

Sound Men Discuss Problem Stars

HOLLYWOOD. — Voices which emanate from the screen may be sweet music to the ears of fans, but to the sound men who have to listen to them all day they're nothing but headaches.

Francis Scheid, who draws a Warner pay cheque for heading the sound effects and recording crew, confided some of his problem children.

According to Scheid, Joseph Cotton sounds like Orson Welles, due in part to the fact that he was a member of Welles' Mercury Theatre. Pat O'Brien sometimes whispers unknowingly, while Claude Rains puts so much into his acting that he often becomes breathless. It is the job of the men at the sound-mixing machines to fix up the normal voices of the stars into dulcet tones.

"The hardest voice I've worked with belongs to Rains," said Scheid. "He threw sound recorders into a tizzy when he first arrived in Hollywood. His voice is so completely different from anyone else's, sort of light and breathy."

Frank Sarver, another sound technician, had a word to say about his pet peeve. "Pat O'Brien played a scene so low the other day that even the director couldn't hear him."

According to Scheid the sexiest female voice in Hollywood belongs to Ingrid Bergman. "At middle register her voice is rich and vibrant, which gives it a wonderfully disturbing quality." He added, "It's sexy in a refined, high-minded way."

Both the men reckoned the sexiest male voices in town belonged to brothers George Sanders and Tom Conway who, they say, sound exactly alike.

For his second choice Scheid said he'd choose Charles Boyer, who sometimes gets so involved

with his French accent that the sound men have trouble understanding him.

Scheid revealed that one of the biggest problems for recorders is the legitimate actor or actress who is used to shouting over footlights in a large theatre. Ethel Barrymore's voice has been so softened for films, he says, that it couldn't carry past the second row in a real live theatre.

"Colds are our worst enemies," said Scheid.

Both men agreed that Jean Arthur had the most unusual movie voice. It's like thick honey. Her nearest rival is Ann Sheridan, who, they say, can get out of one voice and into another at the drop of a hat.

Korda Film Postponed

LONDON. — "Bonnie Prince Charlie," an Alexander Korda opus scheduled to go into production next week, may be postponed indefinitely because Korda cannot find an actress for the part of Flora McDonald.

DEBORAH Kerr, Scottish and red-haired, would make a perfect Flora. She was Korda's original choice, but Deborah's now a star at M.G.M. Studios, Hollywood, and lost to British films for at least five years.

Negotiations started to borrow Irish redhead Kathleen Ryan from J. Arthur Rank, but fell through as she's retired to have a baby.

WITH hundreds of aspirants for film fame in Scotland for England to choose from, Korda must be setting a high standard for an actress to play the part opposite David Niven, who is returning from Hollywood for the title role.

PATRICIA Roc, acknowledged possessor of the best figure in British films, is wearing off-the-peg utility frocks, all costing less than £5, in "When the Bough Breaks."

The woman producer of the film, Betty Box, is responsible for this decision in the interest of realism. "Pat plays the part of a working girl. No working girl can afford made-to-order clothes, and thousands of working girls who'll see the film realise this," said Miss Box.

ALTHOUGH cheap, the clothes are the latest styles, including a candy-striped cotton evening dress of ballerina style, and several frilly United States type house frocks which fans will want to copy.



Irene Manning went into films from light opera to play opposite singing cowboy Gene Autry as Hope Manning. She changed Hope to Irene when she became a Warner Bros. star in "Yankee Doodle Dandy" and "Desert Song".

SEPARATION RUMOR SCOTCHED

HOLLYWOOD.—Ingrid Bergman's husband is busy squelching rumors of separation between them. He has bought all sorts of things to surprise her when she returns to California from New York where she has been acting in a stage play, "Joan of Lorraine." Among his surprises was to be a swimming pool, a luxury in which Ingrid hadn't yet indulged. He spent £2,000 on a tile-bottomed pool and then discovered there was no water pressure on the estate to fill it.

JOAN Crawford has finally signed her new contract with Warners. The deal has been hanging fire for a year, but Joan feels it was worth waiting for. She'll make two pictures per year for seven years without options for something like £160,000 per year. This makes her the highest paid movie actress under contract in Hollywood. Two years ago, before she made "Mildred Pierce," people were saying the Crawford career was over.

TYRONE Power's settlement on Annabella gives her £25,000 a year for the next 10 years. It's one of the most lavish settlements ever made in a Hollywood divorce.

FRED MacMurray, one of the wealthiest stars, had his income tax problems all figured out so he'd have to pay the least money possible, then he made a guest appearance on a radio show without consulting his accountant. For the deal Fred was paid £1,700, but actually lost £1,300. The additional income boosted him into a higher tax bracket.

LATE newspaper columnist O. O. McIntyre once said, "It takes a superb actor to say convincingly 'I love you.'" Actors, directors, and writers in Hollywood agree. Studios go to great lengths to prevent the necessity of hero or heroine uttering those three little words.

In "Two Guys From Texas," Dennis Morgan kisses the heroine. She asks, "What's that for?" Instead of replying, Dennis breaks out in a song called "Every Day I Love You," working on the theory it's easier to sing than say the fateful words.

Personality Parade

By MARY ARMITAGE

United Artists joyfully report that Howard Hughes' "The Outlaw" has passed the Commonwealth Film Censor, though with a "not suitable for general exhibition" tag. In effect, this means that anyone can see it, but it's not classed suitable for the kiddies.

IN England, it got a "universal exhibition" pass. In the U.S.A. it struck more trouble than Hughes' earlier "Hell's Angels," and for much the same reason—the emphasis placed on the heroine's contours. Then it was Jean Harlow; now it's Jane Russell.

Indecency charges were laid against it in San Francisco. Instructing the jury, the obliging judge said: "We have seen Jane Russell. She is an attractive specimen of American womanhood. God made her what she is." Jane and "The Outlaw" were cleared, and although critics were disrespectful, the movie made a large amount of money.

IT was interesting to hear Chips Rafferty flatly deny the rumor that Ealing Studios would slip in a "quickie" before going on to make "Eureka Stockade." At British Empire Films' trade screening at North Adelaide's Piccadilly Theatre he said that "Eureka" would certainly be Ealing's next, and that though no date was set for production, Harry Watt's assistant producer would arrive in Australia this month, and cameras would roll before the end of this year.

YOUR QUERIES...

"Wondering" (Tusmore).—"Red Sky at Morning" was made in Australia in 1943, but I've no record of its release, or of its having obtained its quota registration certificate. "Power and the Glory" was made in 1940-1, and released in Sydney at the Mayfair on April 4, 1941, where it ran four weeks. Principals were Eric Bush, Lou Vernon, and Katrin Roselle. You can write to Peter Finch, c/o J. Walter Thompson (Aust.) Pty. Ltd., Asbestos House, 65 York street, Sydney.

"Dreamy" (Thebarton).—Drummer in "Stork Club" was Andy Russell; you may be able to reach him through Paramount, but he's rot on the company's permanent list. If players think fan mail worth encouraging, they'll usually stand the cost themselves; if they don't, a few stamps won't make them change their minds.

"Film Fan" (no address).—Richard Lyon is the son of Bebe Daniels, and her husband Ben Lyon. He's about 12 or 13, has appeared in "Anna and the King of Siam," "The Unseen," "Green Years," "Howards of Virginia," and "Transatlantic Convoy." Ben and Bebe adopted Richard in London in 1934. No more queries can be answered unless accompanied by the sender's full name and address.

"E. H. A." (Tranmere).—Oscar Asche's "Chu Chin Chow" ran in London from August, 1916, to July, 1921.

Scientist Sees Films As Drugs

LONDON, Saturday. — Most films are harmful to our nervous systems—drugs which undermine our physical and spiritual health, says Jacob Mayer, lecturer in sociology at the London School of Economics.

For several years, up to 1945, Mayer was doing research into audience reactions for J. Arthur Rank. The association ended when Mayer wanted to conduct independent research.

Horror films, he says, cause fright, shock, terror, and nightmares. Other films reduce audiences to types, because film characters are artificially typed. All types try to become Garsons and Oliviers.

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