



Theodore Dreiser

HOLLYWOOD

Its Morals and Manners

Hollywood: Its Morals and Manners

by Theodore Dreiser (1871 - 1945)

Serialized in *Shadowland* from November 1921 to February 1922, *Hollywood: Its Morals and Manners* is Theodore Dreiser's shocking four-part exposé on the motion picture industry. In it, he shares his observations from his extended stay in Los Angeles, and gives us an intimate look at the seedier underside of Hollywood.



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Read by Chuck Williamson

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HOLLYWOOD: ITS MORALS AND MANNERS

BY

Theodore Dreiser

TAYLOROLOGY

A Continuing Exploration of the Life and Death of
William Desmond Taylor

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The Casting Couch and Sexual Harassment in Early
Hollywood

Leslie Henry's Suicide Plan

What is TAYLOROLOGY?

TAYLOROLOGY is a newsletter focusing on the life and death of
William Desmond

Taylor, a top Paramount film director in early Hollywood who
was shot to

death on February 1, 1922. His unsolved murder was one of
Hollywood's major

scandals. This newsletter will deal with: (a) The facts of
Taylor's life;

(b) The facts and rumors of Taylor's murder; (c) The impact of
the Taylor

murder on Hollywood and the nation; (d) Taylor's associates
and the Hollywood

silent film industry in which Taylor worked. Primary emphasis
will be given

toward reprinting, referencing and analyzing source material,
and sifting it

for accuracy.

February 2, 1922

Henry E. Dougherty

LOS

ANGELES EXPRESS

Close-Up Sketch of William D. Taylor

William D. Taylor was a man of extreme courtesy; he
talked little, and,

apparently, he never forgot an acquaintance.

I have seen him at work and at play, and he was always
the same

unostentatious, unassuming, quiet individual.

When he did talk it was in a mild, melodious voice. No matter what the

provocation on a set where he was directing a picture, he rarely if ever lost

his temper. He addressed those under him with the same courtesy with which

he conversed with those who wrote his contracts and paid his salary.

...It was always noticeable that he was extremely courteous to women

working on his set, but he was never familiar. He would laugh and tell jokes

and all that sort of thing, but he would not stand for any "rough stuff" in

any scenes he directed...

The Casting Couch and Sexual Harassment in Early Hollywood

Even in the early days of the silent film industry, there were reports

of what later came to be known as the "casting couch"--where actresses were

subjected to sexual demands as conditions of employment. Reliable accounts

agree that William Desmond Taylor never engaged in such practices; but they

were a part of the silent film industry in which Taylor worked. Below are

some published reports and allegations concerning the "casting couch"

practice and sexual harassment during the years when Taylor was employed in

the silent film industry.

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February 21, 1913

VARIETY

Picture Stock Scandal May Carry Its Lesson

A scandal occurring last week in the stock company of a picture concern

with headquarters in New York City is now the subject of general conversation

in all of the studios hereabouts. The affair was kept from the daily

newspapers and the police only by the herculean work of those concerned who

were friendly to the director of the stock company involved, they realizing

what exposure might mean to the trade and the general public who are patrons

of the screen.

There are two versions concerning the scandal itself. The correct one

seems to be that the director of the company made advances to a young girl,

known as a "jobber" (a picture actor or actress who works by the day when

called upon, usually receiving \$5 for the day's service, although this lately

has been reduced as low as \$1.50). The director promised the young woman the

following week she would become the leading woman of the stock company.

Lured by his promises, the little actress was betrayed. She was picked up on

the street by an officer, who sent her to a hospital, finding her stupefied

with liquor. By the time the effects of the drink wore off friends of the

director who had heard of the affair located her and dispatched the girl to

the asylum for complete recovery.

The father and brother of the little actress also heard of the outrage.

They started for the studio of the stock company loaded with firearms, but

the director had been taken out of town by the same friends. The scandal has

not quieted down yet. It is said there is an indefinite leave of absence

granted the director, who is not certain when he may return to New York. His

present whereabouts are kept a perfect secret. The young woman has been

pronounced temporarily insane. She will leave the asylum in a week or so.

The story has created the most talk in picture circles among the

actresses engaged in that line. A couple informed a VARIETY representative

that similar conditions would not be hard to unearth among three-quarters of

the picture stock companies. It has grown to be looked upon, they said, as a

prerogative of the picture stock director. The "jobbers" are nearly always

the victims. In some cases where girls are ordered by the director for a

day's work, and the task of calling them either by phone or postal card falls

to the lot of an office man, very often this person encroaches upon the

precincts of the company's director by informing the "jobbers" that unless

they listen to him he will forget their phone number or house address.

The picture stock scandal is expected to have a lasting lesson among the

companies. It was a very narrow escape for the director in question. The

actresses of the profession believe that hereafter directors will be more

discreet, at least, if not strictly attending to their business only.

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March 13, 1914

VARIETY

Attention and Punishment for Flirtatious Directors

A recent flagrant instance of the common practice among certain

directors in certain screen studios of "loving up" attractive feminine

applicants for positions, promises to bring about drastic measures through

the Screen Club for the cessation of the insults and the severe punishment of

the offenders.

Everyone familiar with the inner workings of the film stages knows to

what shameless reaches certain directors in some studios have been going

since filmdom got popular with the hundreds of girls ambitious for screen

fame and its other emoluments. But, as in the protected precincts of certain

regular theatres along show alley in days happily now almost gone, those of

filmdom who have "seen things" have kept their conclusions to themselves.

Even reputable directors who have observed liberties to which petticoat

applicants have been subjected have been forced to hold their tongues, if not

shut their eyes, to the lecherous advances lest their own jobs be the price

of protest.

Film men jealous of the good name of their vocation and conscious of the

evil practices referred to, have watched its inroads with increasing alarm.

But though practically everyone knew what was going on, no one interposed.

And then came the instance that promises reform. A certain director's

daughter came home from a visit to a studio not a hundred miles from Broadway

and 42nd Street, last Wednesday with a tale that made her mother weep and

started her father sputtering about the "unwritten law." Friends of the

family got to the father before he could get at the unwelcome philanderer,

and nothing lawless happened.

But the friends and the father, all members of the Screen Club, got

together and wrote the flirtatious director a note, specifying more than a

score of women whom he had recently insulted when they had applied to him for

studio employment. Further, the self-appointed committee interviewed a half

dozen or more of the protesting women and girls specified in the unofficial

indictment, and got their consent to appear as witnesses against the

transgressor if called upon to do so.

Report doesn't say what effect the denunciatory missive has thus far had

upon the morals or manners of the director involved, but it does aver that

the particular offense nettled so many people affiliated with the Screen Club

that talk of an ejection clause to the federation's by-laws for offenses of

the kind is predicted at the next executive meeting.

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December 1914

Irene Wallace

GREEN BOOK

The Woman on the Screen

...I am a motion picture actress, a leading woman, one of the scores who

are pouring out every atom of energy, ability and experience they possess, to

succeed. Therefore it is a rather difficult confession that I must set down

here, this indisputable, ever-present fact that it is only because of mere

good fortune that I am permitted to earn an honest living in the films. [The

most prominent film in which Irene Wallace appeared was "Traffic in Souls."]

I chanced to be engaged by a strict business management. When I went to

market, I found a place where work was bought. I did not have to take myself

to the auction block.

I went on the stage when I was a child. I worked hard and long to

learn. I spent years drilling myself in stage technique. Others now on the

screen did the same. For what? Perhaps to get a position in a motion

picture studio, to find themselves face to face with the alternative of being

"a friend of the director," or a "protegee of the manager," or a "favorite of

the leading man,"--or of quitting their hard-earned positions.

I believe the films breed more immorality than the stage ever did.

Ability and work count on the stage. They might bleed their hearts out for a

trial in some motion picture studios.

The public cannot comprehend how many women are selling their ability

and labor and brains at so many dollars a week, with their souls thrown in--

are forced to sell them or "go look for another job." This is not true

everywhere; it is not true in the majority of studios; but it is so

frequently true as to be sickening.

I love my work, and I love many people of it. I feel their frowns.

They may say I am digging up filth; but I am only uncovering it in the hope

that it may be washed away. I want to help those who are good, to continue

to be good and to warn many unsuspecting creatures of their danger.

I am writing, too, for a little girl's sake. She has just left my room.

To retain her position in another company, she would have been forced to give

up all that a woman considers sacred. She refused; she was discharged. She

is only seventeen.

She put her head down on my dressing-table and sobbed out her story.

Her mother is an invalid. She has a little sister too young to work and

help.

"Sometimes I wonder," she said, "if I shouldn't have done it for their

sake. But isn't there some other way?"

I told her there was some other way. And there is; but it is a long one

--sometimes too long when there is no money to pay for the waiting.

And the man? Oh, he has forgotten long ago. Probably he never thought

enough about it to forget. He is going his comfortable, self-satisfied way,

drawing a large salary, discharging more girls, or-- He will continue doing

so; but who cares? No one but the girls--and there are so many of them in

the world; why bother about a few, more or less? If you ask him, he probably

will say, "Oh, it would have been some other man, anyway."
That is his
defense.

It was the old story.

Her father was dead. She was almost a baby when she went
to work in a
department store. She got five dollars a week. She kept her
soul: the store
didn't need that--it wasn't a particularly salable article.

When her mother fell ill, their savings melted. She was
pretty, and

some one in the store told her--that eternal mischief-maker--
that she was a

"type," that the film companies wanted just such girls. And
the wages!

Beginners got three times as much as she was receiving.

She submitted her application, with her only photograph.
She told the

director of her lack of experience, and of her circumstances.
He did not

sympathize. He merely looked her over, boldly. There was something in his eyes that alarmed her.

"You're a good-looking kid," he decided finally. "I'll give you a trial."

She was to get three dollars a day--when she worked. The director believed he could use her most of the time. To the girl it seemed a lot of money. She rushed home to her mother, and they had a little party that night, a celebration.

Her part the next day was in a street crowd. Day after day she was given something to do. There were other girls there--it seemed as if there must have been a hundred of them--and some of them said they hadn't worked

for weeks. She discovered that it was within the power of the director

pretty definitely to establish wages. Being a woman, and considering the

salary, she was nice to him.

A few days later the director called her to him.

"You're too nifty a kid for small parts," he told her. "I am going to

try to get something better for you. I believe I can make a star of you."

She couldn't get home fast enough, to tell her mother. She even gave

some of the girls at the studio a hint of her good fortune. They didn't even

congratulate her; they only looked at her curiously. She and her mother made

glorious plans--for the time when she should become a star.

Then, the next day, the director called her to him again. "There are

some things I want to talk over with you," he said. "Come to dinner with me tonight."

She went. The things he wanted to talk over were not about her work.

She didn't see any harm in letting him kiss her. She had been kissed before;

and he was the man who was to make a star out of her--the man who had

recognized her ability and had picked her out of the mob.

She got better parts. The attitude of the other girls in the studio

seemed strange. She could not understand their treatment of her. They

seemed friendly enough, but they avoided her. She got to believe that they

resented her success, and that they were envious. "They are cats," she said

to herself.

Another invitation to dinner. (My fingers fairly itch to write the

director's name.) She was afraid to refuse. Her woman's instinct told her

that it was the test--of her and of the man. She won and she lost. She fled

home to her mother. At the studio next day she found a note. She was

discharged. Her services were "no longer needed."

I have said that it is the old story. It comes from the most unexpected

sources, and about the least suspected people. You hear that this girl or

that girl has left a certain studio: sometimes she has been dismissed for

being good, sometimes for being bad, and being bad too long. It seems that

in some studios she must always go sooner or later.

If I were to name the stars who have been made by men, I would guarantee

you the surprise of your life. Fortunately, ability is counting more every

day; competition in the motion picture business is making this true.

Here they come, the extra girls, hordes and hordes of them flocking to

the studios. Each one believes she is the chosen. I pity them all.

One extra girl's mother made it a custom to go to the studio with her

daughter and to remain with her throughout the day. One day the mother found

her girl in the arms of an actor. The mother laid the case before the studio

manager. He listened patiently, then said: "I can't do anything for you.

That actor is worth ten extra girls. I've got to keep him, and I don't have

to keep your daughter. We can always get girls whose mothers are not so

particular. It is probably the girl's fault, anyway."

So the mother and daughter sought another studio. One of the managers

took a liking to the "chicken," as he called the girl. Her mother was in his

way. She got notice that she must stay away from the studio, or her daughter

would be discharged.

"We have found it necessary," so the notice ran, "to keep outside the

studio all persons not employed by us."

Girls of three classes go to the studios:

(1) Foolish chits who have seen the actors on the screen, have glorified

them, or believe they have fallen in love with them.

(2) Vain, movie-struck girls who want to see themselves on the screen,

and who believe that by being filmed they make heroines of themselves to the

picture audiences.

(3) A few girls--and a very few--with a serious purpose and an earnest

desire to get into the work for the remuneration and possible success they

may reach--girls who are willing to work.

Naturally, the first two classes suffer most severely. Perhaps they are

of the kind who would suffer in whatever walk of life they went. Most of

them are shallow, without balance or serious interest, their main purpose in

life being to be admired and flattered.

...Ask almost any little extra girl at a film studio why she is there,

and, if she tells the truth, she will probably give you one of these two

answers: "Oh, I just thought Mr. ----- was grand, and I wanted to meet him,

so I came out and got a job in his company," or "Everybody said I was just an

ideal type for the movies, and that they just knew I would be a success. Of

course I am still undiscovered, but they will put me forward some day."

One is foolish, and the other is vain. What more could an unscrupulous

man ask?

Then in the studios there are all those idle, mischief-filled hours.

Ordinary conventions are not much observed. You see one another in all

stages of dress and undress, and in all sorts of scenes. There is no arguing

against the fact that a certain intimacy arises. The ordinary things that

make up the great barrier between the sexes are gradually pulled away through

seeming necessity. It requires little to topple over whatever remains.

And there is the "friend" evil. You have heard, no doubt, the

expression "Oh, she is a friend of the manager's," or some like comment.

This does not always mean that the woman is bad. But in a great many cases

the "friend" of the manager is a greater evil than the manager himself, or

the director, or the leading man, or whoever she represents. Her place is

insecure, and no one knows it any better than she does herself.

I know of case after case where girls have been discharged simply

because they were too good looking or too attractive to suit the "friend" of

the manager. The favorite, you know, does not believe in taking chances.

One girl--I had known her on the stage--joined a certain film company.

She caught the liking of the advertising manager. She quite calmly stated

the proposition to me. I will give the meat of it.

"Here we are, a man and a woman," she said. "He likes me and I like

him. We are not in love and probably never will be. He is alone in the

world and so am I. He is a nice chap, rather more like a pal. We don't want

to get married because we don't know how long this liking for each other will

continue.

"Without his help, or the help of some other man of importance at the

studio, I'll never get anywhere. We have two directors. One of them is

boosting his wife--he won't give anyone else a chance; and the other is

boosting a 'friend.' I have no chance unless some one boosts me. Billy (the advertising man) can make me a star if he tries hard enough, and I believe he will.

"On one side I have a good chance for success. On the other side, I will have to keep on working for thirty-five dollars a week from now until doomsday, unless I get married. If I got married I would never be satisfied to become a mere dish-washing wife. Now what would you do?"

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December 29, 1915

VARIETY

Startling Immorality Charges

Los Angeles--The movies may be probed by a grand jury. Accusations of a

startling nature were filed against film studios in general here this week

and city officials have decided to make a sweeping investigation.

It is charged that the moving picture camps are seething with

immorality. Several cases, it is alleged, have come to light in which young

girls have, under sworn statement, charged that liberties had been taken with

them by managers and directors and that it was absolutely impossible for a

pure girl to remain so if she elected to adopt that career.

In a scathing announcement Rev. Selecman of Trinity Church, this city,

fearlessly charged that conditions in and about this city were appalling. He

has demanded a thorough inquiry and has tendered his service to the

inquisitors to aid them in unearthing the alleged wrongdoing...

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Acclaimed writer Theodore Dreiser spent considerable time in Los Angeles

where he had many opportunities to observe the practices of the Hollywood

studios. His observations were recorded in a series of published articles.

November 1921

Theodore Dreiser

SHADOWLAND

Hollywood: Its Morals and Manners

Part One: The Struggle on the Threshold of Motion
Pictures

[After describing some of the problems and intense
competition faced by

a newcomer who attempts to get a job acting in movies--]

...At this moment, then, literally hundreds of girls and
women, for that

matter, of the rarest beauty, to say nothing of emotional and
dramatic sense,

in many cases, business judgment, force, energy, tact and
determination, are

concentrating with a single-mindedness that would do credit to
a Rockefeller

or a Schwab, on the above problems. Deprivation, for the moment, is nothing.

The tang and sting of the game makes up to them for that. Insults and

annoyances are nothing. There are those, no doubt, who even like them.

Compromise, if need be, is nothing. They will do anything, all to win, and

then smile condescendingly upon those still in the melee, or who retire

beaten, having scarcely the time or the spirit to assist any, even if they

had the inclination. And if the truth were known, they would not, in many

cases, spiritually wipe their feet upon the many who from time to time, in

the course of their upward struggle, have compelled them to yield their

favours for a price. It is a part of the cost in nearly all cases but not to

be looked back upon in many cases with much pleasure. They took it into

consideration at the opening of the contest.

Here and there, unquestionably, is a producer, a casting director, a

director, etc., who would not, as a rule, disturb anyone, and who seeks only

the merit that is necessary for the adequate representation of a given film.

But for everyone such there are at least five who have no such ethical or

commercial standards. They combine business with pleasure as much as they

dare, and in not a few cases one might safely add, no pleasure, no business,

at least for the more attractive beginner. It may seem a coarse and vulgar

thing to report, but so it is. And happy the girl or woman who, a bargain

being struck, is so fortunate as to find someone who will honestly endeavor

to further her interests.

Now nothing could be further from the purpose of these articles than to

set up a sentimental defense of the assumed reserve and virtue of many who

take up pictures as a profession. Neither is there any puritanic desire to

condemn. By far the greater number of girls and women who essay this work

know very well beforehand via hearsay or exact information the character of

the conditions to be met. And if they do not know it beforehand, they could

not be about the work a month before they would be aware of the general

assumption of those connected with the work, the males in particular, of

course, that all women connected with the work are potentially, if not

actually, of easy virtue. Therefore, if they resent this and still linger

about the scene, ambition or not, the responsibility is at least in part

theirs. And a very large number linger, not only quite willingly, even

though they may possess ample means to go elsewhere if they choose, but they

rather relish, I think, the very lively war that is here persistently on

between the sexes. They are by no means innocents or lambs being led to the

slaughter. And not a few relish the personal and emotional freedom which

life in this realm provides. For most of those who eventually undertake the

struggle are already mentally liberated from most of the binding taboos which

govern in the social realms from which they emanate. And many of them have

already long resented them. Anyone familiar with this realm could spin a

long tale as to this. Nevertheless it is not to be doubted that here and

there among the many who essay the work are a few who have not previously

scented correctly the nature of the conditions. And others who, knowing of

them, have either not been willing to believe or they have concluded that

whatever the conditions they themselves are bomb proof and can make their way

despite these conditions.

But they find it difficult, just them same--very--, and never doubt it.

I have in mind, for instance, certain comedy producing masters and owners of

studios who, apart from establishing character interpreters of a humorous

turn who can make their way anywhere, of course, will give no opportunity to

the novice of the female persuasion who is beautiful unless she is not

married, or is most careful to conceal the fact. And what is more, even

emotionally engaged applicants need not apply. Not that the work itself is

of such a nature as to preclude its proper interpretation by one who chances

to be so engaged but because these lords of these very pretty domains are,

Solomon-wise, determined to attach to their already extended harems

(potentially, if not actually at the time) all those of sufficient charm who

hope to prosper by their favor in any way. This may sound crude and

exaggerated to a degree but I am here to assure you that it is not. They

want these beauties at their beck and call at all times, apparently, and for

no other reason than that they prefer them socially even more than they do as

screen workers and they cannot endure the thought of another who may, by any

chance, have a prior claim. No immediate and willing response at any time,

night or day, seemingly, to their demands and there will be no more work for

them in that studio. Crude? Exactly. But efficient. And I might add that

any and all of those high-salaried and comfortable vice-snoopers, who are

even now so busily engaged hailing before the courts of the land respectable

publishers, to say nothing of serious authors whose only crime is that they

seek via admirable letters to set forth pictures of the social state of the

time, might better be engaged in bringing to light the truth of this, if only

such truth were sensibly and honestly dealt with. But they are cautious and

self-preserving as well as self-advantaging company, these same who have the

morals of the country in charge. You will find them taking no note of what

is here set forth, for the good and sufficient reason that it is far more

dangerous to attack any of these barons of the movie realm than it is the

average hard-pressed publisher and author of distinction. For the former

have the means and the courage to make trouble for these snoopers. And

would. Hence the wide berth given them by these same salary-hunting purists

who will devote months and years even hounding to earth the less "well-

heeled" but serious worker and publisher who can make no expensive and hence

very damaging defense. If you are not prepared to believe this, I commend

your attention to the undisturbed social conditions in the moving picture and

theatrical worlds generally. Not that I desire to stir up trouble for these

very worthy and thirst satisfying industries which are unquestionably meeting

a wide public demand. But rather that the burden of enduring all of the

petty and self-advantaging industry of the snoopers may, in part at least, be

lifted from the shoulders of the hard-working author and his publisher.

But the above is mere fact. There is the commonplace director of the

smaller comedy and other film companies who, invariably and almost as a

matter of course, makes overtures to every attractive worker who enters upon

a set that he chances to be directing. Not that he thereby, and by reason of

his position, is able to force himself into the good graces of those who

chance to fall within the range of his authority as that, in many instances,

he makes it all but a condition of further employment under him that

something be done by the worker of physical charm to assuage his very

emotional and yearning temperament. It seems a little petty to say the

least, especially where the worker in question has secured the brief

employment in question by the most arduous and persistent industry and where

the salary connected with the work, and especially for the brief time that

work is to be had anywhere on any set, is entirely incommensurate with the

ability and service required. Yet so it is. And you may hear some of the

very comfortable employers of labor in this sense laughing over or boasting

their several conquests of the while at other moments, yet in the same

connection, they may be heard denouncing such and such a worker thus used in

the past as a this or a that. It might be a little amusing if it were not

quite so drastic.

Then there are the casting directors of some of these institutions--not

all of them, by any means, I must hasten to add--who are not above selling

opportunities to the needy, or at least the fame-hungry among those who apply

to them and who chance to take their fancy, for a return of a pleasurable

nature to them, of course. Not that all of them have so very much in the way

of an opportunity to offer to anyone. Or, that those for whom that bid do

not, in many cases, know that. Or, that they succeed so very often. I do

not think they do--certainly not in the cases of the more exceptional of

their applicants--at least, not often. Yet notwithstanding, there is this

type of overture about. And there is the type of aspirant who is not above

advantaging herself in this rather shabby fashion. Around the meaner type of

studio I have good reason to know that they are very common. The illusion or

vain hope is that it will do them good "artistically." The thing takes on a

disgusting look at times. But so do aspects of certain other professions--

nearly all of them. Yet there is no one in the profession today who does not

know that sex in one form and another is the principal and hence the

determining factor in the rise of most of those of beauty among the women who

hope to go far. And that there have been and will yet be many compromises of

a decidedly sordid character in order that screen success may be attained.

The most irritating features of the whole thing though, really, are these

constantly and decidedly brazen overtures on the part of so many who are

among the humblest of the attaches--the general assumption on the part of so

many call-boys, cameramen, assistant directors, and who not
else, that all of

those who work in this realm are of easy virtue and that their
favours are

among the rightful perquisites of those who work about the
studios or in the

profession, even. Also, that unless they submit they should
be made to pay

the penalty of ostracism. It sounds a little wild to the
outsider of more

conventional views, but so it is, just the same.

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December 1921

Theodore Dreiser

SHADOWLAND

Hollywood: Its Morals and Manners

Part Two: The Commonplace Tale with a Thousand Endings

I have in mind a certain director, one of the staff of directors of one

of the larger studios, who is, to say the least, a rather ridiculous

illustration of what I mean. At one time he was a butcher's helper and made

a humble wage at cutting steaks and chops. At present he is a fairly capable

"shooter" of five-reelers and is not at all disliked by those who employ him.

Yet mentally he is not much above a certain type of director in filmdom,

which is not saying very much, you may be sure. Although a bachelor via the

divorce court, he has his "home," his butler, his car, his this, his that,

with a little home-brew thrown in for good measure. About the studios and

among the flappers he poses as being a--well a member of a certain rather

popular faith. Among directors and film-workers generally, those who know of

him at all, he is known as a "chaser" of sorts, one of those who are more

than inclined to annoy the novices of beauty who chance to come in contact

with him on his sets. Well, there you have the stage set, as it were.

Now we will say it is nine o'clock of a certain Los Angeles morning, and

Cerise, aged nineteen or thereabouts and but newly engaged to play the part

of a charming niece in a comedy which our director is about to direct, has

come upon the set for the first time and is looking joyfully and gratefully

about. She is pink and vigorous, with golden or black hair, as you will, and

eyes with that haunting freshness that is among the requisites of beauty in

youth. Also there is a smile that is truly winsome, because devoid of make-

believe and because it is suggestive of pleased wonder.

At sight of Cerise, who has been "handed him" by the casting director,

and who, as he latterly phrases it, has proved to be a "pippin for once," he

is all eyes, and yet distant. For so difficult has "the game" become of

late, so watchful the money-power, so tricky and ungrateful the various vamps

and succubi of the profession who, to say the truth, have not used him any

too well, that at last he is developing a little caution. Yet so great is

the lure of youth in this instance, as in that of so many others, that he can

scarcely keep his mind on his work. He begins, forthwith, to talk more

loudly, to give more directions than are absolutely necessary, to direct

"with a vengeance" as some unhappy thespian of his set now makes bold to

comment to another, "and all on account of that young skirt over there."

'Tis the way of a portion of the directors of moviedom, at least.

And within the hour of her arrival, if you will believe it, and after

the direction of many, many pictures, he is her slave, yet still at a

respectful distance. The sight of the "heavy" of this set setting down

beside her and beginning an enticing conversation is sufficient to cause him

to all but suffocate with envy, fear and rage. "What! That waster! Is he

about to attempt an additional conquest here?" Forthwith he proceeds to give

said actor instructions in regard to something in order to divert his mind or

his mood or both. "Just stay over here near me, Williams. I want you to see

what is going on here so you can get into the spirit of this thing for once."

Note the "for once." A little later it may be an extra who has intruded upon

the newcomer with kind words and a smile. At once he is aflame with secret

rage and envy. "Off the set! Off the set! That means you, Fisher. I don't

want any but principals and the members of the cast around here now." Exit

the abashed and angry Fisher, silent because he needs, very much, to court

the favor of all in these trying days. By nightfall, after sidling near at

many points of the day and work with pleasant if inane references to the

character of the work in hand, his plans for it, the impossibility, almost,

of finding ideal types for the several roles, he is ready for his coup or

play. "But you certainly have beauty. Just the person I have been looking

for. If I had known of you when I was casting my last picture, I certainly

could have made a place for you."

Now Cerise, like so many others of her years and sex, is all aflame with

what it means to be a star or within the ranks of those who may reasonably

aspire to stellar honors. Fortunately or unfortunately, as you will, she has

a mother who, to further her picture ambitions, has left her native state

with her and journeyed to far Los Angeles in order to open a millinery

establishment or to herself work in a store. The apartment, that between

them they can afford, is the humblest. In addition, it is with the greatest

difficulty and care that Cerise has achieved the few attractive garments

which she now possesses and by the aid of which she hopes to forward herself

as much as possible. More would be welcome, of course. Hence the thrill at

the thought of making so marked an impression and of being made to feel that

additional work may be in store for her here. At the end of the day, then,

when Sir Director lingers and offers the service of his car, she is

appropriately elated, of course. He is taken with her as a screen

possibility. He will be glad to forward her career because of her innate

fitness for the work.

Now the conclusion of this particular incident may be as your fancy

dictates. But depend upon it, however you, personally, may decide to end it,

it will have had, at some time or other, a counterpart in real life. It

depends on the temperament and hence the practical judgment, or lack of it,

of the one thus enthusiastically approached or often her mother or friends,

or the character of her bad friend in some other way. By far the largest

number of those who decide to test this world are sophisticated beyond their

years, whatever their years may be. They are, in the main, practical to this

extent, that they are here to realize on their ability and charm as swiftly

as possible. Ushered into the very much benickeled car of a personage in

this realm and offered a dinner or at least a little chocolate en route and

told very plainly and earnestly as to what the prospects of advancement are--

well--the matter would certainly be taken into consideration and thought upon

at length, if not decided upon immediately. Such a seemingly real impression

is not made every day. If the situation of the aspirant is very complicated

and her need for aid pressing--well. Yet, as a rule, they know enough that no situation is likely to be injured by a little waiting. Also, that one should look most carefully over the cliff before they leap. Beyond this, and a little time taken, the thing may end most any way. And does. It might well be called "The Commonplace Tale with a Thousand Endings."

Yet in this case, as in all others of the same type, unless the situation is handled by the aspirant with the utmost tact, the director failing will see to it that no more favors of any kind are extended her by him. He may even become very disagreeable in connection with the work in hand, so much so that she might well find it impossible to complete the work

then and there doing. The theory is that if he is not good enough for her,

and she things so very well of herself, let her get someone else to do favors

for her. Depend upon it, he will not. And more than one director has had to

be released from one and another studio before he would cease his annoying

tactics. Not all beginners will endure such assaults without complaint. Yet

in the main they do. And it is thus that one opportunity after another, with

one director after another, has been lost, and advancement all but closed

because the aspirant chanced to be of exceptional charm and was desirous of

making her way without compromise except where her affections were honestly

engaged.

Indeed, the more one wanders about and wins to wisdom in this matter of

picture production, the more one comes to note the shabby and pinchbeck point

of view that holds, not only in most of the counting offices of all these

great concerns where the petty and often pretty beginner is concerned, but

also in the minds of directors, casting-directors, assistant-directors,

cameramen, the heavies and even leads of the male persuasion who have

anything to do with or can, by any hook or crook, contrive any possible claim

upon the time or attention or services of those of the feminine persuasion--

the younger and prettier and less experienced, of course--who are seeking to

make an ill-paid way in this, in the main, grueling realm. The shabby and

even shameful impositions! The sharp exactations in the matter of time and money! (Hours, for instance, that stretch from eight to six and even longer, on the set and in costume, for a wage which, when measured by the number of employed days one will come by in the course of a year, is ridiculously and even pitifully inadequate.)

The general assumption on the part of many directors, assistant-directors and even stage carpenters and electricians is that, somehow, because these hundreds and even thousands of girls are compelled to or, at any rate, are desirous of making their living or their way in this field, and have all too little, financially, wherewith to do that, therefore they are,

and of right ought to be, the sexual prey of these men. Also that any

opposition on their part to being so used or pursued can only be based upon a

disagreeable and even reprehensible vanity--or "better than thou" spirit,

which should never, for a moment even, be tolerated by one in so lofty a

position as any of the above. The often undesired and in many cases resented

overtures and insults which, nevertheless, because of the nature of the work

and the driving character of the ambition of those insulted, may never be

properly rebuked! And, where one such chances to be usually winsome and

earnest, and eager to make progress without compromise, the rebuffs,

impositions and preventing or delaying oppositions, even though all the

necessary talent for the situation may be properly presented,
may endure for

a period of years, in some instances quite until hope is
exhausted.

In writing this I have in mind not one but something like
twenty-five

aspirants of exceptional beauty and ability and admitted
screen charm who,

nevertheless, and because of a lack of means combined with an
unfortunate

determination to fight their way upwards without compromise on
the emotional

side are still, after several years of unremitting struggle or
intelligent

application, as you will, about where they began at first.
And that in the

face of others of no more ability who have risen much more
rapidly. It is

true that during that time, and by reason of some little money
with which

they came, plus the employment they have had, they have managed to live and take their part in the movie social world about them. Also that they have acquired much of the necessary screen technique which, coupled at this time with an opportunity of some kind, might easily lead to recognition of a very grateful character. They are among those who, whenever some exceptional minor part that takes ability but not much time is to be "cast," are sent for. And in such things they appear quite regularly. Their faces, for brief intervals, are to be seen in many pictures. But will they succeed eventually? That certainly depends to a degree upon the presence of others of equal attractions who are not so frugal with their favors. During the

time they have been upon the scene not one of them but has had, over and

over, advances made to them by one and another of force and distinction in

the realm in which they seek to shine. But in each and every case, for

reasons best known to themselves, these opportunities have been allowed to

slip by. Speaking of one of them, a scenarist of no little popularity once

observed to me: "For the life of me I can't see why Mary hangs on out here.

She has ability--tons of it. And if she were only backed by someone she

would make a strike, all right. A few of the right sort of posters, a good

vehicle, and a press-agent, and she would get over with a bang. But here she

is, drifting along, and here she will be five years from now, trailing others

who haven't a fourth of her genuine charm, unless she quits.
What's the

answer? She isn't coarse-fibred enough, that's all. She
can't bring herself

to do the things that most of them do. If she would..." He
said no more

than the truth...

* * * * *
* * * *

After the Arbuckle scandal broke, Henry Ford's DEARBORN
INDEPENDENT ran

a series of articles on "Baring the Heart of Hollywood." The
following,

slightly edited, was from the final article in the series.

December 10, 1921

DEARBORN INDEPENDENT

...That the great body of our motion picture players should have become

what they are is a great pity and it is a condition for which they cannot be

held altogether to blame. The environment of an aspirant for fame in the

pictures is such that only one of exceptionally strong moral fiber could be

expected to emerge unspotted. This applies to either sex, for the

temptations are just as strong and appealing to the boys as to the girls.

Many of our motion picture players have been recruited from good

American homes, the same kind of home that furnishes the bulk of our skilled

labor, our office workers and our salesmen and saleswomen. These boys and

girls, good looking, healthy and with some degree of personality or talent,

come to the studios as clean morally as the average American youth, but how

long do they stay that way? How long CAN they stay that way?

The working conditions in a few of the larger studios have changed for

the better during the past two years. This was not in the interest of

morality but of efficiency. The producers found that love making around the

studios during working hours was a costly proposition for them and they took

steps to eradicate it. But in other studios conditions are much the same as

they were. A well-known producer mentioned two of the largest studios in

telling the writer that he would rather see a daughter of his in her grave

than working in either of them.

The comedies are particularly bad. A college girl who had done some newspaper work before coming to Hollywood and going into the movies, told the writer about a certain well-known comedy company where the brother of the producer and star hired the girls used in the pictures. Before a girl was given employment she took a walk with this man and on her acceptance or rejection of his advances depended her engagement.

This same system of employment was followed by many other studios until it was seen that such methods were costing them a lot of money. Jealousies between directors' favorites often delayed pictures and caused friction among the players that destroyed discipline and ran up production expenses.

The director was a petty czar on the lot or on location, and he could

ruin the chances of advancement of any girl who might reject his overtures.

A girl with ambition to be a star, therefore, either had to accept the

director's advances or quit the pictures, unless, as was sometimes the case,

she was the sweetheart of the producer.

A producer brought out a young woman who showed promise as an actress.

After she had been working in her first picture for a few days the producer

noticed that she was worried about something. After some difficulty he

succeeded in getting the story from her. The director, she said, had made

overtures to her from the first day she had appeared on the lot. When she

refused his attentions he had threatened to get her job. One day he had torn

off nearly all her clothing before she could get away from him.

This director had a two-year contract with the producer. The latter

said nothing to him at the time, but put a private detective on his trail.

After he had obtained sufficient evidence the producer called the director

into his office and informed him that he was through. The director

threatened to sue for fulfillment of his contract, but after being shown the

evidence against him thought better of it. He immediately went to work,

however, for another large studio where he is still directing.

It was such abuse of their positions by directors that led to the

installation, by some studios, of casting directors. Under this system the

applicant registers with the casting director, is photographed in several

poses and these photographs, known as stills, are filed away with the name,

address, telephone number and description. Sometimes a few feet of film are

also taken. After it is decided to film a certain script these files are

gone over and the players selected from them. Thus the director does not see

his players until they walk on the lot the first day. Being shorn of his

power to hire, his power to fire is also limited. In the studios where the

casting director system is used a girl has an even chance of preserving her

honor, provided she escapes the notice of the producers themselves, and has

sufficiently strong character to resist the blandishments of the male stars

and directors.

It takes a girl of exceptionally strong character to emerge unscathed

from the temptations presented at the studios, and all honor should be given

to those who do. The free and easy life, with its escape from the

conventionalities, tends gradually to weaken the sternest moral fiber.

Things that horrify at first become a matter of course when seen daily. The

ambitious girl sees others availing themselves of their charms to push

themselves forward into stardom and its attendant financial reward. It is

only a girl of the most exceptional talent and energy who can hope to succeed

without the aid of a pull. Small wonder that so few of them hold out. The

blame does not rest on them, but on the whole rotten system, a system that

will endure until the public has convinced the producers that there are some

things more precious than the dollar...

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For another reported incident of sexual harassment, see "The Girl Who Wanted

Work" in TAYLOROLOGY 30.

Leslie Henry's Suicide Plan

Charlotte Shelby, the mother of actress Mary Miles Minter, was one of

the major suspects in the 1922 Taylor murder. Her broker, Leslie Henry,

was later charged with stealing money from her account (see TAYLOROLOGY 35).

In 1932, Leslie Henry planned to commit suicide in such a manner as to repay

his debt to Charlotte Shelby, and he wrote her a suicide letter.

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The "Suicide Letter" from Leslie Henry to Charlotte Shelby

December 23, 1932

LOS ANGELES TIMES

...It was learned, however, that the missive was received in a special

delivery envelope by Mrs. Shelby at her Beverly Hills home November 14, last

[1932]. Two other letters relating to the suicide plot were also written and

one received by Miss Eve Baber, Henry's secretary. Upon the receipt of the

missive the secretary hurried to Mrs. Shelby's home and that evening,

convinced that Henry would kill himself, they listened to police and news

radio broadcasts.

Nothing, of course, happened...

Excerpts from the letter received by Mrs. Shelby on November 14 follow:

"Yesterday your attitude put the seal on a death verdict for me that has

hung over me for four years. Tomorrow, when you read this, I hope that the

death I am courting tomorrow will not have proved as vain in your service as

my life has been. Whether this effort is successful or not will depend

almost entirely on your complete co-operation in the events which follow,

your patience, your sympathy and understanding.

"The cash due you and Margaret is nonexistent.

"The securities in syndicate have long since been sold.

"Securities held by you or due you are in default to an amount of

approximately \$5000 per year, excluding the Sutter Basin, Key System and

Shenandoah preferred stock...

"At no time since the above situation began to develop has my combined

life and accident insurance been less than the amount necessary to discharge

these obligations. These policies are paid to date, and are all past the

contestable period of two years. The present state of the market is such

that the funds collected from these policies will pay the cash due, purchase

the sound securities due you and replace the defaulted securities held by or

due you.

"Except as you may show this to Margaret, which you must do for your

joint guidance and which I did not doubt you will do when I wrote the word

'may,' there are only you, my wife and Miss Baber who know the contents of

this letter. I am leaving copies of it for them. Even the attorney who will

probate my miserable estate will know nothing. Naturally the firm knows

nothing, but any untoward act on your part would make it quickly suspicious.

That would result immediately in the calling in of representatives of the

surety company, quick betrayal of the nature of my death and its purpose to

the insurance companies in the effect of the surety firm and the company to

obtain the few thousand dollars to be had in cash values to be applied

against what loss you eventually might have assessed against them.

"The profits which were paid you and Margaret from time to time in the

program of deceit which I had to follow will remain with you, as will the

excess amounts credited you on Wilshire bonds, which were sold under par in

the market, as none of this issue has ever been called."

The letter here recited that the irregularities commenced in 1924 due to

a business deal he became involved in, and then continued:

"From that day to his, hell and madness have been mine. I speculated

with money from other of your securities in an effort to replace the missing

bonds. Interest had to be paid on these taken. Each speculation that proved

momentarily a losing one was sold out before it had a chance to join the

general trend of prices that was to climax in the 1929 market...The frantic

fear of losing yet more of your funds made sane speculation impossible, and

the greatest rising market in the history of the world saw me casting aside

stocks because of momentary declines which if held would have done all I had

to do to preserve your funds and yet live.

"When I left Pasadena for Los Angeles Miss Baber had the opportunity to

uncover a part of what had transpired. I told her everything. She dissuaded

me from the hellish thing ahead of me tomorrow. She might have left the firm

at that point without saying anything to anyone and have been free of this

affair. Although she has never been the beneficiary of so much as a dime of

the money that has passed the way I have described, has suffered the various

cuts in wages imposed by the depression when other houses and banks have

offered her increased figures to join them, has watched herself age under

uncertainty and care such as only a situation as this could impose, she has

stood by.

"Ignoring the meanness of every form of deceit I was compelled to

practice to pursue the course I could not leave except through death, she

looked to but two essentials: my lack of capacity for detail meant my

discovery within a month or two at the month, followed by my death or

imprisonment, an insupportable loss for you, and the disgrace of the innocent

ones of my family. She does not know tonight how close is the final defeat

of her hope that somewhere out of this would come a break that would restore

everything and leave her free to leave for other scenes and other

occupations. I recommend her to you and to Margaret. She can be depended on

to finish for you the work she will be committed to in this letter. She is

honest in everything that honor measures in either a man or a woman. She is

the most capable worker I have ever known.

"Whatever of feeling Margaret has had against her because of the

incident of the delayed letters should be resolved into gratefulness that she

will be available and willing to counsel with you and work for you toward the

recovery of that which I endangered. I do not know what it can be worth to

her, but it is all I have to give for the undeserved loyalty she has given me

--the respect from one who is a bankrupt in everything and who would not have

had even the losing chance that has been mine.

"While Miss Baber has had the knowledge of what might and probably would

eventuate for you, my family and myself, it is a cruel blow that I have had

to strike you who have been in ignorance and apprehension. You must realize,

Mrs. Shelby, that it could not be otherwise. To have told either of you in

your home or the wife now waiting for me in mine the facts of this situation

would have been to challenge that in each of you which took possession of

Miss Baber--preservation of a life at any price. You would have taken your

chances on financial loss and, for all of your indignation and sorrow, have

even hated the thought of prison for me. Knowing that death was in my mind,

you or my wife would have risked everything to uncover me before I would act.

"What I do tomorrow is not done out of fear of facing anybody or of

seeing and hearing myself held up to the world in derision by the empty-

headed, condemnation by the thinking, and shame generally by everybody. It

is not done out of fear of prison. It is done because any other course would

mean a frightful loss to you and yours, penniless misery for my own dear ones

and shame and derision of some kind on all of us alike. That my effort might

fail is my only fear. If only I could assure myself of the end in its every

respect, I would gladly undergo every physical torture that can precede it as

a partial atonement for the sorrow I have caused.

"My wife was not the beneficiary of anything of yours, knowingly. Her

monthly allowance was meager under the very necessities of this situation,

always within my earnings at their lowest ebb. That she was at the beach

each summer of the past three years was over her own protest. I imposed it

on her for her own health and that of the children as something my life might

have to pay for at any moment. What little she had had from me these

miserable few years has been pressed upon her in guilty acknowledgment of the

heartbreak the course of my life was leading her to. She would not touch a

tainted dollar of anyone's giving, and would starve with her children in the

gutter before she would flourish at your expense. The only property that is

hers are within the four walls of the home, and rightfully hers. That house

is mortgaged to its limit.

"I can write nothing more, Mrs. Shelby, out of the numb weariness that

is on me. Have Miss Baber come to your house in the evening and go over the

situation with her pending the return from the insurance company, and

withhold from any contact with the office that will start wheels to turning

which you can never stop from grinding out you and yours and mine in misery

and loss until there remains but shells financially, physically and mentally.

Guard your conversation and the tone of your voice over the telephone in

making the appointment I have recommended.

"For me in all my wrongdoing there is no hell beyond.

"Leslie B. Henry."

Henry then adds a postscript in his handwriting as follows:

"When this reaches you I will be out of reach of anyone,
so don't, I

pray you, trespass the advice in these lines. My going is in
an accident you

are powerless to stop. What time elapses now until its
discovery--only a

matter of hours--It is my hope that it will be all over when
you are reading

this. The cruelty of suspense I have practiced on you was due
these past two

weeks to one vain, final effort to solve this situation.
Forgive me for

having lived so much longer at your expense.

"This letter is a sacred contract in your hands when all
is done.

Preserve it to yourself in your own interest and that of my
loved ones and

destroy it in the presence of my wife when the bill is paid.

"Good bye.

"Leslie B. Henry."

* * * * *
* * * * *

Testimony of Eva Adeline Baber

July 20, 1933

...I think the letter [was] dated November the 14th, to Mrs. Shelby, in which

he told her he was going to commit suicide, among other things. When I came

back to my office after lunch on that particular date, I found a copy of this

letter, and I was naturally extremely worried, not knowing what she was going

to do, and at 5:00 o'clock I had not heard anything from her that afternoon,

and I felt sure that she had received the letter during the afternoon, so I

called her up and asked her if she wanted to see me, and she said, yes, that

she would send Mrs. Fillmore down to get me. Mrs. Fillmore came down and met

me downtown in her car, and took me out to the house. She conducted me

upstairs to the door, and she said, "Oh, is it true?" I was crying at the

time, and I said, "Yes, I am afraid it is true," so we went in and sat down

and talked. She and Margaret were both very kind to me that afternoon and

expressed their sympathy for the terrific strain I had been under, and Mrs.

Shelby brought me some aspirin. I had had such a headache, and she said for

me to take that and to brace up, and we would talk this thing out together,

or work it out together, so I did, and then she said that we ought to have

some dinner, and she told me to go into the bathroom and wash my face, so the

maid would not know that I had been crying. She said, "We have to keep up

appearances, and while I don't think the maid will talk, I would rather she

did not know that you had been out here," so we went down to dinner, and she

cautioned Margaret to address me as Mrs. Brown, in case anything came out in

the newspapers; she did not want anyone to know...We went down to dinner, and

afterwards we came back upstairs and began talking over ways and means of

collecting this insurance. She asked me at the time if I thought Mr. Henry

had already killed himself, and I said "No, I don't think so, because I

haven't heard anything this afternoon, and he is probably going to wait until

dark," and then she asked how he was going to do it, and I said, "I don't

know, he never told me that, but I would not be surprised if he connects with

a freight train somewhere," and then when we began discussing the ways and

means of paying back this money out of the insurance policies, she said--I

told her that Mr. Henry was going to instruct his wife to give me a power of

attorney, so I could act for her, because she wasn't experienced in handling

business matters, and that as soon as the money was available I would buy

back for her the bonds due her, and she said, "No, I won't have bonds; I want

cash." She said, "No more bonds for me; I insist on having cash." Then we

discussed ways and means, and she wanted to know how long it would take

before cash would be available, and I said, "I don't know, but I think it

ought not to take longer than a month," and she said, "Mary must not know of

this," and she said, "There is a payment due Mary the first of the month,

\$700.00, and I don't think I have enough money to pay it," and they talked

about that, how they would keep the news of this disaster from Mary, and then

I felt so badly, it was then, I guess, about a little after 8:00 o'clock, and

we had talked and talked and talked, until I was so tired I wanted to go

home, and she said, "Wait until the 9:00 o'clock broadcast, and see if there

is any news of an accident reported." She had a radio in her bedroom, and I

sat there with her until after 9:00 o'clock, and she seemed to be a little

disappointed and sort of wondered why there was no report had come over the

radio. I presume she expected to hear, as I did to, that there had been an

accident, and then after that, Margaret drove me down to the Pacific Electric

station, and I caught the car and went home, and the next morning, before I

had finished my breakfast, just after I had gotten out of bed, the telephone

rang, and it was Mrs. Shelby on the phone; and she said, "Have you heard

anything yet?" and I said, "No," and then she hung up the receiver, and

there was no more conversation, and immediately I called Mr. Henry's house to

see if he was at home, and Mrs. Henry said, yes he was at home, and then I

went on to the office, and about noon, I guess, Mr. Henry came in...Mr. Henry

told me he had talked to her, and she wanted those insurance policies brought

out to her, and he wanted me--she had asked that I bring them out, and I

said, "I don't want to go, I don't want to talk to her again," and he said

that she insisted that she would not let him bring them out, so I took them

out to her, and her attitude that day was entirely different. She was very

hostile and she was just cool really, and she told me that she wasn't a bit

surprised when Mr. Henry called her up that morning. She said she knew he

wasn't going to do it. She said--Margaret said, "I had a lot of respect for

him when I thought he was going to make good these losses by killing himself,

but," she said, "I have no more respect left for him now, and I think it is

strictly up to him to go through with what he promised to do," and Mrs.

Shelby said to me--I believe it was Margaret said to me, "You know, Miss

Baber, this would ruin you if it ever came out in court," and Mrs. Shelby

said, "I want to tell you, I am going to fight, and I will spare no one.

When I get through with you, nobody will ever employ you again." Then she

sat down to go over these insurance policies together, and I handed them to

her, and she would read the amounts off and Margaret would take them down,

the face amount of the policy, and the date, and whether or not it was

carrying a double indemnity clause, and while we were sitting there checking

them up, she said, "These policies aren't any good to me, because they don't

have the last receipt for the premium, to show the premiums were paid," and

she said, "I must have that." I said, "Well, I think that Mr. Henry must

have them; I know the policies are in full force and effect, and I will go

back to the office if you want me to and see if I can find them. I think she

first suggested that I call Mr. Henry and see if he had them, and I called

the office and he wasn't in, and then I told her I would go back to the

office and see if I could locate them, and she said to bring them out to her,

and I said, "Couldn't I send them out by a messenger?" and she said, "No, I

don't want any messenger to bring them tonight." I went back and I couldn't

find any receipts. Mr. Henry apparently had destroyed all of his papers, and

when I told Mr. Henry I had left the policies out there, he was very much

upset about it, and said that I shouldn't have done that, but she did not let

me take them, and I couldn't very well snatch them up and take them back, and

as a matter of fact, it did not occur to me that it was important to do so.

I called her up and told her I could not find any of the receipts, and she

said, "Never mind, it isn't necessary." When Mr. Henry found I had left

them, he asked me to call and ask if I could come and get the policies, and I

did, and she said, no, that she did not want me to come out. That was in the

afternoon, and later on the evening I went out to the Pacific Electric

Station. She told me not to come to the house, and I called her again and

asked if I couldn't come up and either get the policies or get a receipt for

them. I said, "I will be held responsible for them," and she said, "Miss

Baber, you must not come near the house; I have guest here, and you must not

be seen around here," and I said, "Do you know, Mrs. Shelby, the first thing,

if there is an accident, the first thing the insurance company will want to

know is where the policies are, and if they are in your hands, they might

raise some question about whether or not there was a genuine accident, or

something might come up that would reveal that," and she said, "If anything

happens, I will take them straight on to Mrs. Henry," and that was all.

(Q. Now, you started to say that Mrs. Shelby told you that she talked to Mr.

Henry on the telephone that morning; did you give all of that conversation?)

When I went out there in the afternoon, she said, "I knew he wasn't going

through with it." She said, "He hasn't got the nerve." She said, "I wasn't

a bit surprised when he called me up this afternoon, and I told him that I

would just give him until 2:00 o'clock tomorrow afternoon to go through with

that letter, or I will walk into the office and call Mr. Babcock and Mr.

Cadwalader and lay my cards all on the table."...

[Special thanks to Dave Downey for providing above transcript.]

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