

FIRST NATIONAL PLANS

Associated First National Pictures, Ltd., was inaugurated in March last, and during the thirty-nine weeks intervening, 31 First National Attractions have been offered. Among the program pictures were: "Song of Life," featuring Richard Hedrick, Gaston Glass and Grace Drumond; "Lessons in Love," "Woman's Place," and "Wedding Bells," featuring Constance Talmadge; "Custer's Last Stand," featuring Wesley Barry; "One Clear Call," with Henry B. Walthall; "Hurricane's Gal," featuring Dorothy Phillips; "Sonny" and "The Bond Boy," featuring Richard Barthelme, all of which were scheduled for release between January and September, 1923.

Three "super" productions were offered for immediate release during the same period—"Man, Woman, Marriage," in June; "Smilin' Through," in September, and "East is West" in November. In an industry subject to no small degree to precedent, credit must also be given to the initiative displayed by Ralph J. Pugh, in departing from the customary Trade shows and establishing what is now known as the "premiere runs," in all key cities prior to the solicitation of bookings.

The release of "East is West," synchronised with the announcement that First National's posters and other publicity aids would in future be supplied at cost price—an advantage which has been greatly appreciated by exhibitors throughout the country.

Through the medium of First National, the Talmadge sisters and Mr. Pugh were presented to H.R.H. the Duke of York on the occasion of the premiere performance of "East is West," and when the same film stars were the guests of the Lord Mayor at the Guildhall Banquet.

In 1923 productions, so far announced will, it is believed, be numbered the greatest pictures of the coming year. We have before us an excellent book just issued by this House containing particulars of the first films to be offered, and entitled "The Great Selection."



R a l p h J . P u g h

The first on the program is the super production "Oliver Twist," featuring Jackie Coogan, and supported by Lon Chaney, Gladys Brockwell, George Siegmann, Lionel Belmore, Lewis Sargent and Carl Stockdale. This picture is to be released in January-February, and will be followed by the following supers definitely scheduled for immediate release at intervals of from four to six weeks: "The Eternal Flame," featuring Norma Talmadge, produced by Joseph M. Schenck; "Omar the Tentmaker," featuring Guy Bates Post and produced by Richard Walton Tully; "Lorna Doone," featuring Midge Bellamy, produced by Maurice Tourneur; "Iol'ble David," featuring Richard Barthelme, produced by Inspiration Pictures Inc.; "Voice from the Minaret," featuring Norma Talmadge, produced by Joseph M. Schenck; "Fury," featuring Richard Barthelme and Dorothy Gish, produced by Inspiration Pictures Inc., and "Polly of the Follies," featuring Constance Talmadge.

Further films completed, or in course of completion, are: "Brawn of the North," featuring the dog "Strongheart"; "Minnie," produced by Marshall Neilan; "Light in the Dark," featuring Hope Hampton; "The Dangerous Age," a John M. Stahl production; "Shippy McGee," produced by Olive Morosco.

Among other First National attractions forthcoming are several pictures produced by Thos. H. Ince, the first of which will be "The Hottentot," "Jim," "Sunshine Trail," "A Man of Action," "The Brotherhood of Hate," "Bellboy 13." The stars featuring in these pictures include Milton Sills, John Bowers, Florence Vidor, Noah Beery, Midge Bellamy, Cullen Landis, Frank Keenan and Douglas Maclean.

Several producing companies are actively at work on further productions for First National, some of which will doubtless be offered for early release. In the Latin quarter of Paris, Richard Walton Tully is directing atmospheric shots for "Tribly."

Edwin Carew has begun cutting and assembling his first release for First National, still untitled, which was made around New York City, embracing scenes taken in such familiar landmarks as the Pennsylvania Station, the Brooklyn Bridge, lower East Side tenements and "pawshop row." James Rennie and Dorothy Mackaill will have the leading roles. Other members of the cast are Anders, Randolph and Helene Montross.

Allen Holubar has just completed preparations for the filming of "The White Frontier," a story of outdoor Canada, by

WALTURDAW'S WINNERS

The program of The Walturdaw Co., Ltd., for 1923 will comprise sixteen feature productions (twelve of which will be "Preferred Pictures," claimed to be the finest films now on the American market), twelve Quality Plays (British) and twelve "Gems of Literature" (British).

Walturdaw has explored every possible avenue which may lead the exhibitor to success and has come to the definite conclusion that the exhibitor must have the opportunity to screen brand-new pictures.

One of the determining factors in the success of a picture may be described as the "psychology of the moment." This means that the exhibitor must screen brand-new productions. To enable them to do this, Walturdaw has decided to offer all its features for immediate release. No bookings will be accepted prior to the Trade shows.

To enable the company to carry out this

Jeffrey de Prend. Dorothy Phillips will be the star.

Katherine MacDonald and her company have just returned to Hollywood from location, where many of California's famous resorts were shot for incorporation in the star's next picture, "The Scarlet Lily."

To Maurice Tourneur has fallen the unique task of hunting the San Francisco waterfronts for antique vessels, relics of the old wine hunting colonists, to use in connection with his forthcoming production, "The Isle of Dead Ships."

The Coogan Productions Company is now completing its next picture featuring Jackie Coogan, entitled "Daddy."

Frank Lloyd is now engaged in the preliminary work for the direction of "Within the Law," which will feature Norma Talmadge and the *Daily Sketch* girl, Margaret Leahy, who will take the part of Aggie.

It is reported that in addition to the pictures already contracted for, First National is now arranging to produce fifteen to twenty pictures under its own auspices in Los Angeles which it is contemplated will be made during the ensuing year, in new studios to be built for the purpose.

Program pictures will be Trade shown as previously, in the First National's theatre at 37-9, Oxford Street, commencing on January 16. "Super" productions will be presented to the Trade by means of the premiere run as heretofore.

Undeterred by precedent, the First National policy will be to continue to seek for new channels of service to its customers—the exhibitors—believing that it is not possible to succeed in face of competition, except by providing the very best that is possible in pictures and publicity.

We shall continue to ask adequate, but fair prices for the hire of all our films, and in regard to our super productions we shall take into consideration the "shelved" features, and by means of the system of the premiere runs, which we inaugurated in this country, give our customers every opportunity of ascertaining the local value of the film to them before soliciting bookings.

First National will continue to support exhibitors with posters and other publicity aids at cost price, and with national and lay press advertising. The newly formed Exploitation Department will also be at the disposal of our customers to advise and assist in exploiting pictures booked in such a way as to ensure adequate profit to each party to the contract. In short, our policy may be stated as a determination to use every effort by practical methods of co-operation to increase the patronage of the kinema, upon which we are equally as dependent as the exhibitor.

policy, Walturdaw has deliberately sacrificed a considerable number of pictures that had been contracted and paid for, as these pictures by the time they had reached the public would have been from one to two years old.

Walturdaw believes that in offering fewer, but better, pictures, and giving the exhibitor the opportunity of presenting brand-new productions it is serving the best interests of the cinematograph industry.

Colonel H. A. Browne, chairman of the board of directors, has purchased the entire output of Preferred Pictures, distributed in the States by the Al Lichtman Corporation, of which Al Lichtman, former general manager of distribution for Famous Players-Lasky Corporation, is the president. The transaction, which involves a considerable sum of money, was closed while Col. Browne was in New York recently.

The Al Lichtman Corporation is releasing