

# The New York Times.

May 26, 1914

## THE VERB "TO FILM."

The verb "to film" having gained currency, it must be graciously admitted to the language. It will soon be in the "advanced" dictionaries and it must be recognized. The old idea of protecting the English language from invasion is extinct. To "film" means to make a picture for a "movie" show. "Movie" is a tolerably new word, too, but all the élite use it. The moving pictures are doing much more than revolutionize the language. They are broadening the public knowledge, making globe trotters of the stay-at-homes, showing us the wonders of the growth of plants and the development of animal life. As for their influence on the drama, they have none in any true sense. Moving pictures, even when they are accompanied by talking machines of the best quality, must always be a feeble substitute for histrionism. The actor's art is not to suffer. Whenever it is manifested it will get its reward.

But the theatrical stage has long survived without much real histrionism to brag of and the moving pictures outdo its best shows. They give you real ocean with towering waves instead of painted canvas, they



present the story in motion, and sometimes in color, with such a variety of changing scene as to satisfy the eye. Dr. JOHNSON would doubtless have found that moving pictures interested him more than SHAKESPEARE'S "Antony and Cleopatra" on account of their frequent changes of scene. When the villain throws the heroine off a cliff into a boiling torrent there is a real cliff and the torrent is authentic. No doubt, the present enormous popularity of the moving picture will abate in time, but some of the current picture shows are really marvels of selection, patience, and skill, and they will always survive as illustrations of travel, as aids to the understanding of natural history. As a substitute for the theatre they will do well enough until there is a revival of real histrionism, until great actors come again to exercise their "sway o'er hearts." Meanwhile, whether 16,000,000 persons daily attend the moving pictures in this country, according to the evidence placed before the House Committee on Education at Washington, or only 6,000,000, which seems a more reasonable number, the vogue of the moving picture is surely at its height.