Make it Again

In the motion picture industry, remakes are\_a fact of life. They have been with us almost from the birth of the art form and as long as good fresh story material is^gcarcejthey will remain.

A remade movie doesn't have to be a bad movie. Produced with a talented cast, a capable director, an intelligent screen-play, an ample budget, and, most important, good judgement, these pic­tures can be thoroughly entertaining and, in some cases, surpass the quality of the original.

Film-makers are not absolutely opposed to the practice, al­though there are a couple of schools of thought on the subject.

Henry Blanke, who has produced many "second editions" in his time declares: "Never remake a picture that was previously suc­cessful. Remake one that was miscast, miswritten, or misdirected. In other words, a flop."

Producer H.B.Wallis takes the opposite viewpoint: "If you have a good piece of material that has not been filmed for a number of years, there is probably a brand new audience for it. So, I wouldn't hesitate to re-do a script with a new set of characters."

For:

1. There is always a shortage of  
   new, fresh story material.
2. The public wouldn't notice or  
   wouldn't care that they were  
   paying to see the same story.
3. There is always a valid reason  
   for doing it (the theme is  
   timely, a new cast is available,  
   the economic situation is  
   favourable).
4. The coming of new screen  
   techniques (sound, colour,  
   wide screen) inspired the  
   studios to film their more  
   popular pictures again.
5. A remake of the same director  
   gives the artist the  
   opportunity to correct any  
   mistakes he may have made in  
   the first version.
6. The public at large seems to  
   enjoy comparing the  
   performances of current stars  
   to the legendary ones.
7. Against:
8. Most subsequent renderings  
   of the great cinema classics  
   have been complete failures.
9. The director doing a remake  
   might decide to "improve" the  
   original story, to insert certain  
   things, characters or  
   eliminate others.
10. It is dangerous to use the  
    original script almost word for  
    word. Some stories require an  
    updating of the dialogue.
11. In many cases, the moral  
    values of the situations in a  
    once exciting story have  
    become so antiquated that the  
    plot is not workable for  
    contemporary audiences.
12. There is always the audience's  
    memory of the earlier  
    successful production, which  
    can prevent spectators from  
    receiving the film properly.

be much more so in the future. Similarly a new kind of artist and film-maker will be needed.

B. Should the printed word or films be used in the classroom?

Film is particularly useful for describing processes which can­not be easily demonstrated in the classroom. So far, however, its potentialities have only just begun to be exploited. Conservative teachers still resist breaking away from the printed word.

C. Should actors speak different languages in films?

Usually a director, aiming his film at an audience of compatriots, has everything spoken in the native language. In some films of Federico Fellini each character speaks his native language, which isn't usual in films. The director says he often mixes languages to express the truth of a given situation. But there is a language barrier.

D. Can critics give an objective judgement of a film?

The critic merely by saying, "I am a critic," inflates himself and causes himself to see not what exists but what he thinks ought to exist. But things are only what they are. Therefore, the critic is usu­ally mistaken. Sometimes he doesn't refer to himself as such but rather to his experiences of what other artists have done in a simi­lar situation. But when a critic tells how the work should be accord­ing to his taste, which has been formed by a certain culture and certain artists, he is still judging by what is congenial to him.

**16.** Role-Playing.