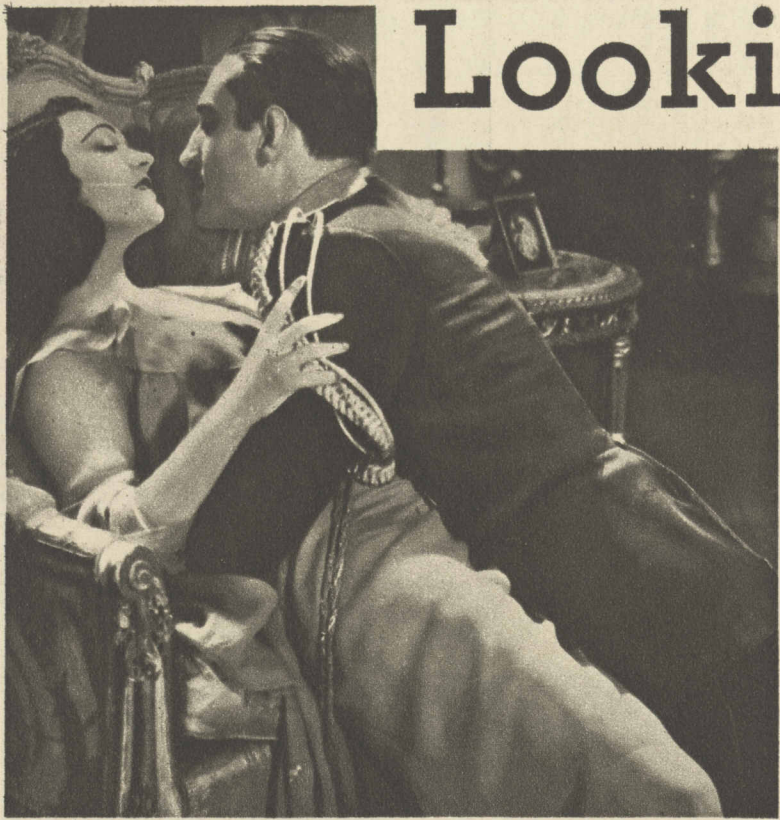


Looking at Hollywood with Ed Sullivan



Pola Negri reclines with a come-hither look, and Basil Rathbone demonstrates what happens when "A Woman Commands"—a 1932 picture.

Shearer trapped in a blazing room? Or Merle Oberon wrestling to a finish with "the clutching hand"? No, I'm afraid that the 1938 heroine is too, too effeminate. That goes for all of them, doggone it. Carole Lombard, product of the rough-and-ready Mack Sennett girls, is the only one left who could handle a custard pie.

The softening of the movie heroines traces back to the doorsteps of two estimable ladies—(1) Theda Bara and (2) Pola Negri. Miss Bara was a plush-lined heroine with ideas. Until her entrance sex appeal was a rough-and-ready, slam-bang affair. Miss Bara reasoned that the half-nelson technique of her rivals was silly. So Theda brought the Slink to pictures. The slink was a voluptuous walk or shuffle designed to bring the heroine from a spot ten feet away from the hero. Miss Bara's slink was a deliberate process. Instead of sinking straight at the hero, she moved sort of on the bias. Agreeing with the mathematicians that the shortest distance between two points is a straight line, Theda traveled the long way, to build up the suspense. She'd fasten her eyes on the hero, you see, and then start for him on a zigzag route. There was plain or garden variety just in her big brown eyes, mind you, and as she slunk forward you could see the hero registering fear. You knew from his closeup that he knew he was a dead pigeon. He was right.



Agnes Ayres in a daring mood that belies her sure-fire clinging-vine style.

of stress, Theda was swaying in front of him.

Being a gentleman of the old school, there was only one thing Mark could do. He breathed heavily, and Theda knew it wasn't asthma. Women are intuitive that way. The rest is celluloid history. The slink scored its first important victory, and from then on heroines stopped leaping to and from railroad trains and substituted the old allure. Pola Negri improved a bit on the Theda Bara technique. Miss Negri brought the couch to the movie screens. She was a bobber and weaver, more on the style of Dempsey, and she always bobbed and weaved to a couch, where she would collapse and eye the hero in speculative fashion.

She was the first of the Come-Hither Look school, just as Theda Bara was the first of the Don't-Make-a-Move-Until-I-Get-There academy. The main distinction between the two schools of thought was that Pola Negri was a counter-puncher and Theda believed that a great attack was the better strategy. They both did very well, so it is difficult to say which was more effective.

In contrast to their brazenness, Agnes Ayres brought to the movies the Clinging Vine approach. When Valentino made passes at her Agnes repulsed him coldly. His ruthlessness was dismayed by her April shower tears. She leaped like a cat from his embraces, threatened to commit suicide if "you so much as lay a finger on me, you beast." The movies had never seen this type of heroine,

and the novelty of it captivated audiences. They'd hiss Valentino the first time he made a pass at her, and then be heartily sorry that Valentino was deterred by Miss Ayres' pleas.

Young America copied the Ayres defense for years. Agnes had every young Romeo of the country in a dither.

Marlene Dietrich, of the moderns, simply streamlined the Theda Bara and Pola Negri technique. As an additional asset, Dietrich's legs were more captivating, and when in doubt she'd lift the hem of her skirt and expose her supports, which were architecturally sound. But actually Dietrich was a throwback to the Theda Bara slink and the Negri come-hither look.

Hedy La Marr, who will be the newest sensation of the films, is also from the Theda Bara school, as you will see when you see "Algiers." Evidently Theda and Pola had something there, as the saying goes.



Today's exponent of the Bara-Negri school of come-hither—Hedy La Marr.

What!! No Amazons Today?

By ED SULLIVAN

Hollywood, Cal.

IN CONTRAST to Pearl White, Ruth Roland, Mabel Normand, Agnes Ayres, and other hardy heroines of what might be described as the crinoline era or epoch of the silent movies, your 1938 movie heroine lives the life of Reilly, the fabled Gaelic gentleman whose life was so effortless and pleasant that he has gone down into history as a synonym for lush leisure.

It seems only yesterday, and perhaps it was, that Pearl White was jumping from speeding railroad trains, that Ruth Roland was being trapped in a burning tenement house, that Mabel Normand was being hit in the eye with a custard pie, that Agnes Ayres was being pursued by mean camels across meaner deserts. They were heroines cut from the whole cloth of adventure. Those were the days when the women of the movies had within them the same fierce flame that distinguished the pioneer women who trudged along the Oregon trail and who mowed down Indian marauders with élan, if not downright aplomb. Survey your modern movie heroines and weep for the good old Amazonian days when the ladies of the cinema talked basso.

Can you picture Lulise Rainer leaping from a railway bridge to a speeding train? Or Norma

In "Cleopatra" Theda Bara brought the slink to its highest common denominator. Brought to Mark Antony as a prisoner, Theda took one look and sized him up as quickly and accurately as Joe Louis diagnosed the weaknesses of Max Schmeling. Her assignment, however, was much more difficult, as Mark was sitting on his throne, three steps above floor level. My blood turns hot and cold at the recollection of her mastery strategy. She shuffled adroitly to the first step and mounted it in circuitous fashion. She side-slipped to the left, feinted to the right, and now was on step two. It was the second down and one to go. Other teams might have tried a forward pass or a slice through tackle, but not Theda. She bustled right through center, and before Mark Antony could say "Signor Jack Robinson," which was a phrase he used in moments



The Theda Bara version of the come-hither—a la Cleopatra.



Mabel Normand suffers for her art with Fatty Arbuckle.



Pearl White shrinks from the villain's insidious invite.

Britannia Still Rules the Waves

(Continued from page one.)

At the southern extremity of the Malay peninsula, and tracing a zigzag line in a westerly direction toward the canal, one will note in strategic positions the following cities:

Rangoon in Burma, Trincomalee and Colombo in Ceylon, Bombay in India, Aden in Arabia, and Port Sudan in the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan.

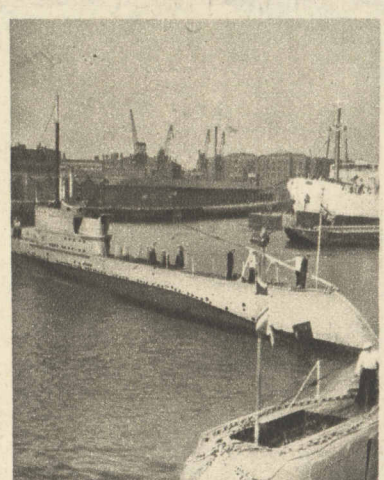
At all of these are British naval bases. Those at Colombo and Bombay are defended. In addition, out in the Indian ocean, also defending the approach to the eastern door of the Mediterranean, is a fortified British naval base at Port Louis on the island of Mauritius. There is a base at Suez, at the southern end of the canal, and another at Port Said, at the northern end.

Planted squarely on the route from Suez to the east and commanding the mouth of the Gulf of Aden is the British-controlled island of Socotra, which is provided with several safe anchorages. It is conceivable that Great Britain might utilize this island as a naval base, so strategic is its position.

Little chance a hostile power would have of sailing a fleet out of the Mediterranean by the way of the Suez canal, the Red sea, and the Indian ocean. It would have to run too formidable a gantlet.

Not only does Great Britain control the approaches to the Mediterranean, but it also maintains a defended naval base on the island of Malta, almost in the middle of the sea that popular opinion has been allotting to the domination of Italy.

Whether or not Italy actually could control the Mediterranean in a war with Great Britain, however, is a debatable subject. Even two years hence, under the present building program, Italy will have only six capital ships in commission and two on the ways. By that time the British will have seventeen similar war vessels in service and three under construction. In other types of craft Great Britain's navy today overshadows that of Italy in about the same proportion.



(Acme photo.)

A British submarine of the newest type.

tant natural resources, petroleum, iron ore, and wheat. These are resources that become doubly important in times of conflict, but they represent only three items in a long list of commodities that a nation must possess in order to wage a successful war.

Oil is essential to the operation of a modern navy. Iron is the principal requirement of arms factories. Wheat is a food staple, the main ingredient of bread for the feeding of the population.

Italy is almost totally deficient within its own territories in petroleum, copper, coal, cotton, rubber, nickel, chromite, and tungsten, all of which are necessary in war. It produces only 15 per cent of its requirements of manganese. Its iron production, although on the increase, still is far behind its needs. It is greatly dependent upon foreign lands for war materials of almost every kind, its gold reserves are closely approaching the vanishing point, and where could it turn for credit?

Obviously not to Germany, at the moment looked upon as its natural ally, for the Germans are not in a position to lend.

In a war between the British and the Italians the first named, holding Gibraltar and the Suez canal, should be able to base air fleets and destroyer and submarine fleets on the north coast of Egypt and harass Italian shipping in the direction of the Dardanelles. To the west Italy would have not only Great Britain to contend with but also France, assuming, of course, that the British and the French would be allied in a war such as this.

Even conceding that Italy might retain control of the Mediterranean, which is doubtful, it still would be in a desperate situation. The British, if necessary, could send their orient-bound commerce around the southern tip of Africa, a slow but safe route, completely isolate the Mediterranean, and slowly render Italy destitute of the essentials of war.

Where in this picture would be Germany, whose territory now touches that of Italy? There could be free passage of goods, arms, and men between Germany and Italy, but Germany on the north would be in a still tighter place as regards the sea than Italy on the south. Germany's fleet, which does not compare with its World War fleet, would have its hands full defending the Baltic. It could not go to the aid of Italy in the Mediterranean.

Even during the great war, when the kaiser's navy was the world's second best, Germany's activities at sea, omitting the deadly submarine, were greatly restricted. The German fleet made an excellent showing at the battle of Jutland, but it never again dared accept the risk of a fight.

Great Britain rules the waves of Europe today, just as it did during those trying times of twenty years ago.

Voice of the Movie Fan

Letters published in this department should be written on one side of the paper. If you wish a personal reply please inclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

Dear Miss Tinée: Could you tell us Norma Shearer's next picture and who she plays with? She was always our favorite actress. Wonder if she is going to quit the movies? Thanks a lot.

Yours sincerely,
L. M. S. and
W. H. S.

P. S.—Could you squeeze this in your column, and squeeze in a picture of Anita Louise, Hollywood's most beautiful blonde? What is her next picture?

Editor's note: "Marie Antoinette" is the title of Norma Shearer's next film. Tyrone Power plays the male lead. Miss Shearer recently was chosen to play the role of Scarlett in "Gone with the Wind," which goes in production next winter. Anita Louise's next picture is "My Bill." Others in the cast are Kay Francis, John Litel, and Bonita Granville.

Dear Mae Tinée: What's all this controversy going on about the current trend toward zany comedies? Wait for me; I love an argument. So the Misses Phillips and Dayton would like to do away with comedy altogether! They should remember that all Muni and no Ritz make Johnny Q. Public a dull audience. A good laugh is good for us all. And also he's a noble fellow who devotes his life to making this harried old world laugh. The main trouble, however, with this comedy cycle is that too many of the wrong people are doing it. Let's look at the record.

There's the lovely Irene Dunne, the same one who gave us Sabra in "Cimarron" and the ever-memorable Magnolia in

"Show Boat," who went completely insane in "Theodora Goes Wild" and "The Awful Truth." How disappointing!

There's Errol Flynn. (Every one else has been mentioning him, so I might as well, too.) The same chap who set the gals' pulses on fire in "Captain Blood" and delighted the "drahmer" loving audiences in "Green Light" and "The Charge of the Light Brigade." There he was, as somebody put it, capering around wrapped up in blankets in "The Perfect Specimen." How disgusting!

There's Katharine Hepburn, with "Little Women," "Morning Glory," and "Stage Door," all jewels, to her credit, running around with the back gone from her evening gown in "Bringing Up Baby." How killingly funny!

There are any number of other ones, too, but for pity's sake why go on? When Laurel and Hardy or the Marx brothers or Jack Benny appear on the screen I settle down happily with the prospect of a funny evening in store, but when along comes a serious actor with a silly glint in his eye and intently bent on making a fool of himself, one can be pretty sure there'll be some illusions shattered before the lights come on again.

Comedy itself is grand, but all I can say is, if I ever see Paul Muni or Norma Shearer or Herbert Marshall entering the comedy field—! Well, producers have been shot before.

Sincerely yours, D. P. EVERETT.

P. S.—When talking about comedies why always drag in the inane antics of Nelson Eddy on that Sunday night broadcast? You started it, Phillips.

Editor's note: Guess I'd better keep out of this.

Dear Miss Tinée: Quite some time ago I had the good fortune to see a foreign-made picture entitled "Wings of the Morning," starring Annabella and Henry Fonda. I raved about it for weeks on end, but could not find any among my

friends who had seen it. More recently I have seen "The Baroness and the Butler," Annabella's first American-made picture. I have heard many say they thoroughly enjoyed Annabella in this vehicle (no offense to William Powell), so I wonder if the local theaters would give their patrons a break by showing "Wings of the Morning" once again. I'm sure it would be their gain.

Many thanks, Miss Tinée, for your splendid column. Sincerely,
C. R. K.

P. S.—I would appreciate it if you will find room for this article in your column.

Editor's note: Happy to oblige you with the "room." Perhaps exhibitors will do likewise with the picture. Thank YOU!

Dear Miss Tinée: I have been reading and enjoying your Sunday columns for several years now, but as yet have not written to you, because most of my questions have been answered by other contributors. However, I have not seen any comment on my pet peeve, the Clark Gable and Robert Taylor comparison.

Though I am no judge of acting ability, I do believe that Mr. Gable is so far superior to Mr. Taylor that there is little comparison between the two. To class the two together was evidently very clever publicity for Mr. Taylor, but in my opinion it seems unfair to underrated such a great star as Mr. Gable and compare him, sometimes almost unfavorably, to a man of far less experience and developed acting ability. It is unfair because it actu-



JON HALL
With Dorothy Lamour in
"The Hurricane."

ally detracts from Mr. Gable's popularity. Mr. Gable found success after much hard work, without the aid of being coupled with another who had already achieved fame.

Then, too, the two men are of such contrasting types that it seems foolish to class them together.

Hoping you'll let me try again, I am
Yours truly,
LOUISE RUSSERT.

P. S.—Could you tell me if Jon Hall, who gave such a splendid performance in "Hurricane," is going to be in another picture, and when? Thank you.

Editor's note: Indeed, I hope you will "try again." Jon Hall is scheduled to play the male lead in another romantic South Sea island film—production to start some time next winter.