

dared to eat his lunch while letting them go hungry.

The worst cruelty was shown in the use of peasants in mob scenes. Impoverished peasants, learning of the chance to make the fabulous sum of one dollar (33 cents in U. S. money) for a day's work, walked twenty and more miles during the night, in order to be on location in time for work the next day. Most of these scenes were shot north of Peiping, because the peasants of this region were noted for their docility. Two or three thousand would be packed onto a train (exodus scene) and shunted back and forth. For hours on end they were not permitted to get off the train to attend to their natural needs or to get some food. One of the women, exhausted and feeble from the long night's trek and the subsequent waiting, died of privation. After about eight hours of dangerous riding and shunting on the trains, the mob was finally allowed to get down. Most of them hadn't even the necessary few coppers for a bowl of tea and they gazed hungrily as the M-G-M troupe and the Kuomintang officials feasted on chicken, oranges and cooled mineral water. When, after an hour or so, they were ordered to board the train again they showed surprising solidarity in absolutely refusing to budge.

At the end of the day was in Peiping. Soldiers beat the hungry mob with the butts of their rifles, officers used the flats of their swords and the gang leaders pummeled the crowd with their fists.

The Kuomintang officials were always afraid to allow mob scenes to be shot within any large town or city. When, in Peiping, consent was finally procured, the following conditions were made: (a) The whole operation must be within the walls of the Forbidden City; (b) The mob was to be recruited by police agents; (c) Soldiers were to be mounted on the walls and emergency police at the gates; (d) For each twenty-five men, there was to be a leader, appointed by the police; (e) The M-G-M was to provide clean caps and other articles of clothing necessary to give the crowd a respectable appearance. (f) The whole operation was to be concluded as hastily as possible. Numerous other conditions were imposed, for the police were in constant fear whenever a mass of Chinese workers were allowed to assemble.

The only filming which was permitted without restriction was that of temples, pagodas, memorials, monuments and grave mounds. This is the "real" China which Chiang Kai-shek and his opium-eaten cohorts want the American public to see.

MIKE PELL.

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The Screen

AS life in capitalist America becomes increasingly cruel, horror films grow more lurid and revolting, more fantastic and pathological. *Mad Love* (M-G-M-Roxy) is an example.

Peter Lorre, in his first American film, portrays Prof. Gogol, a great surgeon madly in love with an actress of the Grand Guignol, Parisian horror theatre. But the actress, Yvonne Orlic, loves her husband, a pianist. Orlic loses his hands in a train wreck and Yvonne persuades Dr. Gogol to perform a miracle. Gogol grafts the hands of a freshly guillotined knife-thrower to the arms of Stephen Orlic: the new hands develop a mind of their own and Stephen automatically becomes an expert knife-thrower. In the meantime, Gogol's passion for Yvonne takes the place of his passion for seeing prisoners decapitated. He cooks up a scheme whereby he suggests to Stephen that he is a murderer and has just knifed his step-father. To make doubly sure that Stephen believes him (and to give the audience the necessary thrill) Gogol masquerades in a steel head brace and steel gloves and appears before Stephen in the role of the dead criminal whose hands Stephen now wears. Stephen is arrested and Gogol's insanity grows. In the final sequence, Gogol is in the act of strangling Yvonne "because he loves her so

much," when Stephen and the police rush in at the crucial moment; the husband throws a knife through a small grill, ending Gogol's career. This outline of the story is restrained, to say the least.

Peter Lorre, one of the most sensitive and capable of film actors, seems doomed to be cast as a rival to Karloff. Lorre came into prominence as the psychopathic child-murderer in Fritz Lang's German production, *M*, still the most effective horror film. *M* lacked all the artifices of *Mad Love*. Although both *M* and *Mad Love* belong to the same genre, there is as much difference between them as there is between a story by William Faulkner and a story by Erskine Caldwell. **PETER ELLIS.**

Other Current Films

Dante's Inferno (Fox-Rivoli): A gangster yarn combined with the theme of *The Power and the Glory*, the film contains a five-minute interlude when a sick man describes Inferno to the hero. Hollywood's version of Hell proves to be thousands of semi-nude, prostrate extras writhing in superimposed flames. The modern story deals with a racketeer living through a hell of his own making (he says) and everything is hunky-dory. This is the second spectacle of the season. *She was No. 1*, to be followed by Cecil DeMille's *Crusades* and climaxed by the Hearst-Warner-Rhinehardt, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. **P. E.**

Between Ourselves

JOHAN L. SPIVAK took time off from a novel he is writing to attend to Congressman Dickstein.

Mike Pell is a seaman. He has been about everywhere and while in China recently worked for the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer field expedition making *The Good Earth*, about which he writes in this issue.

Among the features in next week's issue will be:

"The Rise and Fall of Abraham Cahan," by Paul Novick, managing editor of *The Morning Freiheit*; an examination of the "patriarch" of *The Jewish Daily Forward* who for more than thirty years has been the head of that organ of Old Guard "Socialist Partyism."

"Walter Lippmann and Soviet Russia," by Corliss Lamont, author of *Russia Day by Day*. The steady evolution of an ex-Socialist, ex-liberal into a reactionary sophist and defender of the status quo.

A piece by Robert Forsythe (who is now on vacation). "Back in the days when Upton Sinclair was a novelist and not a politician, there was a large body of opinion which held that he wasn't even a novelist," Forsythe begins and goes on from there.

The International Bookshop, 1265 Raymond Boulevard, Newark, N. J., will follow the example recently set by the Brownsville Bookshop in distributing returned copies of *THE NEW MASSES*, in order to increase sales of the magazine in Newark. *THE NEW MASSES* can now be purchased at most of the newsstands in Newark, Irvington and Journal Square, Jersey City.

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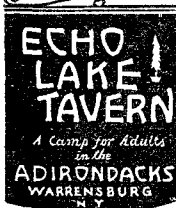
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