

A Fan's Adventures in Hollywood

She has a wonderful time experiencing the thrills of being an actress—with make-up, costume, and everything—even fan mail.

By Ethel Sands

WHEN the editor of PICTURE-PLAY jolted me out of at least three years' growth by sending me all the way to California to write a fan's impressions of the stars and studios, I thought that nothing that could happen to me after that would surprise me. And then when I visited Wallace Reid out at his house and went riding with Rodolph Valentino I found myself just as breathless and excited as I was the first time I visited a studio. After that I began to get anxious and to wonder whether the rest would be an anticlimax. I've always expected that the time would come when I'd lose my enthusiasm; but whenever I get to thinking about that, something comes along that sweeps me off my feet and proves to me that I'm just a fan after all and as enthusiastic as ever.

That is what happened when I was asked if I wanted to play extra in an Alice Lake picture. Well, I was thrilled. Of course, the experience was not entirely new because I had been in a little test film with Corinne Griffith and I had played extra back in New York in a Bert Lytell picture. But this time I was to get made up and wear a company costume and do everything the way a regular extra does.

A large number of extras were engaged for the picture as there was to be an elaborate bazaar scene, so it was necessary to go to the studio the day before the scene was to be taken to get fitted for a costume.

The Metro studio is an unusually attractive one with a long, low white office building in front and several big inclosed stages and buildings in the rear.

A very pleasant young girl from the Metro publicity office took me over to the wardrobe department to see about my costume. There were several women there—some working on sewing machines. One of the women led us upstairs, where there were just heaps of beautiful costumes of every description hanging in glass closets. It was enough to make any girl want to be an extra just for a chance to wear one of those gowns. I didn't know that the companies furnished the clothes for the extras before, and maybe they don't except for special occasions. I noticed there weren't any everyday clothes hanging around—only elaborate ones.

The wardrobe mistress selected two very beautiful black gowns, and led me into a dressing room to try them on. The first was a stunning affair of black jet trimmed with net and a long train, but I thought it a little too severe for me, and I was afraid I'd get all tangled up in the train. Besides, the lady mentioned that Alice Lake had worn the other gown, so of course I preferred that. It seemed to take on an added glamour at once, and it was pretty, anyway. The black velvet skirt was draped at one side and at the waist was a large red velvet rose with a streamer of buds hanging down. The bodice was embroidered with pearls, and

the shoulder straps were of pearl beads. A long panel hung in back, lined with silver cloth, and a gorgeous silver scarf went with it. Every girl knows how different lovely clothes make you feel. It was easy to imagine myself a star in that gown!

After I got dressed in my own clothes again the publicity woman took me around to show me the studio. It's great to go around a busy studio—you get such fascinating glimpses of different stars at work or waiting around.

"Here comes Gareth Hughes," my guide said, and sure enough it was. Seeing him again reminded me of how terribly thrilled I was that first time I visited a motion-picture company, for he was the first actor I met. He remembered me and said I must be sure and come out to see his home some time, and asked me how I had liked "Sentimental Tommy" after I saw it on the screen. He is very proud of "Sentimental Tommy." Then some one pointed out Lewis Stone to me, and a moment later I recognized Stuart Holmes who was standing near the Hughes set where a wedding scene was to take place. I thought of the days when I used to shudder at his arch villainies with Theda Bara and Claire Whitney. If you had told me at that time that I was going to meet Stuart Holmes in real life, I feel sure I would have died of fright, so impressed was I with his screen villainy. He didn't seem to look so terribly fierce and wicked at close range now, but perhaps he has reformed a bit since he hasn't got Theda Bara to goad him on.

They were just putting the finishing touches to the set for the Alice Lake picture when we walked on to meet Maxwell Karger, the director. He remembered letting me join the crowd when he was directing Bert Lytell back in New York. He was very nice, and said I could get in the picture that very afternoon if I wanted to appear in a garden scene, but as I had another engagement I couldn't accept.

Going off that stage we ran into Rex Ingram. It seemed hardly believable that the director of such masterpieces as "The Four Horsemen" and "The Conquering Power" could be such a young man. He is so good-looking in an Irish way with blue eyes and black hair that you almost wish he'd play his own heroes in his pictures. One would almost envy his wife if she wasn't such a lovely person herself. Every one speaks well of Alice Terry; whenever she is mentioned you always hear what a sweet girl she is. I met her later on in her dressing room. She was sitting at her dressing table in a negligee with her auburn hair in a thick, long braid over her shoulder. I missed the blond wig at first, but her own color hair becomes her every bit as well. She has very large, wistful eyes, and the same sincere, quiet manner that makes her so charming on the screen. You wouldn't think that a distinctive girl like Alice Terry

WESTERN STUFF

Those handsome heroes of the West who ride hard, shoot straight, and live nobly, come in for a lot of kidding from all sides, but down in their hearts most people like them immensely. Ethel Sands does, so naturally she wanted to meet William S. Hart and some of the other actors identified with "Westerns." The ones she met—William S. Hart, Harry Carey, Jack Hoxie, and "Snowy" Baker—were all that she had hoped they would be, and they showed her many interesting and surprising things about the making of "Westerns." She will tell you what a nice and jolly sort these men are next month.

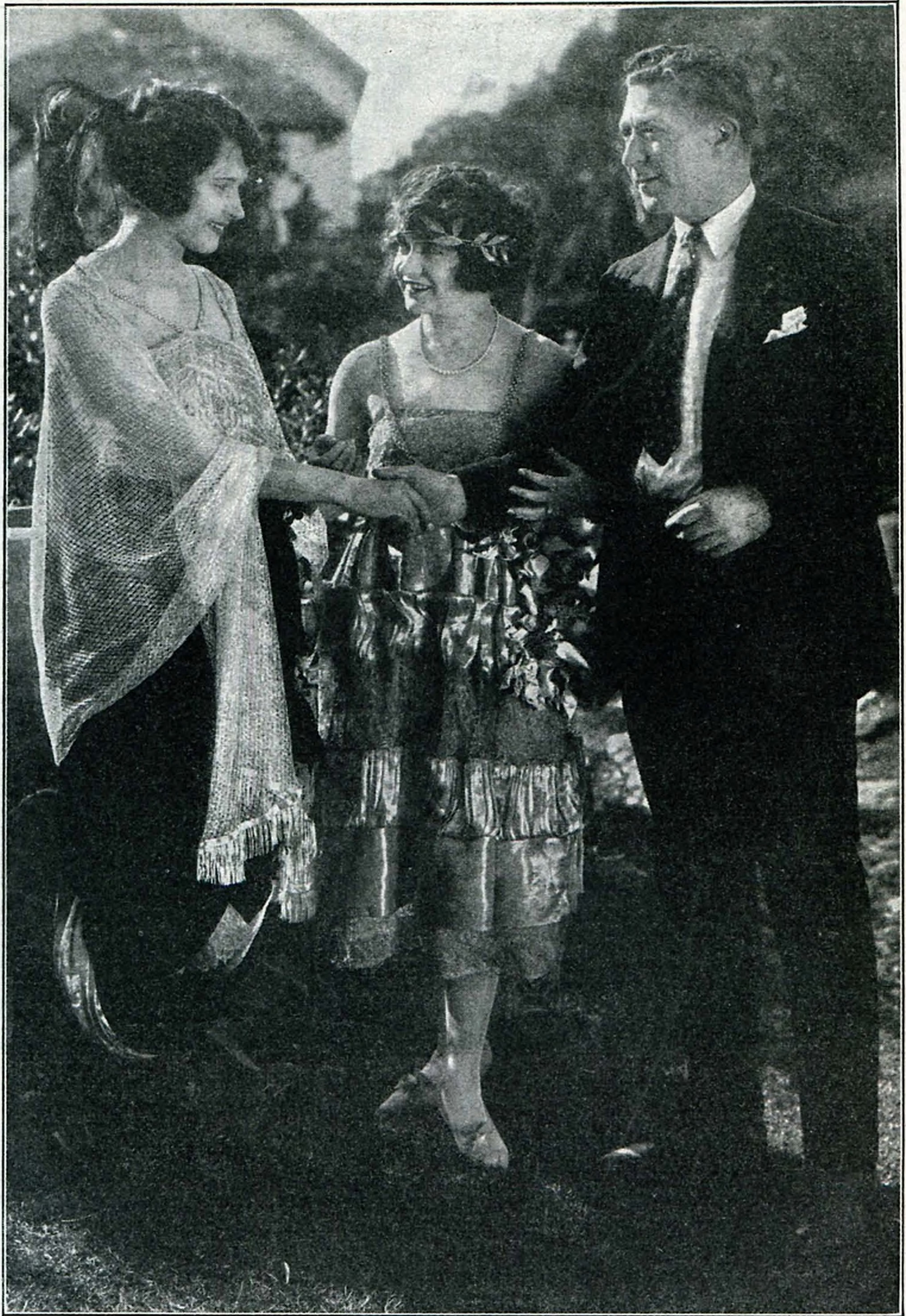
would have had to be an extra girl for several years before she was recognized, would you? But she finally arrived, so you see there is always a chance if you have the courage to stick to it.

The next morning a car called for me quite early. So far I was being pampered; they certainly don't do *that* for ordinary extras. You're supposed to be at the studio at nine o'clock, ready to go on the set. So I found a good many extras were making up and some were all ready when I arrived there; then I learned that many of the more experienced ones make up at home where they can take their time and make a better job of it than when they have to hurry and crowd in with a lot of others.

All the girls and women seemed to be headed for the hairdresser, so I went there first. I never knew before that the extra girls were accorded the privilege of having their hair dressed, but they are. The hairdresser certainly had a great deal of patience, and worked fast because there was a big crowd of women, and they all had to be ready on time. I watched several girls return and ask to have their hair arranged differently as they thought it didn't become them the way it was done. Many of the girls wore fanciful costumes such as Japanese or South Sea Islanders, but if they didn't think the style of hairdressing particularly suited them, they asked to have their hair fixed more becoming to the face than to the character. It amused me to see little Japanese maidens with fluffy, bobbed hair, and one little South Sea maid had her hair marcelled and brilliantined very nice and slick—but as she happened to look rather remarkably like Gloria Swanson that way no one could blame her for insisting on it.

Finally my turn came, and my hair was swiftly marcelled and arranged. The hairdresser suggested that some sort of ornament would put a finishing touch to it, so she got some long, trailing feathers and pinned them to one side of my hair. And then after I had got myself into the velvet gown, came what I thought would be the fascinating business of making up.

Fans, if you think it's an easy matter to make yourself beautiful simply by plastering your face with grease paint and powder—you're mistaken. Making up is an art—I've tried it. With all my movie adventures, I had never yet been made up for the camera, so I was eager to try my hand at it. There were all the ingredients before me. The sticks of grease paint, powder, lip rouge, eyebrow pencils, mascara, and liquid white.



Ethel Sands and Alice Lake were all dressed up for the bazaar scene in "Kisses" but they stopped long enough on the way to the set to chat with Richard Tucker.

Now I didn't have the idea that a good many fans I know have—that if they could just be made up they would rival Mary Pickford or Katherine MacDonald. I had learned better than that.

When I first saw the movie players in their make-up and saw how hideous it usually makes them—to the eye—I was very much puzzled. Then I found that the studio make-up isn't intended nearly so much as an aid to beauty as it is to correct some things that the camera does to our faces in the way of accentuating shadows, making red appear black, and so on.

Knowing that, I had not expected to become transformed into a star by means of grease paint. But I thought it wouldn't be very hard to get the stuff on the way the others did, which I knew would be necessary if I were to photograph well.



In the big bazaar scene in "Kisses," Ethel Sands can be seen at the extreme right; her head just shows above the girl in the foreground who is carrying a basket of flowers.

The press lady didn't know much more about it than I did, but we decided it didn't matter much how you got the stuff on as long as you plastered yourself with it, and so we started in.

The cold cream was easy, but we were soon tripped up on the grease paint. It's in a long, thick stick, you know, and it has to be rubbed on hard before it comes off onto your face. Smear it on we did, but because of it being so hard, we couldn't get anything but heavy streaks. The powder would even it up, we thought, so I put it on thickly. Then I looked in the glass to see how much I was transformed.

I was transformed, all right—into a more than fair imitation of a clown. My face was all streaks from the way we applied the grease paint without smoothing it. Gracious, will I ever forget how queer I looked!

It was too much for our sense of humor, and we nearly went into hysterics. I sobered down, though, when I thought how far from funny it would have been if I had been depending on my appearance to advance me in the film world.

Cold cream came to the rescue to take the stuff all off, so we could start again. Experience had taught—and this time we got it on more smoothly, but there wasn't much time left, so we had to work fast. I could only apply the rouge and pencils hastily, as best

I could, and after several attempts with the mascara brush—in which I succeeded in getting some in my eyes, making them smart so that I thought I was blinded—I finally was ready.

Downstairs we met Alice Lake getting the finishing touches to her costume. My! She was a beautiful vision in a most beautiful gown. She reminded me quite a bit of Alice Brady. She is small, with the same dark-brown hair and eyes. Her hair was curled, and she wore a bandeau of a spray of silver leaves around her head. Her gown was of orchid color with wide silver lace, and a great bunch of orchid satin flowers hung from the waist at one side, and the bodice and shoulder straps were of rhinestones. She looked like a lovely hothouse flower and sparkled like a jewel.

At first you feel self-conscious parading across the big stages in evening dress, and the make-up feels funny and strange on your face. I felt as though everybody must know I was a rank amateur at all this, but nobody paid much attention to me so I guess I wasn't as conspicuous as I felt. When I reached the set it was crowded with extras, and I got a bit of stage fright because I never had been in such a mob before. They were only extras, but to me they were experienced veterans—and I felt like—well, just an inexperienced fan among them all.

I sat down on a box and waited as every one else seemed to be doing. I felt half nervous and yet eager. A set ready for action is always the most thrilling thing. There seems to be excitement attached to it—something like there is just before the last day of school.

The set was a dazzling one. It was supposed to be a bazaar scene and was decorated very much like a De Mille set. I only wish the screen could show up the beautiful colors of it. Bright colored lanterns and balloons were strung across the set and in the background a fancy staircase led up to the balcony on both sides—where the orchestra was. Wheels of chance and beautifully decorated booths were plentiful.

Alice Lake's booth was in the center. It was a huge basket, the handle making a bower of flowers and the counters were laden with boxes of candy. Miss Lake saw me and came over and sat beside me, and I didn't feel so strange and lost then. She outlined the story for me so I knew what it was all about. The title of the picture was "Kisses," and unlike the rest of her pictures is not going to be so heavily dramatic. She called Harry Myers, who plays her leading man, over to meet me. I felt as though he had just stepped out of "The Connecticut Yankee," so like his pictures does he look. Mr. Myers held a megaphone he was going to use in the scene, and had added an individual touch by decorating it with flowers and a balloon.

"Say, that's a good idea," admired Alice, "only don't let any of the others see it, or they'll copy it—hide it," and attempting to conceal the balloon in the mouth of the megaphone, she pushed too hard and with a loud bang it burst right in our faces. This tickled Alice. She went into gales of laughter. Then Harry Myers had to go off in search of another balloon.

"You know," Alice explained to me, "you have to be careful about your actions on a crowded set like this, because the extras copy the principals and stars, and if you think up something original like Mr. Myers did and let them see it, by the time they're ready to shoot the scene, every one has duplicated it. If people could only be more original in the movies, they would get farther—especially extra players. There was a certain extra girl that we used to use quite a bit, and she began to copy every move I made. She copied the way I fixed my hair, and if we were on the set together I couldn't do a thing without her imitating it. It made me nervous and fidgety, and it looked ridiculous on the screen, so finally they couldn't use her any more. That's how a good many extra players hinder themselves."

She told me there were three of her gowns, including the one I had on, being worn on the set.

"See that little girl with reddish, bobbed hair," Miss Lake pointed out one of the girls in the crowd. "She used to double for Nazimova." Much to my surprise, she turned out to be one of the little girls from the Studio Club. A middle-aged man and woman came on the set then, and Alice Lake introduced me to her parents. They had come to watch the scene, so they sat on a slightly raised platform where the cameras and director stood.

Alice was called away to her booth, and one of the assistant directors called everybody on the floor.

Rehearsals were about to begin!

He distributed the extras in different parts of the set—told them just where to stand and where to walk to when a certain number was called. I was somewhat familiar with the method because I remembered Mr. Karger using it when he made a mob scene for "The Message of Mars." Several assistant directors were carrying out his orders and filling in the people in the foreground and around Alice Lake's booth, and they gave us things we were supposed to have bought.

To the novice it all seemed funny at first; a Japanese girl would offer me a cup of tea and I'd take it and never think of drinking it, but return it when another rehearsal was called. Perfectly strange extras would rush up to me, or nod as they passed by, and I soon found myself turning to any one and saying the most ridiculous things so as to appear well acquainted. Gentlemen bought flowers from the pretty flower girls and presented them gallantly to extras they'd never seen before, and when the camera stopped every one would have to go around giving everything back.

Finally, everything was ready. The lights went on, bathing the set in a dazzling glow. The orchestra up in the balcony began to play, the people started to dance, and the gay crowds commenced to promenade the floor. It seemed a wonderful transformation. People standing around in groups at the sound of "All right, now! Let's try it," become suddenly one happy, laughing crowd. When you're in it you soon catch the spirit, and soon forget that the eagle eye of the camera is recording every little move and expression.

Oh, it's fun in a way!

It's like being a kid again and playing make-believe. There was all that crowd of people, all in full regalia—elderly grand dames and gentlemen, pretty young girls, young men and lots of little tots—all playing that we were rich society people, and all knew each other. Then—suddenly—the camera ceased clicking, the lights went out—and the spell was broken! We were all strangers again, some tired, some sad. I seemed to be the only happy one, and I guess it was because I wasn't worried about my next job the way the rest were.

Alice Lake was in her booth, with Harry Myers standing near by. I was paired off with another girl, and all that was required of us was to mingle with the crowd and walk from one booth to another looking at their wares. We'd stand in our places, and when our number was called that would be our cue for action. Of course, in a scene like this that's so important, it requires quite a bit of time and rehearsal to get it all to go smoothly—when they hear the camera clicking at first the people get a little rattled, and empty spaces in the crowds are left. We must have done that scene

Viola Dana let Ethel Sands share her fan mail—and now she can give any one tips on what to write to a star.



over a dozen times or more before it was satisfactorily shot.

The next scene was where Harry Myers acts as "barker" for Alice Lake's booth, and the extras were supposed to crowd around him when he gets up and shouts, "Come and buy a homemade kiss—sweet as the girl who makes them!"

This scene didn't go very well. We didn't seem to be doing it right no matter what we did. Too many would get around the booth and leave the foreground empty, or just the opposite. About the sixth time, Maxwell Karger lost his patience and exploded.

"For Heaven's sake, *wake up*, you people!" he roared. "Don't be afraid to work—you're getting paid for it! Pay attention to what you're doing—all I hear is, 'See you again at six o'clock!'" And I heard him say to one of his assistants, "All they're doing is making dates! It's a good-looking crowd, but you can't get anything out of them."

"Well, you said you wanted a bunch of young people," said the assistant, "and now you've got 'em."

"Perhaps if the orchestra was kept playing it might liven them up a bit," suggested June Mathis, the well-known scenario writer, who seemed to be the only calm person around. So they struck up "Ain't We Got Fun." Only nobody seemed to be having so much fun—but me. Every one was tired. I would have been, too, if it hadn't been for the novelty of it. The day was unseasonably hot, and the lights added to it. Even the stars were not spared, as Alice Lake and Mr. Myers had to go through their action every time we did. One o'clock came and only two or three scenes had been taken. Perspiring assistant directors were racing around,

and Mr. Karger was fairly tearing his hair and yelling like mad. Then some notes of a previous scene were lost, and every one had forgotten what the numbers were of the extras who had been standing around the booth! Even the extras themselves didn't remember if they had been standing there. If they took the next scene without being certain, it would make a bad mix-up when the scenes were put together. As it was past noon, Alice Lake suggested that maybe we could all work better if we had something to eat. So we all trailed off to luncheon at a tiny little restaurant across the way, where every one in the studio eats. It seemed so queer to see people out in the street in evening gowns, walking along complacently.

The restaurant was tiny and jammed full of people, and I felt so confused I was terribly relieved when Alice Lake beckoned me over to sit by her. There wasn't much variety in the menu; just frankfurters, ham, potato salad, and things like that. It was so warm and smoky I couldn't eat much, but Alice's spirits weren't dampened any, and she ate heartily. Apparently, she is used to it. She seems the last one you'd think would play such heavy dramatic rôles in pictures, she's so gay and happy-go-lucky herself. "Gracious, do you always have to work in such hot weather as this?" I asked.

"Do we!" She fell back in her seat. "Well, I should say so and when it's much hotter, too. You can imagine what it's like in summer."

Even my hitherto unquenchable enthusiasm for movie acting was beginning to waver.

"Hello, Vi!" shouted Alice, and who should come dancing up to our table but Viola Dana, Alice's best

Continued on page 86

Pat is at the superlative age of seventeen; she longs for sensations.



Soda Pop—Plus

Not a very dignified characterization for a young woman of Patsy Ruth Miller's attainments, but a true one.

By Myrtle Gebhart

TO begin with, I was prejudiced against Patsy Ruth Miller more than a year ago because her father bought the white stucco bungalow I wanted my mother to buy. However, we settled down across the street from each other and became friends in spite of it, for nobody could resist "Pat," with her impish humor.

I remember when Patsy Ruth had just started in pictures and I took her to a preview at the Ambassador. She was just as thrilled at seeing all the celebrities as any one in the crowd. When Enid Bennett passed us, Patsy reached out a bold hand.

"I touched Enid Bennett!" she said, as thrilled as any fan.

And we took the wrong car going home and got lost and when we finally reached there, after dark, her father was doing a Marathon up and down the street, had called out the cops, and had a murderous look in his eyes. Soon after that we moved to another part of town, and I hadn't seen Patsy since she became a Goldwyn leading lady.

Brother Winston opened the door, a saucy voice bade me enter, and I perceived what appeared to be a duet of mother and daughter on the bench before the grand piano—but it proved to be Patsy getting sewed into a new blouse.

"I've got the lace on the collar and one cuff, but this child won't be still," Mother Miller laughed; "I have to catch her on the fly, trailing along behind with my needle."

After Patsy Ruth had got sewed up respectably, dinner was served. Patsy's Aunt Catherine was there from New York with her small son. Then there was Mother and Father Miller, Brother Winston, Pat, and me. Also Rags, a new addition to the family—a wire-haired canine with a face that would never get him in the movies.

Continued from page 50

pal. The two of them are inseparable, and they're the cutest things together, always joking and teasing each other. On our way back to the set, we met Richard Tucker and we all had our pictures taken together in a tiny little garden in the midst of the studio buildings. Then we went back to work until finally the day was over and every one from extra to star and director was pretty nearly worn out.

EDITORIAL NOTE.—Readers of Ethel Sands' "Adventures" will be interested in seeing the Metro picture, "Kisses," which she tells about acting in in this article. The bazaar scenes which she describes are not merely a flash on the screen, as so many mob scenes in pictures are. In this case they play a long and important part in the picture. Ethel Sands can be seen several times threading her way through the crowd. If you notice carefully her position in the bazaar scene accompanying this article, and then go to see the picture, you should be able to watch her in the midst of one of her most interesting "Adventures."

Now I am going to relate an adventure which I am sure will be of especial interest to every real fan, because it has to do with a star's fan mail.

As a real fan you must sometimes write to your favorite stars. And I know that often, after you've agonized for hours, maybe, trying to compose a letter that will express all your pent-up feeling for one of them, that you wish you knew just how that star feels, and what she, or he, thinks about your letter and all the rest of the hundreds of letters from ardent fans like yourself.

Of course you always feel confident that no one else worships your favorite quite as much as *you* do, and therefore the star can't help realizing that she hadn't many such fans as you—once she reads your letter.

You see, I know all about it, because I used to be one of the most rabid fan-letter writers that ever lived myself. I know just how it feels to wait eagerly for the answering photograph—and, oh, how happy you are when once in a while you're lucky enough to receive a little personal note! Isn't that true?

Well, on the day that I acted with Alice Lake I had a chat with Viola Dana, and she asked me if I wouldn't like to go over and look over her fan mail with her and see what a wonderfully interesting and varied lot of letters she receives. You can imagine how interesting that promised to be, and now I'm going to tell you everything, that this "adventure" taught me about fan letters.

On the day agreed upon I found the diminutive Viola sitting at a table in her dressing room playing solitaire.

Her dressing room is really a suite of rooms; there is a bathroom, dressing room and a reception room, done in cream and yellow, with wicker furniture. There was also a maid and Miss Gaffney, Miss Dana's private secretary, a very attractive young girl—pretty enough to be a movie star herself, I thought.

Stars' secretaries are always interesting to me, especially such nice ones as Miss Gaffney, and I know the fans wouldn't mind her reading our letters to Viola if they only knew what a charming girl she is.

I've followed up Viola Dana's pictures ever since the old Edison pictures, as she was one of my first favorites—and I knew that day when I first met her that she was going to continue to be. I know it seems as if I've said that about so many—that they were my favorites—and I don't want to seem insincere. Almost every fan has a selected number of favorites, ranging from her "crush" to special favorites, extra specials, et cetera. I just happened to be lucky enough to meet almost all of mine. The few players that I didn't like I simply haven't written about at all. That's the reason it has seemed as if every star I had an "adventure" with was one of my favorites.

Naturally, since I've met so many movie stars in person and seen how nice nearly all of them are, the greater number of these I've met are listed among my favorites now. But Viola Dana was one of the "original" ones. I mention this in passing, as all fans realize that to meet a star that falls into that class would be an added thrill indeed.

There was a desk in one corner of the room that was almost hidden with letters and beside it stacks of photographs were piled high. But I didn't pay much attention to that at first, I was too interested in Miss Dana.

She placed a chair beside her dressing table so I might watch her while she made up. I was anxious to see this done, as I remembered my own attempts at it, and besides, I had never really seen a player put on a complete make-up.

After the foundation of cold cream she took a thick stick of some pinkish grease paint and rubbed it over her face. Smoothing that out even she used another stick of grease paint of a yellowish color and put it on thick. With the tips of her fingers she spread it evenly and patted on the powder last, blending it all with a soft brush. And do you know, after I watched her put on all that, when she was through it didn't look so very unnatural—you would hardly have noticed that it was make-up at all!

That's because it was done so expertly, I suppose, for many of the players look simply ghastly with their make-up.

Then she smeared some light-red rouge on her finger and applied it, following the natural curve of her lips.

Last came her eyes, and I watched closely, for Viola Dana's eyes are most fascinating both on and off the screen. First she brushed the lashes upward and darkened her lids slightly. Taking a match stick, she lit it and burned the tip off till it was pointed. Then she melted some cosmetic on the end of it and held it downward until it formed into a little bead. When it was cool she applied it to her lashes and then with a hairpin separated each lash.

The finished work was most satisfactory to the beholder. Her eyes looked *marvelous!* Her lashes are extraordinarily long and curly, and when beaded they turned back and up until they touched her eyebrows—*honestly!*

I made up my mind to try the same thing on my eyelashes that very night. I want my eyes to look like stars, too. But while I was asking questions with that in view Miss Gaffney brought a chair for me to sit down at the desk and begin to look over the mail.

My, but I felt privileged to be sitting at Viola's desk with all those heaps of her letters before me! I couldn't resist pretending that I was Viola, and all those people were writing to me. There were postmarks from all over the world, and I didn't know where to begin or what to look at first. The most foreign-looking postmarks attracted me and I'd open a letter only to find it to be written in Spanish, French, or some other unfamiliar language.

Miss Gaffney handed me a bunch of letters that had been selected to be put aside because they were really distinctive. You see, she looks over all the mail first, of course, and sorts it out—putting aside the particularly interesting ones which Miss Dana reads. But the vast majority of the letters are very much alike I discovered after I had read a dozen or so. They nearly all say that they saw the star in her latest picture, how much they admire her, and ask for a photograph for their collection. I soon felt rather disappointed and vexed with myself to think I had written in exactly the same way such a short time ago when I used to pen words of worship to my idols. It's the natural way, of course, but you can see how soon any star would tire of letters all reading about the same.

Some of the letters were so funny and made such queer mistakes: many were addressed to "Miss Viola Drama;" some would begin, "Dear Actress;" there were verses to "Dana," and some were amazing for nerve.

For instance, one girl wrote in the most "taken-for-granted" manner for Miss Dana kindly to send her the following list of apparel for her wardrobe, as she knew Miss Dana had lots of money and clothes to spare: "several evening gowns, an evening wrap, three afternoon gowns, a complete sport costume, a street dress, a suit, a fur coat if possible, three hats, two or three pairs of evening slippers, a few pairs of silk stockings, a fancy negligee, some lingerie, and anything else Miss Dana could think of."

Viola had to laugh at that. "She didn't overlook anything, did she?" she asked. "I would hardly expect to have a more complete wardrobe for myself!"

Most of the more eloquent and poetic epistles come from Porto Rico, or the Philippine Islands. One especially flowery note eulogized Viola as "a rose in the beautiful moonlit garden of love, with her lovely face and beautiful red eyes." This puzzled Viola as she couldn't understand how any one could get the impression that her eyes were red!

Some of these letters are quite beautiful and sincere in their praise, though.

I think that the letters from the Japanese fans are usually enjoyed the most. They are all so novel and quaint that all the stars love to read them.

But if you could see the mash notes Viola gets! I doubt that any star gets more. She couldn't very well. From young boys to even such distinguished persons as district attorneys come proposals of marriage!

There was one original letter which had pictures drawn all over it to represent the different words. For instance, it began, "Dear Idol of My Heart," with the pictures of a deer, an idol, and a heart. Another was a verse written by a Japanese fan: "Come, autumn, come; bring movie season again—" and went on to say they wanted autumn to come around when the movie season would begin so they could see Viola again.

Viola Dana seemed ever so pleased with these letters and she dragged everybody in to read them—including Alice Lake. So you see, fans, if you want to keep from being an "also ran" you must make your letters distinctive.

Viola Dana is one of the stars who

takes a great interest in her fan mail and gets ever so much enjoyment out of it. She treasures the little gifts and tokens they send her, too. Over her desk hung a little bunch of pressed flowers some one had sent her from a foreign country.

She gets more mail than any other star in the Metro Company—about six thousand letters a week. Just imagine! Every week a truck load of answers to them go out. Miss Dana showed me the photos she sends. Smaller ones free, and to those who send a quarter, a larger one.

"Here's one I used to always send out some time ago," and she held up a duplicate of one that I had received a few years back in answer to a fan letter! It was one where she sat in a pensive, ingénue pose and wore curls.

"Well, I'll give you a newer and better picture now," she said when I told her about it, and handed me several large stunning portraits to choose from. She autographed my choice for me. My, it is a beauty! I just wish you could see it—it's so big and mounted on heavy cream-colored mounting.

After Alice Lake came in and started to joke and cut up with Viola I tried to keep my mind on the letters and watch them, too, but real live movie stars proved too distracting. And here I want to pause and explain something that I've learned after meeting so many stars—something that otherwise never would have occurred to me.

Many players I have found are entirely different from the types they portray on the screen. Several of them have told me that they never really play themselves, or anything like themselves, in pictures. Very often the players are even more interesting than their shadow selves, but I think that the movie star who has the same personality as the one he or she displays on the screen is always the most enjoyable for a movie fan to meet. Because, after all, it is *that* personality that we learned to love on the screen, and no other—even if more brilliant and intelligent—quite satisfies a fan. You may admire them more if you happen to find them different, but later, you discover that they have lost that niche in your affections that you held for that particular type they represent in their pictures. That's one of the most striking things I have discovered since I've been meeting movie stars in real life.

In the old days—which in the movies means only a few years back—Viola Dana played mostly poor, persecuted little ingénues in abused and weepy rôles. The first picture

I saw her in was called "The Portrait in the Attic," I think.

Though she was always appealing I don't think we really began to appreciate her fully until she began to do those comedy dramas in which she became the typical baby vamp—with her moments of pathos all right—but mostly the peppy ingénue.

It would have been disappointing to have found her any less lively, or more serious, or in some other way different from what I had expected her to be. But she isn't very different, and I'm glad of it!

Viola Dana is lively and cute and full of pep. She's not any different in looks and appearance, being the same size, build, same features 'n' everything. Only her voice, thank goodness, isn't ingénuish—it's just a regular voice.

With her brown, bobbed hair—I'm sure it's naturally wavy—and being so tiny, she seemed just a little girl that was trying to pretend she was grown up.

She wore very high-heeled black patent-leather pumps and had on the sweetest frock. It was of white satin, made very simply, with a straight panel down the back and wide bands of black velvet around the skirt. In direct contrast to this richness was a child's blue gingham dress flung over a chair and on a round knob was a brown wig with two long pigtails. This was the costume for Miss Dana's new picture "The Five Dollar Baby," Miss Gaffney told me. She said Viola looked too cunning and childlike for anything in that costume, and I believed her.

There was a new movie theater opening downtown, and they wanted Viola and Alice Lake to appear in person, but they begged off.

I wondered why this was because I knew the movie fans would go wild about her if they could see how adorable she is in real life, too.

"Well, I'll tell you," she said, "it's different when you have a part to play and action to do, but personal appearances mean just getting up on the stage, and that would make any one self-conscious. Another thing, in the smaller towns they usually lead you down the aisle to the stage and as getting up there before the artificial lights requires make-up—the fans see you going down the aisle looking so artificial and then they brand you as made up and painted."

Still I kept thinking it was a shame the movie fans couldn't get a glimpse of Viola personally—I don't like to be selfish and I couldn't help wishing the rest of the fans could see and meet her in real life, as I did.