THE BLUE BUCKLE

A BAFFLING MYSTERY AND BREATHLESS TALE OF ADVENTURE

By WILLIAM HAMILTON OSBORNE

Author of "The Red Mouse," "The Running Fight," "Catspaw," Etc.

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SYNOPSIS.

On board a transatlantic liner, returning from Europe, Craig Rutherford falls in love with a woman, a Mrs. Talcott. She seems to be troubled by something, but refuses his help, and spends most of the time with her invalid husband. Also on board is J. Baron Helderman, an unscrupulous financier, who makes a business proposition to Rutherford, and in a conversation says that he suspects the Talcotts of something. He directs attention to a blue buckle worn by Mrs. Talcott. Later Helderman bribes the wireless operator to let him take a message.

CHAPTER II—(Continued)

"I am not usually curious," he said, "but—is this message something you desire to confide to me?"

Helderman nodded again, then beckoned his companion to a corner sheltered from the breeze and offered him a cigar, while he proceeded to light another.

"You will understand that this is confidential?" he said, after so long a silence that Rutherford was afraid he sought to divert the conversation into other channels.

"Certainly."

"The message was from the Caledonia, which had it from Liverpool. It ran like this: 'Ten days ago a diamond necklace, value 250,000 francs, was purchased in the shop of Kirschwasser, in Berlin, apparently for import to America.' You gather the meaning of this, Mr. Rutherford? It is for the secret service men, and refers to—smugglers."

Rutherford was frankly interested.

"Who bought the necklace? Did the message give any particulars?" he asked.

"The details were few. The purchasers were people of evident prosperity."

"There was more than one person, then?"

"There were two," answered the banker.

"Men?"

"One man," said Helderman slowly, "and a woman."

Rutherford could not suppress the nervous haste with which he put the next inquiry.

"How were they to be identified?"

"The information was meager. The woman was young and quite attractive. The man was middle-aged and wore a beard."

Craig made no further inquiries. He was smitten with a sense of disaster impending. Helderman, however, continued to talk, with the freedom of one superficially interested.

"The message would not have been sent to this ship but for two reasons: The man and woman are our fellow-passengers, and there are secret service men also here, detailed to watch them."

Rutherford felt that his silence would seem strange. He forced himself to speak.

"First or second cabin?"

"First, of course."

For an instant, as they emerged into the silver radiance that flooded the upper deck, the two men regarded each other; then Craig turned away, with a pretense of contemplating the beauty of the night. He knew that Helderman had read his mind, as he in turn had interpreted that of Helderman; and both of them were thinking of the same first-class passengers, an attractive young woman and an elderly bearded man.

"Well—what do you think?" Helderman finally asked, twirling upward the points of his mustache and downward the point of his goatee, both grizzled and betraying his age unnecessarily.

"I haven't any definite opinion—" Craig began, reluctantly.

"Be honest with yourself! You know you have! You think what I think!"

If the financier had expected denial or surprise from Rutherford he was disappointed. The young man merely shrugged his shoulders and kept his own counsel.

"You do not, Mr. Rutherford, happen to know a secret service man when you see him?" persisted Helderman.

"No, I do not," replied Craig.

"Tomorrow, then, I suggest that you correct your ignorance. Keep your eyes open and perhaps you will see what I have seen."

"Where do you suggest that I look?" asked Craig.

"In the neighborhood of Mrs. Henry Talcott!" Helderman answered, turning abruptly toward the royal suite. "I have the honor to bid you good-night."

If Helderman had striven all evening to plant a barbed arrow in Rutherford's mind he should have gone to bed proud of his success. The arrow was there, and it rankled keenly. Craig's mind traveled and retraveled the various points for and against Mrs. Talcott in the short time he had known her. How little was his positive knowledge of her, and yet how she appealed constantly to his trust and loyalty! Here, in one short evening, he had reason to doubt her motives and actions, on two separate occasions, and yet, with the blind unreasonableness of a man in love, he was striving to dismiss everything except the charm of her sweet and buoyant personality.

Granted, however, that her possible interview with the banker might be reasonably explained; granted that she was innocent of smuggling, which was not, indeed, the most heinous of sins—what concern was it of his—Craig Rutherford's—that her charm set even this cynical financier aflame?

Craig had never liked the kind of men who find diversion in affairs with married women, and the disapproval that he had bestowed upon them now rebounded upon himself. Could it be that he was jealous? He recalled the phrase with which Helderman had described her. He had spoken of her dainty aloofness and the lure of it. Craig conceded bitterly that the clever financier had analyzed the secret of her appeal. From this point the young man ceased to reason and gave himself over to his fancy. He saw this girl—for she was no more than a girl—moving lightly along the deck, the folds of her gray ulster pressed close against her erect, slender figure, as she gally breasted the wind. He was proudly conscious of the admiration with which all eyes followed her. His imagination appropriated her and reveled in the possession. He forgot his own culpability in thinking of her at all. He forgot his stubborn efforts to allay his suspicion. He knew only that at last into his life had come the one inevitable woman, for whom poets had sung and warriors had fought since the foundation of the world. Forgetful of all else, he drew the flimsy veil from his pocket and pressed it to his lips.

The action, slight as it was, brought him to his senses with a start. He cursed himself for a fool. Here he stood, idly dreaming, while the woman he sought to serve was daily and hourly exposed to danger. The hidden menace which lay behind Helderman's allusion to the secret-service men was now clear to him, for the first time. Helderman was frankly interested in Mrs. Talcott, and might try to put to some ulterior use the information he had gained by wireless. He was apparently powerful; he already knew about the detectives and their mission. Against these forces, Mrs. Talcott was practically defenseless. Culpable or not, she should not be without the help that he, Craig, might give her.

Here the young man's chin set grimly, and he walked forthwith to his room, resolved to get the rest that he needed to make him an opponent worthy of the wily Helderman. He must be ready and prepared to counter his next move. That there would be a next move, he no longer had any doubt.

CHAPTER III.

THE SECRET-SERVICE MEN.

The next morning, Rutherford arose with his determination of the night strengthened into immediate action. Whether or not Mrs. Talcott confided in him, or would even be grateful for his help, he felt that he must look after her interests. She must be protected—even her invalid husband would commend him in that, he virtuously told himself.

Full of his project, he sauntered around the ship, seeking the disturbing owner of the veil, and at last was rewarded by seeing her, seated demurely in the library, looking through the pages of a cumbersome volume. But the smart, simple blue hat, with its long quill, gave Craig sufficient excuse to enter and interrupt her labors.

"Your book indicates a laudable desire to work," he said; "but your hat points longingly toward outdoors. Don't you think it too fine a morning to be inside?"

"Then why are you here?" she asked, in the same bantering tone that he had assumed.

"I—I came to do missionary work."

"What a dreadful task!" she said, pouting. "To have to visit the heathen, and on a fine morning like this!"

"Oh, some heathen aren't so bad," he said, reassuringly, "especially after they have been converted. Come on, let's go outside!"

"I would like to, awfully," she said. "It is not hard to preach to me about outdoors. But, duty first, you know; and I wanted to find something." And she glanced down at the volume in her hands.

"Perhaps I can help you," he suggested.

"Are you good at finding things?" she asked, darting at him a quick keen glance out of eyes that seemed alternately to laugh and then to be veiled by a softening mist of sadness. She had never seemed so bewitching to him as she did in this moment.

"I am that!" said Craig, emphatically. "The only trouble with me is that I find too much!"

"Too much?" she repeated, puzzled.

"Yes—for my own good."

She was silent, and began turning the leaves of her book. Craig wondered if he would ever be able to curb his impetuous tongue. He glanced at the book. It was a New York directory.

"One can usually find too much in directories," he amended. "But let me help you; I'm pretty well up in New York."

"Thank you," she said, simply, as Craig reached over to take the bulky volume out of her hands. His hands touched hers for the first time. The breath caught in his throat as he saw the rich color surge softly up under the clear skin of her cheeks. Then, with the defensive instinct of womankind, her eyes flashed quick glances about the room to see who had observed her blushing.

The look was like wine to Rutherford. It meant that she was not ashamed to reveal an interest in him, and had no fear of the use to which he might put it, but was careful of the interpretation that strangers might give it.

Keenly sensitive on her account, wildly happy on his own, Craig's glance followed hers here and there in the room. A pair of piercing gray eyes darted back to a book, as they encountered his. They belonged to a stocky man, not exactly of the student type,—though apparently intent upon the volume which he held—who was the only other occupant of the library.

Instantly Helderman's reference to the secret-service man who was watching Mrs. Talcott leaped into his mind. This man evidently had been watching the girl, but whether from idle curiosity of the voyager, or for some special reason, who could say? Rutherford resolved to make it his business to find out. He was all the more anxious to have a confidential chat with Mrs. Talcott, to learn, if possible, what was troubling her, and at any rate to warn her of her peril.

"Come out on deck, and ask me about New York," he urged.

The girl hesitated; she seemed to be weighing his suggestion. Then he saw the white, ungloved fingers grasp the corners of her steamer coat and draw them together.

The mysterious blue buckle shone with a dull gleam against the purity of her throat.

"You know you always have to wait for a woman to get ready," she said, smiling up at him, while she drew on her gloves.

"That is no crime, if the woman is worth waiting for," he rejoined, moving toward the door. He was elated. She was going to walk with him on the sunny deck. The same warm wind would sweep them both. It was not much, perhaps; but it was enough to make him forget, for the moment, that she bore another man's name, and that she was menaced by a painful suspicion. He was to hear the sound of her voice—perhaps would be told the reason for many things he did not now understand. Why should he not be happy? It was so infinitely beyond the casual greeting, the occasional smile that he had thus far enjoyed. It was a fit sequel to the rare, brief interview of the night before, when she reclined in the silver moonlight, like a veritable creature of another world.

Today, in the broad sunshine, Rutherford could have laughed at the ease with which he had fallen under Helderman's carefully created spell of mystery, and his suggestion that this woman was in any way connected with something dark and underhanded. He watched her as she walked with free, light step, her head held high, and the frank, sweet fearlessness of her look proclaiming the blameless life behind it. Rutherford reveled in the thought of being admitted into her friendship and being permitted to shield her from unjust attack.

They made one circuit of the ship, the girl chatting and laughing in the manner of the carefree; the man answering her with like banter, and forgetting for the moment any more important business. But as they came again to the library door, from which they had emerged, Rutherford caught sight of the stocky student fellow lolling against the doorway; and glancing back again out of the corner of his eye, saw him make a sign to another man who lounged against the bulkhead. Rutherford was now certain that these two were the secret-service men detailed to watch this charming girl at his side.

However, he gave no sign of interest by look or speech, and, indeed, continued to revel in her society, without fear or depression. He would presently find a chance, he reasoned, to tell her of this imminent danger, and then she could place in his hands such indubitable proofs of her innocence that he would thereafter be able to squelch both Helderman and these spies at one blow. But his hopes of learning something tangible were doomed to disappointment; as they rounded the deck on another lap they encountered Mr. Talcott reclining in a steamer chair, with an empty one—and only one—by his side.

"You have been away a long time," he observed, in the colorless voice of an invalid.

The girl's face flushed, as she ran eagerly forward.

"I'm sorry, dear, to have kept you waiting," she said; and deftly arranged his cushions more comfortably around him.

Rutherford, violently partisan, thought that the elderly husband was making the youthful wife miserable by polite tyranny, but if she felt this she gave no outward sign. His own impulse was to withdraw at once. He waited, however, long enough to assist her with some scattered pillows, and employed the opportunity to observe the invalid more closely than he had ever before been able to do.

Mr. Talcott was a man of singularly fine physique, despite his present condition. As his head lay back among the cushions, Craig was bound to acknowledge that never had he seen a form and face better harmonizing the ideals of classic beauty. This man might have posed as a middle-aged Apollo; and in spite of the pointed beard he wore in foreign fashion, he was well worth being regarded favorably by the young and lovely eye of his companion. For, reluctantly as he observed it, Craig could not fail to mark the solicitude, the tenderness, the pretty absorption of the girl by his side. She was almost maternal, and the invalid had given himself over into her care with a little sigh of content.

Rutherford excused himself and walked away, out of humor with life. He was apparently no farther along with his friendship, or in his ability to be of the slightest service, than before. He had scarcely swung into a good stride and begun to see a bit beyond his own immediate misery when a man who had done many miles with him in daily constitutionals around the deck happened to cross his path.

"Things are getting a bit squally this morning," he remarked.

"That so? I hadn't noticed," rejoined Craig, glancing at the sunny stretch of water.

"Yes, sir—but I don't mean the weather. It's right here on board ship."

"What's the trouble?" asked Rutherford, uninterestedly.

"You must have gotten up late today! The air is fairly buzzing! Everybody's talking!"

"What about?" asked Craig, seeing that the man would persist until he had communicated his news.

"Smugglers aboard!"

Rutherford started into decided attention.

"What makes you think—how do you know?" he demanded.

"A wireless message received last night says that a week ago a man and woman bought a diamond necklace, worth 250,000 francs, in Berlin."

Rutherford listened, thunderstruck, to the almost exact repetition of Helderman's words. Evidently he had been correct, and the secret message had become noised abroad—but by whom?

"The smugglers—the man and woman—are on board this boat," the man continued glibly; "that is why we were warned. The woman is youngish, and the man has a beard."

"How did you hear about it? The ship's paper publish it?"

"Not much!"

"Who told you, then?" Craig insisted.

"Blest if I know! Everybody seems to know about it, though it's naturally the business of the secret service. But it has leaked somehow."

Rutherford busied himself for the next hour in verifying the man's words. Everybody did seem to know about it. Everybody was talking. Little knots of seeming conspirators could be seen here, there and everywhere. Suspicion wagged and see-sawed and dodged about. The few bearded men among the throng of smooth-faced Americans wanted to, but dared not, seek the barber.

And amid all this confusion and gossip, the two people who answered most nearly the description sat in their steamer chairs on the sunny deck, apart from the buzzing crowd, talking in low tones, or gazing dreamily out across the sea.

IV

THE BLUE BUCKLE IN JEOPARDY

One other course of action presented itself to Rutherford, and this he decided to try at once. He would accost the secret service man whom he had discovered in the library and learn what he know concerning the matter, and if possible why he was trailing the Talcotts.

He rounded the deck again before finding the man he sought, but was at last rewarded by seeing him come out and relieve the fellow who had been lounging against the bulkheads, within sight of the Talcotts' chairs. Craig marched straight up to him, with the intention of accosting him; but was interrupted on the way.

"Oh, sir, may I trouble you?"

The voice was rich and low, and it seemed, somehow, familiar. Rutherford, with instinctive courtesy, halted and turned. A handsomely dressed woman stood helplessly beside a steamer chair and looked expectantly up at him, a frown and a smile blending upon her expressive face. Her hands were busy with the folds of her gown.

"I cannot get it loose!" she complained, as Rutherford came toward her.

The hem of her skirt was caught and held securely in the joint of the chair. While the secret service man moved quickly away, Craig busied himself in the lady's release. Something in the grace and coquetry of her look and attitude told Rutherford—perfectly normal and masculine in his self-appreciation—that she was not at all displeased with the adventure. He even regarded the fastened skirt as an excuse. A moment's unavailing work, however, reduced his conceit and enlisted his ingenuity.

"I'm afraid I shall have to tear it," he announced regretfully.

"Well—if you must. But, of course, I am only a woman—and a gown is a gown, you know!"

Craig showed an instant approval of her feminine attitude, and devoted himself seriously to the task of releasing the skirt from the clutches of the obstinate chair, without harm.

"It's this little bunch—this small wad in the hem that holds it so securely," he said.

She laughed and he glanced up quickly. Her veil was raised, enabling him to look straight into the warm brown eyes of a woman whose features were almost perfect, and whose rapidly changing expressions reflected the vivacity which has long made the Viennese women famous. Her height and graceful form were not unlike those of another passenger who was not long absent from Craig's thoughts; but her breezy, unconventional conversation was in marked contrast to the shy reserve of the other.

"That small wad is a tiny weight," she said. "The wind is no respecter of ankles, you know, so the hem must be made—shall I say, conservative?"

She was cosmopolitan, certainly. Craig knew that no American girl, who looked so refined and beautiful as she, would have cared to begin an acquaintance with the suggestive coquetry of such words, accompanied by a quick downward glance that invited his own scrutiny. He had the impression that she was accustomed to being judged as a beauty, and knew her power with mankind.

Rutherford recognized her charm, admired her beauty, and sensed the piquancy of the situation, but he was armored against the threefold appeal.

"There! At last you are free, madam," he said, as a final tug released the dress.

"At last? I do not think you have been long! And, not madam, please, but mademoiselle—Madamoiselle Irene Arany, to be exact. Indeed, I thank you sir. You are an artist; it is not hurt at all, Mr. Mr—?"

"Rutherford," he prompted.

"Thank you, Mr. Rutherford."

She spoke with a quaintly tinged speech that showed she had another mother-tongue, although her English was excellent. She was frankly ready for him to stay and make himself agreeable, but Craig's mind had already returned to the business in hand while transferring his energies to her service. He bowed and hurried away somewhat abruptly, while Madamoiselle Arany followed him with a calculating glance which proved her to be a clever woman, as well as beautiful. It suggested, too, that her interest in him was not born merely of this morning's adventure.

Craig was striding forward again at full speed, when a new thought interrupted his progress as effectively as any physical object could have done. Suppose he should find the secret service man, what should he say to him? If he questioned him directly about the Talcotts would he not give the detective an idea of his own interest in them, and virtually get himself, too, into the position of being watched? Altogether, the wisest thing for him to do would be to preserve the appearance of a mere traveling acquaintance—which was all he was, he told himself—to watch without being watched, and thus perhaps be able to serve her whom he loved.

Rutherford had long since given up trying to conceal or combat this love with himself. He loved Mrs. Talcott, in spite of his own notions of honor, in spite of any doubt which might attach to her conduct. And loving her, he found himself utterly unable to believe her anything but the sweet, true woman that she seemed. So all his reasoning, and it now seemed, all his planning got him nowhere. He had reached a dead line beyond which he could not pass. At every turn he seemed to be thwarted, until his whole being stormed at the obstacles which prevented him from standing boldly by her side and offering her his help, his protection. He asked no reward but this.

The day had passed, and he had accomplished nothing, for all his high resolves of the morning. Dusk was settling gently over the ship. The tender witchery of the twilight was not yet invaded by the triumphant magic of electricity, which should transform the vessel into a floating miracle of light. Thoroughly dispirited with his feeling of helplessness, Craig entered one of the dim corridors which led to his stateroom.

Then, as if in answer to his great desire for action, came a sudden interruption. A woman's low, startled cry rang above the mellow monotone of the ship's sounds. Again it arose, frightened, pleading, followed by the husky, imperative tones of a man's voice.

"Coming!" cried Rutherford, running at top speed toward the voices, certain that it was a woman crying for help.

He was not mistaken. Turning the corner of the passage which led to his own door, he came full upon two struggling figures. A woman was endeavoring to ward off a man. She was young and slight, the man, short and stocky, yet the woman seemed to hold her own in a manner which showed surprising strength, for every move of her assailant was met and foiled.

All this Craig took in at a single glance. The next look showed him that one of the two was Mrs. Talcott—the woman of all the world that he had been wanting to aid—and in a trice he had sprung upon the man and grappled with him. This action, as it transpired, required no special heroism. The man's defense was surprisingly weak; indeed, he seemed desirous only of getting away. Meanwhile, he sought to shield his face, either from discovery or from attack, with his left arm. Craig struck at the shielding hand. With a quick twist of his body the man tore himself loose and fled down the corridor.

Rutherford started to give chase, when an imploring call from the girl brought him to a standstill.

"Don't go! Oh, don't, please!"

She was leaning against the wall, panting for breath, and seemed almost ready to drop from the unusual exertion. Craig sprang to her side, his arms extended. Involuntarily she shrunk back and drew herself upright lithe and firm. Howbeit, the trembling hands pressed against her breast and the startled eyes, gleaming large and bright from the white oval of her face, told eloquently of her need of protection.

Craig looked at that slender figure, so alone in the world, with all the longing of ages upon ages of physically-dominant man written in his features—but his arms fell limply to his side. It seemed to him, in that moment, as though he would have given anything he possessed for the courage, if not the right, to take her. But her very weakness was her best protection.

"Who was that man?" Craig demanded.

"I—I don't know," she whispered uncertainly, peering over her shoulder, and unconsciously moving nearer to Rutherford. "I don't think—I ever saw him before."

Craig wondered momentarily why she hesitated, and why she had seemed afraid for him to follow the fugitive. Her next words, however, gave him fresh food for thought. Putting her hands to her face, as if the fright and excitement which she had undergone were finally dominating her resolution, she sobbed:

"Oh, what shall we do, what shall we do! I had no idea that any one on board knew about this! I thought we were safe!"

She lifted her hands, and there, dangling from the torn edge of her cloak, Craig glimpsed the blue buckle. Her nervous fingers sought to loosen or secure it, he could not tell which; and in his usual masterful way, which had been successful with womankind until he met Mrs. Henry Talcott, he reached out to help her with it.

(CONTINUED TOMORROW.)

PHOTO PLAYS

Questions and Answers

The Photoplay Editor of the EVENING LEDGER will be pleased to answer questions relating to his department. Questions relating to family affairs of actors and actresses are barred absolutely.

Queries will not be answered by letter. All letters must be addressed to Photoplay Editor, EVENING LEDGER.

The "marriage" of David Brandon and Hannah Jacobs, the old rabbi's beautiful daughter, very nearly turned out to be the "real thing," resulting in the legal wedding of Ruby Hoffman, the Russian actress, and Clifford Bruce, who portrays these parts in the William Fox production of Zangwill's drama, "The Children of the Ghetto."

To "take" the wedding scene the entire company engaged in the production, under the direction of Frank Powell, embarked in 15 automobiles for the Madison Street Synagogue, New York, where the "ceremony" was to take place. Rabbi Herman Moses, of the synagogue, was, by dint of much persuasion, induced to read the Hebraic wedding ritual clad in his robes. Mr. Bruce as David Brandon led Miss Hoffman as Hannah Jacobs before the rabbi, who began the reading of the service.

Mr. Bruce produced the ring and was about to place it on Miss Hoffman's finger when Wilton Lackaye, who plays Rabbi Jacobs, Hannah's father, a part which he created, stopped the ceremony abruptly. In his long study of the part Mr. Lackaye has learned considerable Hebraic lore and he knew that once the ring was placed on Miss Hoffman's finger and the closing words of the marriage rite read, Mr. Bruce and Miss Hoffman would, according to orthodox Jewish views, be irrevocably married.

Mr. Lackaye was in the nick of time and so was Pincus, the crazy poet—who stops the ceremony to prevent this step being taken and the scene was "faded out" with David just about to slip the ring on Hannah's finger.

"Phew! Just think how nearly I came to being a bigamist!" breathed Mr. Bruce who owns to being already wed, mopping his forehead nervously, "this picture game has even more perils in it than I surmised."

Spattered His Spats

Fan Bourke, who has played many eccentric comedy parts in plays released in the Mutual program by Thanhouser, has become a suffragist.

"I'm not a militant yet," she said recently, "but, of course, I've never had an English husband. However, I've begun to understand the militants' point of view better than formerly. We were rehearsing 'The Dog Catcher's Bride' awhile back and were taking a lot of pups to the pound. When the villain appeared and let them loose from the wagon I was supposed to let loose on him. I'd just begun to do so in my best before-the-camera manner when I heard a very English voice say, 'Madam!'—harsh, like that—'Madam!'

"Well, I looked round and there was a sure enough Brittisher. He had spats on, too.

"'Young woman,' he said, severely, 'you've spattered mud on my spats—my spats!' he added, as if that made it all the worse, and it took my breath away so that I couldn't think of a thing to say before he'd stalked out of earshot. All I could do to get back at him was to subscribe $10 to Mrs. Pankhurst's fund, and I'd no more sent the check than I learned she'd quit militancy during the war."

New Lubin Serial

"Road O' Strife," the new 15-part serial by Emmett Campbell Hall, which the Lubin Company will shortly release, will have the strongest all-star cast of any series of dramas ever made by the Lubin Company. More than 500 players will be used in the production and the important parts will be played by men and women who have been starred in some of the biggest Lubin productions.

The three main leading roles throughout the series will be played by Mary Charleson, Crane Wilbur and Jack Standing. Among the other well-known Lubin players who will play important roles are Rosetta Brice, John Ince, George Soule Spencer, Mrs. Daly, Percy Winter, Bernard Seigel, Florence Hackett, George Clark, James Cassady, Frank Smiley, Bart McSullum, Francis Joyner, Walter Law, John Smiley, William Turner, Ferdinand Tidmarsh, William Cohill, Charles Brandt, Clarence Jay Elmer, Flora Lea, Howard Mitchell, George Trimble, Gilbert Ely, Mrs. Sterling, Peter Lang, Douglas Sibole, Frankie Mann, Jack Delson, Jack McDonald, James Daly, Eleanor Blanchard and Josephine Longworth.

Answers to Correspondents

J. A. W.—"Walrus Mustache" is Chester Conklin; then there are Syd Chaplin, brother of Charles; Charlie Murray, Ed Kennedy, Mack Swain, and, of course, Ford Sterling. The woman in the case is Mabel Normand, whose picture will be printed in this paper later in the week. Glad you like the column.

ARTHUR J. K.—"Fatty" is Roscoe Arbuckle and "Mabel" is Mabel Normand. Keystone Films are managed for the market by the New York Motion Picture Corporation, Longacre Building, Broadway and 42d street.

EMMA AND MARY—You would only make yourself very ridiculous by making this request of Mr. Baggott. He has all he can do with his studio work, and although he would no doubt feel very honored at the invitation, he would not find time to accept it. The manager of the theatre who told you such a thing was simply misinformed.

FILM CLUB—The only thing we can recall at present is "The Tigress," in which Olga Petrova starred. Claire McDowell is acting as Baggott's lead. Pauline Bush is a Universal actress. Ralph Ince is with the Vitagraph Company. John Bunny entered the show business through the box office route. He was a treasurer in the business office.

Photoplay Baedecker

CHESTNUT STREET OPERA HOUSE—The elaborate photo production of Hall Caine's "The Eternal City" will begin its second week at the Chestnut Street Opera House today. This film production has made a profound impression among local theatregoers, and has proven the biggest success in the history of moving pictures in this city. "The Eternal City" is powerful and intense in story and massive in settings, having been produced in Rome, London and other picturesque spots of Italy and England. The famous Players' Film Company is responsible for this great film spectacle. The presentation of the photo-play is augmented by two magnificent tableaux, which are staged during each performance, utilizing special scenery and electrical effects. Performances of "The Eternal City" will be given twice daily, at 2:30 and 8:30 p. m., preceded by a comedy bill featuring Charles Chaplin. The comedies begin at 1:30 and 7:30 p. m.

ORPHEUM THEATRE—Some remarkably fine dramatic effects have been achieved in the photo-play, "The Christian," to be seen at the Orpheum Theatre, Germantown, this week. One of these is the tableau of Glory Quayle seated on the rocks at the shore of the Isle of Man gazing dreamily over the waters of the sea. The picture reveals the awakening of the soul of the girl to the magic power of love, and Edith Storey, who is seen in the part achieved a wonderful bit of suggestion in her depicting of the situation. In other respects, there is also something of triumph in the photography of the film. For instance, there is the scene showing John Storm, the preacher, influencing a mob of angry people in the streets. More than 500 persons were required for this incident. Earle Williams, who has this role, was selected for it, not only because of his ability as an actor, but also because he seemed able to catch the significance of every line of his part, and to present, through pantomime alone, a remarkable character study of the zealot preacher.

STANLEY—The management of the Stanley Theatre will on the first three days of the ensuing week introduce a new star to the film world, Elsie Janis, in "The Caprices of Kitty," a comedy in which the authoress, Miss Janis, plays the title role. On Thursday, Friday and Saturday, Louise Weber appears in the title role of a new production, "Sunshine Molly." In the cast supporting Miss Weber will be found Philip Smalley, Herbert Standing, Vera Lewis, Roberta Hickman, Frank Elliott and Adele Farrington.

PALACE—For the first three days of the week the picture attraction will be "The Warrens of Virginia." The vaudeville bill will include the Newsboy Sextet, Whitney's Operatic Dolls, Hallen and Hayes, the Three Keios and Jeanette Childs. The photoplay attraction for the last half of the week will be "The Country Boy." The vaudeville includes Herbert Brooks and company, Elms and Alton, Jacky Marks, Reba and Ines Kaufman and Wartenberg Brothers.

VICTORIA—"The Black Spot" will be the stellar attraction at the Victoria Theatre this week. Vaudeville offerings include Hayes and Alpoint, Mott and Maxfield, the Romanys and Carita Day.

TULPEHOCKEN—Monday, "Alpine Tragedy," "His Night Out"; Tuesday, Madge Lessing in "The Blue Mouse"; Wednesday, "A Fool There Was"; Thursday, "The Ragged Earl"; Friday, "This Is the Life," "Seeds of Jealousy"; Saturday, "When Fate Meets Trump."

BELVIDERE—Monday, "What Evil Men Do"; Tuesday, "The Means and the End"; Wednesday, "Elaine"; Thursday, "The Tigress"; Friday, "Shadows of the Past"; Saturday, "Where Is My Wandering Boy?"

IRIS—Monday, "Master Key 14," "Hogan's Artist" and "Dream"; Tuesday, "It's a Long Way"; Wednesday, "Elaine," No. 3; Thursday, "Runaway June," "The Property Man"; Friday, "Elaine," No. 4; Saturday, "The Accounting."

REGENT—"A Modern Magdalen," a photoplay based on the story of C. Hadden Chambers, with Lionel Barrymore and Catherine Countiss in the leading roles, will be featured at the Regent today. The program for the rest of the week will comprise: Tuesday, "The Eagle's Nest"; Wednesday and Thursday, "The Morals of Marcus"; Friday and Saturday, Betty Nansen in "The Celebrated Scandal."

JEFFERSON—The Jefferson's offering for this week should tax the capacity of the house much as did previous notable productions. Today the marine drama, "Across the Atlantic," will be featured; Tuesday, Robert Hilliard's success, "A Fool There Was"; Wednesday, "Victoria Cross"; Thursday, "Fairy and the Waif"; Friday, Robert Warwick in "Alias Jimmy Valentine," and Saturday, "Treachery."

GARDEN.—Monday, "Runaway June," No. 4; "The Sea Nymphs"; Tuesday, "The Regenerating Love"; Wednesday, Mary Pickford in "A Good Little Devil"; Thursday, Francis X. Bushman in "The Accounting"; Friday, "O'Gary, of the Royal Mounted," featuring Edith Storey; Saturday, "A Daughter of the People."

LOGAN.—The much-heralded Paramount program begins its initial performance at the Logan on Monday and Tuesday, offering for the first presentation "The Sign of the Cross," with William Farnum. Other well-known productions from the World Film Corporation and William Fox attractions will be shown during the week.

BELMONT.—At the Belmont, 52d street above Market, "The Christian," Hall Caine's novel and play, will be presented in photoplay form all this week. The production has been made by the combined Vitagraph and Liebler forces and enlists all of the resources of these two organizations. It is in 500 scenes and employs more than 3000 persons.

TIOGA.—The film version of "Three Weeks," based in part on the novel of that name, will be the attraction at this house all the week, together with the usual high-class comedies and single reelers for which the Tioga is noted.

Theatrical Baedeker

ADELPHI—"Peg o' My Heart," with an excellent cast. Hartley Manners' popular and amusing comedy of the impetuous young Irish girl and what she does to a sedate English family. First-rate amusement...$.15

BROAD—"The Misleading Lady," with Paul Dickey. A broad, "sociological" farce of a gentleman from Patagonia who kidnaps and tames a flirtatious young ornament of good society. Into the plot wanders "Napoleon." Good fun.....$.20

FORREST—The Evening Ledger's Motion Pictures of the War; 7500 feet of battle, with the Kaiser well to the fore. Watch the news columns. Opening today.....2:30 and $.20

GARRICK—"Seven Keys to Baldpate," with George Parsons and Jeanette Horton. George Cohan's masterly dramatization of the story of the young author who went up to a deserted inn in winter to write a novel. Opening tonight.....$.15

LITTLE—"The Piper," with Edith Wynne Matthison and the resident company. Josephine Preston Peabody's Stratford Prize play, which deals skilfully in blank verse with a version of the "Pied Piper." Opening tonight.....$.30

LYRIC—Robert Mantell in a fortnight of Shakespearean and classic repertory. First week—Monday, "King John"; Tuesday, "Macbeth"; Wednesday matinee, "Romeo and Juliet"; Wednesday evening, "Hamlet"; Thursday, "King Lear"; Friday, "Richelieu"; Saturday matinee, "The Merchant of Venice," and Saturday evening, "Richard III." Opening tonight.....$.00

METROPOLITAN—De Wolf Hopper and Gilbert & Sullivan Opera Company in a fortnight of repertory. First week—Monday, Tuesday, Saturday matinee and night, "The Mikado"; Wednesday matinee and night, "Pinafore" and "Trial by Jury"; Thursday and Friday, "The Pirates of Penzance." Opening tonight.....$.15

WALNUT—"Matt and Jeff in Mexico." A new edition of the familiar musical comedy, with the scenes laid in the turbulent republic to the south. Opening tonight.....$.15

Vaudeville

KEITH'S—May Irwin, with new songs; Eddie Leonard and Mabel Russell, Nan Halperin, Pekin Mysteries, Billie McDermott; Arnaut Brothers, Sam Hearn and Ellen Eley, Edwin Marshall, Welting Levering Troupe and Hearst-Selig pictures.

NIXON'S GRAND—Madden and Fitzpatrick, in "The Turn of the Tide"; Harry Breen, the Five Naval Cadets, Lew and Molly Hunting, the Oakland Sisters, Will Morris and comedy movies.

GLOBE—William J. Dooley & Co., in "The Lawn Party"; Carl Byal and Dora Early, Walton and Rutland, "Senator" Francis Murphy, Stoddard and Hyde, in "The Absent-minded Professor"; Al Burton's Review, the Lowes and Richards and Brandt.

WILLIAM PENN—Harrington Reynolds, in "The Haberdashery"; Joe and Lew Cooper, Eddie Barton and Florence Clark, in "Mistaroned"; Clark and McCullough, in "Much Ado About Nothing"; Dupree and Dupree and Kremka Brothers.

CROSS KEYS (first half of week)—"The Arabian Nights"; Webber and Elliott, Edith Moulth, Percy Warsam, in "The Bosun's Mate"; Burns and Acker and the Atlas Trio.

FIREMEN TO CELEBRATE

Good Intent Hose Company No. 2 will celebrate the 111th anniversary of its founding tonight at a banquet at 1206 Spring Garden street. T. C. Thompson, president of the company, will act as toastmaster.

WHAT'S DOING TONIGHT

Lecture before the Contemporary Club on "The Possibilities of the Modern Play," by Granville Barker, Bellevue-Stratford; 8:15 o'clock.

Anniversary dinner, Good Intent Hose Company, No. 2 (111 years old), 1206 Spring Garden street; 8 o'clock.

Lecture, "Beautiful Japan," by Arthur Stanley Riggs, Witherspoon Building; 8:15 o'clock.

Pennsylvania Historical Society, 13th and Locust streets; 8 o'clock. Free.

Fifty-seventh Street Improvement Association, Girard avenue and 60th street; 8 o'clock. Free.

University of Pennsylvania Trustees, University of Pennsylvania Library; 8 o'clock.

Philadelphia Chapter, American Institute of Architects, 1205 Chancellor street; 8 o'clock. Free.

Oak Lane Improvement Association, Chelten and Park avenues; 8 o'clock. Free.

"PUBLICITY" AGENT'S SPONSOR 7 YEARS DEAD

J. Lewis Rains Gets Unexpected Information While Seeking New Client.

J. Lewis Rains, who plays the role of chief executive, editor, biographer, reporter and general canvasser of the Advance Press Service Association, organized to make "big men" more famous than they actually are, is busy today compiling some new features of his association among tenants of office buildings.

Rains, whose office is at 1505 Arch street, suddenly walked out of the office of a merchant today after he had been informed a man who he said had become interested in his ideas only recently had been dead for more than seven years.

Selling publicity at cut rate prices, which ranged from $100 down to a dollar bill was Rains' hobby until a few days ago. He has changed his program, but still insists that he possesses the power to furnish favorable publicity and also to suppress unpleasant reading matter, but informs his prospective clients that the "180 members and directors" of his association plan to distribute the news among newspapermen who are in need.

Armed with sheets of paper bearing the names of hundreds of persons who he says became famous through his method, Rains made his appearance in the office of W. F. Brey, a flour merchant, who has an office in the Pennsylvania Building, 15th and Chestnut streets.

Rains told Mr. Brey the "ABC" of his institution. He also tried to impress upon his prospective client that he hated to go out and canvass office buildings, and added that he was doing that sort of work for the "cause."

"What cause?" asked Mr. Brey, who years ago was swindled out of $25 by members of the defunct "Blue Pencil Gang."

"I mean to help the boys out—the boys who wield the pen," Rains replied.

During the conversation Rains explained that as far as he was concerned he wasn't canvassing for the purpose of accumulating wealth. He insisted that he was merely a Samaritan acting in behalf of struggling young men in this city who were eager to win literary fame.

"And here are some men whom I have helped in publicity and who became my clients recently," said Rains, as he displayed several names written on a sheet of paper before Mr. Brey.

The first name which attracted the attention of Mr. Brey was that of L. Knowles Perrot, who was president of the Colonial Spring Water Company, of Valley Forge, and who died seven years ago.

"Mr. Perrot has been dead for seven years," said Mr. Brey, in astonishment.

Mr. Rains gasped. He picked up his visiting card and other paraphernalia and hurriedly walked out of the office.

Will Lecture on Modern Play

Granville Barker, the English playwright and producer, will deliver a lecture on "The Possibilities of the Modern Play" before the Contemporary Club tonight. The address, which is to be given in the Bellevue-Stratford, will begin at 8:15.

MODERN DANCING

DANCING LESSONS

Our staff consists of four d