

THE SILENT DRAMA



Dangerous Curve Ahead

TO say that "Dangerous Curve Ahead," Rupert Hughes's latest offering, is better than "The Old Nest," is to accord it faint praise. But, unfortunately, faint praise is about all that "Dangerous Curve Ahead" deserves.

Like "The Old Nest," it is intended to be an honest depiction of American life. And like "The Old Nest," it succeeds admirably—for a while. The principal figures this time are a young couple who may be regarded as typical. The story starts with their marriage, thus following the formula made famous by Honoré de Balzac, who was known as the French Rupert Hughes.

Harley Jones and his bride, Phoebe, are prosperous and prolific. These two qualities are so perfectly synchronized that the husband's raises in salary always coincide with the wife's babies, and by the time they have three children they also have a house with Florentine wrought iron banisters on the staircase.

Phoebe, like every other young mother, is hemmed in by her children, until she begins to look at the world from the jail-bird's point of view. There comes a day, of course, when she must break out. The fact that she does break out can not be held against her. It is all perfectly natural and understandable. But when she leaves the bedside of her sick baby to attend a rather dull social function, she immediately ceases to be an average human being, and becomes a movie actress trying to inject a little melodramatic interest into the story.

At this point the spectator's sympathy falls with a thud of the dull and sickening variety.

This is exactly what happened in "The Old Nest," although it happened much earlier. "Dangerous Curve Ahead" maintains a uniformly excellent pace until the last reel.

RICHARD DIX and **Helene Chadwick** interpret the leading rôles with a fine understanding. Their per-

formances are characterized by an easy grace and a sense of restraint that is altogether pleasing. "Lefty" Flynn, the former Yale athlete, is the villain in the piece. He proves that he was more successful as a football player than he is as a film star, and, as we remember, the year he played on the Yale team, Harvard won by a score of twenty to nothing.

Why Girls Leave Home

WHEN the movies first started on their career of shame, there were a great many jokes made about a mythical picture entitled "Why Girls Leave Home." Every comedian used them in his act. Scarcely a play went past without some wag remarking, "We shall now present 'Why Girls Leave Home' in two parts"; or, "'Why Girls Leave Home' with Francis X. Bushman." It was all said in a spirit of fun, of course.

Recently, some enterprising magnate thought to himself that it would be a perfectly corking idea to produce "Why Girls Leave Home" in the flesh, so to speak. And so it was done.

And the funniest part of it is that "Why Girls Leave Home" has turned out to be a good picture, largely owing to the heroically emotional efforts of Anna Q. Nilsson as the principal prodigal daughter.

After the Show

RITA WEIMAN, who is much addicted to stories about the theatre (as witness "Curtain," "Footlights," *et al.*), is responsible for the theme of "After the Show." It is a good story, although handled with no great skill.

The heroine is a miserable little chorus girl who is adopted by a kindly stage-door keeper. (Why is it that all stage-door keepers in fiction are such amiable, likeable souls? Actually, they are quite the reverse. We never succeeded in getting past one in our life.) Ultimately, the young chorine has a love affair with the angel of the show, but he turns out to be an angel of the right sort, and all is well.

One Arabian Night

THIS department has been liberally showered with raspberries for its partiality to the various German pictures—"Passion," "Deception," "The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari," "Gypsy Blood" and "The Golem." We have been told over and over again, and in no uncertain terms, that these films are not to be compared with such masterful offerings as "The Great Moment," "The Restless Sex" and others of similar ilk. What is more, it has been conclusively proved to us that the German-made movies have been complete box-office failures in the United States.

Consequently, we have decided to shun all Boche films as we would the Prussian Guard itself. We shall not utter a word of praise about any of them.

In so far as "One Arabian Night" is concerned, we shall only say that we liked the staging, the scenery and **Pola Negri's** acting, and let it go at that.

Concerning Flivvers

A CORRESPONDENT writes in to say that we are unfair in our condemnation of some of the lesser movies. He points out that all the worst stage plays die a merciful death on the road before they ever have a chance to come into the large cities for critical inspection, whereas every movie, good or bad, must run the gauntlet from the Rialto Theatre, on Broadway, to the Rosebud Picture Palace on Main Street.

This is quite true, and it constitutes a considerable reflection on the intelligence of the movie public. It proves that the average fan does not care whether a picture is excellent or awful, just so long as it is a movie. He will swallow anything in the celluloid line that is given to him.

There is hope, however; some day this average fan is certain to get ptomaine poisoning, and then the great reformation will begin.

Robert E. Sherwood.
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