

THE SCREEN

By MORDAUNT HALL.

Leon Errol As a Buccaneer.

CLOTHES MAKE THE PIRATE, with Leon Errol, Dorothy Gish, Nita Naldi, Tully Marshall, James Rennie, Edna Murphy, George Marion, Walter Law and Reginald Barlow, adapted from a novel by Holman Day, directed by Maurice Tourneur; Vincent Lopez and his augmented orchestra; Edward Silbano, baritone. "On the Road to Mandalay." At the Mark Strand.

Leon Errol stalks, stumbles, glides and flops with his usual success through many a chapter of a highly diverting travesty entitled "Clothes Make the Pirate," which is based on a novel by Holman Day. Mr. Errol's appearance is apt to create laughter when he is merely clad as a seventeenth century henpecked tailor, but when he embraces his dearly beloved role of a swashbuckling buccaneer his garb is enough to awaken laughter in the most morose bosom. Evidently thousands of people like to see pirates or at least Mr. Errol as one, for the Mark Strand was packed to the standing point yesterday afternoon, with hundreds of persons waiting patiently in the lobby and on the sidewalk for their turn to enter the theatre.

This picture has moments that recall "Captain Applejack," and there are times when it is reminiscent of Captain Hook in "Peter Pan." It has, however, an original idea and Maurice Tourneur in directing this production has steadily and surely gunned for laughter. Mr. Errol is aided and abetted by Dorothy Gish, Nita Naldi, George Marion and Tully Marshall.

In the first chapter there is "Tremble-at-Evil" Tidd, a tailor with a ragged beard, who is much afraid of his young wife, Dame Betsy (Miss Gish). Tidd would a-pirating go and his favorite book is concerned with the hardy adventures of Captain Kidd. He also has the clothes and accoutrements of a sea-rover hidden under a plank in the floor of his shop, little dreaming that the day is not far off when he will have the cherished opportunity of making his enemies walk the plank. He would especially like to gloat over the watery grave of Scute, the baker, an abominable rum-hound. So obsessed is Tidd with this idea, bearing also in mind a hope that he will be able to resent the imperious commands of his wife, that one evening he dons his pirate's gear and to his amazement he is carted off to a pirate craft by a bloodthirsty band of mariners, who believe him to be the flint-hearted Dixie Bull, who has made his mark on the Spanish Main. Once aboard the lugger, Tidd finds that the spirit is willing but that the flesh is weak, especially about the ankles. He is not quite such a brazen scoundrel as he imagined he would make on the deck of a ship flying the skull and crossbones. Bluff pulls him through a good way and he slips along fairly well, bossing his frigate from a cabin, and subsequently realizing that his vessel has defeated a warship aboard which there are three women.

The prisoners are about to walk the plank, when Lieutenant Cavendish intercedes, and the masquerading pirate claims the first woman, recognizing her as his young wife. She is supposed not to know him without his beard. He also insists on saving the other women, one being Cavendish's fiancée and the other a French vampire, Mme. La Tour. Tidd then manifests a penchant for vampires before his wife.

There are a number of ludicrous situations, in which Tidd through sheer good luck comes out with flying colors, but in the end he is glad to enter his home and bring the firewood his wife had ordered before he went a-pirating. But as he looks at the woman, his pirate self returns and he ends by wearing the trousers in his own home.

Mr. Errol's piratical attire consists of boots, a stretch of naked calves, knees and thighs, then a pair of wide, very short trousers, a brass buttoned tunic and a large tricorne hat, emblazoned with the inevitable skull and bones. Often he indulges the Errolean ankles, explaining that his crumpling up is due to an old wound.

The scenic effects are cleverly portrayed, and the descriptive titles are worded in old English. It is an affable picture in which the absurdity of the theme is cleverly maintained.

Miss Naldi is a gushing vampire and Miss Gish is a tempestuous young wife. George Marion figures as the indomitable ship's mate. Their performances are capable, but the mainstay of the production is, of course, Mr. Errol.

The Dancer and the Jewels.

THE MASKED BRIDE, with Mae Murray, Francis X. Bushman, Roy D'Arcy, Basil Rathbone, Pauline Neff, Chester Conklin, Fred Warren, Leo White and others, directed by Christy Cabanne; overture, "First Hungarian Rhapsody"; "No Woman's Land," a short subject; Caroline Andrews, singer; Doris Niles in a gypsy dance; "Thou Shalt Not Pass," a Mutt and Jeff cartoon. At the Capitol.

Unconventional and pleasing touches in direction, clever titles and Mae Murray's iridescent charm serve to make "The Masked Bride" quite an agreeable entertainment despite the weird story, the situations in which frequently wander far from anything that might be deemed probable. The narrative often reflects the personality of the star, without any deep thought given to its dramatic possibilities; and the characters, with the exception of the dazzling heroine, are called upon to be dense when it is necessary. So, if there is a diamond bracelet lurking about where it does not belong, all the brains of the male characters evaporate and the girl easily outwits them. Everything works up to making Gaby, a French danseuse and consort of an apache, a clever, beautiful, sympathetic, irresistible little person.

Gaby tells the Deputy Prefect of the Paris police, when he comes to investigate the Coachmen's Café, that his men are toads and insects. This Prefect is impersonated by Roy D'Arcy, who officiated as the Crown Prince in "The Merry Widow." He wears a twin-pointed beard, but his smile still is the smile of the quasi-German officer he characterized in Erich von Stroheim's notable effort.

The Prefect think that Gaby knows a great deal about some stolen jewels, and his friend, Grover, an American of vast wealth, does not believe the beautiful Gaby to be capable of wickedness. This gives the cheerful Prefect the chance to tell Gaby that Grover believes that he will find she has a soul, while he, the Prefect, believes that he will find she has the stolen valuables. The Prefect shakes a bedpost and instantly realizes that it is a hiding place and therefore pulls it off and discloses glittering gems. Gaby is not in the least worried, and soon she hurts the police official's pride, by telling him that she would never keep jewels in such a place if they were real.

The rest of the story is a mixture of a Hollywood scenario with a gleam of a Guy de Maupassant idea. But in the end Miss Murray has to show audiences in Timbuctoo and Tulsa how well she looks in a wedding gown. Hence there is one of those gorgeous ceremonies, accompanied by the familiar wedding march.

The hefty hero, who is not called upon to do anything hazardous but merely asked to have faith in the golden-haired dancer, is played by Francis X. Bushman, who knows his camera but who fails to impress one as a husband for Gaby, except that it is his wealth. Her selfish apache, Antoine, is much more sympathetic, but the title writer kills his manliness when he avers that there is a world of beautiful women but only one 5,000,000-franc necklace. The rôle of Antoine is acted by Basil Rathbone, who gives a most commendable performance.

This is a glittering production, with scenic art, efficient acting, but a Hollywood classic for a story.

Other Photoplays.

Cecil B. De Mille's picturization of "The Road to Yesterday" is at the Rivoli.

Tom Mix in "The Best Bad Man" is the offering at the Rialto.

"The Phantom of the Opera" with a special stage spectacle is at the Colony.

At Warners' it was decided at the last moment to hold over "Hogan's Alley" and the revival of Chaplin's comedy, "A Dog's Life."

"The Big Parade," with Renée Adorée and John Gilbert, is at the Astor; "The Vanishing American," with Lois Wilson, is at the Criterion; "Stella Dallas," with Belle Bennett, is at the Apollo; "The Merry Widow" is at the Embassy; "The Beautiful City," with Richard Barthelmess, at the Brooklyn Strand; "Stage Struck," with Gloria Swanson, at the Cameo, and Harold Lloyd in "The Freshman" at the Broadway.