

TRADE NOTES AND NEWS



Hugh Miller (Quality)
"DARKNESS" SHOULD BE SEEN.

Hugh Miller takes a great interest in the art of make-up, and he conceived the idea of speaking the prologue to "The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse," made up exactly as Prophet John in the play. He is now playing in his second picture for Quality Plays, "Darkness," adapted from the story of that name by Max Brand. His great success in his first picture for this company, "The Letters," will be remembered. For some time past Mr. Miller has been engaged on the art directing of the super films at the Palace Theatre, and has been responsible for conceiving and producing the prologues to "Prisoner of Zenda," "Peg o' My Heart" and "Trifling Women."

DORIS MAY JOINS FOX.

Prominent among new additions to the Fox list of players is the vivacious and talented actress, Doris May, who was recently starred in a series of big productions. She was specially engaged to play the principal feminine rôle in "The Gun Fighter," a new William Farnum subject that has just been completed.

SCENES OF THE FISHING FLEET.

The newspapers recently have been full of what are sometimes termed "incidents" that have occurred at the fishing ports concerning the dumping of German-caught fish. It is a case of "carrying coals to Newcastle" reduced to a logical and humiliating absurdity, and is a case that we shall hear more of in the near future. In "The Trials of the Trawler," which is to be released immediately by General Kinema Films, Ltd., is shown some of the hardy fisherman's daily work in the region of the Great White Sea. We see the vessel leaving the home port, the amusements of the crew, the unexpected nature of some of the catches, the danger in the work of loading from trawler to carrier, and, finally, the race home to the London market, laden to the Plimsoll line.

TWO "CENTURY" FAVOURITES.

Buddy Messenger, with his fat face and ample proportions, is a living embodiment

of the Fat Boy of Pickwick, will play the leading rôle in a special series of Century Comedies. There are only two or three really good boy actors on the screen, and Buddy is one of them. He made his first hit with the public as "Mistah Bad Boy," with Lon Chaney in "Shadows," and since has appeared in several famous productions, his latest success being the impish little brother in the film version of Booth Tarkington's novel, "The Flirt." A limited number of two-reel Baby Peggy Century Comedies will shortly be shown in England. This remarkable three-and-a-half-year-old youngster has a screen career covering less than eighteen months, but Peggy is old in screen art, for, unlike many grown-up actresses, she never makes the mistake of looking at the camera while she is playing her part. Curious to see how pictures were made, Peggy's parents took her to Universal City eighteen months ago, where she attracted the attention of Julius Stern, head of the Century Comedy Company. Stern needed a child to play with "Brownie," the educated dog, and Peggy's big eyes, dimples and naturalness won her for the screen.

I.B.R. EXPLOITATION.

Probably in no branch of the show world is exploitation and publicity so carelessly done as in the putting out of films. Publicity invariably depends more or less on "dope," which the public rarely sees, or if it does see fails to believe. This is more the fault of the exhibitor than the renter, for the latter frequently cares little what the former does once the film has been let. Speaking to a *Kine* representative about the exploitation of the big new Incorporated British Renters' film, "Whom the Gods Would Destroy," H. King Armstrong, the chairman of the company, said that nothing would be left undone to ensure the picture being a success, wherever shown. A special plant of printing was being laid down, including some striking "advance" paper, blocks, distinctive editorial publicity was being arranged for each booking, and at least two features in the exploitation scheme would be of a novel character and one which had never been used before in the "putting over" of a film. The nature of these he refused to disclose at the moment. The film is worth the trouble being taken over it, and it is a remarkable fact that when it was being made, President Wilson and members of the United States Congress took a great interest in it, going to the extent of visiting the studios on several occasions to see how the work was progressing. The initial screening in London will be preceded by the rendering of the famous "1012" by an augmented orchestra, which will be specially recruited for the occasion.

GILBERT, OF MONTE CRISTO.

The popularity of Fox productions, featuring the celebrated actor John Gilbert, of "Monte Cristo" fame, has resulted in a departure of exceptional interest to exhibitors. Fox, we are told, have decided, commencing with the release of "Arabian Love," to make twelve sheets on all John Gilbert productions, in addition, of course, to the different kinds of six sheets previously prepared for this star's vehicles.

PRESENTATION TO JEFFREY BERNERD.

The month of April five years ago witnessed the early beginnings of the Stoll Film Co., Ltd. What is to-day a firm of commanding importance, with a head office in Oxford Street, a publicity department in Soho, with seven provincial branches in

England and Scotland, a branch in Ireland, and with resident representatives in the States and France, began in a single office and an ante-room at Coliseum Buildings.

The progress from a "staff" of two in the early days of April, 1918, to the gigantic business of to-day is the result of efficient organisation and watchful care. Jeffrey Bernerd and those associated with him in the foundation of the business knew perfectly well that success could only be obtained according to the measure of confidence inspired. That the Stoll Film Co., Ltd., has won an outstanding position in the industry has been due to this factor, insistence upon which has ever been in the forefront of the management of the business.

To mark the anniversary occasion was made, at a recent conference of the executive and distinct representatives, to make a presentation of silver plate to Jeffrey Bernerd, who, in addition to being managing director of the company, is associated with W. S. Gordon Michie in the control of Stoll Picture Productions, Ltd.

The presentation was made by Alfred Lever, general manager, who referred to the gratification of himself and those associated with him that they were enabled, at the close of the fifth year of the company's activities, to ask Mr. Bernerd's acceptance of their token of esteem. Mr. Bernerd, in acknowledging the tribute, tendered his thanks to the staff for the loyalty with which they assisted him in the conduct of the business.

One of the pieces of plate bore the following inscription:—"Presented to Jeffrey Bernerd, by the general manager and executive staff and sales organisation of the Stoll Film Co., Ltd., and general manager and producers of Stoll Picture Productions, Ltd., as a token of esteem."

A NEW EDITION.

Is there any reason why a successful film should not run into as many editions as a successful novel? The appeal of daring never fails to attract and interest the public, and every exhibitor knows that logical, well-produced and acted stunt pictures have proved a veritable blessing to the pay-box. It is this belief that induced Astoria Films, Ltd., to purchase the rights of the re-issue of that classic film sensationalism, "The Acrobat of Death," which brought fame to Albertini with the British public. "The Death Leap," which is of entirely Italian origin, is not merely a succession of more or less plausible and daring stunts, but it is a gripping, logical and well-constructed story. It contains feats of herculean strength and mercurial agility such as every audience enjoys. Astoria Films have decided to release this subject immediately.

HALL CAINE PRAISES "THE CHRISTIAN."

Sir Hall Caine, who was present at the first night of "The Christian," at the London Pavilion, was so impressed by the film that he the same night sent a cable to Goldwyn's New York office in which he said, "Have just returned from the first showing of your 'Christian' film. Under the profound impression it has created, I do not for one moment hesitate to say, whatever may be said of it to-morrow and whatever its fortune over here may be, that it is by far the greatest kinema picture yet seen in England. My deep gratitude is due to Maurice Tourneur." The novelist's tribute is the more remarkable in that he has had a very large proportion of his books filmed, and is himself a close student of the screen.