

## People's Column

To the Editor:

Among the many treasured things  
One keeps from year to year,  
Are those which through swift  
passing time  
Become to us more dear.  
A trinket, picture, faded flower  
Some memories bring to mind,  
Of youthful days so long ago  
When life was always kind.  
Among the things that I have  
saved,  
Which now, I sometimes see,  
A faded, lacy valentine.  
That some one sent to me.

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6-C THE BIRMINGHAM (MICH) ECENTRIC Feb. 13, 1958

## LEND AN EAR

By MADELEINE HARRIS  
Special Writer for The Eclectic

## Will Hollywood Recover? How?

The motion-picture industry currently appears to have reached a crisis—a state of affairs that has been brought about by competition with its sometime-handmade, sometime-entertainment, sometime-television.

Last week, the business analysts, Spindler and Company announced the devastating news that movie-theater attendance has dropped seven million from 1954. The once-unassailable box office took a loss of 50 million dollars during the last year, worried theater owners were told.

The main reason for this catastrophic situation seems to be the competition of the large number of post-1948 films offered by television. Some were of the caliber of "High Noon," which this reviewer saw and enjoyed for the first time recently on TV.

HOLLYWOOD can no longer afford to be off-hand as to the quality of its films. Not if it expects to lure people away from free entertainment in their homes and into the theaters.

Two types of films remain, which Hollywood can make profitably without too much competition from TV. One is the big-budget, big-screen, color affair such as "Sayonara," "Raintree County," "Around the World in Eighty Days" and "Guns and Dolls." When this variety is artfully and tastefully executed, sky-rocketing box office receipts prove that people are happy to abandon their little screens at home and pay good money.

The other type not yet available on TV is the low-budget movie that pictures life with a fresh and realistic technique, somewhat in the European tradition. Most such movies should have something important to say and should say it artistically and without compromising.

These innovators have proved, too, that their approach pays.

UNHAPPILY, the craft of movie-making has improved since

the last 25 years. Special effects are dynamic, color techniques, though not yet definitive, are nevertheless impressive, and camera-work is superbly effective.

The content, however, has not always kept pace with technology. As in radio and TV, frightened producers have shied away from artistic presentations, believing the myth of a limited American mentality. Only when a more social-minded writing and directing team thought better of the public's IQ were we treated to pictures with adult themes.

There is one other aspect in the present situation that is making Hollywood cringe. Pictures sold currently to TV often feature such personal favorites as Clark Gable, Robert Taylor, Claudette Colbert, Cary Grant and Joan Crawford in their heyday, blessed with youth and beauty. Today, many of these same stars, now in their fifties, are still playing romantic leads. In a sense, they are competing in new films against their former, youthful selves in TV films. They will certainly have to depend on fine characterization and sensitive acting if they are to lure the public away from their younger selves, although their old performances are considerably less effective.

NO ONE DISAGREES, least of all the frightened moguls that preside over cobweb-hung sound stages, that Hollywood is on the spot. But it can save the day for itself, at least in part, by trying to make consistently adult and superior films. If they fail to do this they may lose out entirely and find that the field of profitable picture-making is in the hands of their more imaginative European competitors.

But if Hollywood wakes up to its problem in time, we may begin to have a mature movie industry that can make films good enough to reduce those old hand-me-downs, now available on TV, to the obscurity of "The Perils of Pauline."

## Random Notes About Town

MUSIC: ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH has Organist August Markelbergh; Fri., 12-15 p.m. Woodward and Vernon.

STANLEY QUARTET presented in concert, Sat., 8:30 p.m., Rackham Memorial Auditorium.

SCOTTISH RITE CATHEDRAL OF THE MASONIC TEMPLE will offer The Tambourines, singers, dancers, musicians; Sun., 2:30 p.m.

THEATRE: SHUBERT: Cat on a Hot Tin Roof by Tennessee Williams, starring Victor Jory will open Sun., Feb. 16 for one week only. This play received the Pulitzer prize and the N.Y. Critics award.

MOVIES: BIRMINGHAM: Bomber-B-52 with Carl Malden and Natalie Wood Feb. 15-18; also Kiss Them For Me with Cary Grant and Genevieve.

Mansfield, Feb. 19-22 Legend of the Lost with John Wayne and Sophia Loren along with Chicago Confidential with Brian Keith.

BLOOMFIELD: Pal Joey with Frank Sinatra, Rita Hayworth and Kim Novak; also Esther Costello with Joan Crawford and Rosano Brazzi; Feb. 15-18. This will be followed by Pajama Game with Doris Day and The Joker is Wild, starring Frank Sinatra and Jean Crain.

ADAMS: Don't Go Near The Water with Glenn Ford, Anne Francis and Keenan Wynn is an hilarious adaptation of a very funny book.

UNITED ARTISTS: Ernest Hemingway's famous story A Farewell To Arms stars Rock Hudson, Jennifer Jones, and Vittorio De Sica too much of a bad thing.

FOREIGN FILMS: CLAWSON PLAYHOUSE: Alec Guinness continues in the delightful To Paris With Love; also The Night My Number Came Up with Michael Redgrave; Feb. 13-18. Maria Schell stars in As Long As You're Near Me; also David Niven in The Love Lottery with Peggy Cummins; Feb. 19-25.

KRM: Brigitte Bardot slithers through And God Created Woman to standing room only.

SURE AND CORONET: Brigitte Bardot slinks through The Bride is Much Too Beautiful with the help of Louis Jourdan and Micheline Presle.

WORLD AND STUDIO: Four Bags Full, a story of the Nazi occupation of Paris, Jean Gabin manages to be grim and funny alternately.

TELEVISION: SHOW OF STARS has Jack Benny finally celebrating his 40th birthday in the company of a galaxy of Hollywood notables; to-night, 8:30, channel 2.

JACK PAER ON TONIGHT has comedienne, Kaye Ballard; Fri., 11:30 p.m., channel 4.

MIKE WALLACE INTERVIEW will feature novelist-movie-writer, Ben Hecht; Sat., 10:00, channel 7.

THE NBC OPERA COMPANY presents Verdi's Rigoletto which will be sung in English; Sun., 2:00, channel 4.

THE LAST WORD, a series dealing with the world of words, features Dr. Bergen Evans with playwright Russell Crouse, and Mary Margaret McBride, as guests; Sun., 3:30, channel 2.

WIDE WIDE WORLD with Dave Garroway as host concerns mid-decade people; Sun., 4:00, channel 4.

OUTLOOK—a background-to-the-news program with Chet Huntley as host; Sun., 6:30, channel 4.

SHIRLEY TEMPLE'S STORYBOOK presents The Nightingale with Thomas Mitchell, Russell Collins, and Judith Braun-Shirley will act as hostess; Wed., 7:30, channel 4.

VICTOR BORGE'S COMEDY AND MUSIC SHOW with Marguerite Piazza, Rod Alexander and Bambi Linn; Weds., 9:00, channel 2.

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