

Evening Ledger

PHILADELPHIA, SATURDAY EVENING, MARCH 4, 1916

PHOTOPLAY THEATRES DANCING MUSIC

WHEN CHARLIE GOT HIS HALF MILLION



Of course, Chaplin's share of the next year's profits weren't delivered when he signed the Mutual's 20,000-word contract, but President Freuler, on the left, handed a \$150,000 check to the famous comedian and Charlie turned it over to his brother, Sid, who stands between them.

Shakespearean Interpreter Interprets the Photoplay

A Few of the Reasons That Caused an English Actor-Knight to Take the Movie Plunge

By SIR HERBERT TREE

Sir Herbert Tree is at the Triangle studio in Atlantic City, looking over a camera before the camera man of his most famous roles. "Macbeth" has been selected as the subject for the first picture, which is to be produced by John S. Brannan. In the following article the English actor-manager analyzes his reasons for going into the movies.

THERE seems to have been some as- tonishment in this country that I was sufficiently interested in the photo-drama to consider an appearance therein. I in turn am astonished at the astonishment.

Can it be that you in America, where the photoplay has developed so amaz- ingly and become so large a part of your recreational life, are behind us in recogni- tion of its high artistic importance? I hardly think so.

For myself—overlooking the fact that I have already appeared in two photo- dramas in England—I would be ashamed not to be most keenly interested in this new and impetuous art.

Surely the artist who is alive must needs be interested in every new develop- ment of the art to which his life is de- voted; only the moribund lack interest in what is new.

Besides, I am an eclectic person. In art I am a socialist. I want whatever gift of art I have to belong to the multi- tude. And is not poetry a multitude?

The actor hitherto has lived by his generation. The cinema has given him the enfranchisement of posterity. This at once a spur and a warning to ambition. We can no longer live on our reputations, but, on the other hand, we can speak to millions where before we could reach only thousands. This is an incalculable privi- lege that I would be the last to belittle.

Yes, every fact of an art must be fas- cinating to the artist. Science has given us this new facet. It is our opportunity to give our best endeavors to its highest achievement, ignoring the unworthy uses

it has been put to for the sake of, the noble destiny that it is so certainly ap- proaching.

The theatre can do what the cinema cannot do. We will never lose our desire to have the artist himself in our presence, to be touched and be hypnotized by the daze of his personality.

On the other hand, the photoplay has developed a form of pictorial narrative, swift, sure, direct and intensely dra- matic, that makes the wide world its stage, renders the impossible possible by its fantastic necromancy, and still registers with infallible precision the personality of its players.

What would we not pay to see the distant past upon the screen as clearly as we see current events projected, to watch the pageant of history back to the days of Napoleon's battles, or of Shakespeare's presentation to Elizabeth? Yet that is the sort of legacy we are leaving our children.

And we can do more for them. By the painstaking research of the student and the constructive imagination of the ar- tist we can reproduce with remarkable accuracy upon the screen many of the crucial events of history, thus revivifying them for the eager eyes of the children that are to come. This is an undertaking as stimulating as it is worthy, and is oc- cupying more and more of the attention of big-minded producers.

It is but a step from this type of pic- ture to the historical drama, but it is a step from recording to creative art. True, the narrative of record may be the in-

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WHEN SAM BERNARD WORE A "FRIGHT WIG"

THE engagement of Sam Bernard at B. F. Keith's Theatre next week, in a style of comedy virtually unknown to the stage of the present day, makes us ask "What has become of the make-up comedian of exaggerated type?" Some of these "make-ups" are still seen on the burlesque stage and every once in a while one appears in vaudeville, but the fact remains that the exaggerated type is almost extinct and the comedians who possess the talent can get along very well without depending on make-up.

Sam Bernard is one of the latter class of comedians and has made good in musical roles, character parts and even senti- mental roles; yet he was one of the "old school" of comedians who 25 years ago wore the exaggerated make-up with a "fright wig" and loose fitting clothes.

There were many of the same type of German comedians in those days. Weber and Fields, who are again in vaudeville; Morris and Fields, Watson and Ellis; Murphy and Shannon, "Dutch" Daly and a few others, who will be remembered by some of the patrons of the Grand Central Theatre in this city and other amusement places of its class. Like Weber and Fields and several others, Sam Bernard began his career as a comed- ian on the Bowery in New York.

At that time Weber and Fields were "trying out" and received nothing but their board for their labor while Sam Bernard and his brother received a salary of \$15 a week. It was a dispute over this salary which really forced the Bern- ard boys out of this "beer hall" class and gave them a start in the "variety" class.

There was no theatrical contract in those days, and Manager Gansberg, of Kronheim's Garden, simply kept a book in which he entered the names of the acts and the amounts he intended to pay them.

On Saturday night of the Bernard boys' opening week they were handed \$15 for the two. They understood it was to be \$15 apiece, and when they lost their argument with the manager, as well as the other \$15, they decided they had had enough. That night they were forced to steal their one trunk from the theatre and carry it three miles to their home. Later Sam and Dick presented their "mixed act" in one of the variety halls in New York city, Dick doing the "woman" half of the act, and for several years they were familiar fig- ures on the bills, ad- vancing steadily with the progress of the variety business, now known as polite vaudeville. In recent years Sam Bern- ard has gained interna- tional fame as a star of musical comedy, being one of the highest-sal- aried character com- edians on the stage and one of the most popular.



SAM BERNARD 25 YEARS AGO When Sam Bernard came to Philadelphia then it was the age of the "fright wig"—and he wore a fine specimen. Keith patrons will see a very different make-up next week.

IF YOU DON'T LIKE A PART, PLAY IT BADLY

"The one thing for the talented young actress to do when given a part not to her liking at the start of her career is to play it as badly as she possibly can."

This iron-clastic bit of advice is proffered by Miss Alice John, of "Twin Beds," at the Garrick, who suggests that if you do not believe the rule she lays down cast your mind's eye back over her own career, which has been a constant struggle against "type parts," and imagine what would have happened to her if only she hadn't played her first unlikable part with all she had in her.

"If I had bungled that part as I now see I should have I would have had a little harder time getting the next one; but when I did get it, it would have been as different as possible from the one I had failed in," said Miss John.

"The thing for her to do is to wait until something comes to her that leads up and then put all her power into it. She will have her success. Something a little better comes. Finally, almost be- fore she knows it, she will have broad- ened out in her work—her opportunities will be varied—she will arrive at her suc- cess late, not early.

"You ask me how many youngsters you can convince of that? The answer, brief- ly, is none. Biosa their dear hearts, they will do anything that comes, and pour into it every shred of ability they have."

WHAT MAKES A REAL SUCCESS IN PHOTOPLAYDOM?

The Views of a Prominent Director of Photoplays on the Real Secret of Popularity

By CECIL B. DE MILLE

Director General of the Jesse L. Lasky Picture Play Company. The motion-picture producer spends from six to ten weeks in producing a feature picture. He has done his best work toward making the picture a suc- cess, and when the film is delivered to the distributing company his work is over, although but 50 per cent. of the success of the picture is accomplished.

After the picture is delivered, it rests entirely with the releasing company, the exchanges and the exhibitors as to what the success of the picture will be. The releasing company and the exchanges put their best efforts toward advertising the photodrama and bringing it before the public until it goes to the exhibitor. With him rests the great success of the picture. Careless projection or wrong manner may ruin it as much as if the producer had run a broad, black pencil mark through each foot of film. Music and the atmosphere are as essential to the photodrama as they are to the spoken drama.

Many theatres are abolishing the stage entirely and blending their screen into the scheme of the house. I think this is a good plan, as the stage is essentially for- mal and a more intimate feeling can be established between the audience and the screen by the absence of the cold barrier of platform.

The screen on a stage was first used in the motion picture theatres to create the illusion in the mind of an observer that they were watching a silent the- atrical performance. But now the photo- drama has taken such strides that I think the better that the public be impressed with the fact that they are watching an actual chain of events, something occurring in the lives of certain people to which they are a part, the better.

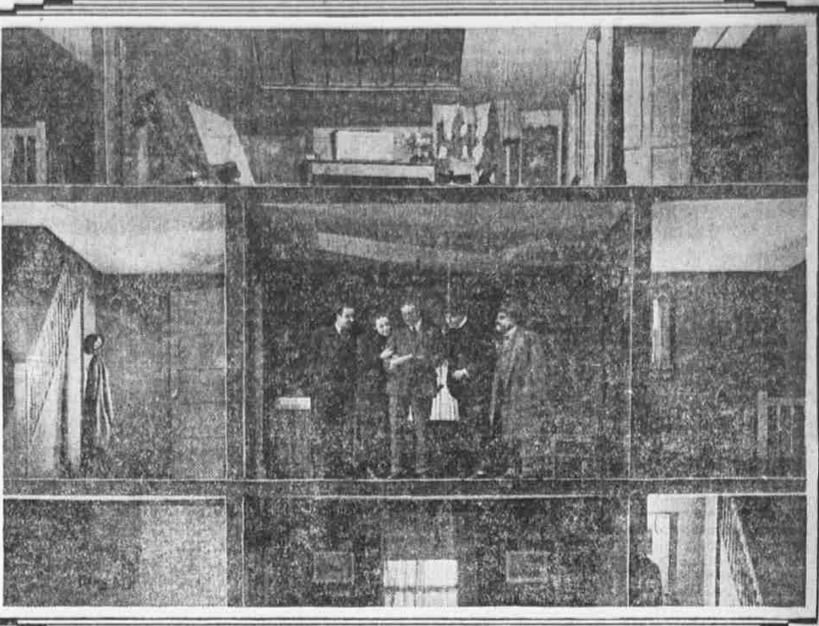
There is a great deal of psychology necessary in the proper presentation of a photodrama. Atmosphere must be cre- ated so that the audience may be car- ried along with the story of the picture. This can be done in many ways. A scenic film run prior to the presentation of a feature has a great deal of effect toward putting the audience in the proper frame of mind. For a simple, quiet production, scenes of country life and views of cities are necessary. For dramatic pictures, scenes showing cities in action, life, rush- ing waters, anything in which there is action, to carry the audience into the spirit of the production they are about to witness.

Many exhibitors go to great lengths to create this essential atmosphere. For Japanese pictures they will decorate their stage and theatre with Japanese settings. For Spanish pictures they will give their theatre a Spanish tone, so that the audi- ence is carried immediately into the at- mosphere of the production. No details should be overlooked to create this at- mosphere, as it is as essential to the successful production as our work in the studio.

Then there is the music, which should be given the greatest consideration. The wrong musical note will jar an audience as much as if one of the actors stepped completely out of the character. Music should be studied with a great deal of care.

One of the greatest faults I have noticed is running a film off in a hurry in order to squeeze in another performance. The director has timed each movement for the proper expression during the taking of the picture, and when the artists are made to run through their performance by an industrious operator it not only hurts the producer, but the exhibitor.

IS THIS THE END OF THE "FLASH BACK"?



We hardly think so. But here we find a World director shooting his camera into every room of a house at the same moment, instead of pursuing the people of the plot from one floor to another. It is an interesting experiment at reducing the confusion—though, also, the variety—of quick shifts of scene.

THE ART OF THE PHOTOPLAY

By MME. BERTHA KALICH

I have had to apologize to myself since I began posing for the screen.

In the days before I knew anything about the business at all I believed that motion picture work was degrading, and that I could never bring myself to appear in a film. Now—why, I am so deeply in- terested in it I want to learn more and more. I want to know all there is to know about the work, and I see tremen- dous possibilities that were never appar- ent to me before.

Oh, I shall never give up the speaking stage—I belong to that, you see. But this I regard as an entirely different sort of thing, bringing into play new ideas, new avenues for the utilization of one's art.

In my acting upon the speaking stage the thought of posing never entered my mind. I always have tried to feel the role, of course, to enter into the spirit of it and, as nearly as possible for the time being, live the life of the person I was endeavoring to represent. Well, in this new field I find that it is quite natural for me to do the work without effort, nor do I have to resort to pantomime to any extent. It is true there is no actual part to learn, but there are lines, and I naturally have the story of the scene I am doing in my head. Then every possible use of facial expression is made, and new opportunities for the delineation of the character unfold themselves continually. Oh, it is deeply interesting. And I am quite happy in my engagement with Mr. Fox—I am planning some really splendid things in a pictorial way for later on—big, fine things.

"The Earth" Is the Stage and the Newspaper World

W. P. Eaton Sees Grace George in Her Fourth Offering This Season and Writes of It in This Week's New York Letter

By WALTER PRICHARD EATON

MISS GRACE GEORGE, with the addi- tion of "The Earth," by James Ber- nard Fagan, to her repertoire at the Play- house, now has four dramas to her credit, all of them well done and worth doing—

and not one of them a new play. Her first production was a revival of Langdon Mitchell's "The New York Idea," a play 10 years old. Her second production was a revival of "The Liars," which is nearly 20 years old. Her third pro- duction was of Shaw's "Major Bar- bara," which was new to America, to be sure, but which

was produced in Lon- don almost a decade ago. Now she has added to her repertoire Mr. Fagan's play about British yellow journalists, sup- posed to be a not very much veiled attack on the present owner of the London Times, which has long been available in print in this country, and was even tried out here at one time by Edmund Breece.

We are not stating these facts in criti- cism of Miss George. Rather are they an indication of the standards she has set herself at the Playhouse. She is evidently determined to produce only comedies with literary merit, with a distinct flavor. The criticism is rather our American dramatists, who have had nothing to offer her which she considers worthy of inclusion. If ourselves were a playwright at the present time, and had any ambition to write a high comedy of American tem- porary life, we could imagine no better chance for a good production than Miss George is offering. Certainly, by next year, she should be able to announce a

brand new, native drama, to start her season with.

As to the latest play in her repertoire, "The Earth," though the scene and the characters are English, the real subject matter is so closely paralleled by jour- nalist conditions in this country that it has a very definite value for us. If the last act of "The Earth" were as good as the other three, that is, if the solution were of equal interest and plausibility to the problem, the play might take a high place in contemporary drama. Unfortu- nately, however, as so often in the case, the author has been unable to untangle his web with anything like the success he achieved in tangling it, and the play falls down at the finish.

The plot is simple. The Right Hon. Denzil Trevelyan, M. P., is the author of a wage bill, evidently the type of legisla- tion being pushed by Lloyd-George before the great war, and denounced in certain quarters as Socialistic. The bitterest opposition to this bill comes from Sir Felix Janion, a man who controls an immense number of newspapers with fabulous cir- culations, and who preaches one thing in his editorial columns and practices another in his news columns. In this particular case, of course, the great editor, who poses as the champion of the people, is opposing the wage bill as a blow at English liberties, the sacred free- dom of the individual, hiding behind this catch phrase his real opposition, which is to legislation that looks toward an ul- timate check on the expansion of such individuals as himself. He will thunder against the trusts, but never admit that he is a news trust, as it were, that he has the power to poison trusts and pre- judice opinion to a dangerous extent.

Now it so happens that among the guests at Sir Felix's house party are the Earl of Killone and his wife the Countess.

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W. H. CRANE, 'ARISTOCRAT OF THE THEATRE'

THERE is no love like the old love and to many theatre-goers of the last generation there is no finer stage figure than William H. Crane. His career under Frohman was one of artistic achievement.

Where is there more pleasure to be found than in honoring a person who de- serves the honor given him? At least, that was the attitude of the 400 guests at the dinner tendered Mr. Crane a few nights ago in New York. Men of prominence from all fields of arts and sciences paid homage to Mr. Crane on the 50th anniversary of his stage career.

Such well-known people as Daniel Frohman, who acted as toastmaster; David Belasco, William Winter, the prom- inent critic; President Nicholas Murray Butler, George Ade, the humorist, and a large number of theatrical celebrities gathered to make this gathering unique.

Among the many tributes paid Mr. Crane, Mr. Henry Miller's spark'd with the joy of the occasion.

"It seems unnecessary for me to offer you any estimate of Mr. Crane's art that is of value so generally appreciated and so long determined, it is well to remember however, that he proves his worth when the standards of acting are the highest; there is no doubt of that—why? Hughes, standard-bearer of Mr. Crane's many of Stephen Sed. remember, McC. L. Mayo.

Jefferson, F. H. Raymond, Crane, Raymond, Goodwin, the elder Sother, Stoddard and that splendid actor, William Warren, and many, many others of their stature. I was only a raw recruit standing on the threshold of my theatrical adventure when I looked up and saw that line of stal- warts—that princely company. He has come down through the years and experienced the many constant changes that have taken place—changes that have gener- ated so bitterness in

his soul, no discontent, no disgruntled sense of holding in contempt the present in comparison with the past. He has preserved unto himself and to us an ever- youthful heart, his great kindness and never-fading modesty.

"In truth, ladies and gentlemen, take him for all in all, I cannot summarize his qualities more eloquently than by roll- ing back the years and saying, as that actor said 38 years ago, 'Billy is a damn fine fellow.'"

Mr. Crane, in his turn, spoke simply and earnestly:

"Gentlemen, I thank you. I should be untrue to myself if these were not the first words to be spoken by me at this moment. No one could be the recipient of so distinguished an honor without a

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THE DIVINE SARAH PLAYS A CATHEDRAL



This remarkable woman, still suffering inconvenience from her artificial limb, finds her most remarkable part in a patriotic piece, "Les Cathedrales." Statuette, in a chair of carved stone, she impersonates the soul of that churchly edifice now closest to the warring heart of France, the Cathedral of Strasbourg.



WILLIAM H. CRANE The veteran actor, celebrating the 50th year of his stage life, comes to the Adelphi next week in "The New Henrietta," a modernization of his famous early success.