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An EASTERN CAP

Fortunes in Frocks

(By Margaret Chute)

Give any woman the chance—just the chance—of spending £200 a month (not her own hard-earned money, but her manager's) on silk stockings, £25 a week on perfume, £2,500 a year on lingerie—what would she say? The answer is not hard to guess. Gloria Swanson has that chance—and uses it.

Such joys form part of the everyday routine of a film star's existence; though, in a sense, the joy is tempered with sadness, since it is not possible to lay out sums of money running into five figures without considerable sacrifice of time and patience, to say nothing of the skill required in choosing the right things.

Some of the figures "revealed" in connection with screen stars' garments and their necessary accessories are positively staggering. Clothes are a tremendous item; not only those worn when facing the camera, for which the management has to pay, but also those in which a star is seen in public at restaurants, theatres, race-meetings, in her car—which she must provide herself. And her contract stipulates, probably, that she must be seen in public constantly, dressed in the very latest, most up-to-the-minute fashions.

Once upon a time, an actress was expected to provide her own stage clothes, as well as those she wore in private life, except in the case of costume plays. But the enormously elaborate wardrobe required by an up-to-date screen star, and its huge cost, has made this quite impossible. So the management provides the clothes; the star wears them, only once, before the camera; and then—well, then she likes a dress sufficiently well, she may buy it for her private wardrobe, from her manager, for a mere fraction of its original cost.

But this does not happen often; so the elaborate day and evening gowns

the silver-sheet beauties must wear continue to make a large hole in the substantial weekly pay-envelope that sounds so enormous until the cost of clothes and living comes into the picture.

Tiaras on Hire.

To dress Gloria Swanson for the screen costs something like £35,000 a year. That does not include any jewellery. When such casual items as tiaras, rings, bracelets, and necklaces come to be reckoned, these light and airy trifles represent at least another £125,000 in value. But they are not purchased outright—for which a manager must have a sigh of vast relief. They are merely hired, as wanted, at about ten or fifteen per cent of their full value.

Shoes, in Miss Swanson's case, are a heavy item; twenty-five pairs of shoes for one production is a modest estimate. As for her stockings, already quoted as costing £200 a month, these are bought in bunches of twelve dozen, and are mostly of the finest, sheerest black silk, at £8 a pair. And no pair is worn more than twice.

To these essential possessions must be added two hundred hats. Gloria Swanson does not allow her hat-cupboard to contain anything less than two hundred smart hats at one time. Possibly fifty per cent of the collection have never been worn after the initial trying-on stage; but they are ready for any sudden emergency.

For a single screen-play it costs, on an average, £12,000 to dress Miss Swanson. In one play, called "Her Love Story," the star's clothes cost no less than £24,000.

Wearing such gorgeous gowns in the correct manner necessitates a slender, graceful figure; so Gloria Swanson's contract—like those of other screen stars—stipulates that her weight must not exceed 150 pounds; which is, perhaps, the fly in the ointment, the snag that calls forth visions of endless dry toast and lemon, lamb chops and pineapple, ad nauseam.

Popular Marion Davies wears clothes costing thousands of pounds in her screen pictures. When she played "Janice Meredith," she used no less than twenty-two costumes, costing nothing under £30 each, plus two cloaks at £125 each.

This pales considerably before her clothes-bill for "Yolanda," when her wardrobe was more elaborate, for every dress cost at least £125, and the dresses ran into dozens. Marion Davies makes many "costume" pictures, which take about six months to complete. Consequently her dresses have to be made of the finest and most expensive materials, in order to stand the strain of long and hard wear in the studio.

For her private use Miss Davies allows £12,000 a year, most of this representing invested capital, not extravagance. Spanish shawls, for example, are a craze with Miss Davies; she pays as much as £400 for one shawl, but most of them are worth far more than she gave for them, and she could sell her fine collection for a very large sum of money at any time.

Norma's Nervous Bill.

Another silver-sheet star whose clothes cost a fortune is Norma Talmadge. In one of her productions, called "Sacrifice"—not her most expensive production by any means—about £5,000 was spent on her clothes.

Normal Talmadge makes at least four big pictures a year, so in the course of twelve months her husband and producer, Joseph M. Schenck, spends from £15,000 to £20,000 on her screen dresses. Like other stars, Miss Talmadge is photographed in many dresses in which she is not seen in the finished film; the best retained—that is the way some of the money goes!

In the screen version made by this popular star of the stage play "Secrets," she was filmed for one short scene only no fewer than eight different times in eight different dresses. She is seen in just one of these dresses in the finished film; seven pictures were discarded, and the best retained—that is the way some of the money goes!

As in the case of other screen stars with a vast following of "fans" all over the world, Norma and Constance Talmadge buy very few handkerchiefs, because they receive hundreds from unknown friends at Christmas and on their birthdays. This is perhaps the only modest item on a heavy expense-sheet.

To dress a screen beauty or a king's daughter must be, of necessity, an expensive matter. And it seems highly probable that the favoured favourites of filmland spend money at a rate that no princess could afford. But to keep up their position on their screen-thrones, stars must glitter incessantly—backed by their managers' money.—Answers.



Woman Keeper Killed by Tiger

Attacked While Cleaning Cage at Manchester Zoo.

With a single blow with one of its fore paws a tiger killed a woman at Belle Vue Gardens, Manchester, where she was one of the best known keepers.

The woman, Mrs. Lambert, aged fifty-five, was cleaning out the back of the cage, and had apparently forgotten to make secure the door communicating with the front of the cage.

Through this the tiger must have crawled, and while Mrs. Lambert's back was turned to it, pounced on her.

It is stated that the tiger then struck her on the back of the neck with a fore paw and killed her.

Fellow keepers at once rushed to Mrs. Lambert's aid before the animal had time to maul her and drove it away.

First Woman Keeper.

Mrs. Lambert was the widow of a former keeper at these famous Northern zoological gardens, and she is described as being on friendly terms with most of the larger animals.

Mrs. Lambert was appointed five years ago as the first woman keeper of wild animals at the Belle Vue Zoo.

She succeeded her husband, who, before his death, had been for many years in the service of the Belle Vue Company.

She was in the Wild Beasts' House, and had charge of some of the larger animals, and knew each of them by name.

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