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HUMORESQUE.

Mama Kantor Vera Gordon
 Abraham Kantor Dore Davidson
 Leon Kantor Bobby Connelly
 Leon Kantor, later Gaston Glass
 Esther Kantor Helen Connelly
 Esther Kantor, later Ann Wallick
 Marnie Kantor Sidney Carlyle
 Isadore Kantor Joseph Cooper
 Isadore Kantor, later Maurice LeVigne
 Rudolph Kantor Alfred Goldberg
 Rudolph Kantor, later Edward Stanton
 Sol Ginsberg Louis Stearns
 Boris Kantor Maurice Peckre
 Mrs. Isadore Kantor Ruth Sabin
 Baby Kantor Frank Mitchell
 Minnie Ginsberg Miriam Battista
 Gina Berg Alma Rubens

Brought into the Criterion for a several weeks' run, replacing "Why Change Your Wife?" this Cosmopolitan production proved to be something exhibitors should not bank on too heavily. Up to the middle it seemed like a wonderful picture. Then it began to slip. It began and ended a story, then added almost another one without knitting the two together. The continuity, in short, based by Frances Marion on the original story by Fannie Hurst, was inadequate, and unless Miss Marion soon values her reputation more than her profits she will have

to look alive to preserve what's left of the former. Even so, you can throw overboard this and Frank Borzages at times illuminatingly careful direction—forget me—of what went to make this a picture, and you will have left the appealing and moving performance set before you by Vera Gordon.

It is said of Alma Rubens, who is featured in this picture and who does not appear at all till the middle of it, that she had to be prevailed on by all sorts of pleadings to remain when she saw how Miss Gordon was grabbing the main chance in it clear away from every one. Well, that kick was doubtless good business on the part of Miss Rubens. But in resolving to see it through Miss Rubens did herself credit and also showed her good sense. The fact that she played side by side with Vera Gordon in this picture will help her, not hurt her, for Miss Gordon's performance is one of those gems in motion portraiture done once by several, duplicated rarely and a regular thing only with exceptional artists of the very first rank. The picture leaves you with the impression that Miss Gordon, who did somewhat the same thing once in "The Gentile Wife" on the speaking stage, was born to live, not act, this part.

For the most part she is the picture. She lends a warmth, a pathos, a natural humanity to those early, well shot, excellently conceived and competently directed scenes in the Ghetto that is strangely new, that touches the deep places of the heart. Later on in the Fifth Avenue setting she is not always so much mistress of the dramatic situations, though on the whole her performance is singularly well sustained. There is no question whatever about her hold on the spectators for some 5,000 feet. Once, even, from way

back where she was out of focus and the lights were arranged in a way meant for anything but her advantage, she seized the attention, gripped it, held it, despite all precautions. And later on she took a closing scene so completely from several competent troupers as to leave experienced watchers amazed.

The story tells how a Jewish mother had prayed one of her sons should be a musician and how her dream came true. At the height of his success he is called away to war. He comes back wounded, and when his broken-hearted sweetheart faints because he says he is a useless man and therefore cannot marry, then and only then does he come back to his manhood. Trying to help her he finds he can after all use his injured arm, and so all ends happily.

The part of the sweetheart in the latter section of the picture is taken by Alma Rubens. At times self-conscious, her grave dark beauty, which in its warm luxury is in piquant contrast to the silhouette values of her clear-cut features, is an addition to any picture, though she either does not know how to handle a kiss or was badly directed.

Otherwise, Mr. Borzage's direction was excellent. He made a lot of the kid stuff; his detail, as far as the Ghetto was concerned, could hardly be improved, and his flashes of the faces at the concert when the "Humoresque" was played were the sort to move any crowd that goes to pictures, whatever its collective intelligence. Some stilted titlings started the ball rolling, but after that they had the Fannie Hurst flavor. Opposite Miss Gordon, Dore Davidson held up his part, which is praise enough, while Sidney Carlyle as the idiot boy got over at once the revolting and pathetic features of his role. Bobby Connelly and Miriam Battista seemed over-directed and so lost something in spontaneity.

In announcing this picture the official press notices call attention to Miss Gordon's performance in the following (from a theatrical standpoint) remarkable statement: "Alma Rubens is the featured player, but it

is Vera Gordon who will hold the attention of the public."

If Miss Rubens is wise she will be among those to insist that Miss Gordon be billed along with her, that both names go up in the lights. That has been done at the Criterion, and it will never hurt the younger player, who plays her role with finesse and charm, and will gain public esteem by throwing such a generous bouquet to her sister artist, for the older woman has come a long way to a deserved success and Miss Rubens is young and beautiful.

Leed.