

# THE FILM SPECTATOR

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**THE VAGABOND LOVER**—By James A. Creelman Jr., with Rudy Vallee and his Connecticut Yankees, directed by Marshall Neilan for RKO. Supporting Cast: Sally Blane, Marie Dressler, Charles Sellon, Norman Peck, Danny O'Shea, Eddie Nugent, Nella Walker, Malcolm Waite, Alan Roscoe.

Rudy, a bright and shining light along the Great White Way, I am told, doesn't look so good in close-up, and it's doubtful if his honey-crooning tunes are going to be enough to satisfy the fans who were expecting a sort of singing John Gilbert. The laddie's face is set in a sort of perpetual sorrow which, added to the fact that he seldom looks the camera in the eye, makes him seem like the wraith of some calamity walking through the scenes. Only the voice is virile, and quite alive. In the dim seclusion of some night club stage, the lights low and colored, soft music, and a crowd willing to be maudlin—the voice might put him across, and evidently has. But in the black and white glare of a close-up on the screen, with typical movie audiences chewing gum and eating peanuts in your ear, I'm afraid most of you won't be able to bring quite the right mood into focus to meet him half way.

Nevertheless, the picture is playable, and entertaining in a degree. If you like Marie Dressler, it will be more than that to you. She convulses the audience every time she opens her mouth—which she does not a few times. I admit she is worth the money to me, always. Eddie Nugent tries brightly several times to arouse the glum Rudy, but with all the effect of a lighted match dropped into an ocean of wetness. A calm little story winds through it, offering very slight excuse for the title, *The Vagabond Lover*.

Rudy and his band come to Long Island to show off before his saxophone correspondence-school teacher, a famous player of that instrument. Strangely enough, we never hear either teacher or pupil perform solo on this horn. The teacher leaves his house about the time of Rudy's arrival, and Rudy impersonates him, singing and playing for some of the neighborhood benefits in general and for Sally Blane in particular. In the end he is a bigger hit—in the picture—than the man he is impersonating, and gets Sally to wife for his efforts. Length 6242—61 minutes. Other pictures directed by Marshall Neilan: *Black Waters*, *Tanned Legs*, *The Awful Truth*.

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