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# Opium Dens Sydney Film

### [Special from Sydney]

OPIUM! Half-dazed whites sprawled on bunks in a Chinese den devoid of other furniture. Such a room with everything that goes into this horror is at present being occupied weekly by fiends of the drug, who suddenly, upon the word of a man who has not been overcome by the nauseating effects of the drug, become normal law-abiding citizens, is to be found in one of Sydney's busiest streets (George Street), within 50 yards of the G.P.O. The scene has been done to perfection for several weeks. It is one of the main scenes in a forthcoming picture entitled "Opium."

The picture will be a full-length production centred round the evils of opium and the trafficking in the drug between Australia and Singapore. Actual models of a Chinese opium den in Surrey Hills (Sydney), complete with sleeping bunks, pipes, and so on, have been made by an expert under the direction of Mr. Norman B. Richards who, with Miss Ruby Bonham, has written the script. Mr. Richards made several visits to a den for material for the picture, and had the models made exactly as he saw it. The sets to be used in the production, which will shortly be put in hand at National Studios, Pagewood, include many lavish and magnificent Chinese scenes similar to those used by wealthy mandarins in China.

A cast of 29 has been chosen and several hundred people have been tested by Mr. Richards who, although he does not think the time is ripe for the mentioning of her name, is more than pleased with the leading lady. Another outstanding member of the cast is a strong man, whose ability to bend an inch square six-foot iron bar around his arm gained him a part which required an exhibition of strength. A shark tragedy and a fight in an aeroplane are also scenes to be included in the picture.

### On Writing a Book

(Continued from page 5.)

written and contains excellent material the author will be unlucky if he does not see his name in type on a title page.

But, taking it all round, one finds it hard to agree that life in a library is altogether secluded and academic. There are many sidelights—manuscripts are only one, and an infrequent one.

THE libretto of my opera is by Gertrude Lawrence and is entirely meaningless, which is a great comfort to my way of thinking and saves a deal of wear and tear.—Lord Berners.