Our Unofficial

Above is Doug in Berlin with Dr. Karl Vallmoeller, the author of "The Miracle"

Mary and Doug with Mr. Maseryk, President of Czecho-Slovakia, in the garden of his summer home at Prague. They were also entertained by the President at dinner

If you are going abroad this summer . . . or wish you were . . . do not fail to read this

When Mary Pickford entered a theater in Berlin for the opening of her "Little Annie Rooney," the orchestra played "The Star-Spangled Banner" for the first time since the war . . . a gesture Germany had not yet had the courage to make for a diplomat or statesman

IF, as Emerson says, traveling is a fool's paradise, there are a lot of happy fools—and a lot more who are perfectly willing to become so, if Lady Luck would only give them a chance.

But there are ways and ways of traveling, and travelers and travelers. Some go just to "look see"—mainly to see how different everything is from the way it is at home. Some go for the educational advantages which they absorb with much determination and a conscientious spirit, others just go to kill time or to shop, but whatever their expressed purpose, the average American travels with a chip on his shoulder and a flag in his buttonhole, and no one will ever get the most a country has to give—will never thoroly understand or appreciate a foreign view-point while he holds so cock-sure to his own.

Douglas Fairbanks was telling me all about it—about his own reactions to the people and the countries he visited, and everything he said suggested breadth—a wide horizon, a deepening of understanding. Not once did he say, "They have such funny ideas over there," "The food is terrible," or "I didn't sleep in a comfortable bed in the whole of Europe," or anything about those "dinky little trains."

And I cant remember ever hearing a returned American traveler who didn't mention at least one or two of those things.

"Chips on their shoulders and flags in their buttonholes!" The expression is Douglas', not mine, and he considers it one of our most serious national mistakes in our personal relations with foreign countries.

I doubt if there is any person in the world more vibrant, more vital, more full of the joy of living than Douglas Fairbanks. I doubt if there is a more vivid personality. He returns from an eight months' study and tour of Europe that would prove a most exhausting experience for the average person—but is he tired or worn out or blasé? Not at all. He says travel is the most perfect relaxation, provided you assume a receptive attitude — provided you adapt yourself to the country you are in, and so far as possible live and think as the natives of that country do.

"If you are exhausted," says Douglas, "a complete cessation of activity is fatal. You must go on, you must fill up your mind with new impressions, so that gradually the old ideas, the old habits of thought which have tired you and sapped your strength, fade away.

"It's the old idea that a cup can only hold so much, therefore when you pour

Our unofficial ambassadors in Paris . . . their car could not drive thru the streets because of the crowds that turned out to see them

Ambassadors

By
DWINELLE BENTHALL

"If you are taken ill in a foreign country," says Doug, "the best way to get well is to eat the same sort of food the natives of that country eat. Instinctively, people adapt their appetites to climatic conditions"

When the Fairbankses travel, they take along a willingness to understand the other fellow's point of view

International Newsreel
The Fairbanks when they returned on the S. S. "Majestic" from their last trip abroad

Mary and Doug in Berlin
J. Zelenka "Ideal"

in new ideas, the old ones must give place to them—that is refreshment, revitalization, and that is why I travel. Nothing will accomplish the purpose so well—nothing is so restful. Traveling will rest anyone, provided he will travel in the right spirit—willing to give even the devil his due.

"But dont try to cling to all your own little pet ideas and fancies. Relax—be a sponge and soak up the strangeness.

"And if you are taken ill in a foreign country, the best way to get well is to eat the same sort of food the natives of that particular land do. Instinctively, people adapt their appetites to climatic conditions. So, to be specific, when in Spain eat as the Spaniards do, and you'll keep your liver right — and consequently your disposition.

"Traveling! There is nothing like it. Back of every trip I take is the thought I have been trying to express," continued Douglas, "revitalization! That is my fundamental reason for traveling. I respond physically and psychologically to each new set of circumstances, and gradually, as I go from country to country, I am made over—refreshed, strengthened—rested—but by change, not by calm inactivity. And, of course, I always travel for pleasure first, but our last trip had a lot of interesting business angles, and in many ways it turned out to be a most important business affair.

"We should all know more about the world. Pictures are international. They are a universal language. More and more the world is growing closer together We must understand each other. It is imperative that we should. Pictures are one of the greatest mediums for mutual understanding."

Their celebration at Naples, just a year ago this month
R. Carbone

He put his glass down. It was tea we had—in tall, thin glasses — steaming, aromatic, with crushed lemon, and the inimitable fragrance of tea. Outside it was cold—very cold for California, and the new United Artists' lot was ankle-deep in very heavy, very black mud—sugges-

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Our Unofficial Ambassadors

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tive of France in war-time—or a detour somewhere in Kansas—anyway, it was *not* sunny California.

And as anecdote succeeded anecdote, we hopped all over Europe. Now it was Italy—"a new Italy," said Douglas enthusiastically. "There are no more beggars!"

Welcome news for travelers that, for memories of Italy to the average American tripper are a succession of cathedrals and art galleries, permanently and entirely overrun with pleaders for charity—arguments about money in which the American was always suavely defeated—an uncomfortable sense of being "done."

So much we have gathered from other travelers.

"And you mean that Italy is not like that any more?" we asked hopefully.

"Absolutely not," laughed Douglas. "For instance, while we were there, we had a place up in the hills on a branch railroad, and every night our car had to be switched from the main line to the little jerk water. It took a number of men to do it, and I usually left some money with the yardmaster to be distributed among them—probably it amounted to five or ten dollars, I dont remember exactly, but it wasn't much. Anyway, one morning as we went thru, the yardmaster came to me and gave me back the money, saying that he couldn't find out just which men switched the car the night before! And that in Italy!

"It's a little thing perhaps, but it is typical of the general change which has come over the country—a progressive, square-shooting attitude.

"Mussolini has done a tremendous thing for Italy," he continued seriously. "He has begun with the most crying needs, the most obvious reforms—roads, industries, public ultilities."

"And how does he feel about pictures?" we inquired.

"He needs theaters first," said Doug. "I told him that. Modern, comfortable theaters. What good are the best pictures in the world if you haven't decent theaters to show them in? We talked to Mussolini several times. He is a powerful personality, a Cæsar, really," said Douglas.

"And another interesting man is Maseryk, President of Czecho-Slovakia—wait a minute, I have a picture of him, and these are interesting—Prague, that picturesque old Bohemian city, which is having such a vital reincarnation—Czecho-Slovakia is one of the most progressive countries in the world."

"Is that why Rin-Tin-Tin is their film favorite?" we couldn't resist asking.

But Douglas' sense of humor is even more apparent when the joke is on him—and when we saw the pictures of the crowds gathered in the streets of Prague, and realized that those thousands of people had gathered to catch a glimpse of two American screen stars—even tho their picture statistics said a dog was their favorite—well, we felt rather like sticking a flag in our buttonhole too.

And we recalled the newspaper accounts of things that happened during that tour and of the vast crowds that gathered wherever they went. Of the holidays Swedish cities declared in their honor—of the decorated streets—how humanity packed itself in dense throngs about the hotels. Indeed, their progress from country to country was attended by such adulation, such public enthusiasm and honor as was once given only to Royalty. Certainly no private American citizens were ever greeted and fêted on such a grand scale.

And thinking of this—aside from the glory of it—the whole thing takes on a deep significance—for America, for Americans, and particularly for Hollywood.

Pictures carry our thought and our ideals to every country on the globe—picture personalities are our unofficial ambassadors.

We probably never will know just how much good Douglas Fairbanks' last trip to Europe did for American pictures, speaking from a business standpoint, and for American picture people, to be more specific.

The spirit of friendliness in which they were received—and the spirit of friendliness they gave, cannot be estimated in dollars and cents. No one wants to, but it bears thinking about.

"Every country is getting into the game," continued Douglas, not realizing how far afield my thoughts had been wandering. "We have a long start and we have immense capital, but we're going to have increasing competition in the world market, there is no doubt about that. And the better we understand other countries

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Fotolegie Spol, S. R. O., Praha

The crowd that thronged the streets surrounding the railway station at Prague, waiting to catch a glimpse of Mary and Doug on their arrival

Our Unofficial Ambassadors

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and their tastes, the better position we're going to be in to make and sell them our pictures. And the better we understand their aims and their problems—well, it works both ways.

"Take England, for example. She is awakening to the immense importance of pictures. Sometimes I think the solution of the English problem is for them to produce in America.

"If you want to buy coal, you go to Newcastle—well, when you want to make pictures, why not come to Hollywood? It's perfectly logical, isn't it? Here we have everything, every possible facility, and it doesn't follow that an English organization, with English minds, would have to make an American picture just because they took advantage of California sunshine, does it?

"They would be free to manufacture any sort of product they wanted to, under the most favorable conditions. Their climate is terribly against them—it's a terrific handicap."

"What about German pictures?" we asked, not feeling equal to England's problem just then. "Are they all masterpieces?"

"Indeed they are not," said Douglas emphatically, "any more than every American picture is a masterpiece.

"We found Germany very active in picture production, as well as in everything else. They make a lot of terrible pictures—but then, they also make a 'Variety' now and then, super-pictures, which we see, and by which we are apt to judge their whole output."

"Is it true that 'The Thief of Bagdad' played in thirty-one theaters in Berlin at one time?" we asked.

"Something like that—it was very popular, and so was 'Annie Rooney.' We were there for the opening, and they even outdid a Hollywood First Night."

He told me about the famous people who were there, and about the theater and the beauty of Berlin—he even told me what Mary wore, when I, with feminine curiosity, asked for this particular detail.

The pomp and the ceremony, the glittering vision of uniforms and gold lace—impressive uniforms and miles of decorations seemed somewhat overwhelming—I wondered just what a mere American woman would wear under such circumstances.

But Douglas was not impressed by that aspect of the case at all.

"Oh, Mary is always prepared for emergencies," he said. "She had trunks of things." He spoke with the most absolute faith in Mary's ability to meet any situation. Whatever his state of mind and wardrobe might have been—hers was adequate—he hadn't a doubt of that.

"Was it white—her gown?" we suggested hopefully.

"Yes, I think it was," he said with alacrity.

But he didn't tell, what was really the most important thing that happened that night—a fact of the deepest significance.

When Mary and Douglas entered that theater in Berlin for the opening of "Little Annie Rooney," the orchestra played "The Star-Spangled Banner" for the first time since the war.

The gesture of friendship which Germany had not yet found the courage to make for diplomats and statesmen, she made for our unofficial ambassadors.

The tension was broken. In "Little

Annie Rooney" Mary made them laugh and cry. In "Bagdad" Douglas led them into the fairy world of fantasy and idealism. War was forgotten—enmity cannot survive when good friends laugh together!

So whatever it was Douglas started out to do—whether it was to find Emerson's "Fool's Paradise" or to benefit the state of his liver by Spanish peppers, when he went to Europe the last time—what he actually did do was to insure a more friendly feeling for America and for American pictures from one end of Europe to the other.

And what he used are the three qualities which are so inevitably his—friendliness and enthusiasm and a willingness to understand the other fellow's point of view.

It's something to think about——

He was telling me about the Gardens of the Crillon in Paris when the door opened and Mrs. Fairbanks came in—gracious, charming. Her air of sweet serenity always seems just the exact counterbalance for his fire and exuberance.

Douglas went to get some personal pictures he had promised us. The opportunity was not to be resisted. "Mr. Fairbanks was telling me about the opening of 'Annie Rooney' in Berlin. I asked him about your gown."

"And what did he say?" she asked smilingly.

"He said you were always prepared for any emergency."

"Oh, wasn't that sweet of him, he is such a dear——"

"He thought it was white," we said. And Mary laughed—— "He knows about as much about clothes as most husbands do. It was pink," she said, "watermelon pink, trimmed with ostrich—and silver——"

Lovely intimate details followed.

Then Douglas came back with the pictures—and it was past dinner-time—past anyone's dinner-time, but neither Mr. nor Mrs. Fairbanks had suggested it, by so much as a covert glance at a watch.

Charming and gracious, enthusiastic and real, loving and human, the world's most famous travelers—oh, yes, they are, in spite of the popularity of Rin-Tin-Tin in Czecho-Slovakia, the best loved couple in the world—Mary and Douglas Fairbanks.

News of the Camera Coasts

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War Department didn't seem to be interested.

THERE have been so many versions of "Carmen" in the history of motion pictures that Raoul Walsh has decided to release his newest edition disguised in a new title. This is the Fox production starring Dolores del Rio and Victor McLaglen. No one has thought of a good title yet, but the contest is on, and it's not hard to guess what sort of thing it will be.

They say that the folks back home in London, where Victor McLaglen hails from, feel very strongly that now that he's such a success, Victor should go back and contribute to the glory of the English cinema. They've forgotten completely that when Victor was looking for work in London years ago, no one would do anything but ignore him completely.

IT'S amazing how short the road to stardom in Hollywood has become. Here are Ralph Forbes and Dolores del Rio, who a year ago were unknown to film fans, starring in Clarence Brown's production of "The Trail of '98." Ralph Forbes made his first screen appearance in "Beau Geste," and his performance in that marked him as a star right away. Of course, Dolores' breath-taking career is well known to everyone. And Gary Cooper, who has only been in pictures a year, is now a Paramount star.

WILLIAM HAINES' first starring picture will be "Spring Fever." Sam Taylor was borrowed from Mary Pickford to direct this, but in the meantime Mary decided on her next picture and recalled him. So Hobart Henley will guide Bill thru his first starring venture.

AS soon as Metro-Goldwyn made up their minds to bar all unnecessary visitors from the studio, Warner Brothers followed suit, and probably all the big studios will adopt this policy, so that only those who have legitimate business will see the inside of a studio.

THERE are few rôles which give Renée Adorée a chance to display all her talents and charms. Perhaps "Rose-Marie" will be one of them. It sounds more like Renée than "The Flaming Forest" or some of the other atrocities she's been in recently. Will Nigh, who made "The Fire Brigade," will direct this story of the French-Canadian girl. No leading man has been selected.

LENORE COFFEE, the scenario writer, is very active these days. It was she who wrote the scripts of "The Volga Boatman" and "The Night of Love." She is now furnishing Gloria Swanson with her next story, "The Battalion of Death," and is also writing an original for First National, called "Bed and Board."

ERICH VON STROHEIM has finished "The Wedding March" and is up against the same situation which greeted the completion of his other pictures. He insists that his picture cannot be cut to less than six-

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THE TEN BEST PICTURES OF 1926

Judged by the Votes of Motion Picture Critics

Every year The Film Year Book asks the leading motion picture critics all over the country to vote on the ten best pictures of the previous year. Here are the results for last year:

"Variety."
"Ben Hur."
"The Black Pirate."
"The Big Parade."
"Beau Geste."
"Stella Dallas."
"The Volga Boatman."
"What Price Glory?"
"The Sea Beast."
"La Bohême."