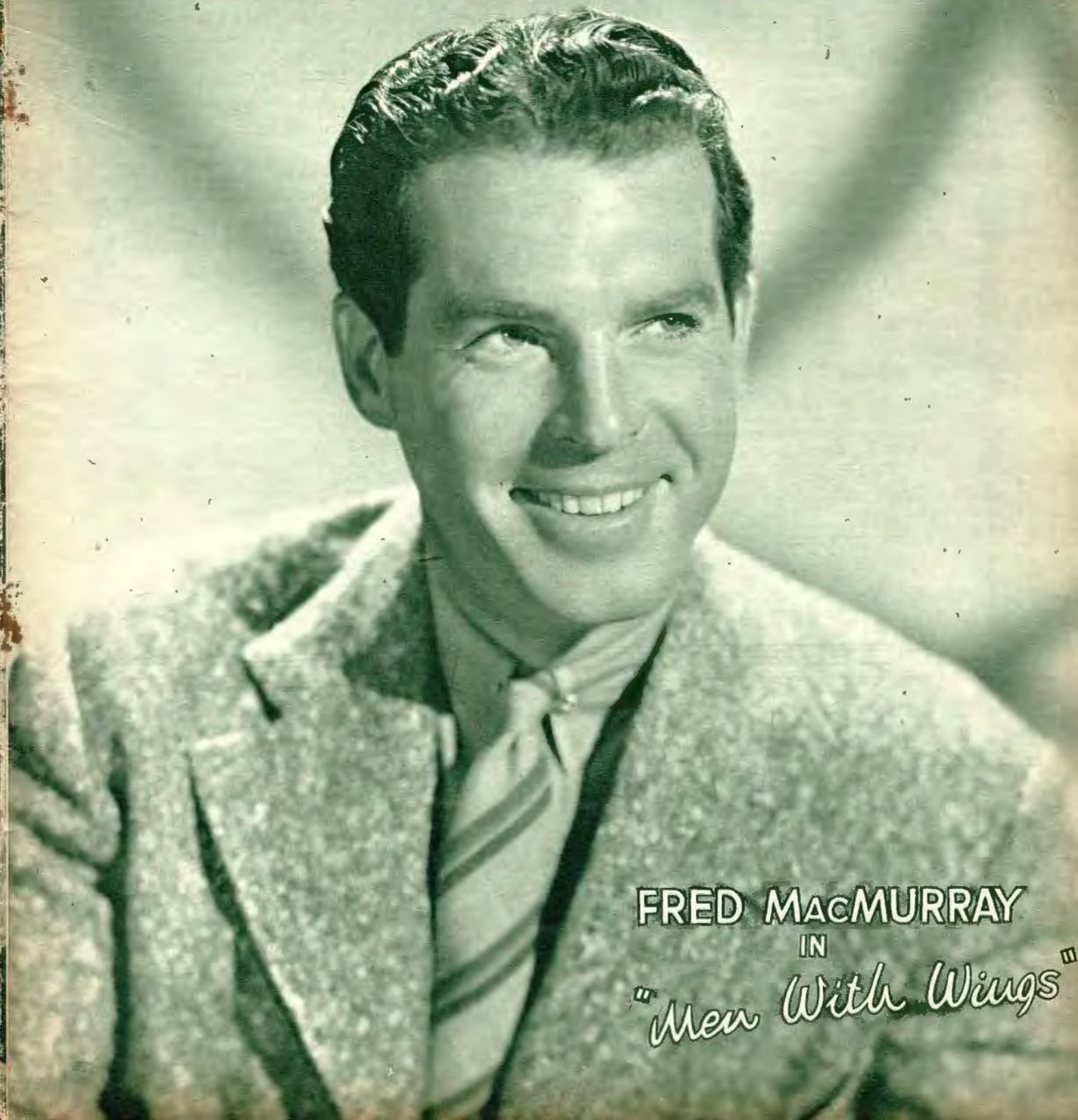


FREE *Inside* — GREAT 16-PAGE "MEN WITH WINGS" SOUVENIR OF

Film Pictorial 2nd

Every Thursday



FRED MacMURRAY

IN

"Men With Wings"

Coming Shortly

Watch this page for New Films that may come to your town soon

*—Good. **—Excellent. ***—Outstandingly brilliant, must not be missed



Latest way for boy to meet girl apparently is for boy to run down girl in a fast motor car, as demonstrated by Michael Redgrave and Jessie Matthews in "Climbing High."

ADVENTURE IN THE SAHARA.—A not very original melodrama of the Foreign Legion. There is the inevitable cruel commander, forcibly played by C. Henry Gordon, and the desert outpost which is constantly raided by bands of Arabs. Story is of aviator who joins the Legion to avenge the death of his brother which has been brought about by the cruelty of a commander.

****ANGELS WITH DIRTY FACES.**—Pat O'Brien and James Cagney in one of the most gripping films since *Scarface*. Imaginatively written with forceful dialogue and brilliant acting, it is the story of two friends, one of whom becomes a racketeer and finally goes to the electric chair; and the other, a priest. But it's the climax that counts.

***COWBOY AND THE LADY.**—Mildly entertaining comedy of a politician's daughter who marries a cowboy, first causing

EVERYTHING HAPPENS TO ME.—Max Miller breaks away from his screen role of Evans with less happy results. Here he has the role of a vacuum cleaner salesman who is hired by a Parliamentary candidate to run a campaign.

***FOUR'S A CROWD.**—Comedy of mixed matrimonial intentions—with well-tried ingredients freshly dished up. If you enjoyed *Libelled Lady* a year or two ago, you'll like this new variation on a similar theme. Errol Flynn, Olivia de Havilland, Rosalind Russell and Paulette Goddard star, and there's good work from Walter Connolly.

****FOUR DAUGHTERS.**—A grand film of the simple things which make up family life. Adam Lemp, his daughters and sister go about their small-town business of earning a living, finding husbands, and keeping the house tidy. Then into

a scandal and finally bringing happiness to her family. Gary Cooper back to his old form as the cowboy and Merle Oberon charming as the girl. Harry Davenport shines in a supporting role.

*****DAWN PATROL.**—Exciting, intelligent and brilliantly acted story of flying during the Great War. The commanding officer is forced to keep sending men to certain death, and the other officers disagree, but each in turn sees that it is necessary when he succeeds to the command. Errol Flynn, Basil Rathbone and David Niven—the latter stealing all acting honours.

their lives come four men. A grand film, made up of a number of small friendly touches. Claude Rains is the father, and three new stars loom into the horizon . . . Priscilla Lane, Jeffrey Lynn and John Garfield.

****GREAT WALTZ.**—Not just a Hollywood orgy of spectacle but a sensitive musical life story of Johann Strauss, with a musical background of his charming waltzes. Sometimes it becomes just a shade bolsterous but that is a minor point. Stars are Lulsa Rainer and Fernand Gravet.

****KEEP SMILING.** Gracie Fields' best film to date, the producers having succeeded magnificently in getting her warmth and humanity down on cold celluloid. Story a trifle unoriginal, but there are excellent songs, a first-rate supporting cast, which includes Asta, and a grand slapstick finale.

***LAST OF THE CAVALRY.**—Demonstrators of a new tank begin their demonstrations before the cavalry and, as you can expect, trouble results. One of the cavalry colonels is taken for a ride and the tank turns over and kills him. The identity of the man who tampered with the engine isn't revealed until after a thrilling court-room climax. Good acting from Preston Foster, Madge Evans and James Gleason.

****LETTER OF INTRODUCTION.**—This film almost comes into the three-star class because of a fine piece of acting from Adolphe Menjou and a first-rate story and direction. Story is of famous actor, known as a Great Lover, who discovers that he has an illegitimate daughter who wants to go on the stage. In the end he is killed in an accident, but the film isn't a scrap gloomy, for there are Edgar Bergen, "Charlie McCarthy" and Bergen's new creation "Mortimer Snerd."

****OLD BONES OF THE RIVER.**—A delightful travesty of *Sanders of the River* packed full of laughs, and once more proving the team-value of Will Hay, Graham Moffatt and Moore Marriott. Hilarious.

(For Next Week's general releases reviewed by JOHN MILFORD, turn to page 18.)

JOHN MILFORD REVIEWS THE NEWEST FILMS

*CLIMBING HIGH

PATIENTLY I waited for Jessie Matthews to sing. And then, three-quarters of the way through, I remembered that she doesn't, except for a brief lapse into opera which is a skit anyway.

Frankly, I was disappointed. The story itself conformed so much to the usual Jessie "musical" formula, that I couldn't help feeling that something was missing. And the something was the music.

Now don't think that this film isn't good, because it is. Granted, the plot is sometimes painfully slight, but Carol "Bank Holiday" Reed has applied his directorial skill with the usual brilliance, and as a comedy, "Climbing High," emerges with flying colours.

Diana is an ordinary working girl who gets a job as an advertising model. Nicky is a wealthy young man who persists in running her down with his fast, long-bonneted car, and falling desperately in love with her each time. But because he is a rich young man, Lady Constance, played by Margaret Vyner, thinks otherwise, and provides the obstacles to the match which are the pivot for the plot. But the obstacles are overcome with the usual ease of "musical" comedy, and in the end Diana, who is Jessie, gets her man, who, of course, is Michael Redgrave.

The biggest laughs come from Alastair Sim as a communist. The writers have given him grand work to do, and if he keeps on scene-stealing like this, he'll soon be starring in his own right.

LITTLE TOUGH GUYS IN SOCIETY

COMEDY that depends for its humour more upon "gags" than upon the main theme or situations. It tells of six slum boys who are given the chance of staying at a country mansion, because a doctor has prescribed companionship with poor boys as a remedy for the apathy of a certain rich youngster.

When the slum boys arrive, things begin to happen—and before they go, the wealthy youngster has recovered all his interest in life and becomes a fine upstanding citizen.

Although the nominal heroes are the Little Tough Guys (a kind of Dead End Kids second eleven), the film is really a grand battle between two of the biggest scene stealers in Hollywood, Mischa Auer and Edward Everett Horton. If Auer is the winner, it is only because

his role gives him more opportunities. Mary Boland dithers agreeably as the rich boy's mother, and Jackie Searle plays the boy himself.

**PERSONS IN HIDING

THERE is a genuine air of authenticity behind this film which follows the career of Freddie "Gunner" Martin. It is based on a book written by J. Edgar Hoover, head of the Federal Investigation Bureau of America, the equivalent of our own Scotland Yard. Actual experiences of Hoover and his department have been expertly woven into a swift moving drama, which has an added interest by showing the modern scientific methods of criminal investigation.

Freddie Martin's career up to the time he met Dorothy Bronson had been along the lines of robbing gas meters, but the girl induced him to aim for bigger things. She had been brought up in poor surroundings and wanted to go places and have fur coats. In Freddie she sees her opportunity to gratify these desires. Freddie falls genuinely in love with her, marries her, and they work together on bank hold-ups and other criminal exploits, the girl providing the brains and Freddie the brawn. Dorothy takes Freddie to her home, an out-of-the-way farm, hoping to use it as a hide-out, but a broadcast reveals everything and the couple are ordered to leave by her parents. Trapped by G-men, they escape once again as the result of Dorothy's quick thinking. Then they overstep the mark when they kidnap a millionaire, and demand ransom money which they cannot spend because they know there is a record of the numbers of the banknotes.

The only genuine thing about Dorothy is her love for her mother, and it is only when the police hold her mother for complicity in the kidnapping that Dorothy betrays her husband and gets herself caught as well to clear her mother.

Patricia Morison is a very lucky girl to be given the role of Dorothy. But she has made fine work of it and gives a brilliant performance. She and J. Carol Nash, who convincingly plays Freddie, dominate the film, while Lynne Overman is excellent as the principal G-man.

*STAND UP AND FIGHT

A STIRRING story of American pioneering days which doesn't quite hit the mark. Bob Taylor, tougher than ever, is Blake

Cantrell, a good-for-nothing Southern dandy who is tricked into becoming a labourer on Captain "Boss" Starkey's stage coach route, which is battling hard for custom with the new railway.

Boss takes an immediate dislike to Blake and treats him as roughly as he knows how—which is quite a lot. While working for the company, Blake learns that Boss is helping a gang which, while ostensibly helping negro slaves to escape, is really stealing them and selling them back into slavery. Blake tells the local authorities that he will trace the criminals and he does so, at the risk of his life.

Blake and Boss become uneasy allies when the slave gang try to wipe them both out, but when they save one another's lives in a terrible snowstorm, they become firm friends. Robert Taylor is not only tough, but also acts very well indeed. Wallace Beery, not having to bother about being lovable, is grand as the villainous "Boss," and Florence Rice, Helen Broderick, Charles Bickford and a strong cast give support. The love interest, however, is kept well in the background.

ON THE OPPOSITE PAGE

To the four great players whose portraits appear on the opposite page, winners of the 1939 Academy Awards for acting, we offer our sincere congratulations. They are Bette Davis, who wins the feminine award for the second time with her magnificent performance in "Jezebel"; Spencer Tracy, winner for the second year in succession with "Boys Town"; Walter Brennan, whose work in "Kentucky" won him the title of best male supporting player; and Fay Bainter, best supporting actress for her brilliant study in "Jezebel."

F.P.8



Academy
Awards
1939

GOODBYE, MR. CHIPS,—

Robert Donat, who has just completed "Good-bye, Mr. Chips." As the British Nomad tells you this week, his two new films will be "Journey's End," by R. C. Sherriff, who worked on the script of "Chips," and "Ruined City" a story of working-class life.

Count of Monte Cristo and 39 Steps. Even in those films there were signs of the fine actor Donat has since become, of course, but there is little doubt that his good looks and pleasing personality were The Thing. Which just shows that you can't keep a good man down and that talent will out.

(And, by the way, the Editor of FILM PICTORIAL has just allowed me an advance peep at the Life Story of Donat, which is one of the grand features he has planned to publish in the near future. It really is good. So keep your eyes open for it.)

Is It Fair ?

MY American spies report that, jealous as most of Hollywood is of Vivien Leigh's chance in the role of Scarlett, there is one group that is anxious for her to succeed. They are the Columbia

cannot say whether it is good or—not so good. But what makes me see red is this idea of putting British films over in America on mere publicity, such as Vivien has since received. If the films are good, they can succeed on their own merits—*South Riding* and *The Citadel* have proved that. If the films are bad, they deserve to fail—and they will fail, publicity or no publicity. Audiences who are gulled into going to see bad British films are not going to have very much kindly feeling towards our future products. One bad British film can do more harm to our reputation in America than three good films can make up.

Meet "William"

OUT at Elstree, I met the boy who is to become as much the typical British lad as Andy Hardy is the typical American youngster.

He is 10-years-old Dick Lupino, who has been chosen to appear as William in the film version of the famous William stories of Richmal Crompton.

Finding him hasn't been an easy task, for so many people know and love the William of the stories, and know exactly how he should look, that producer Walter Mycroft, who is planning a series of films around the character of William, has been searching for some months for a boy to play the hero. He has tested more than 3,000 boys, including a number in a school at Stockton-on-Tees where he found some promising youngsters and one who may appear in the William series—but no William.

Keeping Up The Lupino Tradition

RETURNING to London, Mycroft and R. Graham Cutts, who is directing the first William picture, went together to a West End restaurant. There they met Wallace Lupino and his son Larry, members of the famous theatrical family. Mycroft saw at once that Larry was the ideal William type, though unfortunately too old for the role.

"How I wish you were a few years younger," he remarked. "I'm looking for a boy to play the role of William Brown on the screen."

And Larry remembered that his young cousin, Dick, was said to be the image of him at 10. But Mycroft really wanted somebody of 12 years old. He saw Dick, however, even had him tested, and decided to remember him for future roles.

The sequel came a day or two later when Walter Mycroft and Graham Cutts were in the projection room watching some tests being run through. "Who's that boy?" cried Mycroft suddenly. "I want him for the role of William." It was young Dick, who, being big for his age, looked a good 12 years old on the screen.

BRITISH GOSSIP By THE NOMAD

studios, who have bought up a British picture of hers called *21 Days*, as part of their British quota, and will also show it in America to cash in on Vivien's Scarlett O'Hara publicity.

Now this picture, *21 Days*, was made over 18 months ago at Denham, under the title *First and the Last*. The stars are Vivien, Laurence Olivier and Leslie Banks. I haven't seen it, so I

DOWN at Denham this week I was informed of Metro's plans for Robert Donat, who is by this time as big a star as any on their Hollywood roster.

Good-bye, Mr. Chips is finished, and Donat's contract allows him a six months' holiday.

Two films are lined up for him after that. One will be a new version of *Journey's End*. The other will be *Ruined City*. It is not at present certain which will be made first.

In *Journey's End*, Donat will, of course, play the role of Captain Stanhope, which was first played by Laurence Olivier on the stage and later on stage and screen by that fine actor, the late Colin Clive. The role of the officer, a man of courage slowly breaking under the strain of life in the trenches, and keeping himself going on whisky, is a particularly fine one.

Story of the Depressed Areas

RUILED CITY, in which it is hoped to re-unite *The Citadel* team of Donat, King Vidor and Rosalind Russell, is also based on a best-seller. It tells of one man's attempt to build up again one of our terrible depressed areas.

Then, as my Hollywood colleague wrote last week, there is the possibility that Donat may play opposite Garbo in *Madame Curie*. But nobody over here seems to know anything about that yet.

One curious feature of the films in which Donat has been appearing lately, and which he is scheduled to make in future, is that they are nearly all what might be termed "man's films." I mean by that, that they are nearly all virile, strong subjects calculated to appeal particularly to men. *The Citadel* did, of course, make a tremendous appeal to women, particularly the intelligent modern type of woman, but Donat's films have little of the glamour usually associated with what critics know as a "woman's picture." Even the sentimental *Chips* has little real feminine interest.

All of which is distinctly odd, for a man who made his first film hit as something of a matinee idol in such films as *Private Life of Henry VIII*,

The late Colin Clive as Stanhope, the role Donat will play, and Ian MacLaren as Osborne, the schoolmaster-soldier, in the earlier film version of "Journey's End" which was made in America with British actors.



WELCOME, CAPTAIN STANHOPE

FILM PICTORIAL

EDITOR:
CLARENCE WINCHESTER
TALLIS HOUSE, TALLIS
STREET, LONDON, E.C.4.

Vol. XV, No. 368 March 11, 1939

And that's how this youngest member of a 300-years-old stage family is carrying on the tradition by becoming an actor. Dick, by the way, was born in Hollywood when his parents were working there. But he had to come to England to become a star.

Iris Hoey is playing Mrs. Brown, William's mother, and Fred Emney and Jenny Laird complete the Brown family, England's first bid to enter the field so successfully held just now by the American Hardy and Jones families.

Mr. Hay At Bishops Wallop

ACTORS are queer creatures. They have a way, quite unintentionally, of incurring one's sympathy. Meet an unemployed actor and you're sorry for him; meet a busy one and you instinctively shake your head because of the strain on his nerves.

When I looked in at the Gainsborough studios at Islington a few days ago, I met Will Hay hard at work with Graham Moffatt and Moore Marriot on *Where's That Fire?*

On to the stage had been crammed the main street of a tumbledown village, Bishops Wallop (isn't that a grand name?) and Will was standing on the cobbled road stroking the head of Percy, an old white nag who is one of the stars. But I'll tell you more about Percy later.

Will pushed back his fireman's helmet and mopped his forehead. He looked far from well. I could see that the strain of making three films, one after the other in rapid succession, was having its effect. He looked thoroughly washed out.

"I'll tell you this," said Will, "I'm practically all in. You remember when you saw me during the making of *Ask a Policeman*? Well, I wasn't feeling too well, then; but now, immediately beginning another film, I'm at the end of my tether."

Just About Through!

"I**T'S** not an instance of taking it easy. I wish it was. With a film you can't take it easy. You've either got to give yourself 100 per cent to the role you're playing or not at all. And just you imagine—working 11 weeks without a break from early in the morning until late at night with all the tedious business of re-takes." He shook his head.

"What about your holiday?" I asked. "When's that coming off?" I thought Will brightened up considerably at that. "At the end of this film," he said. "That's in a few weeks, but you know just how long those few weeks are? Mentally they seem

months. I suppose I'll finish up here feeling that one more day's work would have killed me. You know the feeling."

Going To Hollywood

"**H**AVE you bought that steam yacht yet?" I queried.

"I certainly have," said Will. "And don't say yacht, say steam cruiser. It's a lovely little craft. I've sent it over to Norway where I'll join it for a cruise after my holiday in Hollywood."

"But look here, Will," I interrupted, "when I saw you last time you didn't say anything about Hollywood. Surely you're not going to make a film out there?"

"Of course not," replied Will. "But I've heard so much about it and everyone I meet seems so full of the glorious Beverly Hills and the beautiful Pacific, that I'm seriously thinking of spending a month or two in Hollywood. I'll begin the cruise immediately afterwards from Norway."

"And then you'll be away for a whole year?" I said.

"Films Aren't My Style"

"**F**ROM films, yes," retorted Will. "These three films, released one after the other with *'Old Bones of the River'* on the way, will allow me a long holiday, so that I might be away for even longer than a year. But films aren't really giving me any satisfaction, you know. They're not in my line. They're too slapstick. Slapstick isn't my style. Wisecracking is. You see, I don't want the public to laugh at a character I didn't even create. Before I went on the films, I wasn't a slapstick comedian, you know that."

"And that's one of the reasons why I'm thinking of going into a straight comedy in the West End. If I find the right play, I'll put it on, but otherwise—no."

Graham And Garbo

"**P**OOR old Will. On the rocks, aren't you, Will?" That crack came from young Graham Moffatt, who suddenly shot his head up from behind a crate of clucking chickens.

But Will wasn't in the mood for fooling. "Hallo, Graham," he said, "d'you know those lines?"

"Of course I know those lines," Graham cheer-

Below: Putting the horse before the cart seems to be giving those intrepid firemen Graham Moffatt, Will Hay and Moore Marriot (whom the *Nomad* visited at Islington) a bit of trouble. We wouldn't trust those firemen to save our child, but if it's just a question of making us laugh, we know they can do it. The film is *'Where's That Fire?'* Right: Lovely Valerie Hobson, filming at Denham in *'Silent Battle'*, though what that has to do with *'Chinese Fish'*, the film's original title—no, not original, the first one was *'Peace in Our Time'*—well, anyway, Valerie looks very charming, doesn't she?

fully replied. "And did I hear you say that you're not going to make a film in Hollywood?" He turned to me. "Oh, boy!" he said with cheerful boyish gusto, "that's one thing I'd love to do . . . you know, Graham Moffatt, Garbo's new leading man."

From somewhere old Moore "Harbottle" Marriot cackled, "They wouldn't want such a lad as you for that part, Graham. They'd want someone more mature, such as me, for instance."

"You shut up," cut back Graham. "Garbo wouldn't want a grand-dad."

Meet The New Partner

GRAHAM introduced me to Percy the horse, who knowingly nodded his head. "Percy," said Graham, "is our new team mate."

"What does he do?" I asked.

"Drags our antiquated fire-engine, of course," replied Graham. "We searched all over England for Percy. Captain Rex Norton, who supplies animals to British films, found him for us. He travelled 500 miles looking for him, and eventually found him ploughing land on a farm a few miles from his home. Percy's going to be a big star some day, aren't you, Percy?"

"Yes," cackled old "Harbottle," "he'll be starring with you and Garbo, won't he!"



GERALDINE FITZGERALD BECOMES A HOLLYWOOD STAR



Beautiful Geraldine Fitzgerald, the young British actress, who has been chosen as Errol Flynn's leading lady in the remake of "The Sea Hawk," the stirring sea drama which, as a silent film, thrilled audiences all over the world

Gossip from the Hollywood Nomad

ranch woman who reforms the Kids. On account of her age, it was arranged that during the filming, she should live in an air-conditioned lodge in the mountains, some distance away from the sultry site of the location. She had to motor to work each day, and her scenes with the Kids were limited to half an hour at a time because of the intense heat.

But May protested. "I won't be coddled," she said. "If those six sweet boys can stand it, I can!"

An odd sequel is that when she returned to Hollywood she fell out of bed and broke an arm.

Longer Shorts

SEVERAL of the major companies are planning to make four-reel shorts, lasting about half an hour or so; this is Hollywood's answer to the problem of the double-feature programme.

It all began with the success over here of *The River*, a brilliant short made with the co-operation of the United States Government.

The River awakened the studio heads to the value of four-reel shorts and now Warners have made two four-reelers. One is *Sons of Liberty*, which deals with the life of Haym Solomon, a Jewish patriot of Philadelphia who helped finance the Government during the Civil War. The other deals with the reasons for, and the drafting of, the Monroe Doctrine (the rules governing American intervention in world affairs) which should be of especial interest now.

The making of four-reel shorts opens up a whole new world for producers. It means they can deal with many subjects which are too big for a 10-minute short, and not big enough to warrant a full-length film. Many historical subjects would fit splendidly into this length film (so that there would be no need to introduce a romantic interest to pad out the film!) and so would some of the *Crime Does Not Pay* subjects.

Fields as Pickwick

ANOTHER piece of casting news that is sure to be popular is that W. C. Fields is to be Mr. Pickwick in *Pickwick Papers*. Universal are wisely

British players seem to be getting places in Hollywood these days. Here are Frieda Inescort, little Sybil Jason and Henry Wilcoxon, all British, and the stars of "Woman Doctor."

THEY are calling her the new star over here—but I, who have been reading my *FILM PICTORIAL* regularly week by week, even the bits dealing with British films over here, know better.

For the new star's name will be very familiar to you in England.

It is Geraldine Fitzgerald.

When Geraldine first came out to Hollywood some little time ago, she surprised everybody by saying that she meant to be a star. (Most new arrivals here talk about having important characterizations and acting opportunities.)

But Geraldine was right. She is to star opposite Errol Flynn in *The Sea Hawk*. (Incidentally, Errol also talked of being a star when he first came out here.)

Britain's Neglect—Hollywood's Gain

THIS red-headed, green-eyed Irish girl, after being acclaimed for her work in that unusual British film, *Turn of the Tide*, and later in *Mill on the Floss*, was neglected by British producers. But, as she told me, she wasn't unduly disturbed, because she has always liked stage work—she was trained at the Dublin Gate Theatre—and this gave her the chance to do some.

She came to America to appear in Shaw's *Heartbreak House* at the Mercury Theatre in New York, under the auspices of Orson Welles (remember that "invasion from Mars" scare?), and there she was signed by Warners.

She makes her American debut in *Dark Victory*, the Bette Davis starring weepie. She made such a good impression that Sam Goldwyn promptly borrowed her as an addition to the all-British cast of *Wuthering Heights*; and now Warners are giving her the lead in *The Sea Hawk*. The Rafael Sabatini story is being altered slightly for the screen, and I'm told that a character reminiscent of Sir Francis Drake will be the chief personality in the story.

Metro Shuffle Stars and Stories

METRO announce that Margaret Sullavan's new film, now that her second daughter has arrived safely, will be *Serena Blandish*, that charming period piece by Enid Bagnold, who wrote *National Velvet*. The story deals with the love affair of a young Englishwoman and a South American. *Shop Around the Corner*, in which "Maggie" Sullavan was to have appeared, has been postponed.

Meanwhile, James Stewart, Maggie's partner in *Shop*

An Old Friend Passes

AT last Universal have closed their popular "Eat With the Stars" cafe. It is the restaurant at the studios, where all the studio staff eat each day, and it fronts on to the street. It was open to the public, except an inner room reserved for stars only. And the stars had to pass through the main restaurant to get to their sanctum.

It seems an unnecessary gesture, to my mind. For surely the stars weren't hurt by the stares of the fans—and fans went away with more interest in films after having seen one or two stars in the flesh. But Hollywood is putting up more and more bars against honest-to-goodness rubbernecks these days; and at a time when it can ill afford to lose potential film enthusiasts.

Wouldn't Be Coddled

MAY ROBSON is as relentless an old trouper as you'd find, adhering sternly to the "show-must-go-on" dictum. She has recently been on location with the Dead End Kids for scenes in *They Made Me a Criminal*, in which she plays a



planning to make three films of the three sections of the book, rather than compress such a very long novel into a brief hour and a half—which always means leaving out some of the episodes most popular with readers. The first film will be written around the title character, the second around Sam Weller, and the third around Alfred Jingle. Fields will appear in all three, and producer Lester Cowan has Charles McNaughton in mind for the role of Weller and John Barrymore for Jingle.

Probably, too, the films will be made in England, using the original locations as mentioned in the book. But, before that happens, Fields and Producer Cowan, who have just finished work on *You Can't Cheat an Honest Man*, have another film to make for Universal in Hollywood.

His Career Came "Collect"

CHATting with W. C. Fields, I learned the strange story of how he was launched on his career. He was a struggling youngster, and one night, when he arrived at the scantily furnished room known to him and his friends as The Club, he found everyone in a great state of excitement. A messenger boy had arrived with a "collect" telegram for Fields and, failing to find him, had taken it away again.

Fields dashed off to the post office, about five miles away, only to find it closed. He slept in the doorway and was on the spot as soon as it opened next morning. But as the telegram was marked "collect," the postmaster refused to deliver it unless Fields could pay the charges. A five-mile dash back to The Club, a hasty whip-round among his friends, and Bill set off again for the post office.

The telegram set an end to his poverty. It was from a friend in Atlantic City saying there was a job there for him at £2 a week and his board. And Fields has never been really "on his uppers" since.

Joan and Dick Leave Warners

AFTER seven years Joan Blondell and Dick Powell will leave the Warner Brothers studio when their present films are completed. Joan is making *Broadway Cavalier* and Dick is at work on *Always Leave Them Laughing*.

"Every seven years," said Joan, "women change their hair, their complexions and even their thoughts completely. I've decided to change bosses, too. I've been here seven and a half years, and Dick has been here seven. We both thought a change of studio air would be very good for our careers."

"What do you plan to do?" I asked.

"Freelance," was the immediate answer. "You can make more money that way, and you can pick your own stories."

Pat O'Brien, who was standing by, sighed. "I've still got two and a half years on my contract. And whether I have any career left after that remains to be seen." Warners have been slightly cold towards Pat ever since he gave an interview in which he said his last picture was the worst he had ever made. (But a grand performance from him in *Angels With Dirty Faces* and another in *Boy Meets Girl* should please the studio heads.)

"Too bad you aren't a woman," cracked Joan. "Then you could have done as I did—had a baby when you hated a role."

Contract With Columbia

NOW comes the news that Joan has signed with Columbia to do two pictures a year for them for the next five years. That will leave her plenty of spare time to free-lance. You will remember that she recently made *There's Always a Woman*, with Melvyn Douglas, at the Columbia studios. Her first film under her contract with them will again be with Douglas, and will be called *Good Girls Go To Paris, Too*. It's a story that was originally bought for Jean Arthur.

Warners' refusal to lend Joan to Columbia when they wanted her for *There's That Woman Again* some months ago is rumoured to be one of the reasons that she has left them.

About Time Too!

ANN RUTHERFORD, who is Mickey Rooney's girl friend in the Hardy Family series, has never had a date with him off-screen. But the two met by accident at the Coconut Grove the other evening.

Mickey asked her for a dance.

"It's about time," she cracked as they swung on to the floor, "that you recognized your workday sweetheart in public!"

(Right) One of the most novel costumes at Madeleine Carroll's party was Mary Parker's—she came in a sheet. Here she is talking to Bryant Washburn, former leading man, who came in polo garb. (Below) The hostess, Madeleine Carroll, demonstrates the newest dance fad, the Park Avenue Gimp. Her partner is Allen Joslyn.



MADELEINE'S "COME-AS-YOU-ARE" PARTY

Lovely Madeleine Carroll recently gave a novel fancy-dress party. The idea was that everybody must come dressed just as they were when they received the invitation. And some of the guests have played up magnificently—indeed, we suspect that invention was stranger than necessity, for some of the disguises seem too good to be true. For instance, George Ford and Betty Hartman (right) seem to have received their invitations at a very embarrassing moment! They came complete with wax dummy arms. (Below, right) Two more normal people were Fred MacMurray and Lon Wood, leader of the orchestra with which Fred played before he became a star. (Below) Max Wagner said he was in a shower and came draped with towels. Here he is talking to Shirley Ross.





Left: Between lulls on the set, Sabu puts in some football practice in the studio grounds. He's playing with the Rovers on Saturday, and a fellow's got to keep in trim, hasn't he. Right you see him with puppies Mischa, Neville, Floogie and Saddleback, offspring of his favourite terrier, Diana. Below left, Sabu as he appeared in "Elephant Boy"



PRIDE OF THE BEACONSFIELD ROVERS

Not only on the screen is he a star. To the Beaconsfield Rovers, his local team, Sabu means much more than that. He's their star player as well. Sabu, as SYLVIA TERRY-SMITH tells you here, remains, for all his fame—a schoolboy.

"SABU—Sabu, where are you?" called Captain Thompson while I stood gratefully in front of the blazing fire in the comfortably-furnished school-room.

I had risen with the proverbial crack of dawn (but it doesn't crack, it creeps upon you unawares), travelled in three trains, and staggered finally into the warm refuge of Denham studios to be whisked luxuriously to the Beaconsfield boarding-school run by Sabu's tutor, Captain Thompson, and now I wondered whether anything was worth quite such martyrdom.

Then I heard a rush of footsteps overhead, a clatter of feet taking the stairs three at a time with a jump at the bottom. Then a pause, and in walked a debonair young gentleman in a grey polo-necked pullover and grey flannels.

"Good-morning," said Sabu politely, holding out a slim, brown hand, and I knew I'd suffer such agony again for the sheer delight of meeting this dark-eyed schoolboy star.

Fifteen years ago Sabu was born in the Karapur Jungle 45 miles from Mysore in Southern India. Three years ago Sabu was roaming the bazaars of Mysore, once a day calling at the Maharajah's elephant stables for his allowance of rice, for Sabu was the Maharajah's smallest pensioner orphan; his father was killed while working the royal elephants.

Now Sabu takes himself into an Indian restaurant in Piccadilly and orders his favourite dish—chicken curry and rice—and when he handles elephants it's in a film and he gets paid for doing it!

He Loves Noise

PERHAPS it's his jungle birth that makes Sabu prefer jungle films to all others—"I like them because there's a lot of noise and animals," he explained, his eyes lighting up mischievously. Sabu, as are most schoolboys, is happiest when helping to make the loudest possible commotion. "And I like elephants, too—now," he added, nonchalantly swinging one leg as he perched on the arm of a chair. "Y'see, I don't have to look after them. Why—it takes a whole day just to feed an elephant and there's no time for yourself to do anything that pleases you," he observed, his natural gift of exaggeration undimmed.

And Sabu has so much that he wants to do every day that it's no wonder he finds it difficult to fit it all in. He wants to learn to play the piano and to box.

Also jockeying closely for first place in Sabu's





No, Sabu hasn't been a bad boy, and his tutor, Cap'n Thompson, isn't "wliging" him. But it only goes to show what might happen if Sabu got—well, mischievous, as most boys of his age do

affections, are skating and football. The sun, unexpectedly making an appearance, streamed through the French windows on to Sabu's bare head. He blinked in satisfaction and sauntered across to stand by a blackboard and gaze with anxiously speculative eyes at the weather signs.

"I don't know yet whether we're playing a match this afternoon," he remarked, his rather lilting voice heavy with anxiety. "We play every Saturday but Cap'n Thompson is waiting to hear about to-day."

With an obvious effort he dragged himself away from the window to balance once more on the arm of a chair. Sabu takes most of his pleasures seriously and the importance of "to play or not to play" overshadowed all else for the moment. Sabu is the star turn of the school team, the Beaconsfield Rovers, and when he gets a chance he plays two matches on Saturdays—one with the local football team too!

"Then," as he puts it, "I come back all muddy and stiff and have a hot bath and go to bed—but I'm not stiff the same day, but the next morning," he amended, meticulously, mimicking his probable stiffness as he spoke. Sabu is conscientiously careful of details and the habit of illustrating his remarks with gestures, gained while learning English, has not left him now that his English puts many an English boy's to shame.

"They" Won't Let Him!

TO return to the present, though—and Sabu's other love, skating. One London Film Productions' official remarked to me, "If ever we want Sabu and he's missing, it's 10 to one he's at Earl's Court, skating."

Sabu is so keen on skating he practises with the ice-hockey team at Earl's Court. "And I'm going to Switzerland for a holiday," he said eagerly. "Oh no, not to ski—they won't let me; they're afraid I'll break my neck or my legs or something. They're afraid I'll hurt myself and they won't let me learn to fly or anything," he grumbled.

Hasn't that been the complaint of every school-boy who ever lived! But anyhow, Sabu doesn't particularly want to ski.

"I'm going to skate on real ice," he added enthusiastically, his wide eyes roving round the room in joyful anticipation. "Wherever there is ice, then I can see nothing else," he explained simply.

Sabu has not always been so good at skating, as he admits himself.

"When I first began," he confided, those super-expressive eyes of his now dancing in amused recollection. "They used to complain that I was too dangerous—I knocked down everybody who came near me."

It's difficult not to use clichés in describing

Sabu—his teeth really are pearly white, small and even; his smile consequently, really is dazzling and his eyes really do sparkle. Sabu laughs a lot—more, I think, than the average schoolboy—and in spite of his grumbles against the mollycoddling of the mysterious "They" (who, by the way, are the producers of his films) he seems to enjoy life to the full.

Even Sabu himself confesses that his favourite pastimes do admit of a dangerous flavour. Fortunately, perhaps, he is subject to the usual sudden violent passions of most normal boys, which die as suddenly as they come into being. For instance, last year Sabu spent all his free time and pocket-money following Prince Bira from one motor race to the other. Sabu's greatest ambition then was to race at Brooklands or Donnington Park in company with his hero.

He had a small car of his own, presented to him by Zoltan Korda, which he drove furiously round the 165 acres of Denham's studios. But now he cares no more for racing.

"Too dangerous," he grinned cheerfully. "I don't want to break my neck jus' driving round and round a track and have the car overturn and burn. I wouldn't mind going 100 m.p.h. to get from one place to another on the roads," he conceded handsomely. "But they won't let you do it here," he finished, in puzzled complaint.

I asked him if he liked tinkering with the engine of his car and he agreed eagerly. "Yes—when anything goes wrong, I try to put it right," he grinned, then chuckled as he went on. "I once took my brother's watch to pieces—he is older than I am and lives in London. I got it all out of the case all right," he added. "But when it came to putting it back . . ." He pulled a rueful face and I said commiseratingly, "I suppose you found yourself with about three or four pieces that just wouldn't fit in anywhere?"

"Three or four!" shrieked Sabu, his voice cracking as he nearly fell off the chair in his agitation. "Three or four—why, there were thousands! I couldn't put any of them back!"

How Not To Treat A Bike

ANOTHER of Sabu's excursions into mechanics nearly ended disastrously for himself. He had just bought himself a cycle and wheeling it back to the school in triumph he saw the other boys busy taking their cycles to pieces to clean them.

"I thought, what they can do, I can do," explained Sabu, sliding down into the chair from his rather uncomfortable perch. "So I took my bike to pieces too—but when all the other boys had put theirs together again and were riding them, I was still trying to fix mine up. D'you know," he went on, almost unwilling to credit his own experience. "It took me three days to put my bike back. I had to go down to the shop in the village where I'd bought it and watch how the man put one piece on and then come back and do it to my cycle. Then back to the shop to see how the next piece went on and back again—three days it took me," he reiterated.

"And when you finished, did it go?" I asked. "Did it go!" Sabu exclaimed, then threw back his head and laughed unrestrainedly. "Oh yes—it went all right," he grinned. "But so did the brakes. Y'know, when I ride I like to ride fast and make a noise when I go round the corners—squ-irrrr, like that—skidding, y'know."

"Well, I put on my front brake, hard. Then my back brake, and—it came in two!" The look of comical dismay on Sabu's face was irresistible, and he joined with me in whole-hearted, ringing laughter.

"So I had to take the bike to the shop and have new brakes put on it," he concluded philosophically. Sabu accepts life with a fatalistic air.

I asked him if he likes broadcasting—he'd just done a broadcast to schools and has been on the air several times. "Oh, it's all right." He shrugged his shoulders. "I don't mind. They tell me I have to broadcast and I do it, so it wouldn't make any difference whether I liked it or not. It's nothing," he added with a worldly-wise air. "I've done it before, y'know."

Sabu has the same philosophical outlook about the apparent neglect of his friends in India.

"They seem to have forgotten me," he said sadly—Sabu has really taken to heart his friends' desertion. "I write and write and they don't reply, so what am I to do?"

He particularly misses his closest friend, Ali, the mahout; but although he talks longingly of them, he doesn't let anything worry him for long.

"I'll go back to India and see them some day," he added cheerfully. "And anyhow, I've made lots and lots of friends here."

Sabu is very popular both in the village and

round the studios, although he makes friends more easily with middle-aged or elderly people than with boys of his own age.

Sabu's ambition changes every week, as do those of most boys. A fortnight ago nothing seemed more desirable than to go to the Bombay University. When I asked him about this, however, Sabu drew a slim hand across his forehead and said:

"How can I tell what I want to do? When I grow up, then I will know, but how can I tell now?" He emphatically denied any wish to prolong his education. "I don't want to go to these colleges. I don't like them at all." Though he does long to get back to the warmth of India. "This weather," he shivered. "It's so co-old!"

Yet half an hour later Sabu was talking blithely about going to the North Pole, and when I asked him then about the cold, he said gaily, looking at me a little pityingly, "Oh, I don't mind about that—I jus' put on more clothes, that's all. And I'd like to go to the North Pole, really!"

Love For Animals

SABU likes swing and hot rhythm, yachting at Bourne End, fish and chips, exercising in the gym and swinging in the garden.

He was elaborating his list of "likes" when four little bundles precipitated themselves into the room and delightedly scrambled over Sabu. They were followed by an anxious-looking white-haired terrier, Diana, who reassured herself by licking her very new offspring—Saddleback, (he had the distinct marks of a black saddle) Mischa after Mischa Auer, Neville (after Mr. Chamberlain?), and Floogie, of the flat-foot family.

Sabu had long ago lost his first shyness and now he romped with the puppies delightedly until Captain Thompson resolutely routed them out in spite of Sabu's pleas of, "Oh, please let them stay—they won't do any harm."

But it gave this dark-eyed potential breaker of hearts (he's rather scornful of girls at the moment) a further opportunity to inquire about the football match. Still there was no news on the all-important question.

Sabu sighed and stuck his hands into his trouser pockets to gaze in distress at the weather.

"The other day," and he swung round suddenly as he recalled the incident, "it was snowing hard and the milkman was at the bottom of a hill jus' round the corner and a lorry came down and smashed up the cart and knocked down the horse. And they were jus' helping the horse up again when another lorry came down and knocked it down again and killed it!"

How Sabu Learns His Roles

SABU'S brown eyes were soft and his voice low. For he loves animals, especially horses. In his last picture, *The Drum*, he rode a pure-bred Arab stallion. When he first came to Beaconsfield he used to ride regularly from the local stables.

"But not now—their horses are too tame." His young voice was vibrant with scorn. "Why, they won't let you gallop or jump"—he gave a short, indignant laugh—"so I'd rather not ride at all," he finished, in disgust.

During a film, Captain Thompson coaches Sabu in his script, helping him to pronounce the difficult words. Captain Thompson makes a habit of reading the whole thing aloud two or three times a week until Sabu has a fairly good idea of the story and of his part in it. Then a week or so before shooting begins, Sabu learns his lines for the first few scenes to be shot, so that he's always a few scenes in advance and never has to memorize too much at once.

Sabu is always up to some mischief. When he was making *The Drum*, the other boys at his school were eager to go along and watch him acting, but that didn't suit Sabu at all. Outwardly he agreed, however, and arranged to meet the boys at 10 o'clock on the set. The car came for Sabu as usual at nine o'clock and off he drove.

But when his unsuspecting schoolmates clambered into the red school bus at a quarter to 10, they found the two back tyres had been very efficiently let down!

I had to go. Sabu accompanied me to the door and leaned negligently against the lintel. "Good-bye!" he called with a gleam of snowy teeth as he waved cheerily.

I turned to wave back, but he had scampered down the passage impatiently.

"Cap'n Thompson!" I heard him call. "Cap'n Thompson—have you heard about the football yet?"

THESE STARS WANT A NEW DEAL!

Several players are planning surprises for filmgoers, as JOHN K. NEUNHAM tells you here.

Carole Lombard sweeps aside craziness for drama in "Made For Each Other," in which she appears as a young wife. Here she is with Jimmy Stewart and Lucille Watson in a scene from the film.

she will do less and less skating, so that she will pave the way for a straight acting career.

It won't be long, if things go according to plan, before Sonja emerges in films which have nothing whatever to do with skating.

Yet another star whose pictures are to undergo a great alteration in type is Eddie Cantor.

Eddie himself isn't thinking of going dramatic, or anything like that. He will always be a comedian. But he is tired of being the centrepiece of glamour.

Sam Goldwyn brought him to the screen, and hit upon the idea of giving Eddie the support of hundreds of lovely chorus girls. His reason for doing so was that Eddie had always appeared in super-lavish musicals on the stage.

But Eddie also happens to be a broadcasting star, and on the air he is very different. He is a philosopher as well as a wisecracker. I believe that Eddie will soon be stepping into the shoes vacated by the late Will Rogers.

Cantor Leaves His Lovelies

HIS next picture will be a non-musical, *The Flying Yorkshireman*. It is a fantastic comedy of a typical country lad who suddenly finds that he can fly. The comedy element apart, however, there is a lot of philosophical humour in the character—at any rate, there was in the original story, and I imagine that Eddie will keep this in.

Have you always thought of Akim Tamiroff as a heavy villain? That has been his lot on the screen in most of his pictures. But Tamiroff in his early acting days was a comedian, and he has been trying to persuade Hollywood for some time to let him change to comedy.

A delightfully humorous role in *Paris Honey-moon* gives him the opportunity to show what he can do in this direction, and he is grand. We're likely to see him in more comedy roles in the future.

Both Dick Powell and Joan Blondell plan to leave Warners. They, too, are seeking a new deal. Most of their roles have been much the same in picture after picture. Now they want something stronger.

Norma Shearer has never been one to shirk a change. Some years ago she switched from sophistication to the gentle, sweet roles she had in *Smilin' Through*, *Romeo and Juliet*, and *Marie Antoinette*.

Now Norma has made a change again. In *Idiot's Delight* she slinks around in glamorous gowns as a typical Russian vamp.

The Marx Brothers have reduced their craziness to relative sanity in *Room Service*; Dick Foran has deserted singing Westerns and is trying to become a straight actor; Rudy Vallee wants to try drama.

Who goes next?

BE prepared for some shocks in the near future.

From now onwards, don't take players at their face value. Just because you're accustomed to seeing them in one particular type of role, don't expect to find them doing the same thing for ever.

For more and more stars are in search of new deals. They're tired of playing the same type of role time and time again. They want a change.

It's not entirely a selfish point of view. They feel that filmgoers, too, would like to see them doing something different.

On your reaction depends the future policy of many a famous player.

Two or three years ago, stars would have been scared to change type, except, of course, those stars who had always made a point of varying their roles as much as possible.

Follow The Leader

NOW, several stars having shown that it can be done, others want to follow.

Janet Gaynor discarded sweet sentimentality—and saved her career. Ginger Rogers side-tracked musicals and comedies, and tried drama—with success. Connie Bennett deserted straight acting and turned comedienne—and has progressed steadily since.

Probably even more striking was the added distinction to his reputation that Robert Montgomery gained when he tried grim drama instead of his usual light-hearted comedy in *Night Must Fall*.

These stars have done it. Others think they can do the same.

Carole Lombard has led the way by sweeping aside craziness. Her next picture, *Made For Each Other*, is a "weepie."

Yet Carole says that filmgoers aren't tired of seeing her as a comedienne. But she does realize that the time is near when there will be a reaction.

She believes in being one step ahead of trouble. So she is type-changing while the going's good.

Garbo's change is different. She is turning to comedy for only one film, *Ninotchka*. Her reason for the drastic change is not merely to fulfil an ambition to be amusing. She realizes that it will give a fillip to her career.

A lot of filmgoers are apt to take Garbo for granted. They think they know all her emotions. Inevitably, the incentive to see her pictures disappears.

It will be intriguing to see Garbo in a comedy role. I'm confident that a lot of filmgoers who ordinarily don't bother about her films will go to see *Ninotchka* because it offers something new.

Jeanette MacDonald is another who is contemplating a change. For a long time, she has been seen in nothing but singing pictures.

And now, just ahead, are the danger signals. The public automatically expects an elaborate musical when it sees Jeanette's name on a credit title.

Supposing musicals flop? A lot of people in Hollywood think they will. Jeanette would flop

with them, for, even if she did appear in straight films, filmgoers would continue to think of her as a singer and would probably just skip her films.

Being taken for granted is a dangerous risk. The feeling that you know exactly what a star is going to do is, in the long run, bound to be fatal to the star.

So Jeanette wants to do some straight comedies.

Being a comedienne won't exactly be a new departure for her. Before establishing herself as a screen singer, she played in numerous comedies. In fact, she used to be one of filmland's most refreshing comediennes.

The Children Grow Up

IF you still think of Bonita Granville as a child actress, you are in for a sharp awakening when you see her in *Nancy Drew, Detective*.

Bonita is growing up now. In this new picture, she plays the title role. It's difficult to think of her as a girl well on the way to maturity, but time marches on. Bonita now takes over a new personality.

Deanna Durbin, too, is changing. In the title of her next picture, you have the melancholy truth, *Three Smart Girls Grow Up*. Deanna is leaving childhood behind her.

These things can't be helped. Age can't be denied. The changes of characterization are necessary and not of choice.

But Sonja Henie's forthcoming change is entirely of choice, and part of a premeditated plan.

Sonja came to the screen because of her fame as an ice-skater, but she makes no secret of the fact that she wanted to become known as an actress and not merely as a skater.

Her skating put her on the movie map, her bubbling personality giving a great deal of support. In the meantime her ambition to develop as an actress has been given rein, and she has become a very able artist.

Now she wants people to forget that she owes her film career to her skating. In her future pictures



Akim Tamiroff, another distinguished player who is seeking a new deal from Hollywood. Right, you see him as he appeared in "Escape from Yesterday," a dramatic role; and left, as a comedian in "Paris Honey-moon."

MAN OF THE AUER

AMONG other Hollywood routines, it has become quite a fashion to call in Mr. Mischa Auer when a little, or a lot of screwy comedy relief is wanted. So much so, in fact, that one feels a vast emptiness about cock-eyed comedy that lacks his grotesque antics.

He is only one of many who, after years of patient labour in the heavy melodramatic field, turned their latent gifts to comedy. When one of their unexpected comedy cameos distinguishes them above the rest of the cast, they usually start out along the higher road of success.

It has been claimed on Auer's behalf, that he made his mark as a goofy comedian in *My Man Godfrey*. Although to a degree that is true, his genius for burlesque showed itself before then.

I refer to his extravagant comedy creation of a burlesque Indian in a musical produced by the now dead Lasky-Pickford concern, *The Gay Desperado*. That merry little affair bristled with satirical comedy, aimed at certain conventions of film-making.

Not least of the amusing performances was that of Auer, which presented a satire on the stock screen Red Indian. It was uncommunicative to the point of dumbness.

It jibed at the accepted inscrutability of the film Indian. It was an eccentric guying of the feathered brave's formidable silence taking the place of the usual "Huh," and "big heap."

Yet that role was only a shade different from the type of part Auer had for years been seriously playing in Hollywood. In his early talkies he was generally the menace.

Villain In "Creepies"

AT the beginning of his film career, his parts were painfully mediocre. They were heavy villains in crime melodramas, and not very important villains either.

Because he was extremely lanky and had a wild and brilliant eye, and looked so cadaverously menacing, he was allotted the figure of horror and terror in third-rate creepies.

He was queer-looking fakirs in dramas of mysticism, reincarnations of Inca gods in jungle adventures, sombre acolytes in "spook" mysteries. All cast in the same mould of gloomy, supernatural shape, his screen parts were as weird as they were numerous.

Playing natives, the forerunners of his burlesque Indian in *The Gay Desperado*, he finally progressed as far as straight drama in *Lives of a Bengal Lancer*, *The Crusades*, and *Clive of India*. Even in these, he filled coloured roles, merely because he was catalogued as such among the ranks of the character actors.

It was undoubtedly the comedy Red Indian which provided him with the loop-hole into more fruitful spheres. And his work as the indolent, grotesquely-behaved social parasite in *My Man Godfrey* let him right through.

Following that, he was seen as a fake count in *Three Smart Girls*, the type of role with which he is now indelibly identified, if not as an expatriated member of bankrupt European nobility, then as some kind of "phoney" continental.

For the American public sees scions of continental



He sprang to fame with his Gorilla Dance in "My Man Godfrey," and now he's known as Hollywood's most feared scene stealer. JAMES FURNESS tells you the romantic story of Mischa Auer—a born comedian who was once typed as a villain.

With just enough money scraped together to make the journey, Auer, at the age of 15, sailed for New York and the home of his grandfather, Leopold. The elder Auer was a well-known teacher of the violin, and in this manner his grandson was able to make contact with theatrical work.

His first attempts to crash the agents were not too successful, though he did manage to make his name something of a byword among them. It came about over some pictures he took of himself, striking what he fondly hoped were dramatic poses.

Unfortunately, the bookers could see only the abnormally funny side of those photographs of the aspiring tragedian. But they could not be expected to see in them the unwittingly comic qualities which would stamp him as a born clown in after years.

Still, he eventually reached the stage, and spent five years on it. When he did break into films, it was to embark on a series of third-rate parts in schoolboy thrillers. He suffered quite a lot in the interests of transpontine drama, and his odd appearance of gauntness was rather against him.

After his considerable hit in *My Man Godfrey*, it was no unusual thing to hear people talk about him in subsequent films. It was nearly all "that funny chap Mischa Auer," and critics would describe how a certain Mischa Auer was often the redeeming comedy feature of the particular picture.

Prince of Crazy Comedy

REMEMBER his brilliant efforts, most of them conducted in the face of star opposition and indifferent material in such films as *That Girl From Paris*, *We Have Our Moments* (we had them when he appeared), *Prescription For Romance*, and *Merry-Go-Round* of 1938.

He soon became a familiar and regular item on the screen, for there was a rush for his services. And the demand hardly seems to have abated.

In *The Rage of Paris*, he played a "phoney" Baron, with any amount of mock dignity to cover his defects. In *You Can't Take It With You*, he is a teacher of ballet, once again jibing at the "precious" and temperamental vapours of the super-artistic being.

Though he frequently resorts to broad measures to gain an effect, his extravagant and ludicrous humours are never low-pitched. It is, rather, the guying and clowning of types which the majority of folk regard as abnormal.

Mention Russian count, Hungarian maestro, to most phlegmatic Anglo-Saxons, and they invariably conjure up a mind picture of something hardly of this world. Auer renders his own peculiar interpretation of that fable.

Do you think Latins and Slavs are "queer" people, who go in for outlandish folk dances, and act just a shade short of the demented? Well then, Mr. Auer will show you just how funny your beliefs can be.

A brief return to drama as the gaunt revolutionary in the gloomy *Winter set*, and a suggestion of logical behaviour in *100 Men and a Girl*, are his contributions to the saner order of things. But it is as the clown superb he appeals to the adult mind, the grown-ups, rather than the children's Auer.

Merle Oberon in Hollywood



Merle Oberon Is Merle as popular in Hollywood as she is in England? Who are her friends in the American film colony? What does Hollywood think of the Oberon-Korda romance? You'll find the answer to all these intriguing questions in "O-Bee Joyful!" a brilliant American pen-picture of Merle next week. You'll find, too, articles on John "Dynamite" Garfield; Academy Award winner Fay Bainter; and Rene Ray in



NEXT THURSDAY'S "FILM PICTORIAL" John Garfield

GEORGE FORMBY'S ROMANCE



AFTER I had made up my mind to go on the stage, I went back to my hotel, but I couldn't sleep," George Formby told me. "I was too excited as I thought of all that I might do. Would I be a success? Of course I should! Wasn't I the son of George Formby? Hadn't people laughed at my songs and tipped me for singing them?"

"Next morning—or should I say, the same morning?—I took a train back north. But instead of going home to Warrington, I went to Birkenhead to see Danny Clarke, an old friend of my father's, who was manager of the Argyle Theatre. From what dad had told me about him, I knew that he was the chap to give me some good advice.

"He listened silently as I poured out all my plans. 'Have you ever been on a stage?' he asked at last. I shook my head. 'Then you've got a lot to learn, George. Your dad had years of experience before he became a star. You can't expect to begin where he left off. But I'll give you a chance. You can have a week's trial.'

"When I had thanked him, I made one condition. I did not want to appear under my own name. Dad had been 'top of the bill' for 20 years, and I did not want to use my own name until I, too, could be at the top. And if I failed, well, I shouldn't be letting down the name of Formby.

"Danny Clarke agreed. 'What's the name to be?' he asked. I thought for a second. 'George Hoy,' I said. Hoy, you see, was my mother's maiden name.

Stage Fright

I SHAN'T forget in a hurry that first appearance at the Earlstown Hippodrome. I knew that my future depended upon it, but I was as bold as brass while I waited in the wings for the opening bars of my introduction number.

"Then I got my cue, and I walked out in front of that large Monday night audience. I was made up in exactly the same way as my father had always been, and my idea was to open the act in his usual way. But when I saw that sea of faces every drop of blood seemed to go out of my body. I wanted to turn and bolt off the stage, but I doubt if I should

George Formby's leading lady in his early days was his wife Beryl. At the top of this page you see them in a scene from "Boots, Boots," George's first film. (Left) Quite the little gentleman—an early photograph of "our George." (Below) George's private life hobby has always been racing, and his first film for a big company was "No Limit," in which he played a "speed demon."

have been able to move. So I just closed my eyes and stood still for about half a minute. Then someone in the gallery shouted out: "Go on, George, you're a chip off the old block."

"That pulled me together and made me sing. Without any more trouble I got through all my songs, and the audience gave them quite a good reception. And with those words from the gallery still sounding in my ears, I went off the stage. Danny Clarke was there and he shook my hand. 'Not at all bad, George. A rotten start, but you pulled yourself together nicely.'

"'Where's that chap who shouted to me?' I asked. 'I want to thank him.' But I never found him. I wish I could meet that chap some day. I'd like to thank him for those kind words and give him some souvenir of the occasion. He can never know what his shout meant to me."

That is the story of how "George Hoy" became a comedian. Thanks to the help and encouragement that Danny Clarke gave him, George was able to use that trial engagement as a stepping-stone. Through the kindly assistance of his patron, he was booked for a tour of various Northern music-halls. The managers of these halls already knew the true story of his identity, and many tried to persuade him to appear under his own name. But George stuck fast to his determination that he must first reach the "top of the bill."

Becoming a Top-liner

HE fell quite naturally into the life of the touring music-hall comedian. It was as if he had spent childhood wandering from place to place with his father, instead of living in a tiny world where the form and health of a racehorse was the most important thing in life.

Up to a point, he was lucky to be "the son of his father." Wherever he went he met theatrical people who had known George senior intimately, and were only too pleased to tell their anecdotes of him. George listened eagerly, thrilled by every word of their stories. Some day I hope to persuade George to write a biography of his father and to include all those anecdotes which are stored away in his mind. It would make a great story of a little theatrical world which is now part of the past.

For 15 months after his debut, George continued to be "George Hoy." Then, one Sunday evening, he arrived at Burnley to begin a week's engagement at the Palace Theatre. And when he came out of the station, he saw an advertisement for the next week's programme with GEORGE HOY in big letters. He was so pleased with himself that he took a taxi to his lodgings instead of the humble tram, and next week the name of George Formby again made its appearance up on the music-hall bills.

In those days George relied entirely upon his songs and his comedy patter. He had no ukulele as his inseparable companion, and the story of how this was introduced is an interesting one. It shows, too, how luck and chance play their part in the development of a music-hall "act."

On one occasion, when he was playing in Newcastle, he was sharing a dressing-room with an artiste who had a passion for playing the ukulele. For hours he would sit in their small room, strumming the instrument and humming his songs. George, who could not play a note of any musical instrument, was fascinated by it. He began asking questions, and at last the man handed it to him. "Try it," he invited, and George needed no second invitation. He strummed out a tune, and felt very pleased with himself. "I'd like one like this," he said.

Played It for a Bet

YOU can buy it if you like. I'm so broke that I haven't got enough money for my fare to next week's engagement. If you want it, you can have it for 50 bob."

"Done," said George. "I'll give you the money in the morning."

But when it was in his possession, George regarded it only as a toy. It became part of his luggage, to be carried from town to town, but it never occurred to him to play it on the stage.

He continued to practise week after week, until at Barnsley someone said he would never have the nerve to play it before an audience. George chuckled. "You're quite right—I wouldn't," he replied.



BEGAN WITH ROTTEN TOMATOES

But the man persisted. "Bet you a bob, George, that you won't play it to-night."

George chuckled again. "That's a different matter. Do you really mean you'll give me a bob if I play it to-night?" "That's right," he inquired.

"Well, you've lost, lad. Hand over the bob." He played it the same evening, and modestly says that "the audience seemed to like it. So I put it in the act."

Now I want to tell you George's love story. If I could, I would give it in his own words, but if I did it would be possible to tell only part of the story. Beryl and George are perfectly willing to talk about their adventures, and to tell stories against themselves, but they don't talk about their affection for each other. They are as reticent on such matters as are most Lancastrians, and one admires them all the more for being so. But there is more mutual affection and respect between these two than among some of the stars who are so fond of talking of their marriages and their happiness.

You do not have to know them long to realize that theirs is a "double act," in private life as well as in their theatrical career. George may have the headlines and the publicity, but he is the first to say that much of the credit must go to Beryl.

But this happy marriage did not have too auspicious a beginning. One night when George was appearing at Bolton, an agent and a pretty girl were watching the show.

At the end of George's act, the agent turned to his companion. "What do you think of young Formby?" he asked.

The girl looked scornful. "If I had any bad tomatoes I should have thrown them at him. I think he's rotten."

The girl, whose name, of course, was Beryl, was partner to her sister in a dancing act, and so eventually George met his critic. After meeting him, she began to change her mind.

Troubadour George

GEORGE soon decided that he wanted to marry her, but his courtship was no easy matter. Beryl was living with her parents at Darwen, and he was going from place to place in his usual music-hall tour. But every Saturday night, when he had finished his act, he hastily changed into a motoring mackintosh and set off on his beloved motor-cycle for a midnight drive to Darwen. Usually he arrived at about two o'clock in the morning, very dirty and very tired, but cheerful that he could have a few hours with her on Sunday before setting off for his next engagement.

And on Sunday he invariably tried to get another engagement—this time, one which would last for life. But Beryl's reply to his proposal was always the same. He was too young to be taken seriously.

At last George grew tired of this reply. He decided that he must try bolder measures. So one Sunday at two o'clock in the morning, Beryl's parents were awakened by a noise outside their house. Some young fool was playing a ukulele and singing at the top of his voice.

They stuck it for about 15 minutes. Then, angrily, Beryl's father got out of bed and went to the window. "Who's there?" he shouted.

"Me," said a voice.

"Who's me?"

"It's George."

"What do you want?"

"I've come to marry Beryl."

Beryl's father looked disgusted. "Go away," he snorted angrily. "You're daft."

Then another voice interrupted the dialogue. "It's quite all right and George is serious. He wants to marry Beryl."

To be on the safe side, and to be certain of support, George had brought his aunt and uncle with him!

So, in the early hours of the Sunday morning, there was a family conference. Beryl was brought down to take part in the conversations, and within an hour George had won the day.

They were married shortly afterwards, on a rainy day in Wigan. And, of all the days in the year, they chose Friday the 13th. They began with no money, for Beryl had saved £70 and George owed exactly that amount in debts for the various motor-cycles which he had bought and sold. So, when the debts had been paid, they started from scratch.

R. EWART WILLIAMS continues his absorbing life story of Britain's No. 1 screen star. Last week's instalment brought George to the point when, after his famous father's death, he had decided to go into the show business. Now you can read what success he had.



Gus MacNaughton with George in the newest Formby picture, "Trouble Brewing." They are amateur detectives and are trying to break into the master criminal's safe to obtain proof of the crime. But little do they know that the "master criminal" is really the police chief—and that the safe is already open anyway!

Beryl soon showed how well she would play her part in helping her young husband to the top of his profession. They had been unable to afford a honeymoon, and then after only a week of married life they were parted. Beryl and her sister had an engagement at a Newcastle theatre, and George was booked to appear at Morecambe. With a promise to one another to write every day, they went to their respective engagements.

On the Monday night, after her act, Beryl had a visit from the manager. He had heard of her marriage, and wanted to congratulate her on her performance and wish her the best of luck in her married life. Beryl thanked him, and then asked: "Now what about a job for George?"

The manager shook his head, and swore that he was booked up for months. But Beryl persisted. At last he said, "All right, I'll fit him in the bill next week if he's good. But he'll have to be good."

"That's champion," said Beryl briskly. "He'll be here on Sunday to begin rehearsals." And off she went to send a wire to George.

George was a success. On the first night he had an excellent reception and, spurred on by Beryl's encouragement, he was bringing the house down before the end of the week.

Formby Finds a "Manager"

ON the Saturday night, the manager came in to see them. He had a proposition to make. How would they like to tour the country in a revue? "Champion," they replied in unison. Then came the surprise. He offered them a five-years' contract, but there was one snag—the contract could not come into operation for six months.

It did not take them long to make up their minds. Soon terms were settled, and it was agreed that the contract should be signed on the Monday.

As soon as they were alone and George had finished a "war dance" round the dressing-room, he said, "That settles it."

"Settles what, George?" asked Beryl in surprise.

"In future, you are my business manager. If you can get contracts like that, within 20 years

we'll be rolling in brass." It was an accurate prophecy. Within a few years he was to sign a contract which would make him Britain's most popular film star.

But there was to be poverty before success. In his bachelor days there had been weeks when he had been out of work, and he had scraped along on a few shillings until he again earned some salary. But he could not be so happy-go-lucky about it now that he was married. They had to live during those six months, and he had had only a few engagements marked in his notebook. On the strength of that contract, of course, he could have borrowed money that would tide them over comfortably, but neither thought of doing so.

As Beryl put it, "Like all newly weds we were proud. Many a time we were almost starving, and had to spend our days in the park with just a bag of oranges between us. We daren't go back to the lodgings for fear the landlady would know we were 'resting' and not trust us to pay the rent. But we never wrote home for money."

George grinned cheerfully. "We always had oranges," he explained, "because Beryl thought they were good for me. She said that they would help me to stave off 'flu. I'm a devil for catching 'flu, you know."

He turned to his wife. "And do you remember, Beryl, how we used to have sixpennyworth at the local pictures so that we could save on coal? Often," he added, turning to me, "we saw the show round twice because it was saving money."

Then the contract began, and their troubles were at an end. They were not yet earning big money, but at least they could be sure of a regular income. And in the theatrical profession, that is something to feel pleased about.

•• Next week, R. Ewart Williams continues his wonderful story of the Formbys, and tells you how they branched out with their own show, and how they appeared together in George's first film, "Boots, Boots," which, made very cheaply, was a terrific success. Don't miss this instalment in next Thursday's FILM PICTORIAL.



Above: Mr. and Mrs. Anthony P. Kirby (Edward Arnold and Mary Forbes) call on the crazy family of their son's "intended," where ballet-mad Essie (Ann Miller) and her teacher, Kolenkhov (Mjecha Auer) entertain them. Below: James Stewart and Jean Arthur as Alice Sycamore and Tony Kirby.



Top of page: Mrs. Kirby calls on her son at his office, and finds that "work" for him consists of making love to his secretary. Above: Alice and Tony, enjoying themselves, learn the Big Apple from slum youngsters in a park.



JEAN ARTHUR Takes "IT" WITH HER

Jean makes a big hit in "You Can't Take It With You," the Academy Award film generally released next week, and now she has been chosen by Frank Capra to play in his next production. FRANK JENNINGS tells you of the struggles that Jean has had, and how her early success resulted, paradoxically, in her temporary failure in films

FEW young actresses have had the courage to thumb their noses twice at Hollywood. How many have gambled, as Jean Arthur has twice done, on turning their backs on the promise of a fruitful screen career, to be greeted on their second return as a prodigal daughter?

For that is what Miss Arthur has achieved, resuming her interrupted career in Frank Capra's *You Can't Take It With You*. It might be said of her that she did take it with her. She took with her what it takes, and she brought it back to Hollywood.

Once before, when she was no more than a rainor twinkle among the constellation of Hollywood ingénues, she went flying off along an orbit of her own. You've heard, of course, all about her voluntary pilgrimage to the shrines of the American stage, where she disciplined herself to study afresh the job of acting.

Her Voice Brought Her Fame

THEN she went back to Hollywood, prepared to show them what was what, armed with rich experience and newer and warmer appeal which had hitherto escaped her. That might have been all there was to tell, but for her fortuitous appearance opposite Edward G. Robinson in *Passport To Fame*.

Hollywood good fortune and fame turns often on seemingly little things. In that film it was probably the Arthur voice which turned the trick, though it cannot be denied she revealed real signs of her new-found personality.

Anyway, Columbia took up their option on her services, and at a salary that induced her to move in as a permanent citizen of the film colony. The producers, too, casting about for more roles for their starlet and doubtless cutting their production coat according to their financial cloth, gave her the role in *If You Could Only Cook*, which was originally intended for Claudette Colbert.

Frank Capra Steps In

SO she became Herbert Marshall's feminine lead, in the type of film and part which was as easy as shelling peas to her. And, much more important, something which was to have a significant bearing on her future, the production of the film was supervised by Frank Capra.

Capra kept Jean Arthur's individual style and talent in mind, while she earned her daily bread in *Diamond Jim* and *Public Hero No. 1*.

Overshadowed in the former, given few chances by the script, she had an unsympathetic character to play. She was still very much the feminine interest, but tried hard, if barely with success, to make her character noticeable. Interested observers, among the professional critics and

(Please turn to page 25)



Top of page: De Pinna (Halliwell Hobbes), Kolenkhov and Grandpa Vanderhof (Lionel Barrymore), who is responsible for the crazy household. Above: Alice and Tony discuss whether their families ever will mix. Below: The court-room scene, apparently inevitable in a Capra film, in which Harry Davenport (centre) gives a beautiful study of a magistrate.



A VILLAIN BY DAY, A HERO BY NIGHT



(Left) Leslie Banks in the stage version of "Good-bye, Mr. Chips." (Above) As the villainous Joss in "Jamaica Inn" with Maureen O'Hara.

Make Believe, and played in a great many successes before he again visited New York to play Captain Hook in *Peter Pan*.

America can claim to have discovered Leslie Banks as a stage actor, and in 1932 it was again America who realized his potentialities as a screen star, when, after his success in *Springtime for Henry*, Radio Pictures persuaded him to make a screen test. The test resulted in his film debut as the mad Count Zaroff who hunted human beings in preference to wild animals, in *The Hounds of Zaroff*.

Once more in England, he was kept consistently busy on the screen and stage. Being directed by Alfred Hitchcock in *The Man Who Knew Too Much* with Nova Pilbeam, Edna Best and Peter Lorre, is, Leslie says, his most exciting experience in films.

Clive of India is his favourite stage role, though Chips is his second choice—by a narrow margin only.

Returning to England last summer, after a season at the Guild Theatre, New York, in *Wine of Choice* Leslie Banks appeared again in the role of Sanders in Basil Dean's Drury Lane production *The Sun Never Sets*, with Edna Best.

It is apparent that on the very successful and varied career of Leslie Banks, the sun will shine indefinitely, though it is rather sadly that one has to say, "Good-bye, Mr. Chips."

Leslie Banks recently had the strange experience of acting as Joss, the ruffianly innkeeper of "Jamaica Inn," every day, and at night returning to the London theatre where he was playing the role of the kindly old schoolmaster in "Good-bye, Mr. Chips." BARBARA CRAVEN tells you about this favourite star's plans.

"LAST week!" It seemed a little sad to see that notice posted outside the Shaftesbury Theatre recently, as I made my way round to the stage door, for it meant saying good-bye to the Mr. Chips of the stage—Leslie Banks in, to quote the star's own words, "the simple and gentle play," *Good-bye, Mr. Chips*.

In a way it is only *au revoir* to the lovable schoolmaster, for very soon we shall be re-acquainted with him in his celluloid form, in the person of Robert Donat.

It had been suggested—prior to the announcement that Robert Donat was to play Mr. Chips on the screen—that Leslie Banks would have been the ideal person to re-enact on the screen the part he had created on the stage, but when I discussed the subject with Leslie, his views were precisely the reverse.

"I always thought *Good-bye, Mr. Chips* would make a splendid film," Banks began emphatically, "and I know Donat will be a magnificent Chips. Of course, if you really like to play a part on the stage—and during the run of this play Mr. Chips has gained my greatest admiration—then it is only natural that you would like to play the same part on the screen.

"But," Leslie Banks went on, "I shouldn't have been physically suited, as Donat was, to play Mr. Chips as an enthusiastic young teacher of 22. Donat has the advantage of youth, which cannot be as easily assumed on the screen as on the stage."

Anyone who might imagine that Leslie Banks is anxious to follow up his excellent characterization of Mr. Chips in a similar role is very much mistaken! In the 28 years he has appeared on the stage in England and in America, and during the seven years he has been a film star, Leslie has never been typed, for he has played only those roles which have appealed to him.

A Drunken Innkeeper

IT was an instance of acting in one "best-seller" after another, for before the run of *Good-bye, Mr. Chips* had come to an end, Leslie Banks had begun filming in *Jamaica Inn*—the Daphne du Maurier novel starring Charles Laughton and directed by Alfred Hitchcock.

Leslie Banks during the day-time was playing Joss—the dirty, unshaven, bullying smuggler and killer, drunk for days on end, though his wife, Patience, (played by Marie Ney) insists that earlier in his life, Joss was both respectable and respected. But in the evenings, he was at the Shaftesbury Theatre playing Mr. Chips. Two

such entirely different roles, but both part of Leslie Banks' daily routine. Incidentally, it wasn't until Erich Pommer and Charles Laughton had seen Leslie Banks playing in *Good-bye, Mr. Chips* that they decided that he was the only actor to portray Joss in *Jamaica Inn*.

Even before shooting had been completed on *Jamaica Inn*, Leslie Banks was seen and heard in the title role of the television performance of *Cyrano de Bergerac*, and had begun rehearsals for a new play, *The Man in Half Moon Street*, in which he plays a truly villainous role.

Played As Lord Nelson

A PART from the many roles that Leslie Banks has played on tour and in repertory companies, he has acted in no fewer than 62 plays in London and New York; he has also produced a number of plays, including three in which he also played leading roles—as Henry Tremayne in *The Lady with a Lamp*; Andrew Berwick in *The Infinite Shoeblack*; and Nelson in *Emma Hamilton*.

He made his debut at the Town Hall, Brechin, in 1911 as Old Gobbo in *The Merchant of Venice* with Sir Frank Benson's Company. Touring with this company for a year, Leslie Banks next went to America with H. V. Esmond and Eva Moore, and his first appearance on Broadway was in *The Dangerous Age*. At the close of the first night, Mr. Banks imagined himself to be just another small-part actor, but next morning awoke to find himself quite an important member of the cast, for the New York critics had raved about his performance.

One of the most pleasant and surprising Christmas presents that Leslie Banks has ever received came from H. V. Esmond at this time. Esmond, inspired by the actor's performance wrote in a new last act of *The Dangerous Age* for him when the play was produced in London. Such was Leslie's auspicious West End debut.

After having served throughout the war in the Essex Regiment, he resumed after the Armistice his stage career at the Lyric, Hammersmith, in

HOT from the STUDIOS

AFTER *Suez* comes *Panama Canal*, which Warners are planning for one of their big features for this year. The film will deal with the tragic failure of de Lesseps to build the Panama Canal, after his success at Suez, and of the engineering feat of Colonel Goethals, who did complete the Panama waterway. No cast has as yet been announced—but we'd take any bet that Warners won't borrow Tyrone Power for the role of de Lesseps!

Melvyn Douglas has been borrowed by Paramount from MGM to appear opposite Madeleine Carroll in "Air Raid," which will go into production as soon as Douglas is available.

Twentieth Century-Fox have signed Henry Fonda to a contract calling for him to make two films a year for them, for five years. The first one will be *Young Lawyer in Illinois*, the story which deals with Abraham Lincoln's youth, in which Fonda will play Lincoln.

Our *Modern Maidens*, many years ago, started Joan Crawford on her road to stardom. Now MGM are planning a re-make of the film, but it is not yet certain whether Joan, still under contract to the same studio, will play her original role.

Columbia announce that they are entering the "family film" stakes, and to launch their series they have bought a story entitled "The Rumelhearts of Rumpel Avenue." Quite the most unusually-named screen family so far!

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MONEY versus FUN— and true love fights both!

****YOU CAN'T TAKE IT WITH YOU**
JEAN ARTHUR..... Alice Sycamore
LIONEL BARRYMORE..... Martin Vanderhof
JAMES STEWART..... Tony Kirby
EDWARD ARNOLD..... Anthony P. Kirby
MISCHA AUER..... Kolenkoff
ANN MILLER..... Estie Carmichael
SPRING BYINGTON..... Penny Sycamore
SAMUEL S. HINDS..... Paul Sycamore
DONALD MEEK..... Poppins
H. B. WARNER..... Ramsiey
HALLIWELL HOBBS..... De Pitma
DUB TAYLOR..... Ed Carmichael
MARY FORBES..... Mrs. Anthony Kirby
LILLIAN YARBO..... Rheba
EDDIE ANDERSON..... Donald
CLARENCE WILSON..... John Blakely
JOSEF SWICKARD..... Professor
ANN DORAN..... Maggie O' Neill
CHRISTIAN RUR..... Schmidt
BODIL ROSING..... Mrs. Schmidt
CHARLES LANE..... Henderson
HARRY DAVENPORT..... Judge
Columbia (American). Director: Frank Capra. "U."
Running time: 126 minutes.

MR. CAPRA'S annual screen sermon preaches the moral that money really counts for very little in life, and that it is better to be poor and enjoy yourself than to be a millionaire and suffer from indigestion brought on by nervous strain.

Well, you may or may not agree with that thesis, according to how much money you have. But you will at least enjoy the film.

The monied side is represented by Anthony P. Kirby, his wife, and son, Tony. Anthony P. Kirby is worried about—among a great many other things—his son, who doesn't take business as seriously as he should. Tony has fallen in love with his secretary, Alice Sycamore, the only sane member of a crazy family. Alice's grandfather, Martin Vanderhof, has long ago seen the folly of making money. So he lives in a mad household which consists of his playwrighting daughter, her husband, their balletomaniac offspring, and an assortment of people who make fireworks in the cellar, design mechanical toys, and otherwise demonstrate the American ideal of "having fun."

What I enjoyed most about this film were the very beautiful love scenes between Jean Arthur and James Stewart, who act—or rather, seem not to act—magnificently throughout. Harry Davenport's Judge is a brilliant cameo. I laughed at Grandpa Vanderhof's household, but after a time I found they were rather boring. And if living like that is the alternative to making money, then I

would rather make money. But you must see this film, because Capra is one of the few men in the cinema who has something to say, and the saying is entertainingly and well; because the acting is superb; and because it will make you laugh—and you can't take laughter with you, either.

****SUBMARINE PATROL**
RICHARD GREENE..... Perry Townsend
NANCY KELLY..... Susan Leeds
PRESTON FOSTER..... Lieut. Drake
GEORGE BANCROFT..... Captain Leeds
SLIM SUMMERSVILLE..... Spuds
JOHN CARRADINE..... McAllison
JOAN VALERIE..... Anne
HENRY ARMETTA..... Luigi
WARREN HYMER..... Rocky
DOUGLAS FOWLEY..... Bratt
J. FARRELL MacDONALD..... Sails
MAXIE ROSENBLUM..... Joe Duffy
DICK HOGAN..... Johnny Miller
E. E. CLIVE..... Mr. Pringle
WARD BOND..... Olaf
CHARLES TANNEN..... Kelly
ROBERT LOWERY..... Sparks
GEORGE E. STONE..... Irving
ELISIA COOK, JUN..... Professor
CHARLES TROWBRIDGE.....
Rear Admiral Joseph Maitland
MORONI OLSEN..... Captain Wilson
Twentieth Century-Fox (American). Director: John Ford. "U." Running time: 95 minutes.

AS good as any film you are likely to see for some time for sheer excitement and humour.

Perry Townsend is a bumptious young man who joins the United States Navy during the war. His bumptiousness gets him into trouble with his



Sam, Frances, The Lippencott (gorgeous name!) and Sally try to explain a traffic misdemeanour to an irate policeman. Ann Morriss, Lew Ayres, Burgess Meredith (remember him in Winterset?) and Joyce Compton in a scene from "Spring Madness." (In circles) Maureen O'Sullivan gives a tender appealing performance as the heroine of the film.





George Bancroft, Nancy Kelly and Richard Greene in "Submarine Patrol," released next week. This is your first chance to see Nancy, unless you live in London, and take it from us, she's well worth watching.

captain and with the father of the girl he loves—but the girl seems to love him just the same. She is Susan, who accompanies her father on a merchant ship, and because it is wartime and they must obey orders, Susan and Perry are separated from time to time. They conduct their courtship in five-minute snatches in New York, Rome, wherever they happen to meet—but they don't marry until, in a very exciting climax, Perry and Susan's father co-operate in sinking an enemy submarine, and sink their differences too.

A lot of credit must go to John Ford for his direction. Richard Greene, I am happy to say, has improved his acting a whole lot; and Nancy Kelly, the new star, has a refreshingly warm, yet restrained, personality, and she can act. The smaller roles are well played, too.

***MEN WITH WINGS**

- FRED MacMURRAY.....Patrick Falconer
 - RAY MILLAND.....Scott Barnes
 - LOUISE CAMPBELL.....Peggy Ranson
 - ANDY DEVINE.....Joe Gibbs
 - LYNNE OVERMAN.....Hank Rinebow
 - PORTER HALL.....Hiram F. Jenkins
 - WALTER ABEL.....Nick Ranson
 - KITTY KELLY.....Martha Ranson
 - VIRGINIA WEIDLER.....Peggy Ranson (as child)
 - DONALD O'CONNOR.....Patrick Falconer (as child)
 - BILLY COOK.....Scott Barnes (as child)
 - JAMES BURKE.....J. A. Nolan
 - WILLARD ROBERTSON.....Maj.-Gen. Hadley
 - FRANK CLARKE.....Burke
 - RICHARD STANLEY.....Galton
 - MARILYN KNOWLDEN.....Patricia Falconer
 - CHARLES QUIGLEY.....Telegraph Operator
- Paramount (American). Director: William A. Wellman. "U." Running time: 107 minutes.

A FINELY told history of American flying from the days of the Wright Brothers to the present. The film begins when Nick Ranson, reporter on a small American paper, sees the Wrights' flight, and is inspired to do likewise. He is killed, but passes on his love of the air to his daughter and her two friends, Scott Barnes and Pat Falconer. You follow their careers through triumph and disaster, to Peggy Ranson's marriage with Pat during the hectic war years, to Pat's death, and finally to the triumphs of such real-life heroes as Lindbergh and Howard Hughes.

The story is told in full in the souvenir booklet (Please turn to page 21)

AT A GLANCE . . .

JOHN MILFORD, our Review Editor, criticizes the 10 films which are generally released next week.

***Outstandingly brilliant; must not be missed. **Excellent. *Good.

- **SUBMARINE PATROL
- **YOU CAN'T TAKE IT WITH YOU
- *LADIES IN DISTRESS
- *MEN WITH WINGS
- *SPRING MADNESS
- BROADWAY MUSKETEERS
- FUGITIVES FOR A NIGHT
- HOLD MY HAND
- THE MISSING GUEST
- WANTED BY THE POLICE

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THE NEW WAY TO NAIL HEALTH & BEAUTY

6d PER TUBE AT CHEMISTS, HAIRDRESSERS & STORES

March Winds May Blow But They Won't Hurt Your Skin if you are using a little Complexion Care, says Peta



Mary Carlisle, on her way to the studio, finds the March wind living up to its reputation for being boisterous.

WHEN March winds blow complexions need extra care and attention. For March winds are boisterous, full of the dirt and grime of winter. They are also cold winds that roughen and redden the skin—unless extra care and attention are given! For, you must remember, at this time of the year our complexions are at their most susceptible! They have gone through a winter of cold and fog and rain; they have had little sun to nourish and stimulate them. Consequently, they fall easy prey to the March winds that drive dirt and grime along with them. A little extra care for your skin is, then, *absolutely essential* if you do not wish to face the summer's fun and sunshine with a dull and weather-beaten complexion.

The skin must have thorough cleansing; it must be softened, yet protected from the roughening winds; it must be rejuvenated and refreshed, the pores refined.

Quite probably you think, on reading this, that you simply haven't the time to do all those things to your skin? That life's too short and you're too busy—and, "Anyway, it would mean the buying of a number of creams and things that I really cannot afford (I've already begun saving for my summer holiday!)."

Actually, however, the entire process means the buying of just one All-Purpose Cream, costing 2s. 6d., 1s. 3d. or 6d. in jars; 1s., or 6d. in tubes! Which makes this business of being beautiful ridiculously simple, doesn't it? The name of the cream I am particularly recommending is Princess Marguerite Cream.

For Skins Soft as Silk

SOFT and fragrant, this cream does the five essential things for true skin beauty. (1) It cleanses, removing that slightly "muddy" look so many skins collect through the winter months. (2) It refines the pores. (3) It softens and smooths the skin. (4) It protects your face against coarsening weather. (5) It actually builds up fresh, young skin in the place of the dull-looking complexion you've noticed recently!

A final boon is that the Princess Marguerite Cream takes just one minute to apply to your face and throat—so it is, indeed THE cream for the busy modern woman. (You know, of course, that all creams must be smoothed on with an upward and outward movement, don't you? Never, never attempt to apply a cream with a downward action, for this encourages lines and sagging skin.)

As with everything I recommend to you in my pages, I have tested and tried the Princess Marguerite Cream for myself (frankly, I was amazed that just one application of the fragrant, silky cream softened and refined my skin!), and so I can genuinely recommend it to you. And the very best way of using it? I found it was to cleanse my skin with a mild soap and tepid water, rinse and douche in cold water, and dry carefully. Then I applied my Princess Marguerite Cream on the tips of my fingers (and with that upward and outward movement I have been talking about). Rouge and powder followed—and rough weather produced neither a "shine" nor a roughened complexion!

A Reminder!

HAVE you entered for the Tangee Competition yet? The competition that offers you such marvellous prizes as £350 and a month's free trip to New York and the World's Fair! £100 for the "runner up," £50 for the third prize; 50 prizes of £5 each and 250 prizes of £1. 1s. each, as well as 1,000 dainty Tangee Gift boxes. Have you sent in your entry yet? It is a chance not to be missed!

All you have to do is to complete the sentence "I prefer Tangee because . . ." enclosing the envelope from a 6d. Tangee Lipstick if you are sending one entry, or, if more than one, the carton from either the 1s. 9d. or 4s. 6d. lipstick which entitles you to as many as 5 entries. Your entry must be sealed, stamped with a 1d. stamp, and addressed to Luft-Tangee (London), Ltd., (Dept. F.P.) 4 New Court, London, W.C.2.

Hurry up! This competition closes next Wednesday, the 15th of March!

Here's wishing you luck!

Shades of Spring

THE colours that are fashionable this springtime are soft and lovely. All the more gentle petunia shades; delicate violets and mauves; blue-greys and blue-greens; russet browns, and the deeper, more "woody" browns. . . . No very bright or vivid colours, you will note!

Black is still considered very chic—but you must wear it, either all black—with black patent leather "touches," or black sequins—or you must wear one of the new petunia shades in the form of veiling floating about your black hat. But no more definite colour "touch" than that if you would be really up to the moment.

BARBARIC BEAUTY!

. . . A thick gold necklace to fill in the deep square neckline of a plain black dress. A dark red pendant on a silver chain to match up with the red and silver flowers on your spring hat. A massive silver bracelet of filigree design to "gay up" a very severe frock. A heavy gold medallion necklace with brilliants and red stones winking therein, to enhance a strapless evening gown of black velvet. . . . Yes, the larger and heavier, and more "antique" the jewellery you wear this spring, the smarter you will be!

Sally Eilers



Kay Sutton



Juna Clayworth



JOHN MILFORD'S REVIEWS

(Continued from page 19)

given away with this issue. The acting, particularly that of Andy Devine and Fred MacMurray, is excellent. But what really makes the film worth seeing is the technicolor photography, used here for the first time in a flying picture, and bringing out to the full all the beauty of silver planes moving against white cloud and deep blue sky.

*SPRING MADNESS

MAUREEN O'SULLIVAN..... Alexandra Benson
 LEW AYRES..... Sam Thatcher
 RUTH HUSSEY..... Kate McKim
 BURGESS MEREDITH..... The Lippincott
 ANN MORRIS..... Frances
 JOYCE COMPTON..... Sally
 JACQUELINE WELLS..... Mady Platt
 FRANK ALBERTSON..... "Hat"
 TRUMAN BRADLEY..... Walter Beckett
 MARJORIE GATESON..... Miss Ritchie
 RENEE RIANO..... Mildred
 STERLING HOLLOWAY..... Buck
 DICK BALDWIN..... Doc
 Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer (American). Director: S. Sylvan Simon. "U." Running time: 67 minutes.

CALL your film *Spring Madness* and you disarm serious criticism from the beginning. As for the theme of this picture, I can only tell you that it is all a question of whether Sam Thatcher shall partner Alexandra Benson at the annual dance at her college or else carry out his earnest plan to go to Russia for two years to study conditions there.

There is no more story to it than that, and yet *Spring Madness* kept me well entertained for over an hour. It is full of high spirits and slick action—and it is admirably acted.

The chief honours must go to Maureen O'Sullivan, who gives an extremely tender portrayal of a young college girl experiencing the bitter-sweet pangs of first love. We can see all along that Lew Ayres will be an utter sap if he sacrifices Maureen's charms for the doubtful delights of Soviet economics, but then poor Lew is meant to be a sap and he plays up to the role nobly. Burgess Meredith, who is Lew's room-mate at college and his prospective partner in the Russian expedition, is in great form and provides an amusing foil to love-lorn Lew.

But the other college boys and girls are all good, too, especially Joyce Compton and Sterling Holloway, who both have a highly individual brand of humour.

Sylvan Simon directed this picture and, as one feels that he has succeeded in doing exactly what he set out to do, he must be given full marks. *Spring Madness* is not a film of any importance, but it is good fun.



These two comic actresses, Alison Skipworth and Polly Moran, are teamed again in "Ladies in Distress," with hilarious results. Here they are with Virginia Grey in a scene from the film.

*LADIES IN DISTRESS

ALISON SKIPWORTH..... Josephine Bonney
 POLLY MORAN..... Lydia Bonney
 ROBERT LIVINGSTON..... Braddock
 VIRGINIA GREY..... Sally
 MAX TERRHUNE..... Dave Evans
 BERTON CHURCHILL..... Morgan
 LEONARD PENN..... Roman
 HORACE MACMAHON..... Second Thug
 ALLEN VINCENT..... Spade
 EDDIE ACUFF..... First Thug
 ANTHONY HUGHES..... Lieutenant
 Republic (American). Director: Gus Meins. "A." Running time: 67 minutes.

THIS is the type of film which Hollywood makes particularly well. It is sentimental, human, sometimes funny, and has a fair number of thrills.

Josephine Bonney is the mayor of a small American town, Bonneyville, named after her family. It is plagued by a gang of racketeers and gamblers, so she appoints the town's former bad boy, Braddock, to clean it up under an assumed name.

But Braddock is himself a racketeer and when the (Please turn to page 22)

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(Left). Ann Sheridan, Margaret Lindsay, Marie Wilson and Richard Bond in a scene from "Broadway Musketeers" which was directed by John Farrow, Maureen O'Sullivan's husband.

(Right). Barbara Blair, American acquisition for British films, with Jack Melford in a scene from "Hold My Hand."



JOHN MILFORD'S REVIEWS

(Continued from page 21)

gang leaders discover his real identity, they blackmail him into working for them.

Josephine's sister, Lydia, finds out that Braddock is double-crossing them, but when Josephine is taken seriously ill, Braddock justifies her good faith in him by cleaning up the town.

Alison Skipworth gives a delightful portrayal of Josephine and Polly Moran is equally good as her sister.

BROADWAY MUSKETEERS

MARGARET LINDSAY..... Isabel Dowling
ANN SHERIDAN..... Fay Reynolds
MARIE WILSON..... Connie Todd
JOHN LITEL..... Stanley Dowling
JANET CHAPMAN..... Judy Dowling
DICK PURCELL..... Vincent Morrell
RICHARD BOND..... Phil Peyton
ANTHONY AVERILL..... Nick
HORACE MACMAHON..... Gark
DEWEY ROBINSON..... Milt
DOROTHY ADAMS..... Anna
JAMES CONLON..... Skinner
JAN HOLM..... School teacher
First National (American). Director: John Farrow.
"A." Running time: 66 minutes.

ISABEL is the dissatisfied wife of a wealthy husband and mother of a little girl; Fay is a night-club singer; Connie is... well, look who's playing the part. That'll tell you all you want to know about Connie.

Isabel has an affair with a gambler, her husband discovers it and divorces her. Later, he falls in love with Fay and marries her. Isabel's gambler is shot in a gang raid, and she and her daughter are kidnapped. The only way in which Isabel can save the child's life—and prove that she is really a White Woman—is to leap out of the window and kill herself.

There is plenty of action in this, and the players are good enough to make it a satisfactory supporting feature.

HOLD MY HAND

STANLEY LUPINO..... Eddie
FRED EMNEY..... Lord Milchester
BARBARA BLAIR..... Jane
SALLY GRAY..... Helen
POLLY WARD..... Paula
BERTHA BELMORE..... Lady Milchester
JACK MELFORD..... Pop Currie
JOHN WOOD..... Bob Crane
SYD WALKER..... Inspector Robert
Associated British (British). Director: Thornton Fretland. "U." Running time: 74 minutes.

FOLLOWING fairly closely the story of the Jessie Matthews stage show of a few years ago, this film is hardly as bright as that stage version.

Eddie is running a newspaper belonging to his ward, Paula. And as Eddie is no business man, Paula is pretty indignant when she finds the state of the paper's finances. But after the usual musical comedy manoeuvres to steal some jewels to provide a little ready cash, Jane, Eddie's faithful secretary, comes to the rescue.

You may find all this uproariously funny—or you may not. But you're bound to like dainty Polly Ward, and peppy Barbara Blair (quite an acquisition to British films, is Barbara).

WANTED BY THE POLICE

FRANKIE DARRO..... Danny
EVALYN KNAPP..... Kathleen
ROBERT KENT..... Mike
MATTY FAIN..... Williams
LILLIAN ELLIOTT..... Mrs. Murphy
THELMA WHITE..... Lillian
DAN ROWAN..... Owens
SAM BERNARD..... Stinger
MAURICE HUGO..... Marty
WILLY COSTELLO..... Russo
WALTER MERRILL..... Trigger
RALPH PETERS..... Jess
Pathe (American). Director: Howard Bretherton.
"A." Running time: 61 minutes.

YOUNG Danny Murphy wanted to be a big-time footballer, allowing his hard-working sister to keep the home going while he himself trained with the local team and read the sports columns in the newspapers.

But when his Irish mother told him a few truths he got wise to himself and got a job in a garage. Then, too late, he discovered that his employers were car thieves who had purposely compromised him to keep his mouth shut.

THE MISSING GUEST

PAUL KELLY..... "Scoop" Hanlon
CONSTANCE MOORE..... Stephanie Kirkland
WILLIAM LUNDIGAN..... Larry Dearden
EDWIN STANLEY..... Dr. Carrall
SELMER JACKSON..... Frank Baldrich
BILLY WAYNE..... "Vic"
GEORGE COOPER..... "Take"
PATRICK J. KELLY..... Edwards
FLORENCE WIX..... Linda Baldrich
HARLAN BRIGGS..... Kendall
PAT. C. FLICK..... Inventor
Universal (American). Director: John Raoulus.
"A." Running time: 68 minutes.

PLENTY of thrills here... secret passages, phantom voices, clutching hands and sliding panels! Sometimes the thrills are almost farcical, although the whole film is so bad that you can't even treat it as a gag.

Every conceivable situation, however old, has been thrown in, so that even the players suffer from the bad production.

FUGITIVES FOR A NIGHT

FRANK ALBERTSON..... Matt Ryan
ELEANOR LYNN..... Ann Wray
ALLAN LANE..... Nelson
BRADLEY PAGE..... Poole
ADRIANNE AMES..... Eileen Baker
JONATHAN HALE..... Captain
RUSSELL HICKS..... Tenwright
PAUL GUILFOYLE..... Monks
RKO Radio (American). Director: Leslie Goodwins.
"A." Running time: 64 minutes.

STORY that begins as yet another "exposure" of Hollywood, seems to lose courage, and becomes, instead, a not very convincing murder mystery. Bradley Page gives the best performance.

Friendship With The Stars

THEY TOOK THEIR STARS TO A PARTY!

THREE hundred members of the Bebe Daniels-Ben Lyon Friendship Club invited their stars, Bebe and Ben, to a party in Holborn, London, recently.

Bebe went along in her *Rio Rita* costume and Ben was there in an R.A.F. uniform such as he wore with Jean Harlow in *Hell's Angels*.

Bebe sang some of her favourite songs, of which "Umbrella Man" proved the most popular. Then, in the latter half of the evening, the restaurant telephone bell buzzed. It was Claude Hulbert. Could he come along after the theatre? Well, of course he could, so he brought along Billy Milton as well.

Another celebrity to join the party was Rene Ray, chaperoned by her sister.

Then there was the fancy-dress competition, judged, among others, by Stanley Maxted of the



Bebe Daniels and Ben Lyon with some of the fancy dress prize-winners at the Bebe and Ben Friendship Club party at Holborn. In the centre is May Goldsmith, founder and president of the club.

Luxemburg radio programmes. Winners were Edwina Adams and Grace Prior, two of the club's oldest members.

The party broke up just after midnight . . . and the stars stayed until the very end.

Organizer was May Goldsmith, founder and president of the club.

And now for other club news.

For Rathbone Admirers

THE British section of the official Basil Rathbone Eureka Club is run by Miss Gladys Hitchcock, 20 Wilbraham Road, Fallowfield, Manchester. The American organizer, Martha Ferguson of 81 North Eureka Avenue, Columbus, Ohio, U.S.A., writes that the organization has received the whole-hearted support of Basil Rathbone since its formation nearly two years ago.

"Basil's Blue Book" is the official club magazine, and the latest issue, which has just come to hand, includes long letters from Basil Rathbone and Mary Astor; articles on Frieda Inescort and Evelyn Venable and news of many of the club's members. There are plenty of illustrations, with a drawing of Frieda Inescort and photographs of Basil Rathbone as he appeared in *Robin Hood* and *Dawn Patrol*.

Martha Ferguson is also organizer of the Errol Flynn Sirocco Club, which publishes a club journal called "Sirocco." The British representative of this organization is Miss Betty Penner, 69 Amity Grove, West Wimbledon, London, S.W.20.

Many readers frequently ask if a friendship club has been formed for that increasingly popular British actress, Googie Withers. When I met Googie recently she told me that she is a "Star" member of the Federated British Film and Stage Association.

Incidentally just now the Federated British Film and Stage Association is celebrating its 12th anniversary. The Association's silver cup for the best organized branch is awarded for 1938 to the Birmingham branch.

—MOLLIE MONCRIEFF HART.

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blooms anew with new life, new youth and fascinating beauty. To relieve sore, cracked skin and chilblains, also to heal pimples and skin injuries, use Cuticura Brand Ointment. For the perfect finish to your daily bath, dust all over with superfine Cuticura Talcum.

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NOTE.—A-K is how thousands of women ask for Anti-Kammin brand Analgesic Tablets and if you say A-K your chemist will know. 1/3 a box.

COMEDIANS PREFER BLONDES

SEVERAL years ago, a long-haired schoolgirl stood in the wings of a London theatre, gazing with open-mouthed admiration at the star on the stage.

The girl was Polly Ward, the star—Stanley Lupino.

Both came from long lines of stage players, and the families had been friendly for years. That was why Polly was allowed in the wings.

She thought Stanley was just about the greatest comedian in the world. "One day," she told herself, "I'm going to act with him."

That ambition has always remained with her, and a little while ago it was at last fulfilled. Polly was chosen to appear with Stanley in the film version of *Hold My Hand*, released next week.

In making this picture, Polly added yet another name to the list of famous English comedians with whom she has appeared.

Comedy-makers must like her as leading-lady. She's been with George Formby, Max Miller and Will Fyffe, to name the most famous; and, in spite of the British film slump, has been one of our busiest actresses during the past year or so.

Polly Ward is popular because she is a trouper. She is clever at "feeding" comedians without getting in their way. She is decorative, with her vivacious manner, blonde, fair and lovely figure, but she doesn't attempt to steal scenes from the stars.

Polly Wants A Change

AS any actor will tell you, doing nothing is more difficult than playing the most dramatic of scenes, and that's why so many leading ladies fail in comedies.

Because Polly Ward is an experienced actress, she succeeds. But she feels she doesn't get the credit she deserves.

"I'm thoroughly happy playing these roles," she told me, "although it's the most thankless job you can imagine. But I do want to get a break. I don't mind if the studios give me the smallest of roles, as long as I can get the opportunity to show myself as an actress."

"After all, I have done a lot of varied work on the stage. I have appeared at the Open-Air Theatre, but on the screen the only straight role I have had was in *The Old Curiosity Shop*."

"Do you remember Claire Trevor in *Dead End*? I'm hoping that someone will let me take a role like that one of these days—just a small part that will pave the way for me to do something more dramatic than a stooge for comedians."

"But don't think I'm grumbling about my present lot. I'm not. I enjoy working with comedians, because they're such good fun."

I asked her what she thought about the men she had worked with.

"George Formby," she said, "is about the easiest. I was with him in *Feather Your Nest* and *It's in the Air*. He's awfully sweet, and he really does try to share scenes with you whenever possible."

"On the other hand, Max Miller is about the most difficult. I don't mean as a person, because he's grand to know and working with him is a tonic."

"I was his leading lady in *Thank Evans*, and at first I was hopelessly bewildered. You see, Max speaks at such a terrific speed that you instinctively find yourself talking in the same way!"

"I got used to it after a time, though. But probably the most difficult thing about being Max's leading lady is that he is so spontaneous. It's an awful job to know where to bring in your own lines."

"You can't rely on your script. Once Max gets going, new gags simply tumble out of his mouth. According to the script, he might have a hundred words to say before his leading lady speaks—but Max

At least, they seem to prefer blonde, blue-eyed Polly Ward when it comes to choosing leading ladies. Polly has acted with George Formby, Max Miller and Stanley Lupino, among others, and in this interview with JOHN IFIELD she talks about them—and a little about herself.

rattles out several thousand words of additional material!"

Polly appeared with Will Fyffe in *Annie Laurie*, and it's her ambition to work with him again. Incidentally, although *Annie Laurie* was produced nearly three years ago, Polly still receives fan letters about it.

Will Fyffe A Great Actor

SHE considers Will Fyffe one of the greatest actors on the screen.

"It's wonderful to act with him," she said. "He gives you something. It's difficult to explain what I mean, but when you're with him, he inspires you."

For instance, I had one scene in which I had to sit on his knee, and as he talked to me I had to cry. I didn't have to act. I found myself really crying. I didn't force the tears at all."

Polly Ward's own story is a romantic one. Although for generations her family has been famous on the music-halls, she has herself to thank for her progress.

"I was only 14 when I decided to branch out," she told me. "I was the first to leave the music-hall side of acting, and I began as a chorus dancer."

Her first upward step was when she became Jessie Matthews' understudy in *Wake Up and Dream*. She also played a small part in the show. Unluckily for Polly, Jessie didn't miss a single performance, so it wasn't one of those "Understudy Leaps to Fame" affairs.

But Polly progressed steadily, and before long was a leading lady.

An attractive picture of Polly Ward as she appears in the new George Formby film "It's in the Air," generally released a week or two ago.



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Jean Arthur's "Third Time" Success Story

(Continued from page 15)

fans, discerned a quality about her which went side by side with her distinctive voice.

The suspicion, all but a certainty, that she was as good a comedienne as an emotional actress, was strengthened with *Public Hero No. 1*. In the early passages of the film she had many delightful comedy scenes, though in the end her heroine fell away into the unconvincing pattern of the stock girl-in-the-case.

After that, all filmdom knows how she shared in the lustre surrounding the Capra *Mr. Deeds*. The director has put it on record that he had no hesitation in choosing her for the part, knowing full well that in her make-up were the qualities he most desired for the role of Babe Bennett.

There is no need to refer back to her success in that film. Briefly, she had all Hollywood by the ears, and there wasn't a producer who didn't think he could cash in on the popularity which she had earned through *Deeds*.

Unfortunately, Columbia, who had her under contract, knew all about this too. And they thought, "let them get on with it; we shall get our cut out of the business."

In the year following her emergence to the front, she made six films. The final three were *History Is Made At Night* for Walter Wanger, *More Than a Secretary* for her employers, and *Easy Living* for Paramount.

By that time all her good work had been undone. She earned the reputation of being temperamental and disgruntled, because she was engaged in endless disputes with her employers.

It is not hard to imagine that she was over-worked, and temporarily played out with slogging her way through a series of thankless roles.

She was exhausted, physically and mentally. She did not care if her roles were done well, or not. All she did trouble about was whether she was to be allowed more breathing space between productions, and whether her future roles were to be fitted to her individual talents.

As neither she nor Columbia were able to reach an amicable conclusion, she once again left Hollywood, in the summer of 1937, and she went on a lengthy holiday.

And for the next year, Hollywood had only occasional news of her. Intelligence filtered through now and then that she and the producers were making it up.

Actually, she was relaxing and resting in the mountains within easy reach of Hollywood. In the hills of California she recuperated and refreshed herself, with periodical visits to her Hollywood home.

Well, Jean Arthur won her private rebellion, just as Cagney, Raft, and a few others have done.

If an artiste is valuable enough, and producers know that the public retains an affection for her, the artiste will always win if she can hold out long enough. Jean Arthur's position in the public regard was sufficiently secure for her to win the hand.

Victorious Come-Back

FRANK CAPRA it was who began the negotiations for her return. They were, ostensibly, friendly social get-togethers on her visits to Hollywood. When she did return for the purpose of taking up her career again, the approaches made by Columbia were open.

Under her new contract she does two films a year for the next three years. Capra, who wanted her for his picture, played a diplomatic part in this sensible arrangement. And Miss Arthur, who is nothing if not fair, agreed to play in *You Can't Take It With You* as an extra to the contract.

It will be agreed, I think, that her work in Capra's latest enables her to begin again from a mark which she set in *Deeds*. She may not have a fat role, but she has obviously renewed her desire to get the most out of her screen personality.

In a sense it is her third try for a permanent place in the film firmament.

And this time Jean is not being allowed to waste her talents on trivial films, having once achieved success. Frank Capra has chosen her to play the leading feminine role in his new film, *Mr. Smith Goes To Washington*, in which she will possibly play again opposite Gary Cooper or James Stewart, with whom her former successes were made.

This time it looks as though success has come to stay.

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THE WORLD'S MOST FAMOUS LAXATIVE

GET BACK TO THE SCHOOLROOM

DR. TWIST!



Picture posed by Will Hay and Peter Gawthorne.

THE SCREEN PARLIAMENT.

Have you written to us yet? And if not, why not? We feel sure you have something interesting to say—and we'd like to hear your views.

3. The subject remains the primary attraction; few stars have stories specially constructed as vehicles for their talent.

4. There is ample food for thought provided at the end.

Our films have real merit as well as entertainment value; may they succeed still further during 1939.—*E. N. Mackay, Constables, Uppingham.*

Shall He Dance?

SIR,—Is not it about time we saw George Raft dance again? Two of his biggest successes, *Rumba* and *Bolero*, were dancing pictures, and yet no one has had the idea of letting him dance on the screen since.

What a team he and Ginger Rogers would make. Ginger is by far the best feminine dancer in pictures and George, with his snake-like style, would make a perfect partner for her.

And isn't it about time also that George Raft returned to the sleek type of part that made his style so individual.

Admittedly, *Souls at Sea* was the best bit of dramatic acting he has done, and it came as a novelty to the public to see him in a role in which they could sympathize with him.

But half of his public, and particularly the real Raft fans, preferred his former well-dressed villainy to his "whitewashed" roles.

And don't you think a good, or rather bad, villain makes even the handsomest hero look colourless?—*V. Gibb, St. James Road, Shirley, Southampton.*

Eleanor Powell Should Learn From Taylor

SIR,—Give Eleanor Powell a new director for her next picture! And I'll tell you whom I suggest—Frank Capra!

The most brilliant dancer and attractive personality in pictures, Eleanor Powell has been fated to appear in a series of spectacular musical films which, though establishing her as a genius of dancing, have not helped her acting one iota.

Do you remember Robert Taylor in *Broadway Melody of 1938*—a charming dumb nonentity? And Robert Taylor in *A Yank at Oxford*—a vital, convincing actor who gave a superb characterization.

That's what I'm asking for Eleanor Powell—a simple, strong story handled by a director such as Capra—and I am convinced that a new Eleanor Powell would arise. She's lovely, sweet and friendly, but give her a real chance and you will see that she is also—an actress.—*John Lane, Fenchurch Street, London, E.C.3.*

Those Real-Life Screen Stories

SIR,—I wonder how many of us have found the working of machinery a source of great interest on the screen? I have often been fascinated by the mighty printing presses shown in operation during a newspaper story.

It might be a good idea to build up stories around other large industries. How many of us have ever seen paper actually made, motor-cars actually produced or ships actually built?

A good story written with such an absorbingly interesting background could hardly fail to arouse wide interest. The public likes to see just how things are done. I should like to see British film concerns creating a new "cycle" of films—one in which British industries play a part. Quite apart from the trade-creating possibilities of such films, they would provide absorbingly interesting backgrounds for both drama and comedy.—*D. Drewett, Church Road, Ash, Surrey.*

• • • A semi-documentary angle does add much in interest and realism to a film, and in this connexion we recall the mining-town sequences in "The Citadel," and "South Riding," which showed the workings of a Yorkshire County Council. As for the industries you mention, the Gracie Fields—Will Fyffe film "Sally of the Shipyards" will deal with the building of a giant liner; there have been no feature films dealing with paper-making or motor-car production, but there is a short documentary film now going round the cinemas which deals with book production. It is called "Chapter and Verse," and you may care to look out for it.—The Editor.

Memoirs of a "Big Game Hunter"

SIR,—I have collected autographs for some time now and these are the impressions the film great have given me:—

• *Marlene Dietrich*: Very beautiful, charming, marvellously "grooved" and most gracious. After giving me her autograph she posed while I took her photograph.

• *Madge Evans*: Surely every man's dream girl. She

SURELY the quality of Will Hay's latest efforts is not up to standard. This is a great pity, and should not be allowed to continue, as the star is such a fine comedian and one of England's best.

Really, "Convict 99" and "Hey, Hey, U.S.A." were not worthy of him. Even though I look forward to every new Will Hay picture with keen anticipation, I did not see "Convict 99" through, but came out of the cinema before the finish.

Will Hay gained his vaudeville success as a comic schoolmaster, and further enhanced his popularity in "Boys Will Be Boys," and other school films. Is it then absolutely necessary to take him away from this type of role? It seems to me that since this happened Dr. Twist has been steadily going down the class.

A very good remedy, I suggest, would be to send Mr. Hay back to St. Michaels and then perhaps we could once again enjoy that brand of humour which made him famous; and which is so entirely his own.—*Leslie Murray, Hillbrow, New Malden, Surrey.*

This letter wins our first prize of £1 is.

Golden Boy Still in the News

SIR,—I can see a great sensation by casting Ramon Novarro as Golden Boy. I think Novarro is one of the finest actors on the screen. Perhaps your reader is too young to remember Ramon Novarro's performances in *Scaramouche*, *Pagan* and *Ben Hur*, films never to be forgotten. No other star could have acted the part of Ben Hur as Novarro did, and what a sensation it caused.

I think no one would be more suited to play Golden Boy than Novarro, he has got the talent and the most athletic figure on the screen. I also think the older stars are much superior actors to the newcomers. Take for instance Ronald Colman, Paul Muni and Spencer Tracy and last, but not least, Novarro himself. They are still on top to-day. So give us Novarro in *Golden Boy* and other good films suited to his wonderful talent.—*M. Marshall, Harrow, Middlesex.*

• • • It is announced that Ramon Novarro is forming his own company to produce Spanish talkies in Mexico in the near future. As well as financing the company, Novarro will direct most of the films. It has always been his ambition to become a director, though, of course, this need not prevent him from appearing in future films.—The Editor.

She Felt Cheated!

SIR,—A recent film, *The Cheat*, has been discussed in Screen Parliament, and I was surprised to find that it was praised. I found it very boring. It was slow, and patchy, and was received with grim silence at a large suburban cinema, where I saw it. And the acting I thought was terrible, especially in the early stages of the film, where the Cheat as a boy was visited by his uncle, after the death of his family. The way he nodded his head (a gesture which was supposed to express fear) was so rank bad that it made the audience laugh.

This lad's acting was one of the worst child performances that I've seen. Although this film is perhaps

no worse than a good many other films we see, it is its type that needs checking.

Films have reached a high standard to-day, and this dubbing of French films is, in my opinion, a step backwards, and not a step forward. It reminds us of the silent films, to watch these dumb gestures, and I'm sure the voice of a commentator is not pleasant to hear for an hour or so. I hope that this manner of presenting French films is nipped in the bud.—*H. Lisney, Rowver Road, Lee, S.E.12.*

• • • From some of the letters we have received about "The Cheat" it seems that some readers are under a misapprehension; the method of having the characters acting in dumb show and a commentator telling the story was the method of the original French film, and was naturally followed in the process of dubbing. But, of course, any future films to be dubbed will use the natural conversation method, if that is the way they are produced in the foreign originals.

And as for the criticism that the audiences laughed at some scenes of "The Cheat"—well, all we can say is, we've been chuckling at the remembrance of it ever since we saw it. After all, comedies are made to be laughed at.—The Editor.

Where Britain Leads

SIR,—Much has been said contrasting the staid methods of our own film industry with the swagger and enterprise of its American counterpart. But in the four following ways—at least, Britain would seem to rise superior.

In a good British film

1. The background is usually natural—there is no reliance on spectacle.

2. The actors and actresses seem to give of their best for the sake of the public, and not merely to be playing in a lucrative but uninteresting game.



A reader asks: "What has happened to Miriam Hopkins?" Although Miriam has been out of films for some time, since her marriage to director Anatole Litvak, it is likely that she will soon be at work again.

... unaffected, dainty and so lovely. She chatted quite a few minutes and then, all too soon for a hailed a taxi and was gone.

Douglas Fairbanks, Jun.: Vital; very polite and charming, but oh, in such a hurry!

Gary Cooper: Lank and haggard and looked too terribly tired of it all.

Lupe Velez: Surprisingly quiet and subdued; chewed gum; a charming smile accompanied each autograph.

Kay Francis: She signed but seemed glad to get it over. She was obviously scared of crowds.

Edna May Oliver: Tall, stately, aristocratic-looking, witty and beautifully dressed.

George Arliss: I waited quite a while to see him when he was working at Gaumont British. When he did come out with his valet, I was about to approach him, but his man held me back and Mr. Arliss stepped into his car and was away. I remember he looked like the Duke of Wellington, and had a wonderfully clear complexion resembling a girl's.

On the whole the stars I've met have been very human and pleasant.—**Leslie B. Parker, Langleys Road, Selly Oak, Birmingham.**



Nova Pilbeam

Where is Miriam Hopkins?

SIR,—Hollywood's glamour girls may fade out just as soon as they like without worrying me the least bit, but when such a fine actress as Miriam Hopkins ceases to make films for no apparent reason, I think it's time I aired my views just a little.

If Miss Hopkins has retired on her own account, I am not surprised, remembering the third-rate films in which she has recently taken part, such as *Wise Girl*. But when one considers the brilliant performances she contributed to *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, *Becky Sharp* and *These Three*, it seems a crime that she should be allowed to fade from the public's eye.

In my opinion it is about time Hollywood paid a little more attention to this gifted actress and ceased playing around with its wooden glamour girls. It so rarely offers the public an actress of Miss Hopkins' integrity.—**Geoffrey U. Penfold, North Valley Road, Cobbe.**

•• You will be glad to hear that Warners have bought the play "The Old Maid" and intend co-starring Miriam Hopkins and Bette Davis in it. This should be just the thing to put Miriam right back at the top.—**The Editor.**

Embarrassment of Riches

SIR,—I am a schoolgirl and my complaint is the number of star pictures that appear in one week. Sometimes there are as many as four. This week there were three, namely, *Marie Antoinette*, *If I Were King* and *Garden of the Moon*.

It stands to reason that the average person cannot go four times a week, either because their slender purses will not allow it, or because they have not the time. Consequently, they have to miss two films, and very often they turn out to be the best two. Often have I been to see a picture that has been well heralded months before, and then I have heard such good reports of other pictures which are appearing the same week that I find myself regretting my choice. So please, isn't there any remedy?—**"Mere Schoolgirl," Ansdell Road, Peckham, London.**

•• Your complaint of too many good films is certainly an odd one. The only remedy so far as we can see would be for producers to stop making so many good films—and most people think there are too few good ones already! We suggest you study John Milford's reviews and base your choice on them.—**The Editor.**

Those Technicolor Endings!

SIR,—It is extraordinary how effective an inconclusive ending can be on the screen. Although most films end with a miraculous clearing up of troubles, or a nice little technicolor dawn, how much more stimulating to the intelligence and the imagination was the final cynical remark of the reporter in *They*



"Fluttery" Zasu Pitts studied hard to be a detective, but nobody would give her the job. So she went into films. This picture shows her as she appears in "Gambler and the Lady."

THE FILM BUREAU

DITHERING STAR WANTED TO BE A DETECTIVE

Mary (Newcastle).—Zasu Pitts was born in Kansas on January 3, 1900. Her first name is a combination of Eliza and Susan, the names of two aunts. Her earliest ambition was to become a detective, and to this end she studied all the crime novels and stories she could get, but nobody would employ her as a sleuth. So Zasu turned to films, and was acclaimed as a great tragic actress in *Greed* and *Wedding March*. Later she became a comedienne with such good effect that audiences laughed when she tried a dramatic role in *All Quiet on the Western Front*, and she was replaced in the film by Beryl Mercer. Since then, Zasu has always appeared in comedies and her latest is *Gambler and the Lady*, with George Raft and Ellen Drew.

Maurice Black (Coventry).—Two years research was spent on *The Adventures of Robin Hood* and the production was actually before the cameras for five months.

"Film Fan" (London).—You should write to Ginger Rogers c/o RKO-Radio Studios, 780 Gower Street, Los Angeles, Cal., U.S.A. Letters take about 10 days to reach Hollywood from England.

F. Storey (Workop).—Norma Shearer won the Academy Award in 1930 for her performance in *The Divorcee*.

Miss F. Marshall, 32 Gleuwood Road, Hounslow, Middx., runs a fan club for Norma Shearer.

R. Wührer (S.W.1).—John McCormack sang three old Irish ballads in *Wings of the Morning* and their titles were "Killamey," "Believe Me If All These Endearing Young Charms," and "At Dawning of the Day."

"Danny Boy" (Dublin).—Write to Richard Greene c/o Twentieth Century-Fox Films, Beverly Hills, Cal., U.S.A.; Deanna Durbin c/o Universal Pictures Corp., Universal City, Cal., U.S.A., and Don Castle c/o Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Ltd., Culver City, Cal., U.S.A.

Marjorie Coulson (Wandstead).—The cast of *Les Miserables* was Fredric March—Jean Valjean; Charles Laughton—Javert; Sir Cedric Hardwicke—Bishop Bienvenu; Rochelle Hudson—Cosette (as a woman); Marilyn Knowlton—Cosette (as a child); Frances Drake—Eponine; John Beal—Marius; Jessie Ralph—Madame Magloire; Florence Eldridge—Fantine; Ferdinand Gottschalk—Theardier; Jane Kerr—Madame Theardier; Vernon Downing—Brisac; Eily Malynn—Mother Superior.

COLMAN SHOULD PLAY THE MURDERER

Readers Write About "Rebecca" Casting

Sir,—Ronald Colman has for years been my favourite film actor. I am very interested in the possibility of his playing a murderer in "Rebecca."

Although I first became his admirer when I saw him as Bulldog Drummond, he reached the peak of his career as Sydney Carton in "A Tale of Two Cities"; everything he has done since that superb piece of acting has come as an anti-climax. Colman's acting in that film, I consider to be the greatest I have ever seen.

He has discovered the real technique of screen acting. Therefore I think he should play the role in "Rebecca" to prove once more that he can play perfectly any part, within his range.

I am quite convinced that by proving once again his greatness and versatility as an actor, Ronald Colman will not lose the admiration of his loyal fans.

Just as we love to like him when he is gallant and romantic as the hero, we

shall love to hate him as the villain.—(Miss) M. C. Northcott, Atterton, Devon.

Sir,—I read with great relief that Hitchcock is to direct "Rebecca." He is just the man to handle so delicate and subtle a theme. My estimation of this great director rose still higher, when I saw that he wants Nova Pilbeam to play the heroine without a name, for Nova is the only actress of the appropriate age who could portray satisfactorily the intense human drama of the role. Ronald Colman, of course, would be perfect for the role of the husband. I can't think of anyone more suitable. And if Flora Robson could possibly be obtained for the part of the vindictive housekeeper I am sure she would make her live on the screen for us.

I wonder who could play Rebecca herself? Vivien Leigh or Binnie Barnes.

Well, Mr. Hitchcock, I hope your wishes are fulfilled.—(Miss) C. Dace, Wordsworth Road, Horfield, Bristol, 7.



(Right) Ronald Colman

Won't Forget, or the last relentless glimpse of the house tops in *Dead End*.

Certainly it can only be used for a certain type of film, and certainly it could be overdone. But why must so many sound adaptations of plays and novels be spoiled by their endings being changed to conventional affairs, which send you out of the cinema satisfied but not stimulated? The film versions of *South Riding* and *Yellow Jack* are examples.—(Miss) P. E. Nelson, Audley Road, Folkestone.

Talent Neglected

Sir,—We have had a fine group of male stars in the past two years, but I often wonder if Fredric March's great talents are not being neglected. He has given us some superb performances, and he could continue to do so if good stories were offered to him. He is a most versatile actor and he can be as good in

to their stage "flop" of last season. Now there is talk of filming the play with the Marches in the leads.—**The Editor.**

Sir,—Robert Young is a good actor, suitable for modern or historical roles. Yet in nearly every picture he makes he is practically pushed into the background by other leading men who have appeared with him. This is because the parts given to him are not good enough for an actor of his ability.

Rather than roles such as he had in *Three Comrades*, *Frou Frou*, *The Shining Hour*, *Josette* and *Rich Man Poor Girl*, why not give him a good part and a good supporting cast?—**M. Jones, High Street, Prestatyn, Flint.**

Trailers

I should like to suggest Walter Connolly for the role of Edgar Wallace in the film of Wallace's life.—**Mrs. W. Gelder, Huddersfield.**

May I suggest as a new comedy team Naunton Wayne and Basil Radford? If they are able to keep up the standard they set in *The Lady Vanishes*, they would be a riot.—**Jane Blake, Cressington, Liverpool.**

Glynis Johns gives an outstanding performance in *Prison Without Bars*, despite the smallness of her role. The manner in which she employs her voice to heighten the qualities of her acting is particularly pleasing. I can foresee a great future for this actress who, if looked after carefully, will develop into a star of the near future.—**Keith Russell, Addiscombe Road, Croydon.**

You can't expect an educated person to believe that de Lesseps built the Suez Canal at Tyrone Power's age. Nor do I swallow the statement that Marie Antoinette was "the playgirl of Europe." When the film capital sets out to teach us history, I wish they would do it, and not thrust a pack of lies at us "for the sake of entertainment."—**Miss W. A. Wakefield, West Harrow, Middx.**

Film Pictorial



Our Preview Page
"ONE THIRD OF A NATION"
 Inspired by President Roosevelt's stirring speech, in which he said that one third of the American nation was badly housed, badly clothed and badly fed, this film, as did "Dead End," contrasts rich and poor, who live so close together in New York. Sylvia Sydney and Leif Erikson (in the top picture) head the cast, which is composed of distinguished actors from New York's Theatre Guild.

