

Froggy's father, portrayed by Harry Gilbey, who for quite a while was a member of the Hepworth stock company. "Froggy's Little Brother" should make a delightful picture.

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The cast of "The Passionate Friends," Maurice Elvey's new production for Stolls, adapted from H. G. Wells' novel, is an all-star one. Milton Rosmer, as Steven Stratton, heads the list, while Mdle. Valia fills the rôle of Lady Mary Christian, and Madge Stuart that of Rachel Stratton. Fred Raynham, who has recently done quite a lot of fine work for Stolls, figures as Justin, and Ralph Forster makes an impressive Prime Minister, as Evesham. Teddy Arundell has a sort of "Willard" part as the Rev. Stratton, and is revelling in it.

"The Passionate Friends" is intended to be a super-production, and there is little doubt that in the capable hands of Maurice Elvey and the exceptional artists who are working with him, it will prove to be one.

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Casting is proceeding apace for "The Scourge," the Hardy Film Company's new picture, and it is the intention to commence work very shortly.



William E. Stack

Sam Hardy informs us that he has engaged William Stack to star in this production, and has secured equally prominent artists for the less important rôles—in fact, it is to be an all-star cast. Mr. Stack has had a very extensive dramatic experience, having played the lead for two years in the Shakespearean revival at the Old Vic. This was followed by an engagement as leading man with Mr. Martin Harvey in "The Only Way" at the Covent Garden Opera House, in which he made a great success.

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In order to provide suitable scenic effects for "The Scourge," the Hardy Film Company are constructing a special sixteenth century street at their Isleworth studios. This is quite a large undertaking for the length of the street will be over a hundred yards when completed, and it is not to be a mere series of painted screens, but a real structure. The bolts on the doors, glass in the windows, etc., will all be genuine. All the smaller details will be architecturally accurate, and to secure this desirable result the aid of historical experts has been called in. One very pleasing feature in connection with this new construction is that ex-Service men are being exclusively employed on the work.

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The next British film to be Trade Shown by Butcher's Film Service is an adaptation of Keble Howard's story "The God in the Garden." The god in question is none other than Cupid, and although at the beginning of the film one wonders what business Cupid can have in the garden of a decidedly disagreeable spinster, the introduction of the unmarried Miss Carroway's niece soon keeps Master Cupid exceedingly busy. The niece insists on falling in love with the curate, and all sorts of complications follow because Miss Carroway tries to stop the match.

The film has been made under the direction of Edwin J. Collins for Master Films. Miss Edith Craig appears as Miss Carroway, with Arthur Pusey as the good-looking *locum tenens*, and Mabel Poulton as Stella. Wonderful character studies of an old and bearded gardener, and a fat, good-natured cook, are given by James English and Beatrice Grosvenor.

The supporting cast includes Cecil Morton York, Mabel

Archdall, and E. Harding Steerman as the over-worked curate with six children.

The film was made when the natural lighting for the garden scenes was at its best, and some wonderfully effective shots have been obtained.

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Mr. Harding Steerman, by the way, has recently been engaged by the London Players to appear in leading character parts in their various productions. This, however, will not prevent Mr. Steerman from appearing on the screen, as he has a special clause in his agreement which will enable him to continue the film work in which he has been so highly successful.

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Miss Margery Meadows gave a "Rotters" tea party where each guest was asked to represent the character in fiction or history which he or she considered the biggest "rotter." I am told that the prize was won by a gentleman who represented "Armageddon." "Waterloo" no doubt was second, and "Sidney Street" third. A recent event which took place in various parts of Europe was tactfully ignored.

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I enjoyed a most interesting little chat last week with Captain Charles Calvert, who is indulging in a short vacation prior to starting on his next production for the Gaumont Company. True artist that he is, Captain Calvert has fixed his ideal picture on a very high plane; a plane which so far he has never been able to quite attain. Believing as he does that acting is the great asset in the ideal picture, he has to content himself with producing picture plays that, whilst being artistic, have at the same time commercial value as it is appraised by present-day exhibitors—a combination which he says it is not easy to obtain.

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The purely action picture died, says this very capable producer, when the cowboy stuff, which was all action, went out of public favour, and although, as he complains, his has so far been as a voice crying in the wilderness, he looks forward with all confidence to the time, in the no distant future, when British audiences will demand pictures of real artistic merit, and not such as depend for their popularity on a mixture of action and melodrama.

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Captain Calvert is a firm believer in the value of titles to assist the screen artist in getting the story over. "Some titles," said he, "are as much works of art as the picture itself. Then again, if you have all picturisation an audience are prone to become tired; it is a great strain upon them."

Discussing the question of relative responsibility for productions, Captain Calvert, whilst fully recognising the share of the actors and the scenario writer, holds very definite views that the final responsibility must remain with the director of the production, second to whom he places the cameraman. It is not every British actor who is yet inclined to devote himself entirely to film work. In America, he says, it is different, with the result that moving picture production has become one of their biggest industries. The aim he keeps ever before him is to depict life as it is, using ordinary common sense as to what can with good taste be shown on the screen.

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I had the pleasure last week of witnessing the screening of three quite excellent pictures, which the Kenneth Graeme Film Company recently produced from stories by Derwent Miall. These capital and exciting little yarns originally appeared in *London Opinion* under the general title "The Adventures of Mr. Pusher Long." That the Kenneth Graeme organisation have succeeded in their task of translating these stories into picture productions of more than average merit is proved by the fact that the proprietors of the copyright in them have granted the producing company the right to film the remainder of the series during the next six months. In the three episodes which I saw the acting was quite adequate, the technique good, and the photography excellent.