

Loyalty in Films

(Ottawa Citizen.)

Various correspondents of The Citizen have written interesting communications to this journal, dealing with the alleged non-British character of most of the films produced by our local moving picture houses and also of the apparent lack of sympathy on the part of the audiences with representations of events which naturally would be supposed to arouse their enthusiasm.

But there is really nothing to indicate that the moving picture theatre managers prefer American to British films except on their merits. It cannot be denied that the American films are superior in almost every way, and this is not to be wondered at when the moving picture business is compared in the matter of development and money invested, in the respective countries.

In the United States the production of moving picture films has reached its highest development, from a commercial viewpoint. Millions of dollars are invested

by the American producers as compared to thousands in other countries, in France and Britain. It is a usual thing for American concerns to spend \$50,000 on an ordinary production. One comedian is paid \$500,000 a year or \$2,000 a day. Many other actors are paid at the rate of \$100,000 yearly. The production of The Birth of a Nation called for the services of over 8,000 people who were transported to the various localities suitable for the purpose of the picture in special trains, and fed, camped and trained for three months before any attempt to take a single picture was made. The production cost at least half a million dollars. These are but instances. When Forbes Robertson was in Ottawa on the occasion of his last visit an American delegate waited on him in the Russell theatre and offered him \$100,000 in cash, transportation for the actor and all his company to whatever part of the United States the company preferred, all hotel expenses for an indefinite time and salaries for the company fifty per cent higher

than they were receiving from the British actor—for three weeks of Robertson's acting before a screen. The actor refused—and the delegate confided to a local friend that the refusal meant the loss of a bonus to him of \$10,000, which his company had promised him if he secured the signature of the famous actor. No European films can compare with American pictures in fittings, staging or clearness of production—at least none have been produced in this city in any way to compare with the American pictures. Is it fair, under the circumstances, to criticise the local picture theatre managers? Are they not giving the public the best pictures obtainable, regardless of the origin of production? So it seems to The Citizen.

Another complaint is that the audiences cheer incidents in which American flag or American troops are represented as playing a heroic part, while pictures of British troops or of British scenes in connection with the war are received in silence. But this is merely a superficial fault. There are two kinds of pictures, "action" pictures and "still" pictures. The former are part of a connected story and lead gradually to a climax or a series of climaxes, as does a similar production on the stage. The latter holds the spectator and plays upon

his feelings until at some thrilling moment—when as, for instance, the troops gallop to the defence of the sorry pressed fort, where the hero or the heroine, or both, are making a last desperate stand—the tension finds relief in applause. But the fact that the troops carry an American flag is not related to the applause; that would be just as vigorous if the rescuers carried a Japanese flag. The play's the thing.

The "still" picture is different in its effect upon the spectator. The film may represent a column of British troops going to the front. It does not evoke a cheer, but neither would a troop of American soldiers going to Mexico. The connected story is lacking—it is an unrelated picture; it evokes no applause because the spectator has not been put in the mood for applause. It is a fact that no such picture, no matter how beautiful or interesting, earns applause. And—and this is the point—we get no other kind of British pictures but this variety. We have no British studio pictures and the reason we have not is because they are inferior to American studio pictures because of the enormous development of the moving picture industry in the United States.

Until matters are remedied in the obvious way there can be no other recourse. We shall have to put up with American plays until the British brand at least equals them in interest and all the accessories of successful and satisfactory presentation. In the meantime it is no reflection on either our loyalty or our common sense if we continue to witness and applaud the films that appeal to us, no matter where made.

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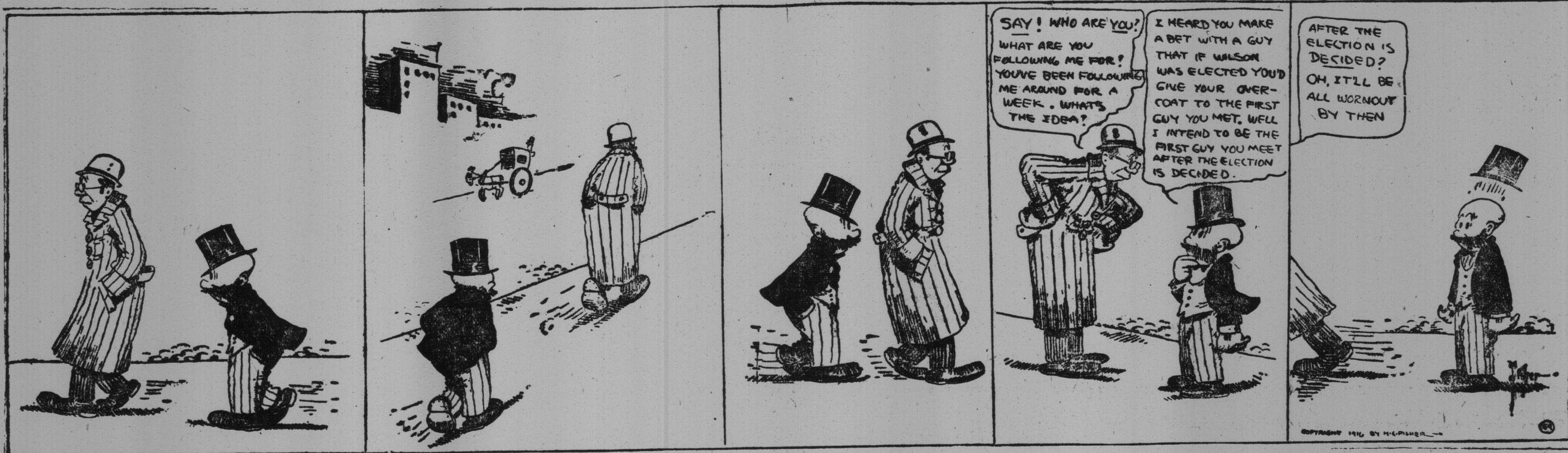
"You'll like the flavor"



Mutt and Jeff—Jeff Will Need a Pongee Suit by That Time

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By "Bud" Fisher



THE FIGHT OF KNOWLEDGE.
YOUTH: "I wonder why those artist chaps always represent 'Victory' as a female?"
EXPERIENCE: "It's plain, to see you're not married, my lad."



Motorist: "You want five pounds' compensation? Why, the last time I knocked you down you were quite content with a sovereign."
Victim: "Everything has gone up during the war, Sir."

—London Opinion.



JOCK (to discomfited prisoner): "Mebbe ye've a wife at home?"
D. P.: "None!"
JOCK: "None! Well, I'm thinkin' this is a judgment on ye!"

BABLING BROOKS.
(Katherine E. Murphy in Lewiston Journal.)
"Why, how d'ye do! Miss Busybee, it is delightful just to see Your own dear self; do step right in And stop till after tea— Now don't say no, it's ages since You've called on me, you must agree, And there is much to chat about The doings at our sewing bee."

"Just lay your hat down anywhere, And rest upon this easy chair in. Then we can have a nice long talk, O never mind about your hair. Well, I just heard this very day, Miss Smithkins has a brand-new dress, Though how she ever finds a way I'll surely never try to guess."

"Her husband wears the same old suit He wore when they were wed. The poor man, by the looks of him 'Twould be better were he dead. I wish you'd seen Velma Brown, Her new coat is a perfect fright! There's none such other worn in town."

"And Mira Stout, with Bessie Spratt Is just friendly as can be— Though we all know they fit like cats Last week at Jessie Jones' tea. Pray have you seen Dot Mason's hat? Trimmed up with feathers, and all that; I'll never mention all I heard, O, must you go? How time does fly! I've so enjoyed your call. Goodbye."

"No one can say I tell a thing, And never get my name mixed in. Besides it's neither right nor just, Scandal is such a deadly sin. Now, you or I are never heard To speak of folks an unkind word, O, must you go? How time does fly! I've so enjoyed your call. Goodbye."

A speaker in an address on preparedness said:
"Before the looming danger of invasion the pacifist and the preparedness chap are respectively like Willie and Johnny."

"Willie and Johnny had been very naughty and were sent to bed by their mother. As they lay side by side foot-steps were heard—it was now evening—and the two culprits realised that their father was mounting the stairs. They turned pale."

"I'm goin' to fold my hands as if I'd been prayin'," said Pacifist Willie, "and then I'll pretend to be asleep when he comes in."

"But Preparedness Johnny was already bustling swiftly about the room. 'I'm goin' to put on my pants,' he said, 'and line 'em with a newspaper.'"

"Well, Tommy," asked the small boy's uncle, "and what did you learn in school today?"

"I learned a lot of things," replied Tommy proudly. "And one of them was that this world is round and turns on a swivel thing like the great big globe in the schoolroom."

"Did you, sonny?" exclaimed uncle, in pretended surprise. "And what do you think of that, now?"

"I think," answered Tommy, in slow and thoughtful tones, "that the teacher is asking me to believe a good lot for a small boy."



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"Well, old chap, how did you get this?"
"One of the fellows dropped a Mills bomb, filled me up with a lot of pieces, bashed up the sergeant-major and three or four men, and killed my fox-terrier."

—London Today.

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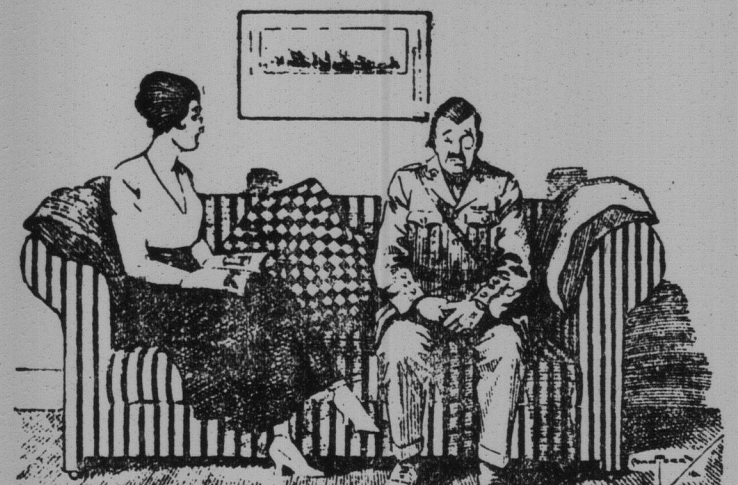
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SHE: "But what on earth did you propose to her for?"
HE: "Well, to tell you the truth, I couldn't think of anything else to say!"

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