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The COUNTRY GENTLEMAN

The OLDEST AGRICULTURAL JOURNAL in the WORLD

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Painted by Joseph F. Kernan

Counties That Go Ahead—By E. H. TAYLOR

Films for the Country

Good Pictures and Equipment are Within Every Community's Reach—By Malcolm Henry

Here's the Hypocritically Praying Mantis, Waiting to Strike Down! Any Prey That Crosses Its Path. From the Film *The Tragedy of the Praying Mantis*

A GROUP of men, charged with the duty of putting over a great war drive, discussed ways and means round a board-room table at Washington. They had planned tag days, ballyhoos, lectures, advertisements, theater drives and what not when a shrewd chap at the foot of the table rose and said:

"Gentlemen, you've failed to take into account Uncle Sam's 6,000,000 farmer families; half of them may get your message, but the rest can't possibly get it the way you are working. Wilhelm, Hindenburg, Ludendorff will be dead and buried before your lecturers reach the folks off the main-traveled roads. The printed matter won't do the trick either. Like the rest of us, the farmers are circularized to death. Suppose, instead, we visualize this thing and bring it to their doors, so that everybody can get it."

The new-method man had captured the board's attention at once. As he outlined his bold plan, those who were skeptical at first became convinced of its soundness. The board resolved to supplement city and village drives by "eye appeal" to the country.

Within a fortnight gasoline buggies driven by bright young film men were on their way to the highlands of the Eastern Alleghanies. Some of the contraptions looked to be antique prairie schooners on newfangled auto trucks. Roomy enough for the driver's sleeping cot, not forgetting his coffeestove and his skillet; but inside were the generator and batteries of an electric-lighting system and a compact, up-to-date motion-picture machine of the portable variety.

On reaching isolated school, church or community house, the driver-operator set up the machine and quickly gave his "show." Post cards had heralded its coming; the folk were hungry for it. Replacing the wordy appeals of perhaps mediocre speakers, there were the actual moving scenes of what the Y's and KC's were accomplishing at the front; thrilling Red Cross incidents on many a stricken field; health pictures from the surgeon-general's office, showing how to combat disease. Whatever the good cause, the eye knowledge of fellow needs, distresses and triumphs was so quickly and potently conveyed that in many cases no further drive was necessary, the campaign being

won and the subscriptions secured right then and there.

The success of the picture wagons was demonstrated some thirty months ago, and though equipment was lacking to go into all parts of the country, the soundness of the new-method man's idea was amply proved—to bring the world in picture film to the people everywhere. First, because it is the shortest cut to knowledge; second, because it is entertaining and gives the country dweller his just and proper share of pleasures that were formerly available only in the cities and villages.

In order to attain this satisfactorily, each neighborhood ought to have its own motion-picture facilities—an essential part of sane and pleasurable living. Equipment is going ahead so rapidly that within the next decade it is probable the picture wagon will join its predecessor, the prairie schooner, in the limbo of curiosities, for every schoolhouse, church or other rural assembly place will have been amply equipped. The larger properties will have their picture palaces, just like the cities.

A Plantation's Movie Show

Down in Louisiana, in the vicinity of Mound, a gigantic cotton and lumber plantation is operated by the Maxwell-Yerger Company. Its 35,000 acres give employment or tenancy to 5000 people. Farseeing George S. Yerger realized that this population needed amusement just as imperatively as any urban hive of manufacturing industry. Mr. Yerger solved the problem by converting a company building into a movie, installing a good machine, lamp and screen and ordering a daily program of pictures from a New Orleans distributor. His six-nights-in-the-week show is a great success, and it is keeping the workers on the job.

A similar idea occurred to John Armstrong Chaloner, whose estate at Cobham,

Virginia, is off the beaten track of rails and trolleys. Mr. Chaloner rechristened a roomy cow barn the Merry Mills Theater. He put \$2000 worth of motion-picture equipment into it, provided comfortable sittings and arranged for a semi-weekly service of fiction plays and comedies from a Washington film establishment. Round Cobham ye old-time barn dance yields place to the greater joys of the barn movie; not only the tenants and the help enjoy it but landed Virginia from many miles round comes in its motor cars!

Like Mr. Yerger, the owner's only thought had been to recreate and amuse. Presently he discovered through a government man that the films are very useful too. A visit by Mr. Chaloner's representative to the Department of Agriculture resulted in his booking a weekly service of agricultural films that will aid his people in their work, giving fifteen minutes of solid pictorial facts and guidance either preceding or following the lighter fiction movies.

It is interesting to record the progress of the big fellows on the big properties, yet the rural film movement is emphatically a people's movement, and the greatest advance is being scored by hundreds of small communities. First and foremost, the consolidated school makes the change possible. Where several districts pool their resources in a really sizable union schoolhouse with ample rooms, a number of teachers and provision of auto barges to take the pupils back and forth, there's a much larger clientele to appeal to and much better prospect of making it a real center. The community assembly hall or auditorium usually provided in such buildings makes an ideal movie hall. Light movie equipment can be installed in such a school for \$300 to \$400; standard or regular-theater equipment at \$1000 to \$1200. To the above

figures \$435 must be added for a small lighting system if you have no electricity.

Where there's a will there's a way, says the old adage. The school superintendent of Multnomah County, Oregon, evidently believes so. He is buying a motion-picture machine and generator, and in his automobile will take the films to each of the rural schools in turn. On the other hand, a county superintendent in Minnesota has joined forces with the county agent in a campaign for school-installed machines. This means knowledge films for the school children, agricultural films for the farm workers, and no doubt in due course amusement films for everybody. Each community having a machine can get a weekly theatrical program of the latter sort for from \$12.50 to twenty-five dollars—a tiny fraction of what the individual members might easily spend for travel and admission to city movies!

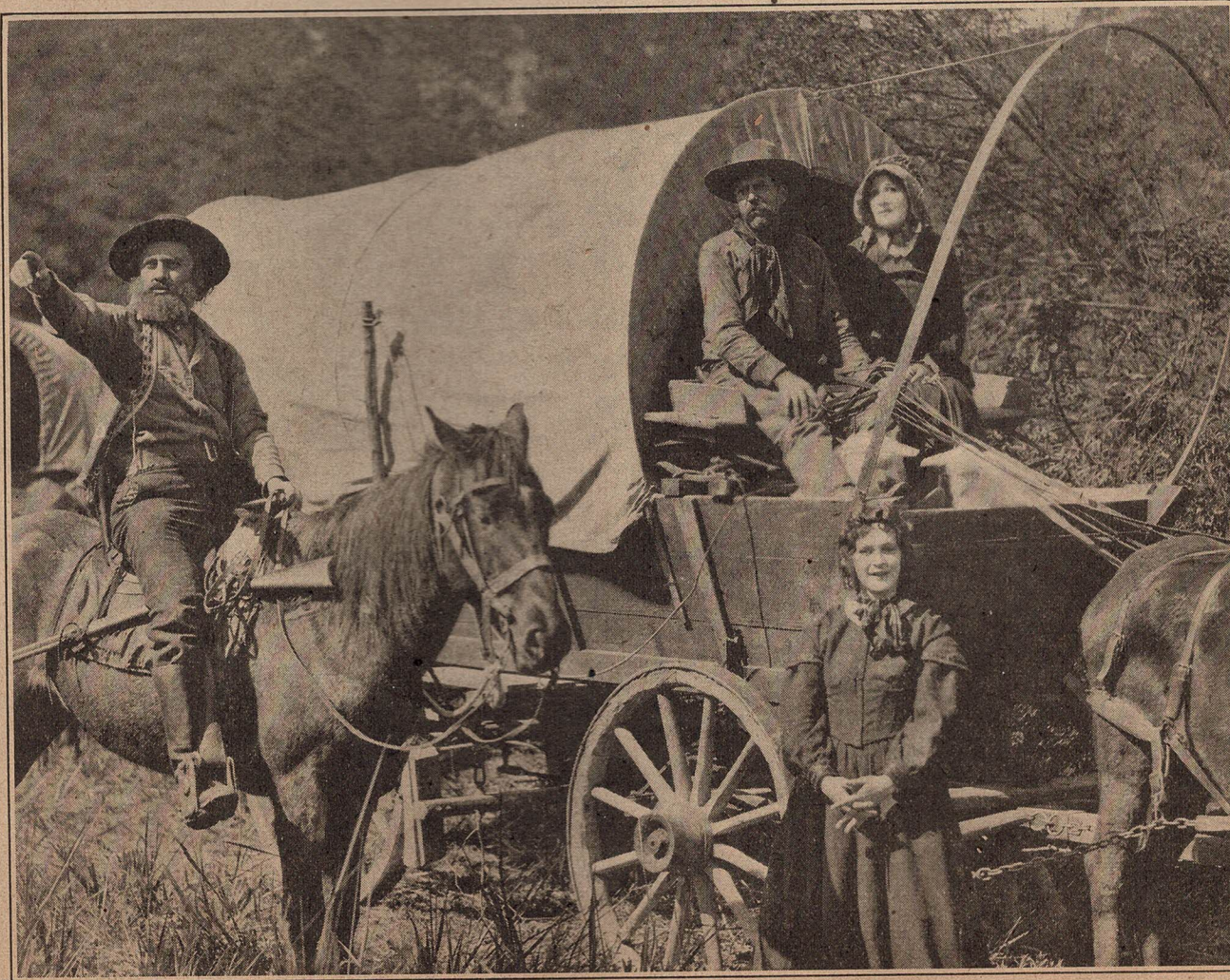
Thirty minutes' moving-picture geography imparts more knowledge of a land's physical and industrial resources than can be got by several days' hard study. Biology is a hard word, but the modern method through the motion picture makes the meaning of life development crystal clear; when this is accompanied by personal work with plant and animal specimens it becomes the most fascinating Nature study.

The Shorthand of Literature

Everybody knows that filmed stories are the shorthand of literature. Instead of ill-digested reading, such as many a book-loving child is prone to indulge in, the modern way gives the actual characters and scenes of Evangeline or Miles Standish or Huckleberry Finn or The Vicar of Wakefield in sixty or seventy minutes of motion pictures. The three R's are just as necessary as ever, of course; but so far as knowledge can be visually and

directly presented, the schoolhouse cinema brings the world right to the juvenile eyes, obviating the roundabout processes of hearsay and tiresome, confusing description.

Not only in school days but as long as we live we require more and better knowledge. The community movie is the community's information parlor. There weekly we can learn about health, sanitation, civics, world events, modern inventions, home and farm improvements, science and household art—not by way of things told to us but by actual pictures of people and processes in action. The Grange, the farm bureau, the home demonstrators and the clubs are most vitally concerned. They need the movie for their varied work, and so does the church. The pictorial sermon invariably brings the crowds to the church that can offer it. It is not sensationalism that the people are after but to see directly the events



The Prairie-Schooner Scene From the Filming of Zane Grey's Famous Novel, *The U. P. Trail*

and scenes of Scripture that have been so often narrated. These the good religious film attractively and yet reverently presents. Faith has been strengthened and good works have been multiplied by such popular presentations as *From the Manger to the Cross*, *God and the Man*, *The Stream of Life* and *The Chosen Prince*.

"Chief," wrote an extension agent to his Washington superior, "we can't get the people of this section to fight the tick pest or take the right measures against the boll weevil!"

The chief looked into the matter and found that the hard-working agents were in no way blamable. An old-time prejudice against dipping permitted the cattle tick to wax fat and slay many thousands of cattle annually. In boll-weevil prevention, the average small planter couldn't be convinced that daylight dusting wasn't just as good as the nighttime application recommended by the field agents. Uncle Sam decided to make and circulate two striking motion pictures about each subject.

The Charge of the Tick Brigade first showed the mortalities and then animated the author of the evil, Mrs. Tick, who in illustrated lecture thanked the owners for not dipping their cattle. The attack on prejudice was followed by *Making the South Tick Free*, which told of the \$40,000,000 loss of cattle annually and then pictured vividly the harmless yet effective process of immersing the cattle in the "canal to prosperity." As the result of this and other visual means 32,000 dipping vats are now working regularly and the title of the film is being made a reality.

Good-by, Weevil showed what lecture or still picture could never show—the difference between day and night applications of calcium arsenate to the young plants. Looking at the day series, any planter could see that the dust was dissipated directly it left the dust gun; whereas, under the heavy night dews and combining with them, it hung, a low white cloud, for several hundreds of yards behind the dust wagon, dripping its poisonous moisture on every stock, leaf or branch and visibly killing long trails of the cotton enemies in its wake.

A dramatic little story was worked into the demonstration. It "got" the planter and made the issue personal by dramatizing, first, Mr. Thomas, who doubted the idea and never made a crop; next, Mr. Slack, who left the job to hired carelessness, deriving almost no returns; finally, the big and the little fellow respectively who saw that the work was done right, whether with handgun or big machine, and picked bumper crops of cotton in the midst of a much-devastated area.

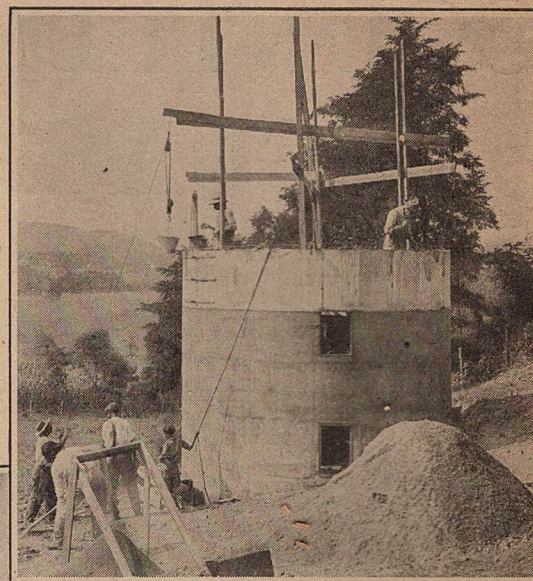
Uncle Sam's Big Selection

In the vaults and on the circuits of the United States Department of Agriculture are no less than 130 separate and distinct picture subjects. A great number of communities are finding it exceedingly well worth while to borrow from the 550 prints that the Government has available. Aside from their excellent quality of a pleasant mode of knowledge, the agricultural films show people how to do things, from selecting good egg layers to building a concrete or wooden-hoop silo, raising and improving the livestock, warding off plant and animal parasites, making plain and fancy cheeses, kitchen gardening or big-ranch farming, preserving and canning, pig clubs and egg circles, organizing community life or making dress forms for the ladies—the range is very wide, and is supplemented by much scenic and a little but growing nucleus of comic material.

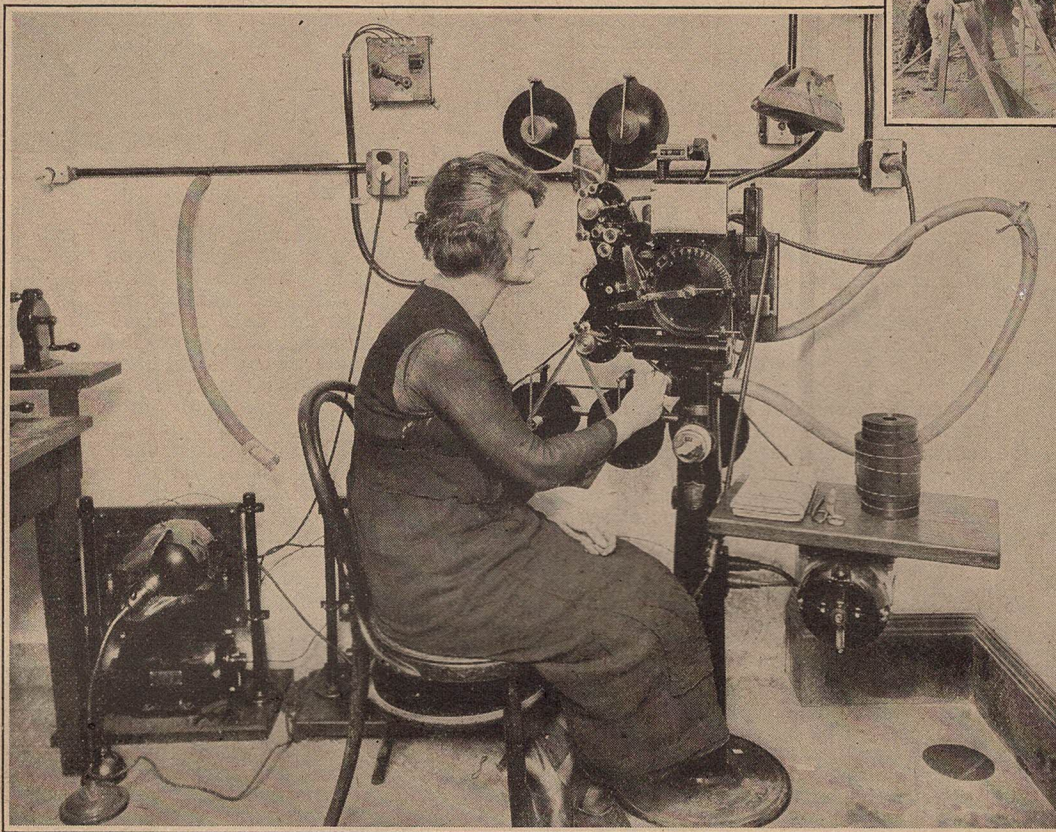
Unfortunately, prints are lacking to supply fully the enormous demands, but your county agent or field-extension agent of the department, if there be one in your vicinity, stands the best chance of getting you the loan of any considerable footage of this governmental picture library, which is growing in volume and in attractiveness every year.

Those who borrow films from the United States Bureau of Education branch depositories in the state universities are likely to get more husks than nutriment in the ratio of 80-20 or 90-10. The trouble is that the Signal Corps and the Committee on Public Information dumped their vast printed product on the Bureau of Education, which in turn dumped it on the universities. These war scenes are not now desirable. Nevertheless, the community leader who can take a trip to the state university, and is permitted by the authorities to pick and choose, can salvage much interesting stuff about Poland-China pigs, pure foods, pheasant shooting, oranges, concrete farm structures and macadam roads, scenic wonders of Colorado, how to safeguard health, and about sixteen other good topics.

Young and old folks alike want good fiction stories. In the old days the curtain was rung down on your favorite characters when you had completed a serial in *THE COUNTRY GENTLEMAN* or had read the last chapter of the book. Now it is different. Dick Gale, Kurt Dorn, Warren Neale, of the exciting Zane Grey stories, and other heroes of dauntless courage and manly deeds renew and heighten one's pleasure by appearing as flesh-and-blood folks on the screen of the motion-picture theaters. The *U. P. Trail*, *Riders of the Dawn*, *The Desert of Wheat*,



Every Step in Constructing a Concrete Silo is Shown in a Department of Agriculture Picture



A Government Film Girl, in the Department of Agriculture at Washington, Printing the Positive From the Negative Film

Some would-be users of knowledge films tend to become unduly discouraged if for one cause or another government service falls down. They forget that the picture appropriation of the Department of Agriculture is but \$13,000 a year, and the Bureau of Education hasn't any at all! The Young Men's Christian Association, the American Red Cross and other agencies provide fair service on terms ranging from mere postal charges to the top rental of \$2.50 a reel. There's a heap of information about the great U. S. A. that commercial houses are glad to picture and distribute at their own cost. These films, dealing with both raw materials and manufactures and including also some American and Canadian travel, are known as industrials.

Sixty Y. M. C. A. county secretaries are now circulating industrials in the rural neighborhoods of as many counties, and this number is largely on the increase. The American Red Cross has half a hundred good educational subjects to offer. The latter films mainly illustrate all kinds of interesting things in Europe and America. From Jacques to Johnny would certainly delight Yankee kids with its graphic pictures of how French boys live and work. Other equally suitable pictures are *Making the Desert Blossom*, *Poland's Harvest Skies*, *Children of the Sahara*, *Beside the Zuyder Zee*, *The Knowing Gnome*, and *Apple-Blossom Time in Normandy*. Some Red Cross divisions charge small rentals for their films, others do not; a catalogue can be had by writing the Picture Department at 220 West Forty-second Street, New York.

Beekeeping films from an Ohio company are being used in Indiana high schools. Taken in one of the biggest orchards in the country, they show every detail in handling the little workers and the honey, emphasizing the value of combining beekeeping with fruit growing.

Desert Gold and *The Man of the Forest* are doubly enjoyable now. Each of them has been made into a fine picture.

As with current or recent stories, so it is with classics. The boys and girls can see all their favorites, while the older people find enhanced in movie version the old-time thrill and romance of *Way Down East* or *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, the fun of *Mark Twain*, the delights of *Mrs. Wiggs* or *Little Women* and the unforgettable stories of *Tom Dixon*, *E. P. Roe*, *Augusta Evans* and other favorite writers.

Twenty-five dollars is the usual rental in almost any section for the important photoplay of recent date; half that amount for features two or three years old. Expressage or parcel postage on films must also be paid both ways.

One service a week is usually quite sufficient; if the school hall be small, the feature can be shown to the children in the afternoon and to the adults that same night before shipping it back to the exchange. Immediately before or after the feature there can be presented a short comedy or one of the educational reels that have been previously described.

The most successful communities pay the most attention to the careful picking of their pictures. In the way of rural

(Continued on Page 44)



A Pretty Scene From *Riders of the Dawn*, the Thrilling Picture Drama Founded on Zane Grey's Northwestern Epic, *The Desert of Wheat*

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"How Do You Like My New Hat?"

WITH these words Mrs. Helen Freeman surprised and delighted her little family, waiting for mother to go to church with them, by appearing in the doorway of the sitting room wearing a becoming new hat instead of the shabby old velvet one they had expected to see. "Oh, mother, how pretty you look!" cried her daughter delightedly. "Some nice-looking lady," chimed in Bud. And Jason Freeman was every bit as pleased to see his wife looking so nice as were the children.

See to it That You Have New Clothes for Easter

Why shouldn't a woman take pride in her appearance? It is the greatest of mistakes not to, even though she has a big family of children, even though she may live in the country.

That was what Mrs. Freeman had realized when she began avoiding meetings and church gatherings; she was so sick of the old clothes she had to wear.

This year the Freemans have found cash very scarce. It has been hard to keep the children in shoes and to buy the other necessities for the family. And it looked as if the bright spring days would find the family worse off than before.

But Helen Freeman believes in living in the present; believes that being happy NOW is more important than hoping to have all you need next fall, maybe. She could not see her children or herself without new clothes at Eastertime.

So—all she did was to write to find out about THE COUNTRY GENTLEMAN's plan for a home woman to make extra money in spare time. You have read of it before, I am sure: The Girls' Club, it is called. Any girl or woman reader may join it, without cost. The Club gives each and



The Family Will be Proud of You

interesting way. You surely ought to find out about it. Remember, it doesn't cost you a cent, now or later. How nice it will be for you to tuck an extra \$10 in your pocketbook whenever you want it for something "special." Write me to-day, and let me tell you how. A note or a postal card from you saying: "I surely would like to know what The Girls' Club is, and how I can make money in my spare time through your plan," will bring an immediate reply, so that you will lose no time getting started at making this extra money. Sit down now and address your letter to me as

THE MANAGER OF THE GIRLS' CLUB

971 Independence Square
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Films for the Country

(Continued from Page 11)

drama you might try Charles Ray in Paris Green, The Sheriff's Son, Peaceful Valley, Nineteen and Phyllis; Will Rogers in Jubilo, Boys Will be Boys and Honest Hutch; Mary Pickford in Heart o' the Hills and Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm; Robert Warwick in Told in the Hills and In Mizoura; Marguerite Clark in Mrs. Wiggs and The Goose Girl; Vivian Martin in The Home-Town Girl or Louisiana; Lionel Barrymore's The Copperhead; King Vidor's The Jack-knife Man; W. S. Hart's The Toll Gate; Griffith's The Romance of Happy Valley.

For Western adventure, the Zane Grey dramatizations are all to be recommended, and so also are the virile William S. Hart plays. The Tarzan pictures give corking animal stories. Sea stories always have a strong appeal, from the classic of Treasure Island up to the titanic passions of The Sea Wolf. Serious or emotional drama like The Miracle Man, Quo Vadis? or Les Misérables should be varied and intermingled with lighter fare such as Daddy Long Legs, Little Women, Captain Kidd, Polly of the Circus or Bunty Pulls the Strings. Two excellent short-comedy series are Chapin's The Son of Democracy—incidents in the life of Lincoln—and Booth Tarkington's inimitable Edgar "kid" comedies.

The rural neighborhood ought to be willing to spend at least as much on picture rentals as on its books and library upkeep. While the short educational reels

may be had free or at nominal cost from the government or allied agencies, the annual expenditure of \$500 to \$750 for feature rentals will provide the community with a first-class picture drama each and every week of the season.

Picture machines do not cost very much more than phonographs now. As they become cheapened in price and thoroughly popularized, the individual farmer and his family can sit at home and enjoy seeing the world through the magic of the action pictures.

WHERE INFORMATION CAN BE OBTAINED

F. W. Perkins, Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C.

Motion Picture Department, American Red Cross, 220 West 42d Street, New York City.

Industrial Department, Y. M. C. A., 347 Madison Avenue, New York City.

Methodist Episcopal Church Conservation Committee, 111 Fifth Avenue, New York City.

National Catholic Council, Washington, D. C.

Dr. E. L. Crandall, Director Visual Education, 157 East 67th Street, New York City.

National Board of Review of Motion Pictures, 70 Fifth Avenue, New York City.

EDITOR'S NOTE—This is the first of three articles by Mr. Henry. The next will appear in an early issue.

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