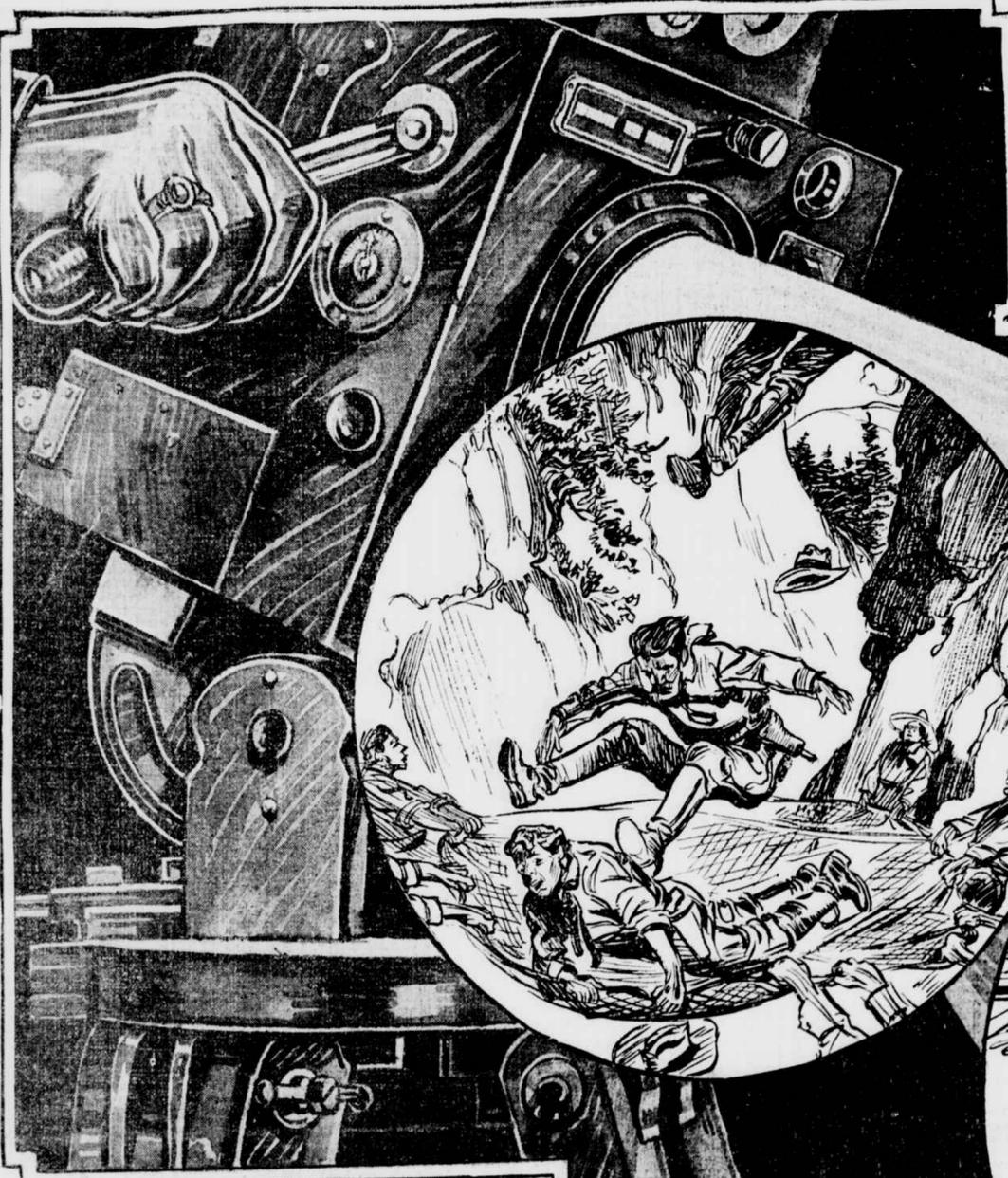


NEW-YORK, SUNDAY, JULY 23, 1911.

Sometimes It's a Real Horror That the Film Presents for Your Gaze

Light Hearted Mimicry Gives Way at Times to Tragedy Caused by Perils That Moving Picture Actors Confront in the Gaze of the Camera's Single, Staring Eye.

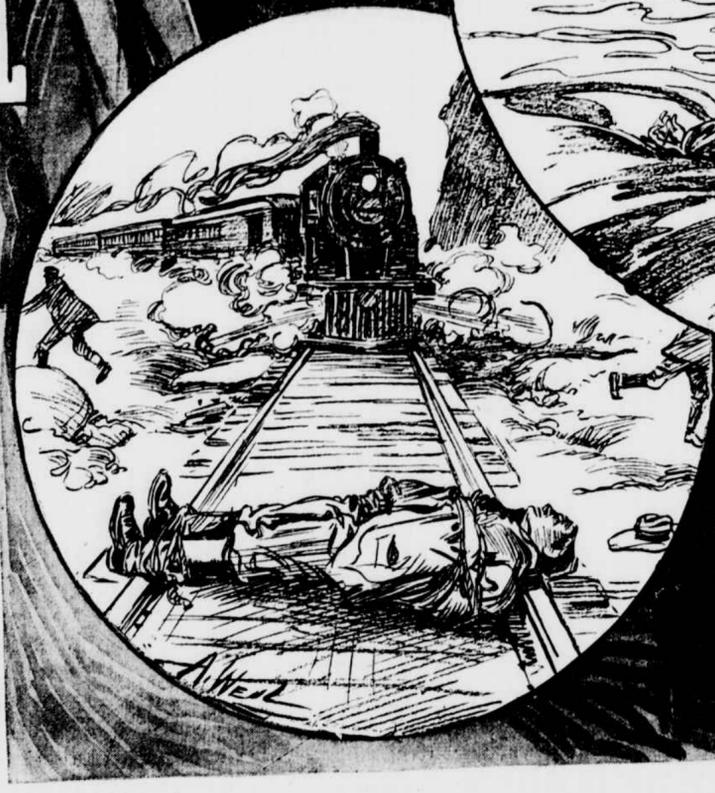


100-foot cliff while carrying an umbrella above his dome of thought, (3) hanging from Harlem Bridge, (4) diving forty feet through the air into thirty feet of water, (5) alighting from thirty-mile-an-hour express trains and (6) kidnapping, followed by arrest and incarceration in a local battle. The story of this Oxford magister artium is such an entertaining human document that it is reproduced here:

through several miles of film-taking and finally to the edge of a horrendous cliff, over which we were supposed to leap rather than stay and be tomahawked by our pursuers.

ballet-girls flying through the air above the stage, pretending to dance, and all that sort of thing? Well, the principle was the same. The trick was worked indoors with an outdoor stage setting. I wore a stout belt around my body, and attached to the back of the belt, where the vision of the camera didn't get it, was a cable suspended from the flies. As the flymen lowered the cable the fool scientist dropped into the yawning chasm, apparently, retarded only by that joke 'parachute.' Just the same, I was glad to get to the bottom. Suppose the rope had broken!

"Next, by way of novelty, I suffered arrest and endured detention in Jefferson Market prison. As you Americans would say, we were too 'blamed realistic.' We certainly 'put it over' on that policeman, though in the next breath I must acknowledge he had the last laugh and the best. Clad as a



LEAPING INTO THE LIFE NET TOO SOON, THE NET COLLAPSES UNDER THE UNUSUAL STRAIN. PRETENDING TO DROWN, HE IS CAUGHT IN A DEATH TRAP AND DROWNS SURE ENOUGH. AN ENGINE DRIVER GETS THE WRONG ORDER AND ACTUALLY RUNS OVER THE BODY OF A MOTION PICTURE ACTOR LASHED TO THE RAILS.

By Henry MacMahon.
"WHEN die, Harold Montmorency?" Seizing an oar, the speaker struck mightily, and the standing figure in the stern of the boat was knocked into the water. He went down with such a yell of terror and so despairing look on his face that a long-haired man on the bank shouted: "Good! That's fine! Now, you, Sylvester Armitage, quick! I say—finish him when he comes up. Don't let him get away!" As accompaniment to the words of menace, something or other on the shore br-r-r-ed and whizz-z-z-z-ed unceasingly.

The doomed victim of the other's "hate" stayed under water an unconscionably long time. "Good God! What's the matter?" cried the man on the bank. Even Sylvester Armitage seemed to pale beneath his artificial olive complexion. And then, with horrible gurgling sounds and amid circling waves and ripples, the stark body of Montmorency—the arms and legs cramped—reappeared a dozen yards from the boat. In a choked voice he feebly shouted: "Help! Help! I'm drowning!" and soon sank again.

"He's all right," called out the man on the bank, reassuringly. "Doing it exactly as I told him. But you, there, Armitage, why in the blankety-blank-blank, didn't you stand by? The second time up, you get him sure, and then he can swim out of the picture and make the shore."

But Armitage didn't look nor act as if he could "get" anybody. A spectator close enough would have noted he was shaking with terror as he gazed like a palsied wretch on the spot where a moment ago his distressed "enemy" showed. Not a ripple at last disturbed the surface. The man on the bank was tearing his long hair and racing back and forth impatiently.

There was a big commotion on the lakeside. The br-r-ing and whizz-z-ing thing had stopped. A party headed by the boss grabbed a boat drawn up on the bank and put forth hurriedly. They were too late. Before they had made half the distance to the drowning man his body came up the last time, but no sound issued from his lips. As he finally sank, the little fresh water pond—a lakelet small enough for "kids" to canoe in—was his death trap.

That (or something quite like it) happened a few days ago on Brady's Pond, Cransers, Staten Island, when the melodrama masquerade of a company of motion picture players was converted into terrible reality. You that have enjoyed the second hand thrills of sudden death and daredevil deeds that the picture films impart, have you ever before realized the desperate chances some of these motion picture actors take?

"It's mere trick work," you say. No, not all of it. Illusion plays the major part, it is true; yet in the great out of doors, particularly, the camera actor leads a strenuous life and faces actual dangers.

force of the wind on the sail above. And crash! went the moving picture outfit, and a few miles, more or less, of film, as the hurrying boom remorselessly swept them into the ocean. You ought to have seen us duck! As it was, the boom carried off our caps and nearly scalped us. It would have been goodby, Mr. Stage Director, and gooby, Mr. Assistant, if it had really jammed us over. The sea was full of man eating sharks, and the vessel was skimming along at such a speed that it would have taken fully fifteen minutes to put back, even if the sharks had kindly refrained from making us the piece de resistance of their dinner.

"In the Rockies," rambled on the picture man, "I almost stumbled into death, as it were. Leaving the hotel one morning, my man and I thought we'd enjoy a little glacier holiday of our own before bucking down to the serious work of photographing Alpine rescues, landslides and moving rivers of ice. As we found the footing good, we continued over the hard, hummocky surface of the glacier until, without warning, I sank to the

waist in a small heap of snow. My companion seized me and dragged me back to the solid surface. It wasn't until two days later that I thought it worth while to relate the incident to an Alpinist. He examined the place.

"Mr. —," he said, earnestly, "it is a miracle that you are alive to tell this. That fresh snow concealed a crevice two hundred feet deep, and it's a wonder if tenderfoot explorers like yourself are not killed in traversing such dangerous ground! Sure enough, on my return I read in a newspaper that a party of sightseeing girls had been engulfed in that very crevice. Two were killed, and two others, I believe, were nearly starved and frozen to death in the awful abyss before they were rescued."

Ahead of me, who was evidently taking his time. I had to follow quickly, and kerplunk! I came down almost on top of him. The lifeline gave way under the combined weights, and though the fall was partly broken I hit with great force on a stony bit of ground. My career as a motion picture actor almost ended then and there.