

Magazine Feature Section

"SEEING IS BELIEVING" IS SECRET OF POWER OF MOTION PICTURES

Little Mary Charleson Says Some Day in Trials for Murder, Films Will Be Used in Arguments

SOME day," says Mary Charleson, the Essanay star, "some brilliant lawyer is going to introduce moving pictures into legal trials. Just think what a hit he would make with juries. If, instead of going through usual tiresome speechmaking, he would present his argument in pictures."

"Seeing is believing," is the secret of the great power and popularity of the pictures. Narrative in speech or print never convinces as clearly as action.

There are several reasons for this. One of the greatest is that many people, most people, lack imagination. They hear only the speaker's words, or heed only the printed letter of a page, and unless the speaker or the writer draws wonderful and accurate word pictures their minds absorb nothing but the surface of the narrative.

The moving pictures not only tell the story, but they supply imagination to those who look at them. The spoken or written story tells you that John Smith went down the street and met a gray-whiskered man at the corner, who presented him with a bouquet of carnations and a black cat in a bird cage; and you, if you have no imagination, get no more than that.

But when you see a picture of the same thing your mind races beyond the action, and what seemed perfectly insane in the telling looks logical in the pictures, because seeing the thing done starts your thinking apparatus.

The man with gray whiskers stimulates the imagination. You figure out that he is either a lunatic or that he is paying an election bet or something like that, and you are right up on your mental toes wondering what is going to happen next. You wonder why there is no bird in the cage. Did the cat eat the bird, or do some people always keep their cats in bird cages?

Building Your Own Story.

You think your mind races ahead of the picture, you build a little story of your own, while in the reading or listening your mind stops at the end of each sentence and you wait for the thing to be explained to you.

That is the reason that many people who never read books and cannot "abide" fiction stories go to the picture shows and revel in the most absurd and illogical plots of the screen. What would have no appeal to them on a printed page appeals to them greatly when they see the characters doing the things in the films.

Illogical action is clothed with reality; the most unreasonable steps taken by the characters become plausible because they are seen doing the things that their imagination tells them they might have done or would do under the same circumstances.

You can see yourself gravely accepting the carnations and cat in the bird cage from the gentleman with gray whiskers, because your imagination has already figured out a solution, and your awakened romance is crying with curiosity for what is going to happen next.

Merchants are using picture cameras and projection machines to exploit goods, because the pictures speak louder than any words or

set speech the salesman might recite to his prospective customer.

In many of the salesrooms of the big cities customers are shown moving pictures of factory processes, taken through every detail of the making of merchandise, and the future will, no doubt, see traveling salesmen equipped with a movie machine, that will be packed in with their samples, and when a salesman gets to a town the first thing he will do, after spreading out his wares in the hotel display room, will be to rig up his movie machine, and then he will invite the merchants of the town in to see a stronger argument as to the merits of his goods than he could ever hope to give them with mere speech.

Moving Pictures at a Trial.

It is not at all unreasonable to suppose that Miss Charleson's prediction of motion pictures in court trials will be fulfilled. And to anyone who has been on a jury and sat through the long-winded speeches that follow long-winded trials, an early fulfillment will be most earnestly desired.

Imagine yourself one of twelve peers who have been kept away from your business, and your family, and your baseball, and everything else worth living for, listening to counsel for the defense and counsel for the prosecution wrangle over obscure points of the law until you have come to wish it were the attorney, instead of the prisoner at the bar, that you have the privilege of hanging or sending up for life.

What a relief it would be to know that when the speech-making time came you were to be argued with by pictures instead of the hateful voices of the two learned gentlemen of the bar!

What a relief it would be for the bailiff to darken the room and show you the early and blameless life of the accused depicted on the screen. You could see him, as a little boy, being kind to other boys and refraining from pulling the hair ribbons from the pigtailed little girls; see him rebuke the bad boys for throwing snowballs at the elderly gentleman; see him raise a protesting hand when the other lads were about to decorate the stray dog's tail with a tin can; see his whole life laid out before you in masterfully acted pictures that showed nothing but goodness and purity up to the day he was falsely accused of putting a figurative spider in his rich uncle's biscuit for his insurance money.

Wouldn't that be more forcible and convincing than any words his lawyer could utter—especially if the room were so dark that you could not see the accused's face while the pictures were going on?

Pictures by the Prosecution.

Or, on the other hand, what a skulking scoundrel he could be made to seem when the other side got its whack at him. The prosecution could get one of the well-known screen villains to enact that part, and any jury would be willing to hang the accused without leaving their seats.

Think how invaluable pictures would be for the lawyers to strengthen a weak alibi; how the accused could be shown returning home when he was supposed to have been elsewhere. You could see him weaving his uncertain way down the street, which could account for his vanishing two miles to cover one; see his efforts to find the keyhole to his front door for ten long minutes; the time he said he got home and the time his wife said he got there, and prove conclusively that he could not have been in Simpson's barroom when the fatal shot was fired that demolished the plate-glass mirrors and otherwise created hob with the decorations and an all-around rough house.

Think of what pictures would mean in a

divorce trial; what jars of spiced pictorial evidence could be unrecited and how the public would revel in it!

If the contestants were rich enough, one of the well-known vampires of the screen could be employed to take the part of the other woman in the case; or in breach of promise cases, the fair and broken-hearted suer could enact the part herself with some handsome hero of the movies taking the part of the suer.

What jury would fail to award damages on the spot when they saw the lovelorn and billing and cooing worked out before their eyes in place of listening to the summing up of the same testimony from a lawyer who was maybe 35 years old and had the influenza and chin whiskers.

Of course, pictures cannot be used for direct testimony, because people are not in the habit of committing misdemeanors in the bright light necessary for the taking of a movie film, but some day some genius may invent a machine that can be set up in the spot where crimes are about to be committed that will silently record the damning evidence of misdeeds.

Husbands might have them hid away in

obscure corners of the house, and when he sues his wife for separate maintenance he could show the judge and jury the movies of the day his mother-in-law visited them, and how his life was a burden from that day on.

What jury would fail to find for the plaintiff in the face of such action?

Mary Charleson, who predicts legal films, was born in Dunganon, Ireland, which fact probably accounts for her habit and power of prophecy, and if she proves to be as good a prophet as she is a film player all that she says about movies in courtrooms will soon come to pass.

Miss Charleson comes from a theatrical family; her father was at one time a well-known actor of the English stage. The family came to America a few years after Mary's birth, which occurred in 1883. They settled in California, and their small daughter was placed in a convent school to be educated. As soon as she was old enough to talk about what she was going to do when she grew up, little Mary Charleson announced her intention of living up to the family traditions and becoming an actress. As soon as she left school she set

about carrying out her plans, and her voice, which was very strong and sweet, and the natural ability she had inherited from her parents, made it an easy matter for her to find a place on the stage.

Miss Charleson's first appearance was with the Grand Opera Stock Company in Los Angeles, in ingenue parts. She played with a number of Pacific Coast dramatic organizations and then took up moving-picture work, at which she was an almost immediate success.

Miss Charleson is of medium stature, has dark hair that curls in natural ringlets without having a thing done to it or having a thing put on it. It is just the kind of Irish hair that has the habit of falling into curls of its own accord. She has Celtic gray eyes, a well-defined nose of humor and an unassuming disposition, likes emotional parts, and says she just revels in roles where she can be a floor-scrubbing, down-trodden sort of heroine that always comes out on top in the end.

Miss Charleson's next film play, which will be called the *Saints' Adventure*, will be released on the Kline-Edison-Selig-Essanay program, in the near future.

ANSWERS TO FANS

Sign your name—it will not appear in the column—and give a title so that you will recognize your answer. Address the Photo-play Editor, care of this paper.

I RRLAND—Fandor in "Fantomas" was Louis Melchior. That picture was made in France and the players were all French. The Fairbanks twins are not related to Douglas Fairbanks. They are 18.

DICK D.—Warner Oland, who plays the part of the Japanese baron, Huroki in *Patria*, is a Swede. Address Milton Sills at Pathé, 25 West Forty-fifth street, New York; Beattie Epton, Selig, Los Angeles, Cal. Douglas Fairbanks carries the key to his own studio now and will lease his future productions through Artcraft, the same exchange that handles the Mary Pickford productions.

BRIGHT EYES—George Le Guere has been acting for more than a dozen years and has been in pictures about two years. He is really around 30, but looks much younger, and always plays juvenile leads.

JAY—The American Film Company is at 627 Broadway, Chicago, Ill. The Essanay is at 1233 Argyle street, and the Selig studio is at Western and Irving Park boulevards. Just now the Essanay is the only one of these motion picture companies making photoplays in Chicago, the other two having transported all their players to their California studios several months ago.

I. C.—The fans are now writing to Douglas Fairbanks in care of Artcraft, 729 Seventh avenue, New York. Give him the impression that it will add materially to your happiness to come into the possession of one of his pictures and he will probably instruct his secretary to send you one.

CHAS. ELTON—Mary Miles Minter is 15, is still single, and gets her letters at the American Film Company, Santa Barbara, Cal. If you ask her in a real nice way, Charles, we think she would send you her picture.

E. DITH HOPWOOD—Maurice Costello is in his 40s and is married. Ethel Grandin is Mrs. Ray Smallwood in private life and is about 25. Letters will be forwarded to them from the Metro Pictures Corporation, 1470 Broadway, New York.

L. F. B.—A detailed synopsis of a photoplay is almost a short story, except that there is no dialogue; the story is developed by action alone. If you have your plot well in mind and can see your characters going through their parts as if they were on the screen before you, you will have no trouble in writing out your story. Begin at the beginning, just as the play should appear on the screen, and bring it to a logical conclusion. You may have to go over it several times to put in the little details, but it will all be good practice, and will make it easier for you to write your next one.

I LLEMO—If you can write stories it should not be hard for you to write photoplays. So many people would like to write, but they have nothing to write about. You are fortunate in knowing what goes into the making of a story. The synopsis of a story. You have the whole idea and plot, but no trills, no flowery language, no conversation—nothing but action.

FLOOR—Whoever spread the rumor that Francis X. Bushman and Beverly Bayne were going to stop playing together after *The Great Secret* was finished was mistaken. They are even now at work on the first of a series of five-reel features in which they are to co-star. They both answer letters. Their address is: Metro, 1476 Broadway, New York.

A. S. A.—A photoplay, more than a story, must have a well-defined plot to it. A story is often nothing but a character sketch with a very weak plot to hold it together, but a photoplay must be nearly all plot—with plenty of opportunities for "close up" pictures of the stars.

G. K.—Alma Reuben was the Little Fatale, gonian girl in *American Aristocracy*, opposite Douglas Fairbanks. Tote De Crow is the name of the actor who played the part of Senor de Castile.

WILDFLOWER—Helen Holmes is with the Signal Film Corporation, Los Angeles, California.

Here Are the New Films to Be Released This Week

TRIANGLE: Hands Up—Wilfred Lucas takes the part of a reformed bandit in the Fine Art mystery story called *Hands Up*. The man, who has committed many deeds of outlawry, has paid the penalty of his wrongs to society and has become a successful business man and president of a railroad. Believing that his past is safely buried, he takes a long journey with his daughter, but, as if to give him a dose of his own medicine, the private car in which he travels is held up by robbers and new complications arise which the respectable bank president and railroad builder could not possibly have foreseen.

Bluebird: The Clock—Franklyn Farnum and Agnes Vernon play the leading roles in this feature. "Jack Tempest" (Farnum) has never learned the meaning of the word "punctuality." He is late in all his appointments, at work and on all occasions, until his sweetheart takes it upon herself to correct his fault. She teaches him the value of the clock—and a clock plays a most important part in the development of the story. Marc Fenton, Frank Whitson, Frederick Montague and Willis Marks lend their support to the stars in an able and convincing manner.

Fox: A Small-Town Girl—June Caprice takes the part of the small town girl in this new feature, and she is undoubtedly the proper person to be intrusted with the part, for she herself has once called a small town her home and knows all about the ways of small-town people. The play is wholesome, and has both romance and adventure in it. In the supporting cast are Bert Delaney, who plays opposite Miss Caprice; Inez Marcel, Tom Brooks, Lucia Moore, N. D. Southard and John Borkel.

Art Dramas: The Adventurer—Upton Sinclair's novel, "The Adventurer," is the story depicted in this film, which is decidedly entertaining, with its mystery and melodrama and quick action. Marion Swayne plays the part of a girl trying to make a living honestly in a cruel city. Pell Trenton plays the opposite lead, and for a time it seems that he is a crook, but as the plot develops his actions are explained and the reasons for his mysterious performances are made clear. Charles Halton and Kirk Brown are the real villains. Ethel Stannard, Yolande Duquette and Martin Hayden all have prominent parts in the picture.

Pathé: Sunshine and Gold—How a little child won her way with smiles into the heart of a crabbed and cranky old man and brought happiness to him, as well as the other characters of the play, is delightfully set forth in this film. Baby Marie Osborne, the 5-year-old screen star, has the leading part. She is kidnaped by a band

of strolling gypsies, and after escaping from them finds her way to the house of an old man who had become a misanthrope because his son had married against his wishes. The baby turns out to be the old man's grandchild, a reconciliation between father and son is affected, and every one is happy. Henry King has the part of the son, and the veteran character actor, Daniel Gilfeather, is the grandfather.

L. C. F.: The Great Stroke—This play deals with a young army officer who has been cut off by his rich uncle in consequence of having contracted many debts. He becomes a robber of safes, and when his sweetheart gives him her money to pay off his debts he promises to reform. His promises are forgotten later when he falls in with a gang of unscrupulous men who are planning to steal some valuable pearls. The officer becomes the leader of the gang, but at the last minute, just when the crime is about to be committed, he is struck with the evil of his ways, repents and returns the jewels to their owner at the risk of being killed by the band of robbers.

Salmick: The Silent Master—The Silent Master is a film adaptation of E. Phillips Oppenheimer's novel, "The Court of St. Simon," wherein a young man of wealth adopts the name of Valentine Simon and establishes a secret tribunal, where wealthy oppressors of the poor are punished in a summary, if not entirely a legal,

manner. These are men who cannot be reached by law, and are made to atone for their misdeeds by means of the lash and other punishment. The mysterious "Mr. Simon" meets a young American who becomes involved in a crime, and whom he tries unsuccessfully to save from his captors. Later he meets the sister of the American and falls in love with her. Olive Tell and Anna Little have the principal supporting roles in the picture, and others in the cast are Donald Galaher, George Clarke and Juliette Moore.

Mutual: High Play—William Russell takes the part of the vice president of a bank in this film, who is taken to task by the other directors of the institution because of continuing his friendship with a woman who runs a gambling hall. The woman does not become vindictive until she realizes that a girl much younger than herself is influencing and winning the young financier away from her. She is instrumental in bringing about a crash in the young man's life that he is enabled to overcome only through almost superhuman strength. Francis Billington is the feminine lead.

Vitagraph: The Hawk—The Hawk, one of the most notable speaking stage plays of the last decade, was produced originally in Paris, where it made such a sensation that an English translation was made of it for William Faversham, who, together with Mile. Dazien, the French

actress, made a great success of it on the regular stage here. The Hawk has been transferred to the screen with no loss of its dramatic power, and makes splendid entertainment. Earle Williams has the principal part of "The Hawk." Ethel Gray Terry is his leading feminine support, and Julia Swayne Gordon, Katherine Lewis and Denton Vane make up the cast.

Metro: The Power of Decision—Frances Nelson plays the heroine of this photoplay, which is based on the theme that "Every mortal has within himself the God-given power of decision." By his own decision each man must set for himself in every crisis. Richard Tucker, who plays opposite Miss Nelson, takes the part of the novelist, "Austin Bland," and writes a story with that theme uppermost. He has a chance to test his theory when an instance, almost identical with that depicted in his novel, happens to him and his wife, John Davidson and Sally Cruise have important parts, and Fuller Melloch and Hugh Jeffrey are also seen to advantage.

Fox Special: American Methods—This is the third of the eight superproductions starring William Farnum which the William Fox Company is now producing annually. The theme of this play is an Americanized version of the novel, "The Ironmaster," by George Chnst. Mr. Farnum gives a splendid portrayal of Ohnet's hero in this film, and Jewel Carmen,

who played with him in *A Tale of Two Cities*, again has the feminine lead. One of the most spectacular scenes in the production is the wedding, which takes place in an elaborate church set with all the accompanying realism, even to real altar boys borrowed from a Los Angeles church. Bertram Grassby, Willard Louis, Alan Forrest, Josef Swickard, Lillian West, Genevieve Blinn, Florence Vidor and Marc Robbins are notable names in the cast.

Universal: The Birth of Patriotism—This is a war film, and, while there are many battle scenes and much carnage in it, the story really deals with those who serve at home, the wives and sweethearts of the soldiers. Leo Pierson takes the part of a man, who, while he is a slacker as far as morals is concerned, is anything but a coward when he hears the country's call to arms.

Pierson, finding life at home too hum-drum for his high spirits, has deserted his wife for the maid of an English public house. After he is gone to the front these two women meet and are drawn together with common pride for the man who is away fighting for their country. When news of his death on the battlefield reaches them the two are on the hat. Pierson, finding life at home too hum-drum for his high spirits, has deserted his wife for the maid of an English public house. After he is gone to the front these two women meet and are drawn together with common pride for the man who is away fighting for their country. When news of his death on the battlefield reaches them the two are on the hat. Pierson, finding life at home too hum-drum for his high spirits, has deserted his wife for the maid of an English public house. After he is gone to the front these two women meet and are drawn together with common pride for the man who is away fighting for their country. When news of his death on the battlefield reaches them the two are on the hat.