

MOVIES ARE CLASSED WITH GRAND OPERA

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THESE are peculiar times.

Men are beginning to go to church as often as women. Jazz and vaudeville are admitted by highbrow critics to be superior and desirable entertainments. A grand lady and her cultivated husband actually have a hard time to decide whether they will go to the opera or visit a palatial moving picture theatre. They are sure of finding wealthy and distinguished friends in either place.

Bald-headed togies who are away behind the times may be excused for giving their homes a shake as the Topsy-Turvy States of America. They say conditions are as peculiar in dear old England, where the Prince passes by opera for musical revues.

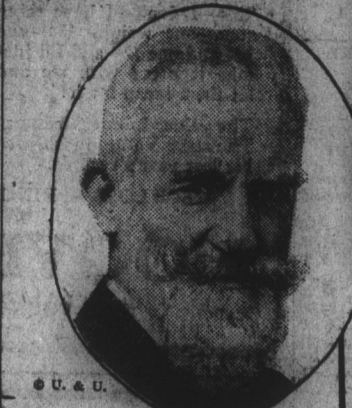
Give Democracy Credit

And they blame it on democracy. Or they did at first. Now the critics almost all agree that democracy should be praised instead of blamed. The arts with which the masses are familiar have been raised to a high level, because they were the only arts that it was profitable to keep alive. The energies of genius and talent had to be thrown into them, or be wasted. The populace had always supported opera, and that is the only reason why it, as well as the movies, continues to attract a public. Jazz, vaudeville, rough and human entertainments such as are comprised in what one critic has named "The Lively Arts," were always the particular possession of the multitudes.

Best Artists in Movies

The wide support given to a form of entertainment, and the improvement in it that is imposed by their improving taste and knowledge, by masses of independent democrats, or republicans, is illustrated best in the United States by the motion picture. They have in themselves an answer to the question, why even the most cultivated citizens put the cinema these nights on the plane with opera, the dance, the drama, or books, as subject to choice for an evening's improvement or diversion. The best creative imagination of the times is turned towards them, and writers and actors who were once easily to be found elsewhere can frequently be enjoyed only on the silver screen. The masses are drawing authors and producers down to their especial interests, and the creative genius of the authors and artists is lifting the taste of the masses to its own better level. One consequence is a raising of the motion picture to the height of a fine art. Another is the matter-of-factness with which discriminating persons who once scorned the movies and every-thing about them now don their party clothes and trot along to the silent show.

Though it is not really a silent



U. & U.

BERNARD SHAW



CHARLES CHAPLIN



ADOLPH ZUKOR



WILL HAYS

show. This upstart eighth art has enlisted the seven traditionally fine ones in its service. A night at the movies is frequently a feast of music, dancing, poetry, drama and painting; with sculpture and architecture represented by the construction and adornment of the theatre. But that is by the way.

The motion picture has been admitted into good society, because it has grown up and shown that it could behave decorously and according to the best artistic traditions. Such proof has been plentiful during the last twelve or fifteen months, and those who are most informed predict that it will be as bounteous in the future. Producers who thought solemnly about the pictures because the public viewed them lightly, now contemplate them joyously, because the public is taking them seriously. In their enthusiasm they are making and planning pictures that rival the creations of pure art. Such pictures are written and photographed with an eye single to motion picture technique, and are designed to express and to arouse emotion in a way to delight their beholders.

Producers may not be making them because of an urge in themselves for artistic expression, but because in

this way they get better stories from scenario writers and bigger receipts from the theatres. The important thing is that they are making them, as is more obvious with each major film that is released. Approval of the critics, and the scholarly, and the socially prominent, was and is a logical result. No one need any longer hesitate to confess a liking for the movies. Such a predilection proves taste instead of, as formerly, its absence. The sophisticated now take their movies where they find them without feeling at all distant. The multitude continues to go to them, as formerly, without feeling apologetic or superior. Only now and then they will register a judgment by shunning a title that fails to come up to the standards to which they are becoming accustomed.

Evolution of the movies from a mechanical novelty into an art has been best indicated during the last twelve or fifteen months by the crystallizing of a conviction among those in the business that their medium of expression is dignified and important enough to absorb the services of writers and artists working directly for expression through it. Producers began to acquire knowledge that the crude adaptation of works designed to be read, or enacted on the speaking stage, was illogical and opposed to the best development of their art. It did, in

be from what are called "original" scenarios—that is, those written just for moving picture production.

Outstanding Titles

Lists of films that were best liked and most profitable in 1934, compiled by producers, reviewers and by the box office receipts, reveal a convincing number of these originals. Most persons will remember "The Dramatic Life of Abraham Lincoln," "A Woman of Paris," "The Iron Horse," "The Ten Commandments," "The Thief of Bagdad," "America," "Girl Shy" and the Palmer Photoplay Corporation's "Judgment of the Storm." They were all written directly for the screen, designed to meet its peculiar requirements and to take advantage of its special aptitudes for reaching the emotions of watchers. Box office success and their intrinsic

merit dictated their inclusion in the list of the year's best films.

Support Film "Originals" The expressed opinion of those in whose hands the active direction of the motion picture business lies is, naturally, in accord with such discoveries as that just described. The belief of others, outside the business, of such an exalted person even as George Bernard Shaw, makes the same trend articulate on purely sensible grounds. Mr. Shaw recently said that "movie plays should be invented expressly for the screen by original imaginative visualizers." Adolph Zukor, who established an annual award of \$10,000 for the author of the year's best film story, did so as an additional inducement for authors "to write for the screen and to stimulate them to a study and recognition of the motion picture's technique." He predicted that just as there are Eugene O'Neills and Bernard Shaws of the stage there will be an equally notable company of men and women whose stories will "teach you through the shadows of the screen."

Jesse L. Lasky reports that "we are training young writers in our studio to the end that they shall know the requirements of the screen and write their fiction accordingly."

Harry Rapf, a production manager whose name is widely known in the motion picture business, not long ago gave his opinion that material would soon be obtained exclusively from "a trained corps of men and women writing directly for the screen."

An Individual Art

Others have expressed themselves as to this primary development of an art. But what is most convincing is the production of current films from "originals": the individual treatment, in practice, of an individual medium of expression.

There are, of course, other evidences of artistic advance. In increasing degree there appear a discernible and economy in "setting over" a story, a development for which much credit is to be given to Charles Chaplin. There is an evolution of photographic devices for explaining unseen action and for shifting scenes without the interposition of written titles—the development, in other words, of a real "film language." These advances, too, are essential in making defensible the cinema's claim to be an authentic eighth among the fine arts.

They help explain the hesitation over whether to go to the opera or to a palatial motion picture theatre that is experienced by many a modern grand dame and her wealthy spouse in the face of an evening that is to be devoted to recreation!

Amazing Transformation Is Seen in the South Today.

Everywhere from North Carolina to Florida and from Louisiana to the northern boundary of Tennessee the South is undergoing an amazing transformation, according to Edward D. Duffield, president of the Prudential Insurance Company of America, who has just returned from a trip through seven states, below the Mason-Dixon line. The entire region, he said, is losing familiar characteristics and assuming instead something of the air and spirit long identified with Southern California and its people.

If the South suffers from the loss of enormous numbers of negro laborers who have migrated northward, the effects do not show, so far as Mr. Duffield could see. On the contrary the country is advancing with rapid, assured strides, building roads, enhancing its natural attractions and carrying out well-founded plans for the development of every resource and advantage.

"From what I was able to observe," he said, "the most remarkable thing is that the old South—frequently referred to up here as the Good, Old, Sleepy South—has developed a most surprising habit of boosting. I saw down there a man from California who was as astonished as I. 'California,' his man said to me, 'is away behind the times, compared to this country's ability to rouse the enthusiasm of its people.'"

"And the results are becoming everywhere apparent. All the people down there have suddenly got the idea that the South is undeveloped territory (which to a certain extent undoubtedly is true) and have undertaken to overcome that condition. Chambers of Commerce, and other civic bodies are directing movements, the results of which are showing in a new concept of civic duty and the relation of the citizen to the community.

"Take North Carolina and Charlotte, for example. The people of the state have recognized the advantages of good road systems. They are shouldering a material increase of taxes without complaint because they realize that they have to spend money to develop their state, and they are prepared to pay the price. As for Charlotte, I know of no community in the South that shows a more steady, solid growth.

lanta, Memphis, Nashville are all alert to capitalize on opportunity. Mr. Duffield added. The South, in no part, he said, seems now to regard the federal reserve system with any degree of distrust. Bank balances are increasing, and conditions, in actuality, warrant the time-worn descriptive, "Fundamentally sound."

Johnson City, Tenn., however, particularly impressed Mr. Duffield. "I had never been in Tennessee before, and when I got to Johnson City, in the eastern part of the state, I found there the most pervasive, community spirit I believe I have ever encountered anywhere. But there was very little boasting.

"There they do not tell of the tremendous prospective increase of population, or the increase already realized, though that has been considerable. But they do impress me most strongly with the fact that they are living in American style in an American community—a community which is proud of its record of having given more men to the Union army in the Civil War than any similar community in the North, and that when the World War came more men enlisted, before conscription was put into effect, than there were voters in the county."

In the mountain region about Johnson City, where North Carolina, Virginia, Kentucky and Tennessee come together, Mr. Duffield detected some sentiment in favor of the creation of a forty-ninth state for the union, the state of Appalachia.

"This," he explained, "would take in the region which once comprised the first state of Franklin, a forgotten commonwealth which had for its capital Jonesboro, where Andrew Jackson presided as a judge before the Battle of New Orleans."

Mr. Duffield visited the Hermitage, Jackson's old home near Nashville, and found it more interesting historically than Mount Vernon.

"You see, there," he said, "not only the home of a great man, but a veritable reminiscence of the times in which he lived. It is exactly the same house in which he lived, in exactly the same state in which he left it, even to the old dressing gown thrown over the back of a chair in the room in which he died. Outside is the old coach in which he drove from Washington in thirty days, and the old hut in which he lived before the Hermitage was built."

and if my life is spared, sure I'll be buried in it."

USE PENNY COLUMN—IT PAYS

She's Going to Be Married



She's going to be married. The young actress, who recently spent two days in Hollywood for racing her roadster, is to marry Kenneth Fitzpatrick.

LINCOLN'S COACH TO BE PRESERVED Is One in Which He Went to Battle-field at Gettysburg.

Baltimore, April, 16.—The railroad coach in which Lincoln rode to Gettysburg to deliver his famous address on the battlefield in 1863 was found today on a siding in the yards of the Western Maryland railway.

USE PENNY COLUMN—IT PAYS

Timely Shoe Styles

SPECIAL

For Saturday and Monday

\$1.00 to \$2.00

Off on All of Our Broken Sizes in Men's and Ladies' Slippers.

We have all of the latest shades and styles—AA-E

RUTH-KESLER SHOE STORE

Judgment of the Courts. The first finder of gold in the Klondike was George Washington Carmack. The Washington state supreme court has so decided. This ruling was handed down in a suit brought by an Indian woman in Alaska, who claimed a share of Carmack's estate on the ground that she was his daughter by a former marriage.

Federal Judge Morton of Boston has ruled that though an American woman sued her former wife's present husband, J. Howard Hiss, for \$50,000 for alienating her affections, a jury awarded him one cent damages.

USE PENNY COLUMN—IT PAYS

Can a man convicted of murdering his wife claim her estate? Common Pleas Judge Phillips at Cleveland says not. He refused to honor John Young's demand for an estate amounting to \$2,000.

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