

Mary Pickford, Manager

By ROBERT F. MOORE



Photo by Hartsok

Now that the suspense of the oft-repeated assertions and denials, long current in the news columns, of Mary Pickford's threatened change from the Famous Players Company's management, was finally ended and cold in the discard, I decided to ask Little Mary how she liked playing the part of producer.

The morning paper announced that Mary Pickford was to desert the East for California. A big studio has been taken over for her in Los Angeles and work on the next Mary Pickford Artcraft pictures was to include "Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm" and "A Romance of the Redwoods," directed by Cecil B. DeMille.

Everybody seemed to be very busy. Even in the street, the pounding of hammers and scraping of moving scenery were distinctly audible, while a corps of assistants, under a technical director, was busily engaged in unloading several trucks of properties. Affairs of the Artcraft Picture Corporation seemed to be well under way.

After cooling my heels in the office, awaiting the pleasure of a small Cerberus of the studio in the person of a freckle-faced call-boy, I was escorted to Miss Pickford's dressing-room.

Little Mary, fresh from her afternoon's work and the hands of her maid, was resting on a big, comfortable-looking wicker couch.

"Come right in and sit by that window," she called cheerfully, "and enjoy this delightful breeze."

I dropped into the arm-chair with a sigh of content.

"Miss Pickford," I said, going straight to the point, "I came up expecting to find you in an office with books and papers and things. What is the meaning of this?"

Little Mary laughed.

"I'm really very glad you came, for the newspapers have given a very false impression. I don't go into an office unless I have to. I want to make pictures, not sell them.

"You see," she went on, "when an actress is successful, everybody thinks she wants to do everything from directing to running a corporation. Now, I don't want my friends to get that idea. Things are going much the same as usual, except that I get no salary, but share in the profits."

"Then you are not directing your own pictures?"

"Most emphatically no! Mr. Maurice Tourneur and Mr. DeMille are now my directors. Mr. Zukor, Mr. Lasky and myself are in partnership, and Mr. Zukor is still the papa of the concern, as he always has been. Of course I have the choice of the stories and have a say in the studio work, but I am a player and wish to remain one. One person cannot make a picture, much less a corporation."

Little Mary's mouth was set, and she looked quite positive.

"Has forming your own company proved more beneficial than working for the Famous Players?"

"I don't know that it has helped me, but it was my dream for a long while. Every actress looks forward to it, I guess. Everything is going well, and we are all working very, very hard. But my real reason for wanting the change was in order to be independent of any definite program. While I was with the Famous Players, I received many letters from exhibitors,



complaining that they could not afford my pictures because they had to lease the whole program. I began to feel that I wasn't reaching my friends outside as I should, and if they really wanted my pictures money shouldn't stand in the way, so we talked it over, and decided that this was the best way. That's all."

"That's all," but there you have

Little Mary's character. She will go to twice the trouble and twice the labor, for she really is laboring very much harder to please her friends.

This latest successful development of Mary's career hasn't changed her a bit. She is just her usual, unassuming little self, with the same childlike wonder at her popularity. Perhaps that is where the secret of her charm lies.