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Moore-Wilson Co
THE DAYLIGHT STORE

Youngest Leading Lady in World Tells of Her Experiences in Support of Selig Movie Stars



"You See? He Does Not Love You!"

By GRACE DARMOND.
My home is in Chicago. One day about two years ago I walked into the Chicago studios of the Selig Polyscope company. The studios are not so very far away from my parents' home. Maybe that was the reason I walked into them. The superintendent of the studios needed 'extra people.' I had visited the studios in curiosity; I remained to take part in a Selig feature film. That was the beginning of my motion picture career. One must photograph well in order to attain any degree of success in motion picture work. I was told that I photographed well. My profile is clear and my features are adaptable to the animated screen. I was asked to take other minor parts. I liked the work—there is a fascination about it—and I accepted.

That was about two years ago. Today I have the honor of being assigned to many important roles in Selig Red Seal plays. I have assumed leading feminine parts in "A Texas Steer," "The Millionaire Baby," "The House of a Thousand Candles," "A Black Sheep," and other productions which have won further fame for the Selig company. I have been asked the reason for my rapid success in a difficult profession. The only answer that I can give is 'hard work.' There were other incidents that also contributed to my success. One of the most important is that Col. William N. Selig, president of the company which bears his name, gives everyone a fair opportunity. He appreciates close attention to work and loyalty on the part of his employees. I was fortunate enough to please him and the directors and was assigned to more important roles as time passed, and I gave my entire time and thought to them.

Perhaps there is another qualification connected with my promotion that should be mentioned here. I had had stage experience. I appeared in the spoken drama when five years of age, taking the title role of Editha's Burglar. Later I appeared in stock companies. This experience in the art of acting was certainly of untold benefit to me.

I have been told that I am the youngest leading woman in motion pictures. Maybe I am, but I have earned the parts I play. Working in motion pictures is no pastime—it is hard work. In motion pictures, as elsewhere, work counts.

Long hours fall to those who engage in motion picture acting. They report at a studio at a certain hour in the morning. They do not leave until a certain hour. Their day's work is just like a day's work in any other occupation in life. In warm weather the sun beats through the glass enclosure of the studio and the thermometer sometimes registers 150 degrees. Perhaps in this warm atmosphere one must be compelled to appear as a character heavily bundled in clothing, and you can imagine one's discomfort.

There are many recompenses, also, and I think, on the whole, that the work is ever so much more enjoyable than the speaking stage. Girls who wish to enter motion pictures, however, should pause and think over the fact that they are embarking on a

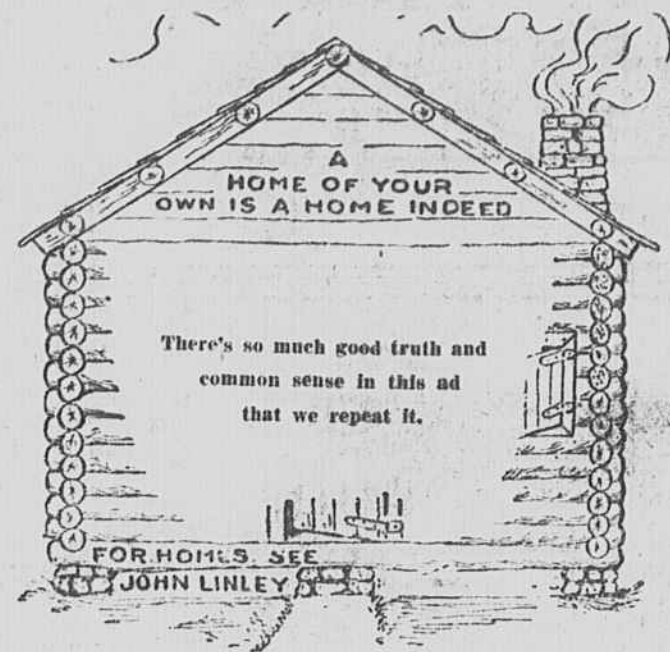
career—a branch of art which requires talent, intelligence and hard work. There are many girls who feel that if they could only appear before a camera they would be an instantaneous success, yet who would go to a business college for many months in order to become a stenographer. It stands to reason if one considers that preparation for such a position is necessary that ever so much more time must be devoted to learning an art which entertains millions of people daily. From my own experience I do not feel justified in advising any girl to try to become a screen actress.

There are times, of course, when I enjoy the excitement of being a player. An example of this was during the filming of the big Selig Red Seal play "The House of a Thousand Candles," at the Chicago studio of the Selig Polyscope Company. Doubtless most of my readers heard of the big car strike in Chicago, but few of them knew what havoc it played with the motion picture producers. We had many players who were working in the "Loop," Chicago theatrical center, and as the studio is quite a way from this place, and there was no auto service, Mr. William N. Selig ordered a huge truck in which all the players were taken to the theaters in which they were working.

There were other excursions, too, during the time I was appearing in "The House of a Thousand Candles." One of these was made to find a house which would correspond to the director's ideal "house" in which the "thousand candles" were supposed to be. All the players who had friends with homes which might serve the purpose told the director about them, and one day we all got into a big touring car and started our search. We covered almost all of the city of Chicago, and when we were all beginning to despair of ever finding an ideal "House of a Thousand Candles," the director suddenly called the chauffeur to stop. We were in a part of Wheaton, a suburb of Chicago, and none of us could see any "house" that might prove available. The director, however, made us all get out of the machine and tramp up a hill. As we rounded a curve in the road we saw beyond a clump of trees, which had been obstructing our view, the exact "House of a Thousand Candles" we had all been hoping for.

When we returned to the studio to take the interior scenes, we found that we needed many more times as many candlesticks for the "big set" as our property room had. We started a search for candlesticks and candelabra, and gathered them from every conceivable source—our own homes, homes of our friends, small shops near the studio, and large stores in the business district of Chicago. After getting them all together, we sorted them out and the director arranged them about the "set." The effect is beautiful in my estimation, and I am sure that those who see "The House of a Thousand Candles" will agree with me.

Mr. Harry Meistayer and Mr. Joan Charles, who have the two leading male roles, and Mr. Backus, who plays the "character" lead, were all cast in parts which fitted them perfectly and enjoyed the work fully as much as I did. The other players were also at their best, so we went through the entire production like a well-oiled machine. Mr. Hoffman, our director, kept us all working together, and while no exciting accident happened to distinguish it from other pictures in which I have worked, I shall remember "The House of a Thousand Candles" for a long, long time, because of the pleasure I experienced in working in it.



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"Oh, three or four."
"Weeks?"
"No; motor-cars."—Boston Transcript.
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