NOVEMBER 25 Cents

FILM TRUTH

“That Little Red Devil”
FILM TRUTH
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DEDICATED to the TRUTH about
the motion picture industry and its people,
written without fear, favor or malice.
The Shame of Smut

I AM of the mire too dirty for swine; I am of the filth that incinerators cannot destroy; I am of the stench that God’s own sun fails to purify; I am of the corruption that lies at the most dismal depths of man’s mind; I am the slime and slew that pervert the divine gift of speech; — I AM “SMUT.”

I am the foul breath of disease; I am the tainted hands of sin; I am Thought strangled by Shame; — I AM “SMUT.”

The muddied waters of the Ganges are to me as the rippling mountain brook.
I am the refuse that Hell discharges.
I AM “SMUT.”

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And it is to me that the great Master of the Motion Picture has turned for succor.
I am selected as the tool to lure a vile profit.
To me it has been left to smirch the good name of a revered American classic; to dig a Grave of the Nameless for a play that clean men and women have loved.
I am the Satanic genius that makes an Artist—moulder of a pictorial masterpiece—poison his triumph in gangrene.
I AM “SMUT.”

* * * * * * * * *

My words need explanation. Yet from my own foul station I hesitate to descend. Here, however, is an advertisement that sullied the pages of a New York newspaper on October 4th:
“Why does every girl have to battle against love?”

“Why does every woman have to feel the straining power of seduction in one form or another—the hot, alluring breaths of deceits?

“This thing has been, time and again, from the beginning of history, through all the ages. Man’s most beautiful property, most sought after, most desired, has been woman. And through all these ages it was more through passion than the better desires.

“Even the saints of past history fought bloody battles; worked, dreamed, struggled through their love for women—not satisfied with one or two or three. These almighty men demanded hundreds—every variety of beauty, dainty little girls in their teens; blondes from the Northlands; strange slant-eyed brunettes from the Southlands. Mighty wars, broken nations, wrecked civilizations over the Helens-of-Troy and Cleopatras.

“Doesn’t the same battle go on today, though changed and modified? Is not every little girl still pursued? Why? What is this great mystery of love?

“There is the greatest revelation of a woman’s soul and a woman’s temptation in a tremendous play that is shaking the world; the greatest uncovering of a woman’s inner soul ever given. If you know, then you know all love and all temptation, joy and sorrow. You will know the DIFFERENCE between the alluring passion of deceit that leads to bitter ashes; the great overwhelming, all-enfolding SOUL LOVE that looks through the body and finds the great WOMAN-HEART; the love that every woman wants, with peace and purity, leading on and up to the great happiness, with the masterful, overwhelming bliss, all centered love of the great ONE MAN.
“To learn the great lesson of ALL LOVE you must see ‘WAY DOWN EAST,’ and WOMAN and ALL WOMEN, and the story of Anna Moore in this play. And of David the farmer boy, greatest of all lovers. And Sanderson, with the old polygamous idea of deceit and shame for those women who fall in his clutches.”

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May my respected ancestors forgive me the quotation. May the minions of Evil temper their contempt as I repeat:

"Why does every woman have to feel the straining power of seduction?"
"The hot alluring breaths of deceit."
"Even the saints of past history — — "
"These almighty men demanded hundreds."
"Is not every little girl still pursued?"
Mephistopheles — thy pardon! Boccaccio,— turn not from me in repugnance!
Mothers of Men — thy prayers!
Verily, I am the dross that dares tarnish the sweet name of Woman; I am the ulcers of leprosy; I am the spawn of hellions;— I AM "SMUT."

Yet —
Am I the tool of the Master?
Am I the bait that is sought to lure scurvy dollars?
Am I to be the left hand of the Griffith?

* * * * * * *

FILM TRUTH will now speak:
Why, oh, why, does the name of Griffith have to be signed to the slushy drivel of such advertisements?
“Way Down East” is a big picture; “Way Down East” can stand fairly, squarely, flatly on its own feet. “Way Down East” is worth two dollars of any man’s money,
We paid two dollars to see it—and we are going to pay again. Provided Mr. Griffith’s advertising writers don’t convince us that our money would be accepted as a response to the salacious; our two dollars a contribution to the cause of promoting motion picture censorship.

“Way Down East” lived its life on the American stage honored and respected—without the need of such truck and trash.

“Way Down East” made fortunes for its stage sponsors, and yet the “Way Down East” of the spoken drama was as an amateur’s weak-kneed effort to the stirring strength of the screen gem that Griffith has given us.

Then why the need for advertising what is cheap, tawdry and contemptible?

The “Way Down East” of the stage did not need, and the “Way Down East” of the screen does not need, an appeal that says:

“Why does every woman have to feel the straining power of seduction in one form or another—the hot, alluring breaths of deceits?”

The charming lady on the cover is not a bare back rider. Appearances are deceptive. It is Norma Nicholls, one of a sextet of Vanity Fair girls who, under Hal Roach’s protecting wing will delight the tired business man in comedies to be released by Pathe.

P. S.—The other five are just as pulchritudinous.

On the inside front cover the attractive study by moonlight is one of Lucy Cotton.

And, we ask you, who couldn’t cotton to Lucy?
Our “Flynancial” Page

No publication is complete today without its financial department in which some thirty-five-dollar-a-week expert advises you how to get rich on stocks and bonds. The guff is written principally for purposes of draping around the ads of brokers who will give any sheet their money if it will start an investment page.

So this is our page. We have everything but the advertising. And our hopes are slim.

The Fan Film Corporation is offering stock in a million-dollar company to back Louise Du Pre, “Mary Pickford’s former understudy.” Charles Giegerich is “vice-president and general manager.” The four-page prospectus read interestingly until we came across a column and a half of praise for Miss Du Pre reprinted from Motion Picture Classic and credited, “By Chas. G. Rich.” We hesitated. We pondered. “Charles G. Rich”—“Charles Giegerich.” Why they must be one and the same! And so they are.

Our “flynancial” expert hereby advises Fan Film that no matter how good a proposition may appear otherwise, there’s a touch of the foolish when you quote the press agent flub-dubbery of your own vice-president.

The Cortland Pictures Corporation, of Indianapolis, has an honest-to-goodness picture director for president and some fine local names on the board. They modestly hint that five thousand theaters are going to set aside one or two days a week to show their pictures — with net results at the end of the year of $1,497,500 in profits.

Wonder if someone has thought to tell the five thousand theaters what is expected of them?

[7]
“Guilty”

SCORE one for “FILM TRUTH!” A bull’s-eye zipped right to the center of the dot! A ten-strike down the middle of Swindler Alley!

Way, way back in its May issue — six months ago — “FILM TRUTH” turned its trusty spear in the direction of one George A. Strader who was victimizing would-be scenario writers on the strength of stationery which proclaimed him “Formerly with the Famous Players-Lasky Company,” and “a member of the National Association of the Motion Picture Industry.”

George found the high muck-a-mucks of the magazine field willing to carry his ads telling amateurs in glowing terms of the wonderful opportunities in photoplay writing, and of his own intimate inside opportunities to sell scenarios. After the sucker forwarded a story Strader would counter with a letter suggesting that a few expert touches were needed — price $10 — and a sale would be certain. Of course a little typing would be charged for too, perhaps. But the “touch,” the $10 was the main thing necessary for the sale.

“Expert touch” was right — for nothing ever happened after George got the ten dolderinos.

“FILM TRUTH” told the truth — way back in May, and regardless of possible laceration of Strader’s feelings, his protests, wails or threats.

That was in May. The mills of the gods grind slowly, but October rolls around, and, one bright Indian summer morning, we pick up our newspaper to read: “George A. Strader was convicted yesterday in the Federal District Court on an indictment charging him with using the mails in the operation of a scheme to defraud.”

One down!
DEAR Liz: Three cheers, kiddo! Hoorayeureka! I've discovered the place where they bury the bodies. The secret is mine. Within six months, dearie, I'll be drawing down a thousand a week and owing more money than the national debt. I'm going to be one of the big, bigger, biggest directors.

Don't laugh, sweetie. I know I've been piking my way making good pictures for a slim three hundred a week for so long that you won't believe I can step out. But listen—I'm going to be a big leaguer if I have to wear a pillow slip on my coat lapel. Watch my errors, Liz.

I've diagnosed my own case—and do you know what has been responsible for the anaemia of the bankroll that has afflicted me all these years? My early training was all wrong. Every time I spend a dollar I squeeze it till the birdie cuckoos "One hundred cents!"

I guess that year I spent in school spoiled me.

I took them there copy book Maxims too seriously. You know the stuff I mean. About—"Two bits saved is a jitney earned," and "Save the pennies and the dollars will draw four per cent."

Well, here I've been in the fillum flurry a dozen years little one, before the truth dawned on me. They shoulda put silencers on them Maxims or else handed them to you with interpretations and reservations. Chief of which same is this here: "Nothing in these articles shall be construed as referring to THE BOSS'S MONEY."

His bankroll is made to be shot; he isn't happy unless it's riddled. He won't say "Good Morning" to you unless you caused him to say "Good Night, Mr. Receiver," the day before.
I'm starting on a new picture now, Liz, and to tell the truth if I hired an oil promoter for property man I don't think I could spend more than fifty thousand dollars making it a good picture. But I've learned the secret—and if I break a leg doing it I am going to take more time on this picture than George Loane Tucker needs; I'm going to spend more money than Von Stroheim; I'm going to build more sets and tear 'em down faster than Mickey Neilan at his best; I'm going to have a bigger hospital bill than a Holubar production.

If I don't spend more than two hundred and fifty thousand on this picture I'll be willing to take a job making LoKo comedies. Of course, two hundred and fifty thousand doesn't put me in the class with the big boys but it's a pretty fair start for a guy with wrong upbringing.

It was this nut Stroheim that give me the idea. You know, Liz, when this Von got through serving the time in the army that all them Heinies has to, he came here and first broke into the United States histories in the packing room of a department store. He studied stagecraft wrapping planks around "This Side Up" signs.

He musta come to Los in one of his own shipping cases for when I first saw him hanging around the studios looking for extra parts he didn't look as though he'd ever possessed Mister Santa Fe's price. The boys gave him a rough deal in those days—you know it wasn't a popular time for gents with the "Von" handle on their monickers. But we had so many beastly Berlin pictures that we all had to use him. He played more German captains than there were in the Kaiser's army.

Then one day he negotiates a ten minute loan of Carl Laemmle's ear and comes out of the office with the title "Director." He earned the brackets by guaranteeing to
make a picture for twenty thousand, and faithfully ful-
filled his promise by spending not a cent more than fifty.
What’s more it was a good picture.

Universal foolishly thought the gink would be grateful
for the opportunity they gave him so they turned loose
the noisiest advertising and publicity they could. That
queered it. He started going loco then and he’s three
laps ahead of a flea-bitten coyote ever since.

Stroheim spends more money now on his own clothes
than he guaranteed to make that first picture for. Out
here where every director has to look like a Hartschaffner
ad touched up by a futurist painter he manages to hold
the jazz record. What a swath he cuts with the extra
girls!

As for his pictures — if he reaches a cent less than five
hundred thousand on this “Foolish Wives” he’s mak-
ing now he’ll probably be so peeved he’ll try hari-kari.
Why, do you know, Liz, he’s spent enough money build-
ing Monte Carlo’s up at Monterey to relieve the housing
shortage in six states!

Do I blame him? Not a bit. If he didn’t toss the
coin that way people wouldn’t believe he was one of the
biggest directors. His company would probably fire him
for getting old-fashioned. Then they’d bail Ponzi and
put him on the payroll.

Once you hadda put a close-up in every ten feet to be
ranked an up-to-date director; now you have to find new
ways for filling up the Home for Incurably Insane
Cashiers.

Another fellow whose boss has to make the money
with a machine is this here fellow Holubar. I think
that Holubar and Stroheim musta formed some sorta
grudge when they hung out together on the Universal
lot. Now they take it out on the boss by racing neck and neck on the Expenditure Extravaganza.

Holubar's just finished his first independent feature starring his wife, Dorothy Phillips. "Man, Woman and Marriage" they calls it. Al Kaufman, who supplied the money, must agree that this married life is expensive. Here's one way they ran head-long into the subtreasury, Liz:

Holubar decides that a little prehistoric stuff showing a battle of the Amazons with the Male Brutes would be good stuff. So five hundred horses and five hundred dames are hired and turned loose for the action. The janes are in the near-nude, and beside you can't expect that many girls in one city to know how to handle horses, so quite a few of them take a tumble when the battle reaches the rough stage. The first thing you know the ambulances are chasing to the Holubar lot as though they belonged in the story.

Continuity calls for the women losing the battle for the obvious reason disclosed when a later scene shows three hundred of them nursing babies. A hurry call is sent out for three hundred infants willing to yawl a few hours for the movies. How that assistant director got 'em I don't know — but he did.

"Shucks," says someone then. "Now we gotta get three hundred women to nurse the infantry." That was a tough assignment — but some miracle worker produced the women.

Do you know what happened then, Liz? The kids went on strike! They might be of the nursing age but hang it, they were particular where and when they nursed. And they had no sympathy for the battery of cameras anxious to grind.
All was at a standstill. What could be done? Then a clever chap who deserves a Croix de Gerry Society had an idea. A few whispered words, hurried telephone call, truck load of honey arrives. Honey applied to the proper spot, youngsters start to work with a will. Cameras click.

Isn't it a great life in the West, Liz? — Your own ex-chauffeur friend, Bill.

While they last, the publishers of FILM TRUTH will send the first six issues of the book, April to September, inclusive, to any United States address, upon receipt of $1.

Foreign postage, 25 cents extra.
Details will be found on the inside back cover.
Corner in Chaplins

SOMETIMES we let our readers on the inside of a coming movie event so far in advance that we are afraid they will forget all about our having told them when the happening comes to pass.

A reader has just written us, “I know you’ve told us about the delay on Chaplin’s new picture, but why is it we don’t see so many old Chaplins either? A couple of years ago every other theater was playing a Chaplin, some of them so old the prints could hardly hold together.”

Some four months ago we told “FILM TRUTH” readers about the Chaplin serial that is already made—or rather, assembled—and about to be launched whenever the moment seems ripe. Well, in that inside note, is also contained the explanation for the scarcity of old Chaplins.

The market is being scoured and cleaned. Every granddaddy Chaplin that shows its head is being bought and retired to the home for the aged. If you have a friend in the junk business tell him to look over that pile in his backyard. It may disgorge a Chaplin print. And today it can be sold.

The men who hold the Chaplin serial up their sleeves are the wisest of the wise. They won’t say the word “Go!” till the stage is set. One of the essentials is freedom from junk competition.

So wait a while longer for the Chaplin serial, readers. But when it comes remember that “we told you so.” There are thousands of folks deep on the inside of this movie game to whom it will be the surprise of the year.
S’s’sh—! Some Gossip!

Is it unfair to ask what Garret Hughes can see in Mildred Harris? Or vice versa?

“Forbidden Fruit” is the next DeMille production in titular succession to “Why Change Your Husband?” Just think of all we are going to see of Elinor Fair, Gloria Swanson and others. The Los Angeles Hosiery Hucksters and Lingerie Lizards have entered a protest against the continuous overtime.

Oft in the still and starry night we have paused to wonder why DeMille is willing to share so much of his favorites with the general public.

Temperament? If you want to know the meaning of the word ask Maxwell Karger, director general of Metro production, about Ina Claire. Karger, being a diplomat, probably won’t answer you. But anyone else at the studio can tell you that Ina has the tempestuous, rock-bound coasts of Maine licked to a frazzle forty ways when it comes to the stormy stuff. Ina is only making her screen debut in this Metro picture but she knew what she wanted—and by all hemlock cantankerousness, she got it, too.

It takes some pepper pot to create any notice in a studio where Nazimova has worked.

Isn’t it rather sad, to say the least, to have fame affect some of our stars, as it does? Our attention has been directed to Charles Ray—rather more strongly to Mrs.
Charles Ray. Charlie’s rise has affected her — so much 'tis said, that there is a dearth of chauffeurs at the Ray villa. This in spite of the fact that a half score or more have entered employ — and rather quickly tired of it. One of 'em tells us his reasons, and we admit they would peeve a brass Buddha.

And, by the way, was it Mrs. Ray whose attitude toward a grocer’s delivery boy who carelessly let his Ford drop a bit of oil on a macadamized driveway, caused so much mirth around the colony lately?

An event long looked for in the Somborn household (Gloria Swanson of yore) has occurred, and a bouncing girl is announced. Months ago we were told that Gloria’s contract with DeMille, at a comparatively small salary, could be broken only by such an event. Mr. Somborn, being a picture magnate, is said to naturally have wanted to star his wife. Now the way may be open. We shall see.

Mutterings around a certain railroad ticket office in New York the other day, boded ill for the husband of the deceased Olive Thomas, had he dropped his dignity and approached in person. His valet, through association or education, we know not which, has picked up a domineering attitude, and the tantrums he went through over the phone at various times with every clerk in the office, got under the skin. “Don’t you know who my master is,” chirped the valet. And just as chipperly the railroad clerk said, “I do, and I don’t give a damn.”

Party of four, two staterooms on the Century huh? We are slightly curious, just slightly.

Would you believe it? There’s someone afraid he won’t be given credit for making “Uncle Sam of Free-
dom Ridge,” the propaganda picture which FILM
TRUTH exploded in last month’s issue. The director,
George Beranger, is the man. At that, Beranger is in the
right. He is an A1 director, fully capable of making his
own pictures. There was no need of anyone else claiming
credit for “supervision.”

While on the subject of Levey’s film it might not be
adverse to whisper that we have at hand letters from live
wire exhibitors stating they have thrown it out of their
houses after finding it purely propaganda.

From a press agent comes a screed concerning a pro-
duction under way at Los Angeles called “The Perfect
Man.” And in the cast we find a player named Andrew
Sous. We’ll say so!

How soon are the dead forgotten! Ollie Thomas has
not had time to get settled in her grave, when here we
find brother Duffy reported gallivanting around New
York one evening, imbibing the atmosphere, and then
some, in company with a fair damsel who has a husband
somewhere or other, and to whom an unbroken Arabian
steed is as a lamb.

My, my, it does seem hard for a young lady to keep
a “steady” in this dear Los Angeles these days. Take
little Lottie Pickford for instance. Before going east,
Gossip Row on the coast hummed with a hair pulling
match said to have been staged very, very openly, with
Lottie in the role of challenger, and a former Ziegfeld
Follies beauty as defender. ’Twas said Lottie’s sweetie
(who came on the scene following her divorce) had been
weaned away by the newcomer. Hence the fireworks.
Anytime you see an "it" on the streets of Hollywood wearing English riding breeches wider than an embarrassed pancake, leather puttees wound round legs thinner than a producer's heart; a waxed and pointed mustache sillier looking than shirred humming-bird's eggs—lay a hundred to one bet that you are looking at a moving picture director pulling down a measly thousand a week. The question of the Sphinx: Must movie men of the studios look like Asses?

These here now fillums make strange bed-fellows. "Determination" now has in its cast both Lieut. Maynard, "the Flying Parson" and Maurice Costello, who used to appear every now and then in Brooklyn police courts to answer wifey's objections to the pugilistic form of argument. Remember when "Cos" was the shining matinee idol of the screen?

The Unkindest Cut of All: One of our contemporaries discloses to a palpitating world the fact that Reeves Eason, the director, started life as a butcher.

George Walsh was anxious to wind up his Fox contract while brother Raoul was hitting on all twelve cylinders as an independent producer. Wonder how George feels about it now that Mayflower's limping progress threatens to embarrass Raoul's activities.

"Brewster's Millions" is going to be made in pictures again. Producers must work on the theory that they were entirely successful in their efforts to kill off the earlier generations of fans.
"The Public Be Damned"

THE high faluting talk of art for art's sake and such high sounding expressions, placed on the lips of some picture magnates, is humorous enough to make the Gods of High Olympus crack a smile in view of the penny-grasping, public-be-damned attitude adopted when opportunity presents.

Twice within a month a big picture, meritorious in every sense, and one which the public which supports the poor pictures of the same producers should by every right have opportunity to see, has come out advertised as not to be released for general exhibition for a period of years.

Griffith started it with "Way Down East." He stuck an exorbitant admission price down for the New York showing, and then advertised the picture would never be seen in any but the large houses in the large cities. In other words, that the real motion picture public, the real exhibitor, he of the small center, could whistle for this picture, but could pay for the inferior stuff instead.

Fox now comes forth with a masterpiece in the form of "Over the Hill." And his ads carry a line that the picture will be seen in the first run houses only for the years 1920, 1921 and 1922.

The consummate gall of such maneuvers, even in this business where one feels like keeping a hand on his watch when in certain neighborhoods, is somewhat appalling even to those of us who should be hardened.

Mr. and Mrs. Public can see and pay for the ordinary film. But if, by chance, the lordly producer makes one of exceptional quality, then admission prices will be jacked up, exorbitant rental be demanded of the big exhibitor—and the small town can do without.
Boots and Boots

“PEACEFUL VALLEY” (Kane-First National). Charles Ray back to the role he can play. No real story, but none needed. Star appealing and pleasing in rustic setting. Dramatic moments interjected here and there. A hundred times better than “45 Minutes from Broadway.” We take our hat off to Ray once again.

“BEHOLD MY WIFE” (Paramount). From Gilbert Parker story. Somewhat above the average production. Englishman of high birth marries half-breed and sinks to degradation. Unconvincing motive. Mabel Julienne Scott, as we have said before, is a real find.

“THE BRANDING IRON” (Goldwyn). Realistic action throughout, yet rather unconvincing. Barbara Castleton excellent in part of girl who, it is feared, may become lady of easy virtue through heredity. Jimmie Kirkwood makes screen bow after long absence.

“THE TRUANT HUSBAND” (Rockett Film). First release by this independent concern. Very human production, and will please most audiences. Mahlon Hamilton and Betty Blythe the best known in cast.

“THE FURNACE” (Realart Special). One of strongest plays of the month. Will hold any audience from start to finish. Action throughout. Special cast. See it.

“THE GILDED DREAM” (Universal). The bunk. Minus plot, action, or playing out of the ordinary. Carmel Myers featured. Let it pass by.
“Passion” (First National). A German made picture. Version of “Du Barry.” Releasing corporation said to be worried as to whether public will stand for German made picture. Feature is spectacular and except where anti-German feeling is still particularly strong should appeal. Pola Negri, whose reputation is known on this side, is Countess Du Barry.

“The Song of the Soul” (Messmore Kendall-Goldwyn). Falls short in dramatic appeal. Kendall and associates are said to be looking for an “out” in their contract with Vivian Martin. Vivian is not a star by any manner of means, though she does her best work in this. There is really material for good picture, but director and cast fall short.

“The Leopard Woman” (Associated Producers). Merely another opportunity for Louise Glaum to regale the public with her limbs and other physical attributes. There are other players whose physical appeal is far stronger. As usual she wears many stunning costumes, and picture is lavishly made. Falls short on entertainment.

“The Riddle Woman” (Associated Producers-Pathe). What a lemon this release is! Apparently made with the single purpose of keeping Geraldine Farrar continually before the camera. And she does nothing that a mechanical doll couldn’t do. Pathe much worried over picture. An awful dent in some one’s bankroll will follow in wake of this release. Farrar is passé as film attraction.

“Over the Hill” (Fox). Greatest human document we have seen on the screen. Doubt if there is a player
in cast drawing over two hundred a week. Puts "star" pictures to shame. Mary Carr as Mother gives greatest characterizations we have witnessed. Inside story of picture is that no one in Fox organization, even Director Harry Millarde could "see" the film when screened. Fox himself, with his showmanship instinct, alone visioned the sensation it would create. Short-sighted release policy is treated in a special article in this issue.

"THE DEVIL'S ANGEL" (Clark-Cornelius). A strong state right attraction, depicting life of the Latin Quarter. Produced by Lejaren à Hiller. Some parts may not get by the Board of Review unless cut.

"SO LONG LETTY" (Robertson-Cole). From the stage version of the play of Morosco's. Replete with bathing beauties. Those who like such—and there are many—will have their fill.

"YOU NEVER CAN TELL" (Realart). Bebe Daniel's first for the concern. Good entertainment. Comedy-romance of check room girl who yearns for riches, finally "falls" for supposed chauffeur, only to find her dream came true and he is wealthy. Miss Daniels fulfills every demand of her part. Pleasant evening's entertainment.

"SWEET LAVENDER" (Realart). Just what title indicates. A sweet, homely theme that appeals. Mary Miles Minter her usual capable, charming self.

"EVERYBODY'S SWEETHEART" (Selznick). The last appearance of Olive Thomas. Heroine from county poor farm. Pleasing though pathetic story. The past
has evolved an axiom among film men that death of star almost makes pictures as yet unreleased, valueless. On good authority this picture is said to be an exception, the public crowding the house wherever shown, and will gross more than any picture this star ever made. Last scene made just before she sailed for Europe, and death.

"HELD BY THE ENEMY" (Paramount). Though this company looks forward to big business for picture, it is doubtful if public will care for it. War play of civil war days, well produced—but still a war play. Based on William Gillette’s stage production.


"ONCE TO EVERY WOMAN" (Universal). Excellent picture, realistically produced. Dorothy Phillips is better each time we see her. A refreshing production in a month of rather ordinary ones.

"SINS OF ROSANNE" (Paramount). Better to leave this one alone. For some reason they hand Ethel Clayton poor material all the time. Unbelievable in theme. Pass it up.
TEMPESTUOUS winter visits its venom on the country for but a quarter of each year.

Wherefore, why cannot "Ma" Pickford take example and cast the winter out of her soul for at least a portion of the time?

This woman, mother of our greatest screen actress, has occupied our pages off and on for some time — without much credit. Now, once again we feel called upon to devote a little of our space to the latest caper of what those who should know — (including son-in-law Doug) have designated as a sour disposition.

Lately the fair metropolis of New York has been graced with "Ma" Pickford, and daughter Lottie, the erstwhile Mrs. Rupp. Lottie has had a good time. Why not— Manhattan is an Oasis in the Sahara. But Ma," as usual, stepped off with the wrong foot.

It seems the two went east with a film in which Lottie has the principal part. And "Ma" decided to act as sales-manager — the "managerial" instinct growing stronger with age.

The second act reveals a projection room on 42nd Street. Dr. W. E. Shallenberger, President of Arrow Film Corporation and of Federated Exchanges, "Ma," Lottie, and several members of the Arrow film offices enter down stage (though "Ma" might appear to be "up-stage").

Reel one gets by O. K. Shortly thereafter Dr. Shallenberger with an eye to business, injects a laugh into the plot. Those who know the Doctor's disposition insist
it must have been a forced laugh, a business prop as it were, in order to inform others he did not think so much of the film — with a natural drop in the “asking” price a possible consequence.

But it didn’t work out. True to form, “Ma” pugnaciously arose, and, according to those present, irately questioned Shallenberger exactly where he “got off at” as a critic, vehemently flung a few minutes more berating from her 75 millemeter vocal channel, and then, getting warmed up and into form, proceeded to “bawl” out the head of the Arrow Film Corp. to a fare-thee-well.

Then came the startling part of the affair. “Ma” is not used to being crossed. Except for one occasion when daughter’s husband laid down the law (which was related in a past issue of FILM TRUTH) she has seen all adversaries crumple like grains of puffed rice when she really got started. This time she got another unpleasant surprise.

The Honorable Dr. Shallenberger said not a word. He arose, told the operator to shut off the projection of the film, opened the door and walked out.

So, we judge, “Ma” is now peddling her daughter’s film around other companies where the buyers have a conception of “decency” which Doc. must, in her estimation, be lacking in.
The Fame That Was

JUST a brief line in one or two theatrical papers recorded what is, to us, one of the most interesting events of the month.

"Kay Laurel last evening stepped into the role heretofore held by Helen Barnes in 'Ladies' Night' at the Eltinge theater."

So it read. And our mind goes back to the Kay Laurel who but a few brief years ago was the toast of Broadway. The Kay Laurel of enticing face and figure of which artists and illustrators raved. The Kay Laurel who wed Winnie Sheehan, the left bower of the Fox Film Corporation.

Kay may have been seen many times lately on Broadway with the younger Selwyn of the theatrical clan of that name. And now we find her in an A. H. Woods' piece. Perchance, we may be pardoned for lively curiosity as to exactly why Selwyn did not place her in a large, secure part in one of his own enterprises. Especially in view of the marked interest he apparently holds for her.

And the public, not conversant with what everyone in the business knows, may ask why Winnie Sheehan, all-powerful film figure that he is, has not relented and placed her with a picture company.

But the birds of film row whisper that Winnie's heart is hard,—that there will be no more reunions. Kay, on the other hand, protests on every opportunity that her feeling for her husband, her big Irish lover, as she calls him, is as strong as the day he led her to the altar.

So Kay stands again before the footlights, and Winnie, well, Winnie watchfully waits. And Broadway smiles.

[26]
The Drugged Awaken

The famed coat of many colors of Joseph of Bibilical fame, or the ever-changing chameleon, can't pretend to hold a candle to the editors of the Coast publication "It" for variety and shiftiness of policy.

'Twas only a few months ago that this magazine, together with one or two others put forth here in Los Angeles were rising up on their hind legs and mouthing vapid denunciation at "FILM TRUTH'S," policy of getting right down to fundamentals and digging at the cancerous sores of the industry. Now comes to hand an issue of "It" thundering against the shame of many of the movie colony, terming them drug addicts, and calling for a thorough cleansing of the Hollywood section.

Well, well, well! Even Rip Van Winkle awakened in time. And so it is with "It."

To pretend that all the men and women of Hollywood were lily white, beyond criticism, etc., has been a favored role with every publication devoted to the industry. FILM TRUTH'S entry into the ring was met with a holier-than-thou-don't-dare-to-touch-us greeting by several publications. We have gone on our well-known way, and now we must compliment "It" for getting a little vision and editorially announcing that all is not well with our little colony.

"Two members of the colony carted off to the police station as drug addicts" is the gist of "It's" editorial. But why stop at two? And why have certain publications risen in horror against articles appearing in a San Francisco paper giving the report of the State author-
ities that twenty-five per cent of the registered addicts in Los Angeles are of the movie colony?

That the use of drugs is widespread in certain quarters has been known for some time. There is nothing that is new in the fact. It is a beastly shame that such a cancerous few should smirch the clean majority; that magnates should expect the public to take its entertainment from such hands.

At the same time we compliment "It" for finally removing the smoked glasses and "don't touch" dictum from its editorial staff. And, might we gently inquire whether the move was through sincere desire to better conditions? Or—is "It" after wider circulation, and lacking in faith in the pulling power of its several really entertaining departments?

While on the topic, we might refer to a certain fan magazine which, with great fan-fare and blowing of trumpets, announces it will expose stock-selling, fake motion picture schemes. We respectfully refer the magazine to almost any one of our issues—and trust it will be as frank as we have been in such exposés.

Without patting ourselves on the back, we do hug close the thought, as we see other magazines announce departments and articles that "tell the truth," that imitation is the sincerest form of flattery.
On the Toboggan

SLIPPING faster than automobile prices—and in the same direction—are two young ladies of the screen, yclept Mabel Normand and Mildred Harris. In one case it's a shame; in the other it's the natural course of events.

When good fellows slip we are sorry.

On the other hand, water cannot run up hill; neither can matrimony make stars.

You can't expect to find many tenants in the lofts of any screen star, but Mildred's vacancy surpasses understanding. Hoisted by matrimony into the position of a First National star Milly fluttered along in haphazard fashion. Now, we understand, the end has been reached. The coming Mildred Harris Chaplin productions will not be First National attractions. Some other means will be found to offer them to a not over-anxious public.

Mabel Normand's case is more difficult of analysis. In the hands of Sennett, Mabel could have still been splitting honors with Pickford and Fairbanks. Now she's playing on the "Maybe, yes; Maybe no" time. What's the answer?

It seems to us that Mabel started to slip the day she got well enough acquainted with Samuel Goldwyn to call him "Sammy" and give him orders. Mabel's orders brought her individual stardom and probably more money than the Sennett payroll afforded—but not the same pictures.

Not all the printer's ink that artists can splash will hold a star in place if the pictures fail. High-priced
vehicles and expensive productions don't balance for the
genius of a Sennett.

Now that Sammy has been erased from the affairs of
the company whose name he bears there is speculation
in picture circles as to what effect this will have on Mabel
Normand's status. Two years ago this discussion would
have been a burning one. The loss of Mabel Normand
meant considerable to any company. Now? It's just idle
speculation that doesn't seem to be heading anywhere
and caring less whether it arrives or not.

It's too bad!

For Mabel is the original good sport of picture players.
You can't find a Mabel Normand knocker if you travel
the length and breadth of studio land. (Always except-
ing studio hands who have felt her tongue.) And that's
going some in a business where the dearest phrase is
"I knew her when ——."

Give us Mabel Normand and Pearl White on one party
and we'll guarantee to turn rivers into burning oil. You
can't step so lively or so fast that you won't find yourself
trailing Mabel.

It's a shame to see Mabel start to slip. Won't some-
body bring forth another "Mickey"? You can't expect
Sammy to do it alone. Won't somebody give him an
idea?

He who laughs last laughs loudest. And the former
Mrs. Goldfish-wyn — Jesse Lasky's sister — is getting too
many of the ha-ha lines in the script.
We are reaching the stage in this series of hints on photo play writing where our readers are beginning to drop us little notes something like this: “I think now that you have shown me how to build a story but I don’t know yet how to write it in scenario form. I have never seen a scenario and know nothing about the technical phrases. Will you please send me a sample scenario or tell us in an early issue of ‘FILM TRUTH’ how to write one?”

To which we hasten to reply: “We will not.”

And why not?

Because, aside from the correspondence school experts, no one who claims to know will let any aspiring writer spend five minutes of his time on the study of the pseudo-technical junk of a scenario. The men who make their bread and honey by convincing you that you must learn a lot of mysterious inside phrases and bunk still work the specimen scenarios. Naturally, that’s where their gasoline bills are paid.

But it isn’t done any more by those who know. So don’t let any “FILM TRUTH” readers bother with a fear of their lack of knowledge on the scenario score.

If you think you have gained an idea of the method of discovering story germs, constructing a plot from them, holding suspense and building a climax — then prepare to sit down and write your tale. It is called “writing a synopsis.” Forget the word if it sounds too technical. *Sit down and tell your story!*

I say that because at this point someone has probably asked, “How long should a synopsis be?”

Then when you set out to tell them how long most
synopses are you suddenly realize what a damphool you are making of yourself. And you wind up half-exasperated with, "A synopsis should be just as long as is necessary to properly tell your story—and no longer."

That’s the right answer. Don’t set out with the intention of telling what happens in each reel in three hundred words—or three thousand. If your story is a real story it won’t let you set limitations. If you are a real story teller you won’t run to three thousand words if fifteen hundred would really tell your plot in a manner that would hold the interest of the reader.

Sit down and tell your story!

Tell every bit of detail and good atmosphere that you feel adds strength to your tale; tell every bit of action that you can be sure brings screen pictures to the eyes of the reader. Don’t tell a word more.

And don’t attempt to get technical. Just because you see it done that way—and you’ve heard the word—don’t say “Fade-out on the two lovers.” That isn’t doing your story any good and it is eating up space that could add strength.

Put yourself in this position: You’re sitting before a fire-side with a close friend. You’ve got a story to tell him. You don’t want him to yawn in the middle of it. You don’t want him looking at his watch.

That’s the time you are going to tell a story naturally, but also picking every word. Every phrase and incident is going to be placed at the point where it will do the most to arouse your friend’s curiosity and interest in what is to come.

Can’t you picture the situation? Then bear it in mind when you sit down to write that synopsis. And for the best lesson ever written on the art of story telling go to any library and get a copy of the Richard Harding Davis story, “Out of the Fog.”
BACK NUMBERS OF FILM TRUTH

SCORES of requests for back numbers of FILM TRUTH from its first issue of April, 1920, have been received each month from new readers.

The filling of these requests has resulted in a dwindling number of "extra" copies kept on hand, until some issues have been nearly exhausted.

A limited number of complete sets of the first six numbers, namely those dated April to September inclusive, have been made up.

These will be mailed to the first applicants at one (1) dollar for the set.

The number of sets is necessarily limited.

In the event of applications being received over and beyond the supply on hand, the publishers will return such money as is sent.
FROM 800 TO 63,000

The sale of this issue of FILM TRUTH will reach 63,000 copies.

Eight months ago when the first number of the magazine made its appearance, just 800 copies were printed.

Then, in but one city of one state was the magazine distributed.

Now, 683 cities in 29 states are served.

Volume circulation has not been forced. Rather it has been cried down, owing to the manifold difficulties that have confronted the publishers, and all publishers in general.

The public has shown it wanted a magazine of FILM TRUTH’S calibre—a magazine that lifted the lid off this great, but over press-agented industry.

And to its constantly increasing host of friends, FILM TRUTH reiterates its original promise to tell the truth without fear, favor, malice or advertising considerations.

800 to 63,000

The figures speak for themselves