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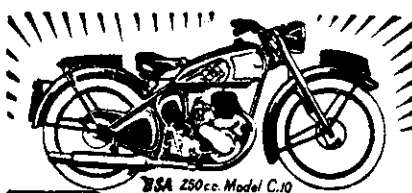


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DON'T PUT YOUR DAUGHTER ON THE SCREEN

English Actress Gives Sober Advice

THE advice of Megs Jenkins, British film and stage actress, to those New Zealand girls who dream about talent-scouts, screen-tests, and visits to Hollywood, is (as *The Listener* discovered in the course of an interview with her in Wellington) the same as that given by Mr. Punch about a similarly hazardous undertaking.

"The answer," she said, "is *don't*. It's such a gamble. Tell the girls to stay at home. Let them enjoy their pictures from a seat in the audience. Unless a

instead." Other script-writers making names for themselves were Frank Harvey Jr., and the New Zealander, Meriton Hodge.

"What progress is being made with the new exchange system between Britain and the United States?"

"It is working very well as a sort of human lend-lease scheme. British film artists go to Hollywood and the Americans come to Britain. From both points of view the idea is good. Our people remain on British contracts but their acting scope is broadened, and the Americans find that there is something to learn from us. The technicians, too, are included in the exchange system."

"What brought you to New Zealand?"

"I was engaged to take the leading part in the stage performance of *The Late Christopher Bean* in Sydney. They were not quite ready for me and asked if I would like to visit New Zealand. I said I'd love to and we're very glad we came, aren't we, George?" (George is George Routledge, Miss Jenkins's husband, formerly a commando captain—he stood unsuccessfully in the Liberal interest at Colchester in the British elections.) He thoroughly agreed. Now Miss Jenkins is touring New Zealand. After the tour she will return to Sydney for the opening of the production there.

Plays in Cinema Theatres

For eight or nine years Miss Jenkins has been on the English stage, notably in Emyln Williams's *The Wind of Heaven*, which ran for 10 months. The company now in New Zealand, she said, was doing a sort of pioneering work, for it was presenting stage shows in some of the cinema theatres which had fine, big stages. "And oh, the dust of years that rises from the stage at rehearsals!"

When asked what it felt like to attend a preview of a film in which she had worked for months, Miss Jenkins said it was always a thrill, even if half the part was left on the cutting-room floor. "An actress sometimes tells a friend she has a wonderful part. That friend waits and watches, then bends down, perhaps to pick up a dropped cigarette, and in the meantime the actress has come and gone like a flash."

"Both George and I have put on weight since leaving England, and it's a little regrettable. For some reason which the technicians could probably explain, the films always put about a stone on your weight, because of their flatness, I suppose. I look like a battleship in full sail. That's why the film actress has to be so diet-conscious. We learned thrift in England. We hesitate to buy clothes, because we have been used to making our old wardrobes do, but the food here is wonderful and we do enjoy it after England."

Most actresses indulge in some hobby or other—it gives press-agents a talking-point—but Miss Jenkins is a cheerful exception to the rule.

"I am very fond of my home in Chelsea, and I really like domesticity," she said, "it's a contrast to the studios. Even my husband likes my cooking." (George Routledge nodded assent.)

Interviews with Megs Jenkins will be heard on the 2B stations during her New Zealand tour.



MEGS JENKINS
And She Can Cook

girl is chosen from a screen test, she might as well drop the idea. Success in films either just happens, or follows years of hard training. And that applies to aspiring young men, too. There's no 40-hour week. Sometimes I have to rise at 5.30 a.m., and I don't get back home till eight. And (she added) forget all you've heard about glamour. It doesn't exist in the business."

Having made herself quite clear on that point Miss Jenkins told something about the rise of the British film industry. It was expanding daily, she said. More and more pictures were going into production and more up-to-date equipment was arriving continually from America.

Efforts were now being made to produce propaganda stories to meet the tastes of the middle class working people, who were the mainstay of the cinema theatres.

Some New Script-Writers

"Have any notable screen script-writers appeared in recent years?"

"Several; one is Peter Ustinov, born in England of a Russian mother. He is both writing and directing films. One of his plays is *School for Secrets*, a story about radar. He was the author of *The Way Ahead*, and he's only 25. Another of his productions is *The Man Behind the Statue*. I was going to play in that film with Robert Donat, but came here



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