

"The Girl on the Cover" Advises "Movie-Stricken" Women and Girls—Also Discusses Movie Wardrobes

Miss Edith Johnson who herewith writes her own story of motion picture experiences has developed within the past few years into one of the most versatile of movie stars. Before her debut in the movies, Miss Johnson was known as "the girl on the cover," her pretty face adorning the outside covers of many popular magazines.—Ed.



By EDITH JOHNSON

There really was nothing exciting about my entering motion pictures. I just wanted to get into the work and I applied to the Selig company because I enjoyed their artistic productions. I surely was surprised when I received word that I would be given a trial, for I had feared that my

ambition would never be satisfied. I had been working for a Philadelphia Company posing for illustrations which appeared on the covers of their advertising booklets. When I received word from Mr. Selig that an opportunity to enter motion picture work awaited me, I took the first train for the West and arrived as soon as possible in Los Angeles where the great studios of the Selig Company are located.

I have found it is so much easier for the men who pose for the camera to dress than the women that it almost seems unjust at times. One of the things which keeps me busy night after night in my home is planning new dresses to wear in forthcoming productions. It may surprise many to know that when an actress wears the same dress in two or three productions she is certain to receive a number of letters commenting on the fact. It is necessary therefore to change every gown in some manner after it has been worn in a few scenes in a motion picture play.

The work is harder than posing for cover subjects and there is a great

deal of art connected with the work despite certain contrary statements. After several years with the Selig Company, during which I have been cast for more and more important roles, I can look back and easily notice the advancement I have made in both experience and conception of motion picture art. I fear I would have been lost when I started my engagement with the Selig Company if I had not had some previous dramatic experience, but even in my schooldays I was fond of amateur theatricals and frequently appeared in them, and this experience proved very valuable indeed.

There are many hazards encountered in the course of motion picture production, but an actress gets used to that quickly and it becomes a matter of course—a part of her daily life. I have got so that I consider the wild beasts at the Selig Jungle-Zoo as pets rather than ferocious animals and I am told that if I feared them I would never be able to work in scenes with them. They are really like little children and one must humor them continually in order to keep them in the best of spirits.

There is one thing I feel it my duty to discuss here and I hope all the girls who read my story will profit by my experience. This is my advice to the hundreds of girls in all parts of the world who continually write to me asking if there are opportunities for them to become motion picture actresses. Some of these epistles come from very young girls, too—girls who should be thinking of their school work and not of the theater.

It has become almost impossible for young women without previous theatrical experience to secure engagements in motion picture productions. Long lists of experienced theatrical people are waiting for engagements and there is little opportunity for the amateurs to gain a livelihood via motion picture acting. And some of these girls would be sadly disillusioned, too, should they engage in the art. When your screen favorite appears in the cozy theatre and the orchestra plays and there is applause, the girls may be pardoned for longing to become film favorites like the others. This is just one side to the situation however. The other side is not so attractive. There is the hard toil which every movie actress must undergo. Frequently work starts at 7 a. m. and does not finish until late at night. There are no bright lights, no applause in the actual work of movie acting. Instead there is the sometimes gloomy studio, suffocatingly hot under the glass roof in the summer time, often unbearably cold in the big barn-like structure in the winter time; there is the director who does not hesitate to reprimand; there are the scenes to be rehearsed time and time again until one is exhausted; there are the hazards which are necessary to undergo in order to provide the thrills longed for by the audiences and there is the uncertainty for weeks or maybe months whether or not your part has "gone over."

To all "movie-stricken girls" I would say "Don't!"

Film critics tell me that my very best work was in the part of "Sweet Alyssum" in the late Charles Major's appealing story of the same name, released as a Selig Red Seal play in five acts. I am not surprised. The part of "Sweet Alyssum" is that of an innocent young girl, care-free and un-sophisticated. She lives with her father on a little farm and is the apple of his eye. And then the stranger comes into her life. He is handsome—a school teacher with a past. She loves the stranger with all her heart and they elope and are married. Later he is arrested for theft and bigamy. There is a baby which "Sweet Alyssum" is willing to sacrifice for the life of her husband. Of course everything turns out all right and the real villain is punished.

I always loved that story and I was delighted when Director Colin Campbell cast me for the title role. I was proud, too, to appear in a Selig Red Seal play in a stock company that included such artists as Tyrone Power and Miss Kathryn Williams. I really and truly lost myself in the role, something that is as possible in motion picture art as on the legitimate stage.

The big scene where "Sweet Alyssum" holds her first-born in the line of fire from her father's rifle in order to save the life of her young husband, was rehearsed again and again before it was satirized and I am told the rehearsal was worth a while for the scene has been pronounced one of the most intense in motion picture history.

There is another scene that I just know would be praised. That scene is where Roanoke Brooks confronts his wife with the hidden finery. It should be remembered by motion picture lovers that "Sweet Alyssum" is the first Selig play in which Tyrone Power and Miss Kathryn Williams appear. How could the scene be otherwise than tense with those two great stars playing opposite to each other? It is action that is certain to go down into motion picture history.

Perhaps That's the Reason.
"How are your daughter and her husband getting along?"
"Very well. We haven't been over to see them lately."—Detroit Free Press.

Postmaster Walter LaRoque expressed the belief Wednesday evening that the new postoffice at Queen and North streets will be occupied by a date late in January. The equipment for the office is now arriving piecemeal. The interior of the building will, of course, be handsomely finished and furnished. Practically the entire appropriation is expected to be used up by the time the structure is opened to the public.

MINISTERS CENTRAL POWERS LEAVE THE CAPITAL OF PERSIA

Russians Advancing Now Against Teheran Without Hindrance—Another Request for Explanation by Athens Government

Amsterdam, Nov. 24.—Continued progress toward Teheran, Persia, is admitted by the Cologne Gazette. The German, Austrian and Turkish ministers are reported to have left the capital, believing it will be captured by the Russians. The American minister is in charge of the German legation.

Urgent Note to Greece From Allies.

Athens, Nov. 24.—An urgent request for a definite statement of attitude toward the Allies' operations in the Balkans has been handed Premier Skouloudis by the Entente ministers. The note is friendly. No time for an answer is specified, but the note emphasized the necessity for a prompt decision. It does not ask Greece's participation in the war. Required are assurances of permission for the transportation of Allied troops over Greek territory and the privilege of retreating by the same route.

VERDICT OF NOT GUILTY IN THE POLLARD CASE

A jury in criminal court at Greenville Saturday after 6 o'clock, following comparatively short deliberation, rendered a verdict of not guilty in the case of S. M. Pollard, former Farmville druggist, who was accused of the murder in the latter town of Chief of Police Smith early in 1914.

The verdict was not a surprise. Judge W. M. Bond's charge, it is said, intimated that the policeman might have overstepped his authority in trespassing on the premises of Pollard, believed by the authorities at the time to be running a gambling joint and selling whisky.

Why those Pains?

Here is a testimonial unsolicited
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