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The question, then, as to the general character of the films that are produced—whether they are of a healthy moral tone, improving and uplifting, or whether they are degrading and sensational—is one that is of vital importance.

There is a censorship, of course, of a kind, but it does not go far enough. One has only to walk along our main streets and look at the photos exhibited at the front of the theatres to see that there are many plays that are not of an elevating nature, sensational melodramas and trashy comedies, often savouring of vulgarity and erotic nastiness. Flaring posters representing brutal crimes prompt the minds of impressionable youngsters to run along such channels. Perhaps in some cases, by the strange tendencies to imitation of evil, even although painted in no very attractive guise, that often show themselves where the moral nature is weak, these may start them on the downward path to the life of crime. Those whose business it is to cope with criminals have often attested to the evil influence, especially on young boys, of suggestions of this nature, whether through books or plays or pictures.

There are so many pleasing and wholesome films, some of them exciting enough, but in an unobjectionable way, that it seems a shame that all should not be so. Such artistes as Mary Pickford and Mae Marsh, who only act in plays that are good, are amongst the most popular, showing that after all the taste of the public is not so much depraved. If we must take our film-plays from the United States, as we have to take so much of our magazine literature, let us see that we only get what is good when there is so much that is good to be got. There is a moral laxity that pervades certain strata of their social life down there which it would be a grievous pity to see introduced into Canada. We may be thankful that as yet the divorce news does not form the chief feature on the front pages of our newspapers, although we must be vigilant to see that such a thing does not come about through the influence of photo-plays such as we have spoken of.

It is not a flabby, emasculated film drama that we want at all. Let it be as virile and red-blooded as possible, with boodlers, bandits and burglars galore, and such interesting people of predatory callings that supply so much of the piquancy of story life. Let there be plenty of love-making and a strong heart-interest, with a sprinkling of tears for the sentimental and withal a strong seasoning of humor. But let us bar whatever is morbid, unwholesome, or even depressing—for in these war times we have little need to have our feelings harrowed in our recreation—and we shall not need to view with alarm the increasing popularity of this class of amusement.

"God in His mercy grant that we
A wide-spread peace may live to see,
Good fruit be borne of agony,
When war shall cease to be.
Oh, shed the leaves of the Tree of Life!
To heal the nations and calm the strife.
Thy living waters, O Lord, release!
To cleanse the world and to give us peace
That man may worship Thee."

—N. R. E.