

THREE CONVINCING CARTOONS



Shade of Voltaire: "You have the hat, but not the head."
—Casare, in N. Y. Evening Post.



It's no joke to desert from a German ship.
—Roger, in New York Herald.

Do You Propose

YOU'RE going to do it, says Norbert Lusk, in Motion Picture Classic. You can't escape doing it. If you have not already done so, you will eventually try to write a photoplay. Everybody does—college professors, lawyers, actresses, sailors, soldiers, dressmakers, butchers, janitors—these are some of the vocations represented in the thousand-odd contributions submitted to a big film manufacturer every week. Indeed, the most pronounced stimulus given literary endeavor during the present day is not to be found in the vastly increased circulation of the newspapers, nor the easily published magazines, nor even in the facility with which the valedictorian writes a best-selling novel, but in the pervasive appeal of Motion Pictures.

The much maligned movies have at last had a real evil proven against them: the belief of the incompetent that he can write a photoplay. This is the delusion cast by the spell of the screen and fostered by those who profit financially by the aspirant's efforts. Else why would the most ludicrously impossible submissions be made by people who attach a little slip to their work, proclaiming that the writer is a pupil of a "college" of photoplay writing?

There are but three classes of photoplay scripts: one in which possibilities can be seen by the trained eye; another which, through the writer's ignorance, is an oasis of comic relief to the tired reader; and the last, and most plentiful of all, the endless succession of trash.



Brum and the Brink.
—Low, in Sydney Bulletin.

to Write a Movie?

But the unconsciously amusing stories are few enough to be remembered. None embodies so perfectly the point of view assumed by the unformed feminine mind as the story of the bride with the stuffed ankles. It had to do with a coquette who wished to test her husband's love even while their honeymoon was beginning. The bride owned faultless ankles, and wound them with many bandages, causing knots and ridges to mar the surface of her hose. She recked not well, however, on her loved one's aesthetic soul, or on the amount of stuffing in her stockings. For when playful zephyrs revealed his wife's supposed imperfections, and when, instead of symmetrical ankles, the husband saw bumpy cylinders, he thrust her from him, jumped from the lake steamer and swam ashore. His love of beauty had been so betrayed that he entered a monastery and eluded his wife's search forever after.

In view of this morceau you will not wonder why barely one story in a hundred is retained for editorial examination. A good scenario is not a thing of chance, but a thing of pearl in its intricate perfection. Nowadays, the creative ability required to conceive a plot, both logical and original, must be of a high order, and the technical skill necessary to develop the plot to the utmost of its power and appeal ranks with that of the important dramatist and novelist. Indeed, the novelist can do things with a story which no careful photoplay-wright dares attempt.