



"CLOSE-UPS"

*Limbering
Our
Language*

WHEN a thing takes hold of a whole people its idiom enters the language; its individual verbiage begins to limber up the common speech.

So the idiom of active photography has entered the English language—at least, wherever the English language is Americanized.

The self-conscious valedictorian is told not to “look into the camera.” The reporter writing of a street murder terms his description of the underlying cause a “cut-back.” The editorial writer now takes his daily “close-up”—a phrase first given exact editorial application by this magazine—on some phase of the European war. The vaudevillian refers to any actor with a family as author of “The Birth of a Nation.”

Eric de Lamarter, the brilliant music critic of the Chicago Tribune, provides an ultimate tribute to the new lingo in a scholarly description of recent performances of the Wagnerian “Ring” dramas. He says: “First of all let us eliminate the Wagnerian menagerie Then let us bury all monologues over twenty minutes in length. Having accomplished so much, we shall be in a position to *film* all of the “Ring’s” action on the length of one *reel*.”

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