6. From Actor to Director

Working with Sennett, Charlie felt good. On the set his ideas were well accepted. He began to see himself as creative and to think that he could write his own stories. But he still had to win over the public. Sometimes he went into the movie house with the audience. If they laughed he was happy, but they did not laugh enough. They preferred a familiar face on the screen, and Charlie was still too new.

While he was making comedies, Charlie learnt all he could about the trade. In his free time he was in and out of the developing plant and the cutting-room, watching the cutter piece the films together. He watched everything very carefully. As the days went by, he was more and more eager to write and direct his own comedies. He told Sennett about this. At first Sennett said no, but in the end he decided to give Charlie a chance. And so, one day, Charlie stood behind the camera for the first time.

When Charlie finished directing his first film, he wanted to know what Sennett thought. He waited while Sennett watched the film. When Sennett came out of the room, he said to Charlie, "Well, are you ready to start another?" After that Charlie wrote and directed all his own comedies.

Nothing lasts forever in this world, though, and in time Charlie left the Keystone Company and moved on. He worked in different cities, including New York. His films became popular and he began to make a lot of money. Fame and success were knocking at his door. At times this made him glad and excited, but at other times he felt lonely and lost, like a child in a new world.

Eventually Charlie moved to Hollywood, where he bought land and built his own studio. Sometimes he went to the theatres for relaxation. One day he saw a small boy on the stage with his father. The boy was very funny, and straight away Charlie wanted to make a film with him. The boy's name was Jackie Coogan. He was only four years old.

The picture was about a tramp who adopts a baby he finds in the street. When the baby becomes a boy, they are like good friends and they do many funny things together. The picture was called The Kid, with the subtitle "A picture with a smile and perhaps a tear."

Until then pictures had followed only one pattern such as satire, farce, realism or melodrama. But this time Charlie wanted to combine slapstick and sentiment. He wanted the audience to laugh and cry. This was a new idea. Some of Charlie's friends were sure the picture would fail. They tried to persuade him to stop making it, but Charlie was sure his idea was a good one.

In the end, The Kid was a huge success. It opened in New York and every day the newspapers said great things about it. Everyone loved Jackie Coogan. In no time the picture was named a classic, which made Charlie very happy. He himself, however, never had the courage to go to New York and see it. He preferred to stay in California and hear about it.

EXERCISES (6)

Ａ　（　）に適切な日本語を入れ、本文のあらすじを完成させなさい．

セネットと仕事を続けるかたわら、チャーリーは（ア　 　　 ）に関心を持ち、熱心に勉強した．そして彼が（イ　 　 ）をした第１作はセネットに合格点を与えられた．やがてチャーリーはキーストン社を去るが、彼の映画は好評だった．彼は財をなし、ついに（ウ　 　　　 ）に自分の（エ　 ）を持つまでになった．

ある日、彼は天才的な子役、ジャッキー・クーガンを見いだし、彼と共演の映画『キッド』を作った．「（オ　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　）」という副題が表すように、従来の映画のパターンを破るこの映画は大当たりし、たちまち（カ　 　 ）と評価されるようになった．

Ｂ　本文の内容に合うものにはＴ、合わないものにはＦを書きなさい．

(1) Sennett was sure Charlie would succeed in making his own film. ( )

(2) After leaving the Keystone Company, Charlie was always sure he would succeed. ( )

(3) Charlie thought he might fail when his friends advised him to stop making The Kid. ( )

(4) When The Kid was on in New York, Charlie was not there. ( )

Ｃ　各文の空所に、下から適切な動詞を選び、正しい形にして入れなさい．

(1) I ( ) tea to coffee when I stayed in India.

(2) His offer was ( ) by all the members.

(3) Did you ( ) me as timid?

(4) How long will this hot weather ( )?

(5) He returned safely, which ( ) them glad.

[accept, let, make, see, last, end, prefer]