

TALKING OF TALKIES.

Nonsense Written About New Films

Advertisement Writers Are Knocking the Meanings Out of Many Words—
What a Survey of Several Newspapers Reveals—"Jane Eyre"
Privately Screened in Wellington.

THERE was a time when such adjectives as "glorious," "glamorous," "magnificent" meant something; to-day, thanks to some writers of film advertisements, the true meanings of these words are as remote as the days of Dundreary whiskers and horseshair sofas. I spent an interesting half-hour the other day looking at the film advertisements in the newspapers published in the Dominion's four chief cities. Christchurch, I discovered, was far and away the chief offender. Not a picture is screened in the city of the Plains that is not an "unforgettable picture with an unrivalled cast" (which is a very mild one). A Continental actress who certainly shows promise is described as a "glamorous, glorious new Viennese star—a flaming personality—dramatically different, alluringly lovely, dynamically real." I felt prompted to remark, in the words of a galleryite at a Clara Butt concert, "What a luv-ly tart!" In the next column to this advertisement there is mention of another Continental star. This one is "a new star whose loveliness will amaze you, enchant you, haunt you—you will never be able to forget her!" Joan Crawford's film, "Dancing Lady" is described as the "miracle picture of the musical age."

A film advertisement writer in Christchurch hit on the idea of describing "Sunny Side Up" as "coming in a sunburst of glory." Since that time, every second picture to be screened in Christchurch has arrived in a similar dazzling burst. Dunedin advertisement writers attack their tasks with modesty. In a half-page of film advertisements in the "Evening Star" the most extravagant phrasing was that used to describe Charles Royer's film, "The Battle," and even then the film was quietly referred to as "immensely enjoyable." Auckland film advertisements, too, are comparatively sober, but then the theatres take less advertising space than the Christchurch ones and have, in consequence, less room for adjectives.

In Wellington the most extravagant phrasing on the film page is used in the advertisement referring to the second run of "The Barretts of Whimpoole Street"—"the play that captured the heart of the world is now the finest triumph of the screen! A glorious memory of two who triumphed against a world that sought to crush their love. The tender, fragile love—threatened by the rage of a diabolical father. Your heart will sing with joy." "One Way Passage" is described as a "smashing modern drama replete with thrills"—sounds vaguely like a five-roomed bungalow with all mod. cons.

It's very disconcerting to see these adjectives, which should be saved for "extra special occasions," being applied to any and every film. The public isn't a child, and it is quite capable of

discovering for itself whether a film is worthy of the words "glorious," "glamorous," "magnificent." Many of the English and American papers simply announce the film, the cast, the times of screening, and the prices of admission. The idea seems a commendable one, and one that may prevent the present indiscriminate and illegitimate use of the English language.

PROBABLY in sympathy with her own unhappy childhood, Charlotte Bronte wrote "Jane Eyre," a book of the trials and spiritual cruelties which were too often the lot of orphaned children less than a century ago. We hope, however, that all orphaned children may surmount the nastiness thrust upon them to live for the day of recompense as did Jane Eyre. In the film version produced by Monogram Pictures, the

story is not new, but it is treated in such a way that without obtruding too much misery on the audience it provides a comfortable hour's entertainment in its unfolding.

Almost a female "David Copperfield," the misunderstood little girl is committed to an orphanage because she chose to use a mind of her own under her relatives' roof. We are not tired by a sordid repetition in this picture of the rottenness and cruelty of the poor child's life in the "home." In fact, the sorry years she spends are cunningly suggested by the scene in which she enters the place with a covering letter from the spiteful aunt to "keep a firm hand" on the girl. Jameson Thomas, as the master of the institution, certainly needed no prompting in that direction, as he obviously did not even

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