

REVIEWS OF THE WEEK

Quality Films

Walturdaw (Quality). Short Features. Released fortnightly. This second series of short subjects maintains in every way the high standard of the first, with one exception. "Keeping Man Interested" is forced and unreal, and although the story produces some good situations, it is nothing more than a very mediocre piece of comedy. "The Letters," on the other hand, is a flawless little dramatic cameo, faultless alike in conception, technique and acting, while "The Cunninghams Economise" is an equally flawless piece of pure comedy.

These two deserve not only to be widely booked, but to be featured.

"**Keeping Man Interested.**"—Geraldine, taking the advice of Miss Anthonpe on how to manage husbands, organises a dance to amuse Jim. He is so much amused with their prettiest guest that Geraldine is upset. She suggests taking their holidays apart. They start off in different taxis, but change their minds and return home unknown to each other. They mistake each other for burglars, but all ends happily.

"**The Letters.**"—Mme. Vincourt begs Landier to return her love letters, as she has ceased to love him. He does so and later accepts an invitation to dinner at her house. During dinner he explains he has been trying to write another novel—a love story in the form of letters. He describes what a marvellous book it would have made, but how now it will never be finished, as he has had to return the letters. As he is leaving Mme. Vincourt whispers with pride and elation that she will bring the letters to his rooms. "Madame," he replies, "I was not speaking of your letters."

"**The Cunninghams Economise.**"—Jim, having lost money in the City, tells Geraldine she must economise. She tries to earn money by hiring out their car with herself as driver, and bribes the garage-keeper not to tell Jim. He thinks the car has been stolen, and joyfully claims the insurance money. The police look for the car, and Geraldine and her passenger are arrested. Jim comes along and takes them both home, believing the worst. Reconciliation, however, follows explanations.

Origin.—British.

Points of Appeal.—These short subjects contain as much dramatic interest as full-length features, and are packed with real entertainment value. Any audience should give them a warm welcome.

Production.—With the exception already referred to, and where the fault is more in the story than anything else, the technique is practically flawless. It has the finish of true artistry and calls for nothing whatever in the way of criticism.

Acting.—Of an exceptionally high standard. Hugh Miller and Madge Stuart in "The Letters" are magnificent. Sydney Folker and Joan MacLean are natural and convincing, and act throughout in an entirely admirable way. Donald Searle reveals a capacity for comedy work that is highly commendable.

Photography.—Excellent.

Suitability.—Good anywhere

Short Sporting Dramas.

Walturdaw. One reel. Released one a fortnight, beginning February 15, 1923.

Judging by the two subjects selected for Trade show, the idea on which these films are based is a good deal better than its execution.

A slight thread of very conventional story leads up to the sporting climax, in the one case a sculling race, and in the other a football match.

In "Rowing to Win," the effect of the race is, however, entirely lost owing to the fact that it is impossible to tell which is the hero until the race is over. Moreover, there is little possibility of excitement or suspense, since it is obvious that he is going to win in any case, just as in "A Football Favourite" it is obvious that the hero will inevitably score the winning goal. In the latter film, football enthusiasts cannot fail to notice that the crowds and stands have nothing to do with the actual game being played. The latter, while of no particular interest, is quite well photographed, a long passing movement being clearly shown. The production is quite ordinary and contains nothing of more than ordinary mechanical merit.

Origin.—British.

Photography.—Ordinary.

Suitability.—Only average fill-ups for most programs.

Hepworth Christmas Specials.

Hepworth. Christmas Novelties. 800 feet each. Released December 25.

Exhibitors have been complaining of the lack of suitable material for inclusion in Christmas programs. Undoubtedly films with an appropriate flavour are difficult to find, and it is to supply the demand for such productions that Hepworth immediately set to work to make three attractive little items to make up this special Christmas offering.

"**Peeps Into Puzzleland.**"—This is an extraordinarily clever picture, which shows a little girl playing with some of her Christmas presents,



"**The Letter: "Quality Films"** (Walturdaw) included amongst which is a box of puzzles. The puzzles proceed to form themselves into pictures and come to life. Some very clever trick photography shows animals and dolls stepping out of the puzzles and dancing on the girl's bed. The picture was made by Gaston Quiribet, who was responsible for "Do You Remember?" and other Hepworth short subjects.

"**Little Red Riding Hood.**"—An animated cartoon by Anson Dyer, and tells the well-known tale in a manner that will appeal to old and young.

"**Three Little Pigs.**"—Another Anson Dyer cartoon, on the same lines as "Little Red Riding Hood." An artist is shown telling his children of the three pigs' adventures by means of drawings.

Suitability.—Exhibitors cannot afford to be without one or other of these films during Christmas week.

Pathe Pictorial, No. 244.

Pathé. Interest. One reel. Immediate release.

This week's issue opens with some pictures of a new wind-propeller boat. This novel boat is operated by an air screw instead of sails. A number of pictures are shown of the Serpentine Rock workers of Cornwall. These men carve rocks and form them into ornaments. Some beautiful pictures of clouds and scenes in Greece are shown. George Robey as a bill poster and shadowgraphy are the other items in the number.

Suitability.—Will be found useful in almost any program.

High Fliers.

European (Universal Star Comedies). Featuring Neely Edwards.

One reel. Released February 8, 1923.

This is pure slap-stick comedy, with nothing very outstanding in the way of stunts. There is, however, a horse which plays a part in a very efficient way, and provides the funniest incidents in the comedy.

The story concerns two tramps who are mistaken by the caretaker of a house for the new servants. As the owners are absent they take their place. The owner's daughter arrives, to whom one of them makes love, and finally the owner himself, who tells the real estate man that the house is the tramp's. The tramp sells it, but, on finding the girl is the owner's daughter, hands the money over and leaves with his pal.

Origin.—American.

Photography.—Good.

Suitability.—Quite adequate where a short slap-stick comedy is required.

Secrets of Nature.

Regent (British Instructional Films). Six 800-foot episodes. Released March or April, 1923.

This series includes Nature studies that are wonderfully interesting as well as others more commonplace.

When the life of a bird or an insect is followed one is divided between interest in watching the creature's movements and admiration for the photography which, though not always of the clearest, succeeds more often than not in giving remarkable records of wild life at close quarters.

There are, of course, many descriptive sub-titles, and it is only when one subject is not adhered to that they seem rather to outweigh the pictures.

Anyone interested in natural history—young people as well as others—ought to find these features attractive in the program. For educational purposes they should be most useful.

"**The White Owl.**"—An owl is seen with her eggs in the corner of a barn. The young are hatched and the life of the fledgling is