

Looking at Hollywood with Ed Sullivan

Hollywood, Cal.
“YOU ASK why it is movie stars often get themselves jammed up on account of bad publicity,” commented Norma Shearer. “Well, take an experience I had in New York. The M-G-M publicity men arranged a series of interviews. I was delighted to be interviewed. Publicity is of vital importance to any performer. This one chap walked in, and it didn't require a psychic to know that he had come there to write a certain kind of story about me. ‘How much money have you in the bank and in stocks, Miss Shearer?’ was his first question. ‘How old are you, on the level?’ was his second question. Then he pointed at two bracelets I was wearing and said, ‘How much are those worth?’ I told him that the bracelets had been given to me as a wedding present and that I'd never gone out and priced them. In answer to his question about how much money I had in the bank I told him that it wasn't enough to support or fulfill my obligations if I were thrown out of work. To laugh off the whole thing, I summed up by assuring him pleasantly that I wasn't as old or as rich or as shrewd as some people imagined. ‘The next day there was a four-column head on page one: ‘Shearer Denies She's as Old, as Rich, or as Shrewd as Fans Imagine.’ Now, I've been in this business long enough to know that newspaper men must get a story and that bad news too often is good news, but I think that a writer if he half tried could get a truer story than that, honestly I do.”

“It reminds me of an old French Canadian story of the neighbor who decided to go next door and borrow a lawn mower. He started away from his door, and before he'd left his porch he started guessing what the owner of the lawn mower would answer. ‘He probably won't give it to me at all,’ he guessed. He walked a few feet farther. ‘The old skinflint has a lot of nerve refusing to loan me his lawn mower.’ By the time he reached his neighbor's door he was burning up. When the owner of the lawn mower opened his door the would-be borrower shouted indignantly, ‘To hell with you and your old lawn mower!’ and stalked away in high dudgeon. I think that newspaper men often approach movie performers in that frame of mind. They start disliking us before we meet. ‘If they'd just realize that we're just as scared of them as they are critical of us it would make it a lot easier for us and for them.’

The more time you spend with Norma Shearer the more you get to like her. She has a swell sense of humor, she doesn't take herself seriously, she likes crowds, she is always willing to

Customer Is Right, to Norma

By ED SULLIVAN

lend a helping hand to younger performers. While she was on Broadway she attended the show on the Hotel Astor roof, where Alabaman Hal Kemp's band is playing. Songstress with the band is tiny Judy Starr. “You're grand,” said Norma. “You ought to be in pictures.” The next day an M-G-M scout was over to cover Judy's act. “I thought that she was only fooling when she told me that she would tell the studio about me,” Judy told me a few days later. “You know, a lot of people make promises at night and then forget all about them in the morning. I wouldn't have felt hurt if Miss Shearer had forgotten, but she didn't. The really big people are always nice, aren't they?”

I spoke to Norma about what Judy had said. “Plenty of people helped me when I first came to New York from Canada,” she said. “I'd be very ungrateful if I didn't help youngsters now. It means so much to them, and it takes so little of your time to say a good word about them to the right people.”

The Shearer background wasn't exactly a path of rose petals. She worked in a music shop, demonstrating songs, in Canada. She worked as a model for billboard and magazine ads in New York. She and her sister, armed with a letter of introduction, went to see Florenz Ziegfeld for a job as showgirls, but were turned down. Ziegfeld, however, gave them two free seats for the Ziegfeld “Follies,” so they were delighted. D. W. Griffith told Norma to pack up her clothes and her dreams and go back to Canada. “You would have no chance at all in the movies,” he told her. But Norma and her mother and sister decided to stick it out for a few more weeks. They were living in a flat on 6th avenue on a floor level with the “L” trains. Then she got a small offer from Universal, but they wouldn't pay her mother's car fare to the coast, so she turned it down. A few months later she got an offer, slightly better, from M-G-M. Daringly she decided to ask for more money and so wired: “Universal is very anxious to sign me, so please make immediate decision.” To her amazement Irving Thalberg, at M-G-M, told her that he had been the one at Universal a few months previous who had made the original offer. So she signed hastily with M-G-M.

That she and Thalberg would fall in love was in the stars. Quiet, modest, diffident, he was a “natural” in so far as attraction for her was concerned. The question often has been raised as to whether or not Norma Shearer ever will marry again. I don't know the answer to that, but you can make up your mind that when she does it will be because she has met some one who is as quiet, as shy, and as appealing as Irving Thalberg. Having resigned the lead in “Gone with the Wind,” her next picture will be “The Women.” In the Reno sequence you may see her do a dance. She has become convinced, as a result of her travels, that the country has gone dance crazy. In Chicago 120,000 jitterbugs assembled at Soldiers' field. In New York 30,000 jitterbugs crowded Madison Square Garden for the Harvest Moon ball. Norma believes that the movie star who goes along with the fan taste is being intelligent. She is one star who believes that the customer is right, a fact which explains her long career as a headliner. “I don't want to start slipping,” she tells you frankly. “When that time arrives—and I hope it doesn't arrive for about three years—M-G-M will have to get rid of me. There is very little sentiment in business, believe me.”



Miss Shearer as Marie Antoinette.

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NORMA SHEARER
 (Willinger photos.)

Stars in Color

● Natural-color photographs of the stars about whom Mae Tinée writes in this series of brief sketches appear on page one of the picture section today. They were taken with The Tribune's color camera.

DOUGLAS FAIRBANKS JR. It is reported that Douglas Fairbanks Jr. dislikes to be called Junior. Why he doesn't say.

This son of a famous papa was born in New York on Dec. 9, 1907. His mother is Beth Scully—now Mrs. Jack Whiting.

When small Douglas didn't want to be an actor. An elevator operator's job was his ambition. For a while he lived with his mother in Paris and studied art. Then, need-

CLAUDETTE COLBERT Claudette Colbert is all for white lies. She says one launched her successful career. She told Producer Brock Pemberton she'd had several years' experience in stock, when she had played only one small part. As a result he gave her the lead in “The Marionette Man.”

Miss Colbert was born in Paris, France. The family came to New York when she was 6 and she received her schooling in New York. She did designing, taught French, and finally landed on the stage. Her first starring part was in “A Kiss in a Taxi.”

Her first movie, “For the Love of Mike,” was made in New York. “It Happened One Night” won Academy awards for both her and Clark Gable. Important movies—“The Gilded Lily,” “Private Worlds,” “She Married Her Boss.”

Miss Colbert is 5 feet 5, weighs 103 pounds, has reddish brown hair and eyes, and is married to Dr. Joel Pressman.

JAMES STEWART Six feet two and one-half inches of gangling young manhood, a shy, disarming smile, a shock of brown hair that doesn't like to stay in place, and a pair of gray eyes as friendly and trusting as a Newfoundland puppy's have wedged James Stewart tightly into the hearts of fans.

Mr. Stewart was born May 20, 1911, in Indiana, Pa. His parents, nonprofessionals, are Elizabeth and Alexander Stewart. He was educated at Mercersburg academy and Princeton university. He began his stage career playing with a Cape Cod stock company, later appearing on Broadway in “Yellow Jack” and other plays. He was stage manager in Boston for Jane Cowl in “Camille.”

Outstanding work in a short subject attracted producerial eyes, and James' performance in “Rose Marie” established him as a clever and dependable actor. Since then he has been greatly in demand. His most notable pictures you will recall as “Rose Marie,” “The Gorgeous Hussy,” “The Last Gangster,” “Seventh Heaven,” “Navy Blue and Gold,” “Of Human Hearts,” and “Vivacious Lady.”

Not married.

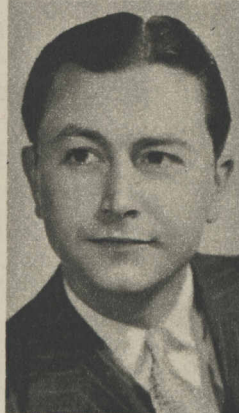
ing money, he accepted a movie offer. He came to America and made “Stephen Steps Out”—his first film. His work on the stage in “Young Woodley” convinced Hollywood that here was an actor. Joan Crawford sent him an enthusiastic telegram—and you know what that brought on. It wasn't long till Joan became Mrs. Fairbanks Jr.

Fairbanks is a little more than six feet tall, weighs 165 pounds, and has blue eyes and brown hair. He writes prose and poetry, loves to argue, and is unmarried at the present time. His latest pictures to be talked about—“Joy of Living,” “Prisoner of Zenda,” and “Having a Wonderful Time.”

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: It is terribly important that I find out who took the part of the reporter in “Night Club Scandal.” He also took the part of Jim in “Her Jungle Love.” I think he's great, and I'd like to see him in more pictures.



ROBERT YOUNG
 Fan wants to see him in more pictures.

I enjoyed his part as a reporter because I have high hopes of becoming a scoop collector myself, even if I am only 14 now. My favorite actor is Robert Young, and I'd like to see him a little oftener. If you could find a corner empty I wish you could put a picture of him in for me, and also a bit about him. Where and when he was born, and all that sort of stuff. A faithful admirer,
 HELEN MAY.

Editor's note: Lynne Overman played the rôle of the reporter in “Night Club Scandal,” and he also took the part of Jim in “Her Jungle Love.” Robert Young was born in Chicago, Feb. 22, 1907. He's 6 feet tall, weighs 170 pounds, and has brown hair and eyes. Educated Seattle and Los Angeles public schools and Lincoln High of Los Angeles. He's married and has two children.

Dear Mae Tinée: Isn't it too, too bad when “the enjoyment of a film” such as “Son of the Sheik,” with Rudolph Valentino, must be hampered by the comparative imperfections of old movie mechanics? This quotation is from Mrs. Beulah Bark-

er's letter in the Voice of the Movie Fan. If the wonderful movie industry would give to the screen again some personalities just half as distinctive and worth looking at as Rudy and many others of the silent pictures we could well dispense with all the so-called new perfections being foisted upon us. All that Hollywood movies are composed of today are new perfections, million-dollar picture pay rolls, and a set of the most thoroughly individual looking and acting movie stars ever collected in one place.

I'm only 24, but with a good memory, and I know that the silent pictures and their players had something that made you a movie fan, and that has gone since talking pictures came in.

So bring back all of Valentino's films, and though we'll sigh and sob at the lack of new perfections, we will have something good to look at! Sincerely,
 MISS L. CARLISLE.

Editor's note: “Amen!” will say many readers of your letter.

Dear Miss Tinée: Will you please tell me who was the leading man in Joan Crawford's “I Live My Life”? I saw the picture a few years ago, and I just can't recall the leading man. I remain,
 MISS ANGELYNE KLEMISH.
 Waucoma, Ia.

Editor's note: Brian Aherne played opposite Joan Crawford in the above film.

Dear Miss Tinée: Bouquets to two of the best “picture snatchers” I have seen in a coon's age, namely, Lew Ayres and Melville Cooper in “Holiday” and “The Adventures of Robin Hood” respectively. Ayres' characterization of the alcoholic Ned should certainly win him the Academy award for the best supporting actor of 1938.

Not to mention Melville Cooper, who could walk calmly in and steal a scene

completely from such opposition as Basil Rathbone and Claude Rains and even Errol Flynn himself. His ludicrous speeches and pompous ways, which vanished so completely when either of the two villains scolded him, had me in stitches most of the time. More power to the two of them. Here's hoping they go even farther. Sincerely,
 S. E.

Editor's note: “Picture snatchers” always add a lot to observers' enjoyment, though they probably bring very little sunshine into the lives of the stars.

Dear Miss Tinée: The facts you give are most interesting. We are constant movie goers, and we have our likes and dislikes in the stars.

Could you please print a small picture of Jane Wyman, who played in “The Crowd Roars”? We think she did an excellent job with that silly part. Thanks.
 MARY JANE KRAJEWSKI.



JANE WYMAN
 Praised for good work in a silly part.

Editor's note: Here's a picture of Jane.

Dear Miss Tinée: Would you please print a brief biography of William Hopper, the son of Hedda Hopper? Thanking you,
 JEANNE IRWIN.

Editor's note: Here are facts about William: He was born in New York City, Jan. 26, 1915. He's 6 feet 3 inches tall, weighs 185 pounds, and has green eyes and dark brown hair. Educated Raymond

Riordan school and Catalina School for Boys. Appeared on the stage before entering motion pictures.

Dear Miss Tinée: Could you please tell me if George Brent, who played in “God's Country and the Woman,” also played the part of the husband to the missionary in “West of Shanghai”? Thank you so much.
 MRS. G. P. HUNGER.
 Burlington, Ia.

Editor's note: George Brent did not appear in “West of Shanghai.” Ricardo Cortez played the rôle of the missionary's husband in this film. Glad to help you.

Dear Miss Tinée: I am replying to the letter written by Francine Smart. She said you were not compelled to sit through a double feature. Well, what do you do when you come in at the beginning of the one you don't like? I wish she would answer that. I am all against double features!
 Sincerely,
 MARY E. CALLOPY.

Editor's note: You might phone the theater for the time each feature starts.

Dear Mae Tinée: I thought you might like these:

- Robert Taylor—A baked apple à la mode.
- Ginger Rogers—A platinum loving cup.
- Clark Gable—A hearty laugh.
- Mariette Dietrich—A candle gone out.
- Hedy Lamarr—A candle burning.
- Ronald Colman—British tweeds and a cup of tea.
- Douglas Fairbanks Jr.—A little boy with a new tin sword.
- Beulah Bondi—Our first school teacher. Respectfully,
 PETITE.

P. S.—Please, puh-lease print your picture, ‘cause we all are dying from curiosity. Editor's note: You know what killed the cat, don't you?

DROP ME! I'M DANGEROUS

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