

Cecil B. DeMille's essay on Motion Picture Directing, presented to Harvard's Graduate Business School

A motion picture director in many respects occupies a position analogous to the leader of an orchestra. The leader has to wave a baton in order to get the right tempo. He has to see that the bassoon does not come in while the violin is playing its solo. Likewise a motion picture director has to hold together all the departments, he has to see that they all function on time, and that everything meets on the little set where the camera is going to turn for a few minutes.

I will review first the period of preparation to bring about that moment. There are three classes of directors. There is the director who has been sufficient of a success in the past to have the confidence of his institution and is allowed to choose more or less his own subject. There is the director who is sent for and handed a manuscript and told "This is what you shoot." He takes that manuscript, works on it, and says, "I suggest the following changes." Then there is the director to whom you say, "Take this manuscript and shoot it just the way it is written and don't change anything."

In the first place, as I know more about the first class, I will discuss that as a basis. The first thing is the idea. What idea are you going to produce? The sales department will always name to you the last success, whatever it was, and say, "Produce something like that because it was a success." Had you named that idea to the sales department before it was a success they would have thrown their hands up in horror and would have said, "But nobody wants to see that." This has been my experience in blazing a trail practically from the beginning of pictures, that nobody was in sympathy with the subject I wanted to do until after it was a success. Then I was a great hero. But until that point I was the national villain, and if I use "I" a good deal, I apologize for it in advance. I am speaking editorially.

To make my point a little clearer let us consider *The King of Kings*. At a time when everybody was producing melodrama, when such pictures as *Crime and Broadway* and *The Spider* were intriguing the public, I felt that the world was ready for the life of Christ. When I suggested it we almost had to artificially resuscitate the financial department. They said, "No; what they want is melodrama." That is the time, however, to do the other thing.

I made a picture recently called *The Volga Boatman*. When I suggested it to the financial department they said, "But nobody is interested in Russian peasants." After the picture was a success they said, "There, we told you." That is the attitude, and it always will be, of the sales department.

The production department acts more or less as a bouncer between the director, who has his vision, and the financial department, who sometimes lack it. So, the subject is selected.

Then comes the matter of the treatment, at least as to whether the subject is big enough to make what we call a super-special, that is, a picture that is road showed or released separately or whether the subject is not sufficiently big in quality, so that it should be a program picture.

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When that point is decided the amount of money to be expended comes next, whether the idea is big enough to carry \$50,000, \$100,000, \$300,000, \$500,000, or \$1,000,000, as the case may be. In the case of *The King of Kings* the cost was \$2,500,000. That seemed a ridiculous amount of money to expend on an idea that the financial department were sure could not be successful.

That is why the director has gray hairs, because he is the fellow who dreams, and he has to make his dreams come true. That is the advantage he has over most dreamers. He has no choice. If he does not make them come true he is like the general who does not take his objective, and you know what happens to generals who don't.

You are given a scenario writer. Your first treatment resembles the plan of a house. You do not sit down and have a writer write a scenario. You draft a treatment, that is, a plan. You look for a foundation on which to stand your story.

Has it a theme? Is it episodic? Is it dramatic? The treatment may be done over and over again but the wise director will never let his manuscript go to continuity form until he has that treatment. In other words, it is as if you were going to build a house and the architect said, "I have a magnificent roof and some lovely walls," and you said, "What are you going to stand it on?"

He would say, "I don't know, but the roof is beautiful." That is the danger of the green director or the green writer. They are blinded by the beauty of the walls and the roof, but if there is not a great dramatic foundation underneath your structure it will not stand, no matter how beautifully played it is and no matter how beautifully directed.

If your treatment is as strong as you can make it, then comes your continuity. Continuity is the scene for scene scenario. What is generally known as a scenario is the continuity. It is equivalent to the dialogue of a play. The playwright does not start out to write beautiful dialogue until he has a structure on which to hang it. So the first treatment is the structure on which you hang the continuity, which is the written sequence of scene.

The continuity comes to the director and goes back to the writer again and again and again, and a great deal of money goes into that going back, and back, and back. The wise business department knows that where a picture is made or lost is over the desk. You cannot hand a director a poor story or a poor scenario without good drama. No matter what ingredients he may use, he cannot give you a good picture unless he has the essentials. You may have a beautiful cannon but if the powder is no good it will not throw the balls very far no matter how fine a sighter the gunner may be or what fine soldiers may be handling the machine. If the powder is wrong you are out of luck. So it is

with the story. Therefore you take time over, and over, and over again to look for weakness from every angle, in every scene.

Take a scene where a man comes in, sits down, and picks up the telephone. The first-class director has the man come in, sit down, and pick up the telephone. Your highest class director says, "How on earth can I make that interesting, so it will hold an audience for just a second, so that it is not just a man coming in, sitting down and picking up a telephone? What twist can I give that to make a little smile come to the audience? If merely the cord of the telephone catches in the drawer that little incident means a lot because the audience thought they were going to be bored and then they say, Oh! That little exclamation, Oh! has a great psychological effect." That is the way every scene should be worked out in the mind of the director.

Then we see that the scenario is right, which it seldom is, but we take that for granted.

Then he calls in the art director. The term art director is sometimes a bit misleading. He is the man who designs or has designed the sets. He is the head of that department. If the story is modern, again comes the point of "How can we make this a little more interesting, a little different from the last picture made?" He says, "Well, this series is a short series. If it isn't of any particular value pictorially, we have a set already that was used in such and such a picture." The director says, "Can that be disguised? - Can you change that door into a window so it will not be recognized as the set that was used in the last picture?" The art director says he can or cannot, as the case may be.

We will say we have a great scene called for,- the vision of temporal power in The King of Kings, which Satan shows to Jesus, where the power of the world is depicted. That is the proposition that is put up to the director,- how to depict the power of the world, how to show it, how to do it. That is the kind of proposition the director gets. He has his art director, his technical man, his trick man, stunt man, miniature man, and glass man.

For instance, in the scene I just mentioned, the vision of temporal power, we changed the temple into a vision of Rome and, because it is an imaginative thing, it was necessary to show Rome even more magnificent than it was, in other words, a hundred Romes piled one on top of another. That would be impossible to accomplish if you went out and built it. It would take as long and cost a good deal more to build Rome, because wages are higher now than they were then. You take your miniature man, your glass man, your art director, your carpenter, and you say you are going to use a foreground of 500 or 1000 feet in this. We will built this set for 500 feet, the actual set. From that point on we make a miniature which is matched by very clever camera work to the real set. Then we have glass on which we paint, clearing the glass to show the real set and the miniature, and on top of that, because it is supposedly far in the background, we have painted by the finest artist we can get, the imaginary Rome. The real thing is in the foreground, the miniature just above it showing the roofs of the great city of Rome, cleverly blended as to what we have built, and then this glass picture in front of that but really giving the effect of a far-distant horizon. Then the camera is set back a certain distance. In that way these great scenes are made possible.

Do not get the idea that this is not an expensive process. The making of the miniature and the matching must be very carefully done because it must not be detected. Some of you may have seen the picture called *The Ten Commandments*. In that we were given the proposition of opening and closing the Red Sea. That is what the director was told to do. He can't ask how because nobody can tell him. Nobody had opened and closed the Red Sea before except on one memorable occasion, but we nevertheless had to duplicate that. That was done with 14 exposures on the film. I am not going to dwell too much on these technical points but I want to give you a little idea of what I mean.

There were 14 pictures or exposures on the opening and closing of the Red Sea. That was a mixture of the real sea and very clever motion picture trick work. The wave which engulfed Pharaoh's army was obtained by building two tanks holding 60,000 gallons of water each, designed to drop at the same moment onto a large curved piece of steel so that when it threw this wave into an enormous curve, the two things met at the top, and we got a wave in that way that was enormous. The camera was almost underneath it. That is before you start in with your people at all.

This probably sounds like Chinese music to you, but it is impossible to give you in three-quarters of an hour the mechanical working of the trick department of a motion picture studio. The art director, however, in conference with you, covers these points in connection with scenes which require this treatment.

Then comes the costume department, and you discuss the matter of the types of clothes, and so forth. If it is a costume picture the research department must start months before, because, for instance in *The King of Kings*, you cannot take Renaissance paintings and say, "Let us find out what the costumes were there." If you recall Rembrandt's painting of Pharaoh's daughter finding Moses in the bulrushes, she is clad in a long-waisted Elizabethan gown, and the page holding back the bulrushes is in tights with velvet trunks and a red hat with a beautiful long feather in it. The Renaissance artists painted in the costume of their times. They did not have the money for great research departments such as we have, so that the motion picture is infinitely more correct in its historical detail than Renaissance art or any other art that I know of in painting.

The next point is the camera. The art director now has gone out and is starting his various functions in the 22 departments to bring about the first set. Then comes the camera. The selection of a camera man is vitally important because, in painting, if you were going to do a painting of the battle of Waterloo you would not employ Corot to paint it, because he paints a different type of thing. So with motion pictures, certain camera men are excellent for the pastoral scenes while other camera men are better fitted for dramatic things.

In the matter of lighting I am going to reminisce for a moment to give you an idea of motion picture lighting, because it is a very interesting story and a very important one.- I will show you the birth of artificial lighting. When we first went to California everything was sunlight.. No artificial light was employed. Having come from the stage I wanted to

get an effect, so I borrowed a spotlight from an old theater in Los Angeles when I was taking a photograph of a spy in The Warrens of Virginia. The spy was coming through a curtain and I lighted half of his face only just a smash of light from one side, the other side being dark. I saw the effect on the screen and carried out that idea of lighting all through the rest of the picture, that is, a smash of light from one side or the other, a method that we now use constantly.

When I sent the picture on to the sales department I received the most amazing telegram from the head of this department saying, "Have you gone mad? Do you expect us to be able to sell a picture for full price when you show only half of the man?" This isn't an exaggeration. This is exactly as it occurred. The exhibitor immediately used that as an argument and said the picture is no good as we showed only half of him. They telegraphed back to me, "We don't know what to do; we can't sell this picture." I was really desperate. As I told you, the director has to go through; he has to do something, so Allah was very kind to me and suggested the phrase "Rembrandt lighting." I sent a telegram to New York saying, "If you fellows are so dumb that you don't know Rembrandt lighting when you see it, don't blame me." The sales department said, "Rembrandt lighting! What a sales argument!" They took the picture out and charged the exhibitor twice as much for it because it had Rembrandt lighting. That is the history of artificial light in motion pictures today.

After the arrangements are made for production, then comes the subject of cast. Is the story strong enough to be portrayed without using a star? Or is it so weak that you must have a great, well known personality that the sales department can sell, in order to overcome the weakness of the story? That is the great struggle for stars too. When a star gets to a point where the sales department can sell him or her, then he or she gets most of the weak stories, because the good stories will sell themselves and the star doesn't need a good story because people will buy a Bill Jones or Susan Smith on the name. The producer, on the other hand, can make a non-star picture with people getting \$300 or \$400 or \$600 a week salary and sell it, saving the weaker material for the star getting \$1,000, \$2,000, \$3,000 or \$4,000 a week salary.

We will talk about The King of Kings for argument's sake, and say that his subject is big enough so that it requires no star. We send for the casting director and we say, "Here are the types that we want. I am going to require 12 disciples; I am going to require Mary the Mother; I am going to require Mary Magdalen; I am going to require Simon the Cyrenean, and not just people who will necessarily be able to play these parts but people who will sit in the frame of such a picture, not just actors or actresses, but types that are psychologically right." I could talk to you for hours on the theory of casting a picture because it is a very, very important one; it is a very subtle one. It is not "Let us put Mamie in this and let us put Jimmie in that." You have got to make a combination that the public wants to see and that will give you the highest point in artistry because the director is at the point where business and artistry blend. He has to make an artistic piece of work as he sees it for the amount of money which the business department allows him for that picture, so he must fit his cast accordingly. He has to consider the general frame of the picture, and by frame I mean the atmosphere. Then when your cast is selected, tests

are made. If it is a big production you have to make camera tests because you cannot trust your judgment in selecting a type for the screen. If possible, you select from the screen first before you see the individual, so that you get the screen personality, because after you meet the individual and then see the screen you instantly translate to the screen the personality that you met, and you do not get the same impression that the audience gets who have not the advantage or disadvantage, as the case may be, of knowing that personality. That is a very, very important point.

The same is true in acting a scene. You cannot judge it with the eye. You do say, but you shouldn't, that it is a great scene; that it was well done; that it will be wonderful. You should see it that night on the screen. So we make tests of characters in makeup and costumes.

When you are bringing together a leading lady from one organization and a leading man who is free lancing, that is, who is engaged in no one company but may be employed by any, the matter of make-up is important. One is accustomed to using one type of make-up and the other is used to another. The cameraman must light for each of these two faces. If he lights for the girl who is very light the man looks like an Arab. If he lights for the man, the woman is pictured entirely white and you cannot see her features at all. There must be a blending, and all that costs a great deal of money, and yet the picture has not started. Up to this point in *The King of Kings* we have spent \$200,000, and the camera hasn't turned yet and the financial office is becoming very much worried because they say, "Why, \$200,000 has been spent and you have not produced one foot of film. Why?" The wise financial man knows, if he is satisfied with the man at the helm in production, that this is where his foundation is laid.

Then we come to the starting day. All the 22 departments have been functioning and your set is ready. The actors are there in make-up, ready to begin. If you have a great big set, the number of cameras is important because sometimes, if you have, we will say, 200 or 300 people in the set you are working in, you use as many as 14 cameras on one scene, to take your close-ups and long shots at the same time with different lenses. A one-inch lens gives you an enormous field of view. A three-inch lens gives you a close-up. In that way you can match your action for cutting. If in a long shot a man raises his arm to strike somebody, you want, to see that blow hit, so you use a three-inch lens centered on that blow. On the long shot you cut the film from the moment the man raises his hand. Then you put in your close-up shot which just shows the two men, so the audience sees who is struck and who is striking and gets the psychology of it and you come instantly back to your long shot and show the effect of your crowd rushing in to see what has happened. That took a great many years to work out and discover. Your director is leading his orchestra and he works up to a tremendous climax, which is your long shot, holds his orchestra a second, and then your close-up, the short chord of a violin, and back again to your big effect.

The use of a number of cameras is very expensive, so you have to be very sure that you are going to require them. Each camera uses a great deal of film because you photograph this full scene through on your close-up camera, although you are only going to use the

pictures actually showing the blow. But when you come to your production that night to study it you find you have two other good moments in there. Therefore you don't have the man turn just at the moment of the blow, but you have him turn during the entire scene. Your director has to have good judgment for that or he can ruin an organization in the waste of film alone, because it is very expensive and goes very fast and cameramen love to turn the handle.

The next point for the director is the camera line. He looks his set over carefully to see if anything has been neglected, if he can see a blunder of any sort. One thing left out can cause the loss of a whole day's work. We shall say that in the last scene they are going to require a pepper box on the mantelpiece, and that isn't going to be used for four days, and you start in with your first scene. Unless you have in mind that pepper box that you are going to use four days from now and you shoot your first day's work without the pepper box up there, and you come to your last day's work, you have to go back and shoot everything, at an enormous cost. The director must have the entire vision of the picture completely in mind. He cannot just be thinking of the scene he is going to do. After looking the set over he says O.K. and fixes his camera line. The cameraman doesn't set up and take in the whole set. He approaches it exactly the way an artist does the canvas, as to what is his best position, what will give him the best effect for the dramatic point he is going to bring out. He gets that camera line finally and then calls his people on for rehearsal. If he is a wise director he rehearses through the camera and he doesn't stand back and tell everybody what to do. He rehearses through the camera because that gives him the picture he is going to see on the screen. If he rehearses without looking through the camera he gets a big, broad canvas and what he is going to paint is a miniature. Actions viewed outside of the camera and viewed through the camera are frequently entirely different, so that by working through the camera he saves himself frequently a full day because he sees what will appear on the screen and can work from that point.

Then the psychology of the close-up and the long shot is very, very great. A long shot photographs action. A close-up photographs thought. There are some scenes that you must take in close-up and some scenes you must take in long shots. Certain scenes would mean nothing photographed 30 feet away. If I were taking a picture of the gentlemen in the back row, for instance, they could be sound asleep and the camera would never know it. So if I wanted to get the psychology of their reaction to what I am saying I would have to go up and place the camera within seven feet of their faces. Then I would get the expression either of interest or the nod of sound sleep and I would come back here with the camera and go on and the audience would know what the men in the back seat were thinking. That is the way you handle the psychology of that. You jump to the spot where you want to register thought.

The movement of characters can throw you out very easily. In a long shot moving from right to left, when you move your camera in close-up that character must still move from right to left. If it moves from left to right, when you see it on the screen the character meets himself. Those little things cost hundreds and hundreds of dollars if they are overlooked. New angles of camera are important. The Germans are probably the most expert in this respect. They study and look for new photographic angles to get a different

effect. For instance, if I wanted to photograph a hat on the table at my side, if a scene were being made of me and I glanced at that hat I would have to take an insert photograph of the hat in order to let the audience know what I glanced at.

One of the vital things for directors to remember,- and here is the greatest temptation- is that you do not teach the actors how to act. The business of a director is not to show everybody how to act, because if he does he inserts his personality into the actor instead of bringing out what the actor has in him; instead of having Ernest Torrence, and Gloria Swanson, and Leatrice Joy, and Rod LaRocque to play the scenes, if I show them what to do I have six or seven little Cecil DeMilles running around. In other words, they are all playing with your personality and are all playing with your ideas instead of your bringing out what is in them.

That is one of the most vital points for a director to know and one of the points that probably few directors really know, because there is a terrible temptation in that quarter. Every director and everybody in this room is confident of being able to act. That is the one weakness of humanity. They all feel they are actors. I don't know why. You do not all feel you are violinists, and yet acting is a great deal harder than playing a violin. There are a great many thousand good violinists. You have them in every orchestra. The great actors you can name on your fingers. Acting pays very much more than playing a violin, so it must be more difficult, and the reason why fewer people reach the top is that they start out with the wrong premise. They start out thinking that acting is easy. It isn't. You are playing a much more delicate instrument than a violin.

The technique of motion picture acting is very great because a camera has no ears. You can say the most magnificent things in the most thrilling way but it cannot hear you. It can only see. Therefore the voice is useless. You will see a green director insist that his people yell frightfully loud in a mob scene or that the heroine sob terrifically in an emotional scene, and when you see it on the screen you wonder why they all have Saint Vitus dance, because the proper technique is missing.

The principle of screen acting I can give you in one word. If I said, "Do you gentlemen see this yellow paper?" If I said that to the camera it wouldn't mean anything. I might have said, "There is my watch," or "There is a gentleman taking notes." The screen version of saying that is a moment's pause. That arrests the attention of the audience. Then you pick up the paper, you show it to your audience, you indicate it. Now you know that I am talking about this and you know that I am asking you a question about it. I might yell at the top of my lungs and insist that it is a yellow piece of paper, I and the camera cannot hear it. That, in a word, is the secret of the great screen actors.

Music is an interesting factor in direction. We spend a lot of money to have an orchestra there to put the actor in a certain frame of mind, to get a certain emotional response. That music is just as bad for the director as it is good for the actor, because it fills an emotional spot with him. In watching a scene while an orchestra is playing I always put my hands over my ears, so I will not hear it, because there may be a blank place in the scene which is filled by a beautiful note over here and gives you satisfaction, and when you see it on

the screen you say, "Strange I didn't catch that. That point is wrong." The reason is that the music satisfied that void.

The element of time of course is a vital thing. The driving force is the battle with art. A director has to learn to keep two balls in the air at the same time. In the case of *The King of Kings*, the picture cost \$19,000 a day to make, for 116 days of shooting time, or \$2,225 an hour. You can see what a moment's indecision means. You can see what a little absentmindedness on the part of a director or a property man can mean if he leaves a certain prop at home and if you lose two hours waiting for it you can figure the cost of forgetting Pharaoh's wand. Therefore your machinery of direction with your assistant directors must be perfect.

Touching that point of the assistant is a very interesting one in the handling of great mobs, where you handle 2,000 and 3,000 people at a time. To get great results you cannot shout at 2,000 or 3,000 people and give them the business to do, and yet each one has to be an actor and do a definite piece of business. The idea of directing a mob scene is not that they all wave their arms, so you divide them up into companies of 100 and you designate one capable assistant director for each hundred. In that hundred extra people he has ten good actors and each actor has ten extra men, and each one of those actors gives the business to the ten extra men and the assistant director gives it to his Centurions or his captains of 100 men, and the assistants get the instructions from the director. That is the way these big mob scenes are handled. They are worked out as mathematically as you would work out an attack on an enemy.

The problems that confront a director are very interesting. To show you the quick thought that a man must have, in the case of the opening of the Red Sea that I spoke of a moment ago, those of you who may have seen the picture remember that you see the children of Israel coming along through the bottom of the sea for about a mile and a half. The exposure took in the walls of water on each side of that and it was in a curve, if you recall. They were driving their flocks of cattle through and if a sheep or cow ran off into the side out of that line they would run into one of the walls of water. Of course the walls of water were not there actually. They were on the second exposure of the film, and if the flocks wandered off at all you would be treated to the sight of having a herd of sheep stroll into the ocean. Therefore we had to build a fence that exactly corresponded to the lines which were to be the walls of water, to keep the cattle inside of those two walls of supposed water. But the fence posts threw a shadow. When we inspected them before shooting we saw that there were shadows for a mile down in the bottom of the Red Sea, shadows of fence posts. The only thing to do was to shoot it exactly at noon. There were 3,000 people and 8,000 animals in that. That was quite an undertaking. We did it, however, and at 20 minutes before 12 some bright chap came to me and said, "Mister DeMille, do you know the bottom of the Red Sea is dry?" Of course the sand was dry. Here we had just sent the waters apart and yet the bottom of the sea was perfectly dry. This was 20 minutes before we got ready to turn the camera, and the cost up on that location was \$50,000 a day. That meant a full day just to move the animals and people out to that location, which was a long way from camp. So with \$50,000 at stake and 20 minutes to do it in I called for a quick suggestion as to how we could darken that sand for

two miles. If we get it dark and glistening we are saved. If that sand is dry and white we are lost. What can we do? Somebody suggested a pump. They had some pumps there. In about 8 of the 20 minutes they wet a strip a few feet in length and as soon as they moved on this place became dry again. I suggested black paint. How much black paint have we got? The painter stepped up and said that there wasn't paint enough in California to paint that.

What would you gentlemen have done? How would you have darkened that sand? We are working by the sea within 40 feet of the shore line. I will tell you how it was done, because time is pressing. Allah again was very kind. In looking desperately and thinking, "What can I do with this thing?" I saw this great kelp bed at my feet and I said, "Everybody, men, women and children, get up this kelp," and they picked up the kelp and laid kelp for a mile and a half, and at exactly 12:02 we had a nice wet bottom of the sea and we turned the camera. That is the kind of problem that the director is up against and has to solve. If we couldn't have done that you see what the loss would have been.

I will give you another instance, a rather amusing one. I made a picture once, called Male and Female, with Thomas Meighan and Gloria Swanson. Tommy has supposedly just shot a leopard and had it hanging over his shoulder. The property man had a stuffed leopard there with one foot out at one side and the tail going off at an angle. I saw this thing and was terribly annoyed because I had specially talked with the man about it and said, "Get me a body that is limp and will hang as though it were just killed." I had to postpone the shot till the next day, and one of the property men came up and said, "There is a real leopard over in the zoo that just killed a man." I said, "Get me that leopard," because the leopard had to be executed anyway. They have a rule there that one killing is treated as any murder, and the leopard would be killed. I said, "Bring him over here and we will kill him, and Tommy can hold this leopard that has just died, over his shoulder while he plays this impassioned love scene." We brought the leopard over and it was a magnificent animal. I said, "You can't kill that animal. That is a beautiful specimen." Tommy looked a little doubtful. I said, "I'll tell you what we'll do. Get a lot of chloroform and ether and some sponges." The property man rushed off and bought all the chloroform and ether in Hollywood and we poured it on these sponges and put it into the leopard's cage, and put something across the front. There was terrible to-do inside the cage, a rocking back and forth and there were frightful noises. Pretty soon everything was quiet and we opened the cage and the leopard was taken out. The scene was all rehearsed and ready. We put the leopard over Tommy's shoulder and said, "All right, Tommy, go ahead." We had men with Winchester 30-30's all around this love scene, and it was rather a long love scene. We had to take it two or three times. Toward the end of the last time- I don't know whether you gentlemen know all about ether- you probably know more about it than I do; I don't know whether you ever heard anyone coming out of ether or chloroform or a mixture of the two, but this mixture has a strange effect, and in the middle of the love scene this leopard started. He was perfectly unconscious, but you have heard people talk under the influence of ether. Well, this leopard talked and talked in the middle of this impassioned love scene, and Tommy, with Gloria's hand pressed on his heart said, "Mr. DeMille, I tell you he is coming to."

I will give you another instance of what a director must inspire in his people, a different story, to show you the esprit de corps of the motion picture profession, and I know of nothing that will better show it to you. When that camera turns it is the wheel of fate.

I was shooting a scene in *The Little American* and we were firing a line of guns, supposedly French 75's. As they were using the real ones over in France we had to use imitations. In the middle of this scene the breech-block blew out of one of these guns and one man had a portion of his anatomy torn away, another had a great splinter go through his mouth and tear out his cheek; that whole gun crew was shot to pieces. But there wasn't one of those men that stopped acting. There wasn't a man on either side that turned to those fellows. They glanced at them as you would if it had been a real shell that struck and went on with their own guns until that scene was played through and the whistle blew. Then they went to these men.

Men will give their lives, gentlemen, to carry through. Nothing will stop them. They will do anything.