

The Heart Of Hollywood Really Touched At Last

Unaffected Grief and Anxiety Stirs Movieland When News of Critical Illness of Grand Old Man of Movies Reaches Film Center

By FOREST WHITE
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Los Angeles, Feb. 20.—A bold real estate subdivider recently advertised the discovery of the heart of Hollywood. Fortunately for him his claim was physical and geographical.

The Hollywood of the movies, the shadowland of make-believe, the place of quick changes and vivid contrasts, has lived its colorful life on the surface. Of its men and women who have had their adventures, their loves and their tragedies, they were as actors playing their parts. They held the stage for a while, and then they passed, and their final fade-out was simply the end of the play. Lights, and they were forgotten.

There is one actor—the only one of them all—whose fate has stirred Hollywood below the surface—who has found the heart of Hollywood. He is Theodore Roberts, reported as waging a probably losing fight with death in Pittsburgh, where he was stricken on a tour undertaken to prove his faith, his loyalty and his usefulness to the world of the movie.

It is but the triteness of truth to call Theodore Roberts the "grand old man of the movies." He played the part, to the life. It is doubtful if there ever was an actor of the silent drama so well loved on and off the screen. He worked his way patiently and even doggedly to a high place as an actor for the movies, and as a screen figure he is probably better known and loved than any actor who ever posed before a grinding camera. And for all that, he was never a star.

If Theodore Roberts passes, there will be real grief in Hollywood. The motion picture colony will be stirred to new depths. Its heart will really have been touched. For he is more than a mere figure in shadowland. He has been a real friend, kind and true, to all who have had contact with him in his full year's in motion picture production, and he is the one figure who can be said to have been absolutely free of the jealousy and false pride so characteristic of the profession.

Theodore Roberts was an actor—a trouper—long before he came into the movies, and that means much in movie land. The troupers, who have battled their way up through adversity and hard knocks common to the lot of actors who devote their lives to the profession in a spirit hard to understand, have not only made the greatest success in the new art, but are uniformly distinguished from their fellows by their friendly spirit of aid, their tolerance and their charity.

When Theodore Roberts came to the movies, his sphere of usefulness seemed sadly limited. Old men parts, at the time, were scarcely more than "bits," and to feature an actor in such parts was beyond the wildest thought of any producer or director. He was a utility man in the studio and nothing more. Production in those days was more of a haphazard affair than it is today, and actors in make-up were often held idle on the "lots" for days while waiting a call.

Roberts, witty, good natured and always interested, made a peculiar place for himself at the studio. He was the official referee of checker games. He was the third man at the table where the most interesting game was in progress, and the measure of his interest was the unlighted and vigorously chewed cigar stub he held in his mouth.

One day, so the story goes, Roberts suddenly ceded from his chair at a checker game to his part on the set, forgot to discard the cigar stub in his mouth, and in thought of the game he had left, rolled it in his mouth while taking part in a scene. Discovering his oversight, he tossed the offending stub away with true vigor in the course of action before the camera, with visions of a reprimand and a re-take of the scene on the following day, but the director, viewing the "rushes," found that his "old man" had registered in a new way, and thereafter Theodore Roberts did most of his acting before the screen with a cigar in action.

Roberts was a friend, and a good foil for Wallace Reid, and had Reid heeded his advice, kindly and unoffensive, the pair would have gone on to greater success on the screen, for they were cast together in most of Reid's pictures.

All told, Roberts has probably

appeared in more feature screen plays than any actor who ever faced the camera, and really made a part for himself. In the last few productions he has been a featured actor, and it was in the cards that he should be a star, particularly after his wonderful characterization of "Moses" in the production of a Biblical prodrome to a play.

But the slump came to the movies. Roberts was a regularly salaried man—a high-salaried man. Such actors were requested to aid the company by utilizing their earning power wherever they could. Roberts did not hesitate. He went into vaudeville and left Hollywood for a tour. He has not come back, and the heart of Hollywood is really reached, and its hopes are all for the recovery of the actor who has a million friends—and not an enemy.

MERCHANTS HEAR PAUL

(Continued From Page One)

thread that runs through all commerce, that is distribution.

It is doing this from the far end of distribution, at the retail counter where we find a finished product, a finished price, and a finished service, the point of contact with the entire public with the scheme of commerce, and working back, step by step, until the manufacturer's process is reached; then through the process of conservation back to the original raw material, showing each of the steps in the movement of present day commodities.

Showing the great interest displayed by the industries in the new Division the Chief said that the division has brought together retailers, wholesalers, and manufacturers and many fundamental principles underlying the whole process of distribution have been agreed upon.

"At the present time," Mr. Paull said, "industries representing 37 billion dollars worth of products are accepting and have asked for service from the Domestic Commerce Division. If the Division is successful in affording them facilities for increasing the efficiency of distribution by only one per cent, the purchasing power of the people will have been increased by more than three hundred and seventy million dollars annually."

The speaker then traced the development of American industry from colonial days to the present time. "In those days the cost of production was high," he said, "but

there were problems of distribution. As the country developed and was settled and transportation systems began to spread over the continent, the manufacturer was compelled to turn all his attention to production, leaving the problem of distribution in the hands of manufacturer's representatives, wholesalers and retailers.

At this point the manufacturer lost connection with the consuming capacity of markets.

"His job was to produce at the lowest possible unit of cost. Presently he came to believe that the lowest possible unit of cost was in production. Having lost contact with the consuming market, he felt that as long as the wholesaler would buy, that long must he buy raw materials and the wholesaler would buy as long as the retailer might buy."

"But presently we as manufacturers wake to the fact that our salesmen are not taking the normal volume of orders. Then we begin to appreciate the fact that we have built a dam across our channel of distribution, so that our goods will not flow out; and certainly we are not going to operate long if there is no place to put our goods. The result is that we lay off help and close down our plants, we take a pause until the surplus can be absorbed and that pause is longer than it would be if we had a better purchasing capacity."

"It seems to us that the best service that we can render to commerce will be in assisting to measure the current consuming capacity of markets, so that the manufacturer may be budgeted to maintain a steady flow of material through the process of manufacture, which impresses us as being more economical than an interrupted operation on the basis of volume. Our volume always will be only as much as the market can consume."

"We cannot budget our production until we know more of the current consuming capacity of markets. We must approach the proposition from a different angle than that of the salesman. A salesman is an enthusiast, he is out to sell, he is out to urge purchases. We must know something of the fundamentals of market requirements and of commodity requirements. It means the obtaining of the maximum information about the consuming capacity of our own markets, and that in turn relates to foreign markets. We can not hope to maintain a foreign market as a dumping ground for sur-

plus, and until we can measure the present consuming capacity off against the current production we are not going to know what we have in surplus with which to maintain markets established abroad."

The speaker brought out the fact that more than three-fifths of the population lives east of the Mississippi, while about three fifths of our agricultural production occurs west of that river. Knowledge of this fact, he said, could make us realize that the dollar passed over the retail-

trade counter pays not only for the commodity itself but for a considerable amount of transportation service.

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TO MY FELLOW CITIZENS OF ELIZABETH CITY

I am appealing to you to help make our town the best in Eastern Carolina. The only way that we can do this is by attracting more enterprises and a larger number of residents, but several things must be done before that can become a reality. Among other things, we must have more good roads, a deeper harbor, an extended water front and the Dismal Swamp Canal opened.

The only agency of bringing in any industries and saving the ones we now have is the Chamber of Commerce. If this organization had done nothing else except save to the city an enterprise doing a half million dollar business per year, it would merit the support of every man in the city. But at the same time it saved \$25,000 to the fishermen who spend this \$25,000 with the wholesale and retail merchants of this town. In addition, the Post Office of Elizabeth City was kept in first class by that saving. You ask me why a minister should be interested in the progress of his city? I reply, that everything that help my home town helps my church.

Anything, therefore, that helps Elizabeth City, helps the commission men, the doctor, the dentists, the druggists, the wholesalers, the retailers, the mill men, the manufacturers, the real estate men, the insurance, men, the lawyers, the preachers, the bankers, the blacksmiths and the mechanics.

I am appealing, therefore, to you as citizens of this city to join the Chamber of Commerce and help build the "fairer city" in all this land.

SAMUEL H. TEMPLEMAN,
Campaign Director.

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