



Drop that Pie!

By John B. Kennedy

They tried to make a slapstick movie clown out of Gloria Swanson. She accepted one kick but refused to sprawl. So, reluctantly, they let her become an actress instead

GLAMOUR, and something other than glamour, marks the progress of a little girl from a Chicago parlor, on Chicago's West Side, with horsehair furniture and a square piano, to a pink satin suite in a luxuriously appointed hotel in New York.

She would sit, every afternoon when school had been dismissed, pounding the square piano, all sorts of tunes—Wait Till the Clouds Roll By, What Are the Wild Waves Saying?—and between poundings she'd mope over a print hung on the wall above the piano. It fascinated her. A huge lion, in sepia ink, bayed to the moon, while at his feet lay a prostrate maiden—rather shapely. The picture was called *The Lion's Bride*. She was to hear—and say—more about that.

Her grandmother caught her moping, frequently, over the picture. Followed a family huddle, and it was decided that the little girl, aimed at music for a career, cared nothing for it. Her father got her a job.

A Sure Sign of Genius

That didn't last long. A bumptious floorwalker saw customers impatient at a notions counter; discovered Miss Gloria Swanson reading romance—*Quo Vadis*, to be exact. She was fired.

And thus began the career of glamour, and other things, that made Gloria Swanson's name a household word.

"I was not," said Miss Swanson, known, of course, matrimonially as the Marquise de la Coudraye de la Falaise, "a movie fan at the time.

"My dear father was a serious person. A govern-

ment engineer. Incidentally, he was in the war and did not long survive it. He wanted me to be a thoughtful youngster.

"I was. I thought something very attractive waited back of the cinema doors. Although I'd promised to stay away from the movies, I broke the promise.

"And when I saw pictures of young girls not much older than I—in a John Bunny comedy—having a good time and getting paid well for it, that settled me. I picked especially on Mabel Normand. She enjoyed her work tremendously, and it seemed to me that I could do everything she did.

"I recall walking from the theater, homewards, practicing the sort of faces she had made on the screen. A cop stopped me under a street lamp. He asked me if anybody had been bothering me, and when I blushed and said 'no' he grunted.

"Then," said he, 'you're an epileptic, maybe.'

"That meant I could act."

The Marquise de la Falaise has an athletic pair of grayish-silver eyes. That is camera training. When she reflects on the step-by-step incidents that led her to stardom, those large and militantly agreeable eyes slide at and away from you; then, just as you are wondering whether or not they are really beautiful, they stop and fix you in a cool gaze—and you decide that they are beautiful.

"I wore out all the mirrors in our house, imitating Mabel Normand and other stars." And it was distinctly screen courtesy not to mention more names. Some still thrive as flappers.

It was time to ask Miss Swanson what was the very first picture in which she appeared. There's much apocrypha connected with her early days. For a young woman just beyond thirty, intensive fame made her a tradition almost before it gave her triumph.

She revealed—and it is here set down for whatever historical value it may have

—how and when she first faced the grinding film.

At the old Essanay plant in Chicago. You remember Cowboy Anderson, who bossed it, the blunt-nosed chap who rolled cigarettes with one hand and fortunes with both? At that old plant where the extras piled two lines on the right, little Miss Swanson bounced to the top of the line. She was just as tall then as she is now; which isn't tall at all. She has to shout up in telephone booths, as anybody five-feet-one will understand.

Bouncing to the top of a line is one way of being bounced back to the bottom. Which happened. A young man striding hurriedly before a rubber-fendered truck that gave him chase, saw the bounce. He shouted. Up ahead cameras stopped clicking. He took the lady to the lot and explained that she was just the height for his sort of heroine.

A Yearning for Tragedy

"What sort of heroine is that?" asked the lady.

"Come and see," said the young man. He and his director, script-writer, electrician, title-monger and the horde of talent who get their names on the programs, held a conference.

The following morning Miss Swanson reported for her first part. In a two-reel custard-pie comedy. Bounteous fun. Gents sliding on banana peels; ladies having ice-cream cones dropped down their bodices from great heights; rubber babies being tossed over walls. Subtlety no end. The climax of hilarity was reached when the hero, necking the heroine in a final fade-out, pointed to her dropped handkerchief. As she stooped to pick it up he administered a playful kick which, according to the genius of the script, should have sent her sprawling. Miss Swanson accepted one kick but refused to sprawl.

"I want to be an actress, not a clown," she declared, and departed with as high a dudgeon as one can manage from five-feet-one.

"Sorry," said the hero. "Next, please."

For clowning was his cross in life; his name being Charlie Chaplin.

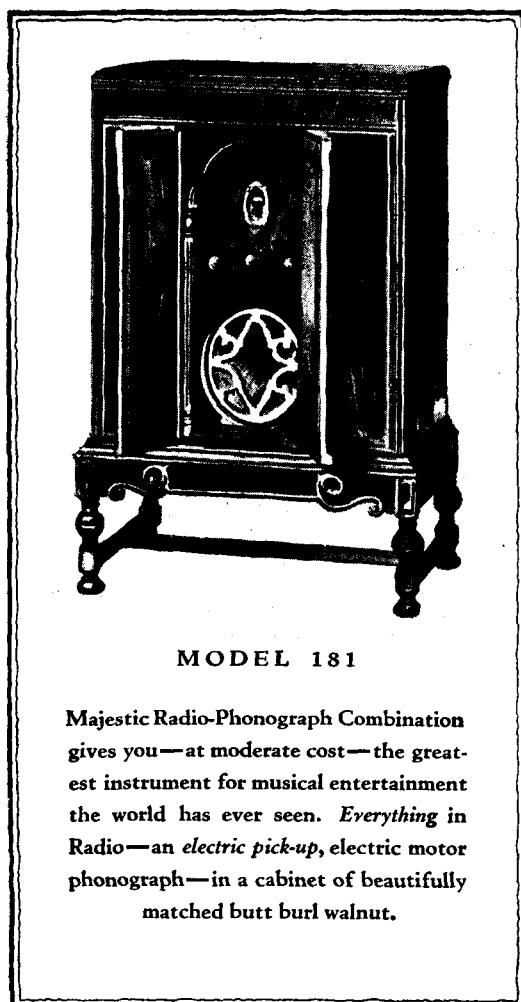
Miss Swanson's cross in life was its opposite—a personality which the savants of the movies assayed as comic, while her soul yearned for the expression of tragedy.

She went to Hollywood in the remote days before a salvo of twenty-one guns marked the end of every whoopee party. The Triangle Film outfit took her on.

She had to be content with bits and pieces remotely related to sex. Somewhere in the archives of forgotten films repose a series of two-reel comedies—*The Young* (Continued on page 48)

Drawing by
S. M. Wiggins
from a photograph

Mighty Monarch of the Air



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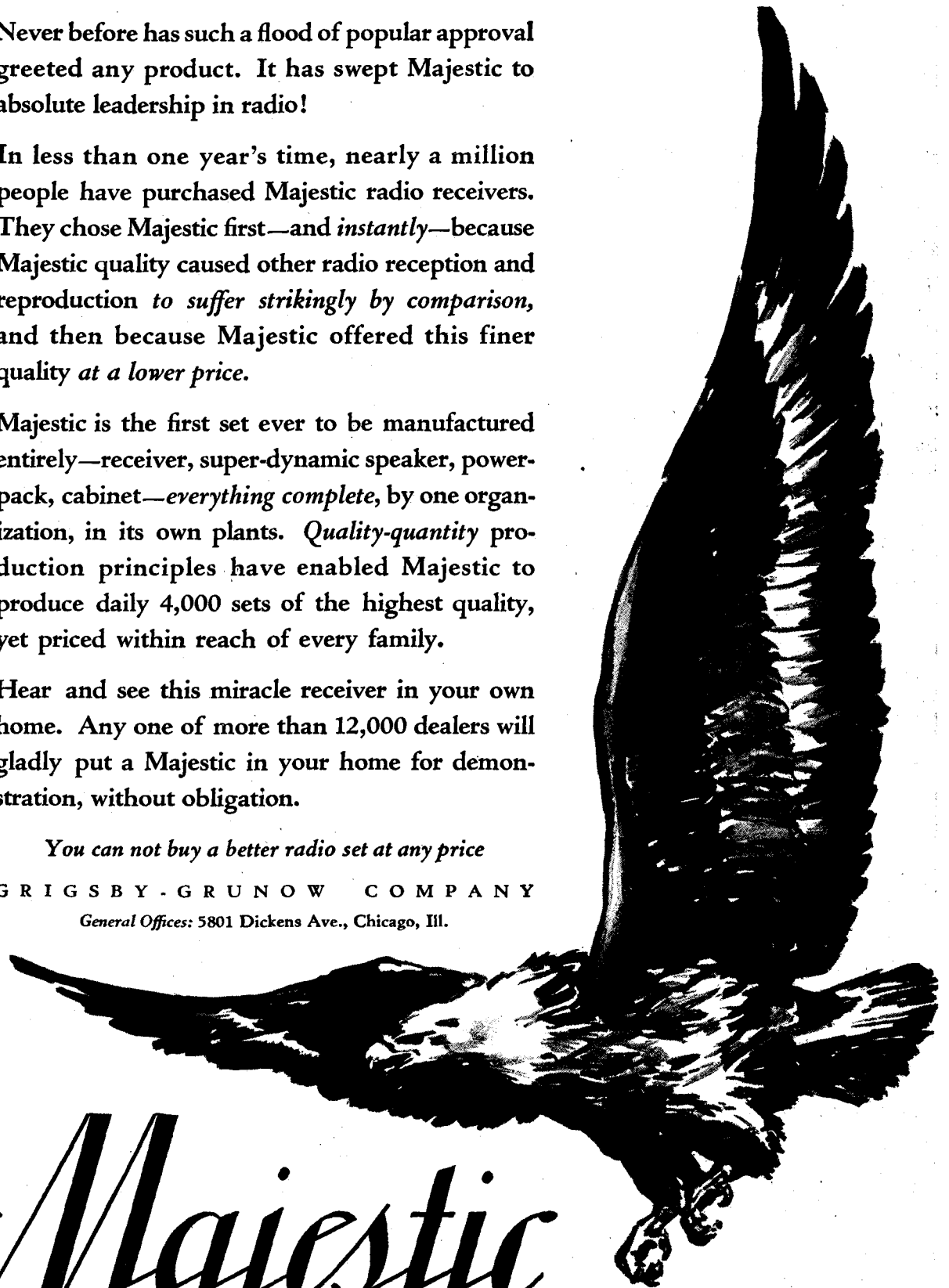
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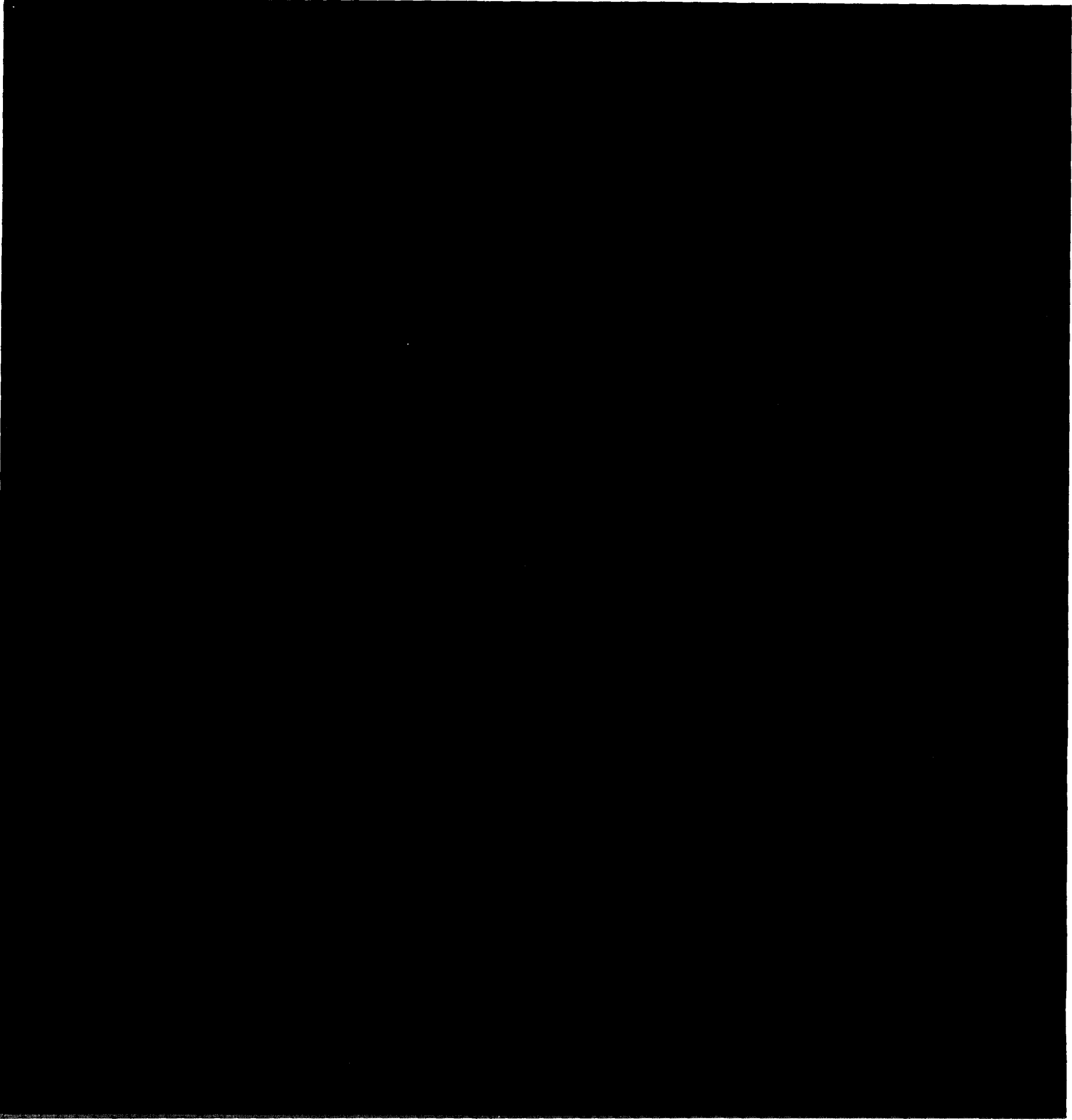
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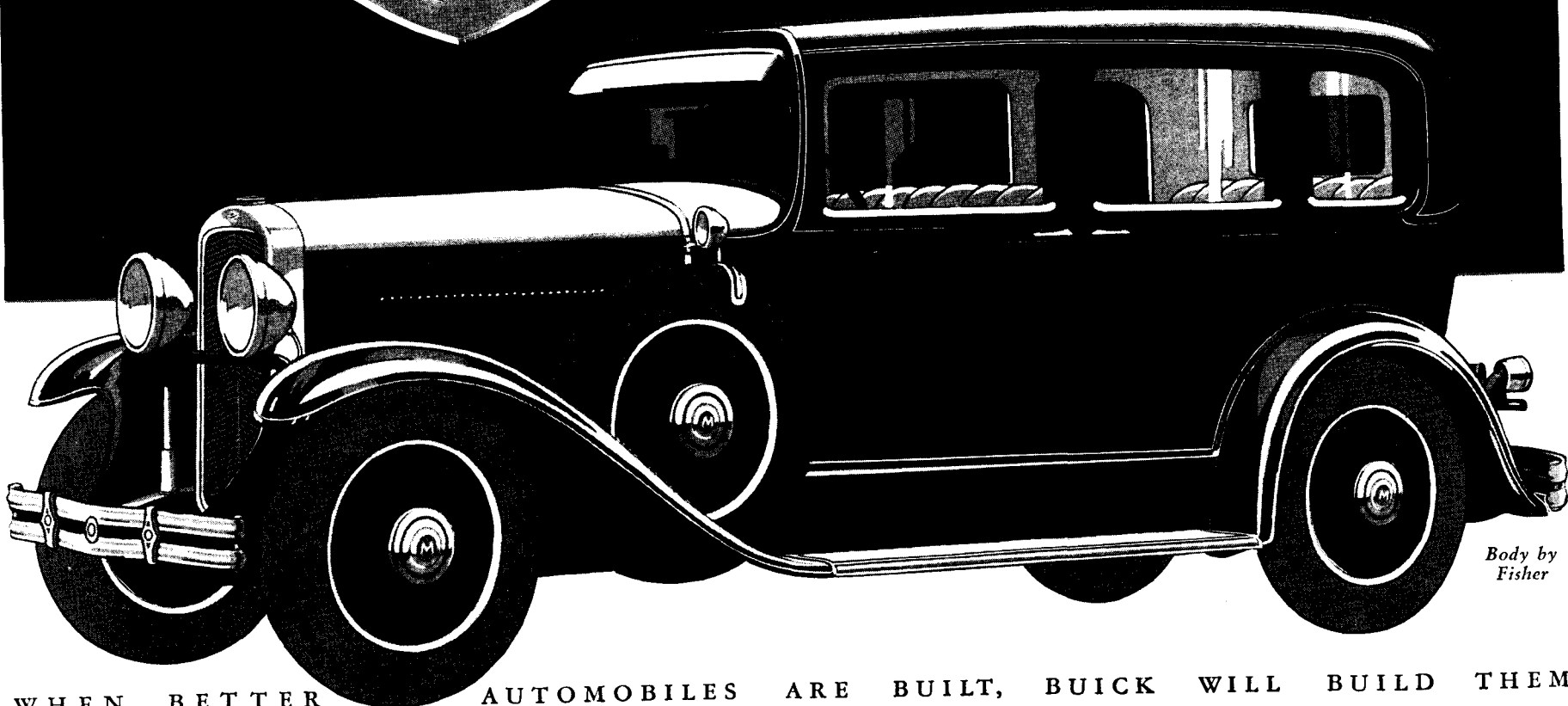
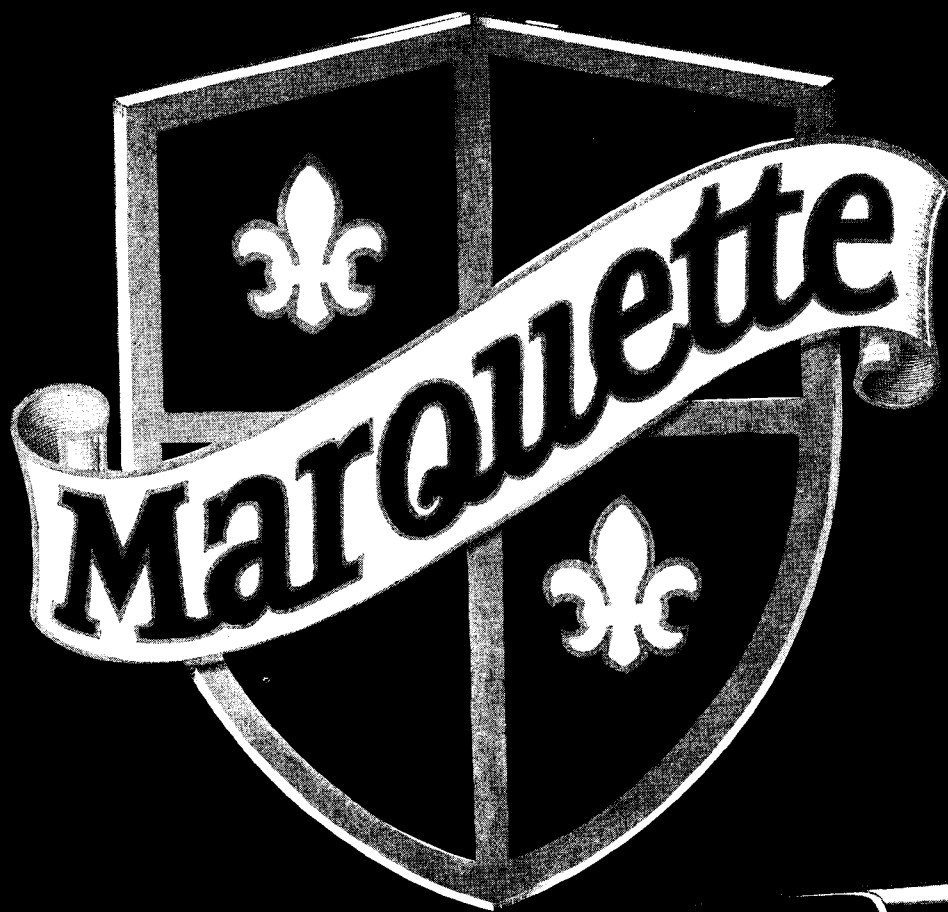
In appearance, the Marquette expresses

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WHEN BETTER AUTOMOBILES ARE BUILT, BUICK WILL BUILD THEM



G. FRANCIS KAUFFMAN

"Just a minute," called the operator. "One of you had Number Seven. Here."

In One Ear

Odd little bits of chit chat from here and there that came to the ears of Collier's writers in their travels up and down and all around. They might have been lost forever if we hadn't rounded them up on this page for you

OUR own William G. Shepherd is the father of two boys, six and eight years old, and he never misses an opportunity to teach them a Great Moral Lesson. But he flivvered on one, recently, although his intentions were noble.

With the youngsters he was driving past a small carnival when they noticed a crowd around a "wheel" which was spinning industriously.

"That," said Shepherd, when the youngsters inquired about the gayly illuminated booth, "is one of the silliest stores you ever heard of. That's a place where people go and pay their money for nothing. They just go and put down their money and walk away and they haven't got anything to show for it."

The boys looked skeptical, so Shepherd decided to teach them the folly of gambling. Each of them had a dime and Shepherd produced one of his own, got out of the car and led them to the booth. He directed each to select a number. They did so, paid their dimes and waited.

"Now you'll see," said the good father. "The man spins the wheel and then you walk away and that's all you get for your ten cents."

The wheel spun and stopped. Shepherd, beaming in the knowledge of a lesson taught, started to lead the somewhat dazed youngsters away.

"Just a minute," called the operator. "One of you had Number Seven. Here."

He reached out to a shelf and took down the cutest canary you ever saw in a little wooden cage and handed it to Shepherd to the amazement and hysterical delight of the boys.

It cost him about ten dollars to house the prize in a worthy cage and lay in a supply of bird seed and cuttlebone. And now every time the canary trills a joyous note, as it does frequently, Bill and Bob look at their father curiously.

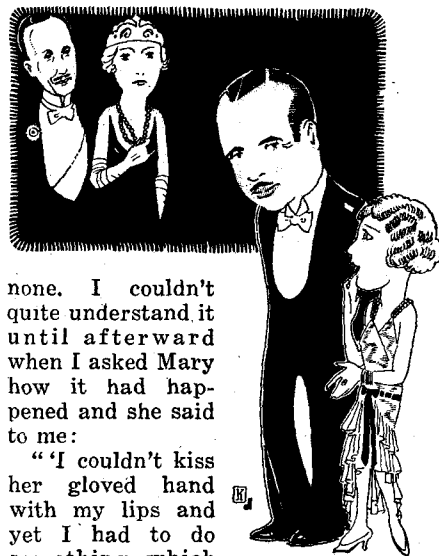
A Kiss for the Queen

DOUGLAS FAIRBANKS has delighted his intimates in Hollywood with a story of what happened—or, what almost happened—when he and his wife, Mary Pickford, were presented to the King and Queen of Spain.

"Just as we were walking up to the throne for the formal ceremony," relates Fairbanks, "both of us happened to notice at about the same time the Queen was wearing white gloves. The ceremony called for Mary to kiss the hand of the Queen and Mary had rouge on her lips.

"The kissing ceremony was vital, the rouge was transferrable to white gloves and Mary, momentarily, was in a panic.

"We were close to the throne and we just had to go ahead. Mary seemed to kiss the hand of the Queen and I took a quick look at the white glove for the red imprint of the rouge. There was



none. I couldn't quite understand it until afterward when I asked Mary how it had happened and she said to me:

"I couldn't kiss her gloved hand with my lips and yet I had to do something which would put a little pressure on that hand to let her feel that I was kissing it. So I just avoided touching the glove with my lips and touched it with my nose."

Controlling the Vote

FOUR years ago during a sensational campaign in a western state we asked a prohibition enforcement officer how a certain county was going to go.

"Republican," was the prompt and positive reply.

"But it never has yet."

"It will this time though."

"Why?"

"Humph, it's a cinch. There are thirty-two stills operating in that county. I know where they all are, and who runs 'em, and I've just been down and had the boys together and told 'em that if they didn't turn in a Republican majority that I'd raid every damn' one of 'em the day after election." That county went Republican.

"Two Other Fellows"

IN THE old easy days of newspaper railroad passes issued "on advertising," but really on suspicion, a conductor on a Kentucky railroad said to a passenger:

"I don't want you to get the impression I am doubting your honesty in presenting this pass issued to the Louis-

ville Courier-Journal; but recently we have been jacked up about these passes and asked to make sure that the presenters are really newspaper men. There has been some abuse of the privilege. It happens that today I can check up, because Mr. Henry Watterson himself is in the parlor-car just behind the coach. If you will please step back there and be identified, I'll be obliged to you."

The young man was inwardly panicky, as he had had his pass from a friend who worked on the Watterson sheet, but had never himself done a day's newspaper work. Yet he dared not refuse. He accompanied the conductor back to the parlor car.

Leading the young man to a gentleman sitting in a chair, the conductor said:

"Mr. Watterson, I am asking you to identify this young man. He works on your paper, does he?"

"Yes, indeed," said the gentleman heartily. "He is one of my best and most trusted reporters."

"Thank you, Mr. Watterson," said the conductor, bowing. "And thank you, too, sir. I am sure you understand why I did this."

After the conductor had hurried on to his duties forward in the train, the young man lingered and said to his benefactor:

"That was certainly sporting of you, Mr. Watterson—"

"Sh-h-h-h-h!" said the man. "I'm not Mr. Watterson!"

Those Funny Laws

THE soda fountain clerk turned toward the new customer and asked, in Boston accents, "What'll you have?" Boston soda clerks are gentle.

"A glass of milk please."

"Can't sell it," he said curtly.

"'Gainst the law!"

"Can't sell milk?"

"Tain't my fault," he explained. "I can put just a little syrup in it, though. That won't hurt it."

"Go ahead," said the customer.

The customer had a good drink.

"Couldn't even taste the syrup," he announced. "Why can't you sell milk?"

he asked the clerk, wiping milk off his lips with a paper napkin.

"Some restaurant law," he said. "All

I know is you can't sell it. Have to put a few drops of something in it to make it a fancy drink."

"Here! You can't take that taxicab." The decorated doorman of a Washington hotel fairly shouted.

A Washington visitor had hurried from across the street to get the taxi. "Why not?" he asked.

"It's a law," he said. "This stand is for hotel guests."

"But this is a public street."

"Sure. But you're supposed to be a hotel guest." Just as the visitor gave up and started to go away, he heard the doorman say:

"Go in that swinging door and come out again and it'll be all right."

The visitor did. The taxi took him off without further ado. He had complied with the law by passing out of the hotel door.

A traveler asked for a package of cigarettes in the club car of a certain crack New York-Chicago train.

"Sorry, sir, but I'm not allowed to sell them," said the steward.

"Why not?"

"We're not allowed by law to sell them in the state of Ohio." And he wasn't.

He lent the traveler his own package, until the train passed into Pennsylvania.

Then he unlocked a carefully padlocked drawer and brought out his cigarettes.

SCENE: Newton, Kansas, three years ago.

"Gimme some cigarettes." A tourist who had dropped off a transcontinental train to make connections was speaking at the cigar stand.

"Can't sell cigarettes in Kansas," said the clerk, automatically.

"Good Lord!" groaned the traveler.

"I can sell you cigarette tobacco," said the clerk.

"What good is that without cigarette paper?"

"Here," said the clerk, as he slammed a ten-cent bag of cigarette tobacco on the counter. "Now you go outside and when you come to a shoe-shining stand climb up on the seat and say to the boy, 'I don't want a ten-cent shine. I want a fifteen-cent shine.' And let him see your bag of tobacco."

The traveler followed the advice.

When he handed the shoe shiner fifteen cents he got a little book of cigarette papers in exchange.

There's always some way around the hundreds of pestiferous little laws and ordinances that keep biting away at the heels of citizens.

Kansas has repealed its anti-cigarette law. One reason given was that it didn't work; neither do lots of other petty laws.