

Authors Are Rejoicing At Packard's Victory Over Fox

Story Writers Who Have Sold 'Movie Rights' to Some of Their Works See Chance of Redress for Plot-Marred Beyond Recognition.

By ROBERT T. SMALL

New York, Dec. 15.—Authors who have seen their favorite brain-children ground into a pulp in the hands of some ruthless moving picture director are rejoicing today over the fact that one of their number has just won an important victory in his suit against the Fox Film Corporation for "distortion" and misuse of one of his stories.

The Appellate Division of the Supreme Court of the state of New York has ruled that authors have an inviolable property right in their manuscripts, and that when their names are used in connection with a production they have a right to say how the story shall be rendered.

Many authors lately have given up writing for the screen because they failed to recognize their story when the directors of the movie colony got through with it. Fannie Hurst had the shock of her young life recently when she went to the first showing of one of her stories adapted to the screen. She came out of the theater in a rage. She claimed her work had been ruined and vowed she never would have anything to do with the movies or their people.

Movie directors are a conventional lot. A picture must follow certain rules laid down by them or they regard it as a "washout." Where the author feels he has placed his artistic touches is exactly the point where the director gets in his deadliest work. Nothing ever is good enough for a director. That is why he places his name in so much bigger type than the author's when the preliminary announcements are projected upon the silver sheet just before the show begins.

The authors' league also has taken up the cudgels against the movies. It is claimed that out of some forty thousand scenarios passed upon and sent to Hollywood within a year, not more than four were accepted by the movie industry. Authors were warned thereupon to expect nothing in the way of remunerative writing directly for the screen. It was said that the movie directors had their own methods of obtaining what they considered the "wangs" and the "knockouts" that the movie public wanted. Adaptations of popular short stories or novels of late have been the favorite methods with the movie folk.

But here again the work of the author never has satisfied the directors. An author may spend many sleepless nights thinking up a name for his favorite piece. The director throws it overboard. When the author might term "still waters" the movie director would call "flaming passion." All the latest rules of the movie directors' union call for "flames" and "passions" of one sort or another.

The victory of Frank L. Packard against the Fox people here is likely to cause the directors to pause for a moment or two in their ruthless disregard of an author's wishes, his likes or dislikes. Mr. Packard sued for the alleged mishandling of his story "The Iron Rider." The Fox people bought the moving picture rights and the picture was produced under its original title and the name of the author. But the story as produced was not the one written by Packard. After declaring the property rights of authors in their works, the unanimous opinion of the Appellate division reads:

"Whatever rights the defendant acquired to use said story and in connection therewith were limited to the terms of the contract. When the defendant exceeded the rights thus acquired, and used plaintiff's name in connection with an entirely different story, defendant was appropriating something that it had not purchased from the plaintiff and for which it had given the plaintiff no value."

Packard also has sued the Fox people alleging they issued a release called "Hearts are Trumps" based upon his "Iron Rider" and again used his name. The court has held that Packard's name and fame were injured. So the authors feel that at last the worm has turned.

LOSES HOME THEN JOB

Munster, December 17 — Prof. d'Estier, one of the few lecturers on journalism in German universities, has been compelled to abandon his work in the university here. His dwelling house fell down and he was unable to obtain living quarters through the housing commission.

Craven Too Large Jones Was Formed

Col. Fred Olds Gives Another Chapter Of History of The State's Counties

Halifax, Dec. 17. The fact that the county of Craven was so large as to include public works, a harbor and a thousand removed from the county was one of the compelling reasons which caused the Legislature in 1779 to divide a portion of that county into the county of Jones. This was true of a number of counties formed about that period, according to the history of North Carolina counties compiled by Colonel Fred A. Olds of the State Historical Commission, the historian's account showing that the same exigency moved the Legislature in the formation of new counties in a number of cases.

The act of the Legislature named several to find "the most convenient and central place" for the court house, jail and other public buildings and to purchase five acres of ground for the site and to contract with workmen to erect the buildings. "Until they were completed," continues Colonel Olds' account, "it was ordered by the General Assembly that the county courts should be held at the house of Thomas Webber at Trent river bridge. A tax of three shillings was laid on every 100 pounds of taxable property and of three shillings on every taxable person who did not own property worth 100 pounds for two years to pay for the land and buildings. The court house was built in 1780, of wood.

"The county was named for Willie Jones of Halifax County, a member of the Council of Safety during the War of the Revolution (who in 1783 secured the rejection of the U. S. Constitution by the State convention at Hillsboro). The county seat was named for Trenton, N. J., where a noted battle of the Revolution was fought. In 1779 the colonel of the county militia was Nathan Bryan. "In a letter from William Caswell to Governor Burke dated at Kingston, August 20, 1781, he said the British had captured New Bern with 400 Royal Troops and 500 Tories on their way northward from Wilmington; that part of Dobbs County had fallen into their hands and that three companies of its militia had joined them; that they were in possession of part of Jones; that he had posted men at Webber's bridge on Trent river and hoped to hold that place. General Jethro Sumner had found that there were 200 public arms in the county. General Arthur Lillington had 100 men from Jones in his brigade.

"In 1782 a further tax was levied to meet the cost of the court house. In 1784 the General Assembly

named commissioners to lay 100 acres of land on the north side of Trent River to be the court house site. The land was to be sold to the State and the proceeds to be used for the purchase of land for the court house. The land was sold to the State for \$100 and the proceeds were used for the purchase of land for the court house. The land was sold to the State for \$100 and the proceeds were used for the purchase of land for the court house.

The court house of 1780 was succeeded by a brick one in 1840 and the latter was in 1882 burned during a battle between Federal and Confederate troops. In 1883 the present one of wood was built. The war and death books begin in 1777. In addition to furnishing the State with many officials the county has produced to the United States one congressman, Nathan Bryan (1795-1860) and one Senator Furnifold M. Johnson.

THE HUNCHBACK

From this memorial the hunchback has played an important part in history. It seems that every man has a hunchback, some to the hunchback, and the part he plays is never a small one. Some people call him a "wise fool"; a fellow of wide sagacity. Even Verdi in his most popular opera, "Rigoletto," made the main character of that opera a hunchback. Modern writers have not let him slip through the history pages unnoticed. The late Marion Crawford in his work, "The Palace of the King," played him up big and strong, and even in Russian literature and musical drama he stands out.

In Eugene Sue's "The Mysteries

of Paris," Hopsy is a hunchback who has such an eye for the money. To the Chateaux, the Barr and W. Hugh Bennett's own production of "Secrets of Paris," which has been produced under the title of "Secrets of Paris." Mr. Bennett and Mr. Bennett have taken from the original story the best of the plot and kept upon them. The role played by Hopsy is a hunchback, and he has played several of the best parts, and claims that he is a hunchback in every way.

Every hunchback is different, says Mr. Bennett. Personally I find most of them possessed with a keen sense of humor, and always a good and kind. They are not, as a rule, people to excite pity over their misfortune. They are generally intelligent and of a sunny nature. Then again I have run across others who are the reverse, but these I think are few. I do not agree with all writers who try to put a sort of curse upon the hunchback. I think many writers have done him an injustice. Of course we all know that Richard III was a hunchback, but then there were few men of his type. Hopsy of "Secrets of Paris" is not such a bad fellow. Environment and association brought him to grief. But was he any worse than the Strangler, the Owl or the Schoolmaster? If so, I fail to find it.

Mr. Southern says the greatest portrayal of the hunchback he ever saw was that of Tito Ruffo in "Rigoletto." He did not understand a word of Italian, but he understood everything that was in the heart of the man. In "Secrets of Paris," Mr. Southern claims he has tried to take a lesson from the great baritone, and he feels that he has not been mistaken in doing so. "Secrets of Paris" is tonight's attraction at the Alkrama theater.

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