

# What is a good Eye Lotion?

First of all it is a Lotion—that is, a LIQUID medicinal preparation.

Secondly, it is a Lotion which is prepared, not in the factory, not even in the home, but in the aseptic conditions of the laboratory.

Thirdly, it is a Lotion that is kind to the eye—like its own natural fluid.

Fourthly, it is a Lotion that can safely be used for all eyes of all ages, at all times, whatever their state of health or sickness.

Fifthly, it is a Lotion that your eyes can go on using, however frequently or copiously it is applied.



## EYE LOTION

answers all these requirements, but some essential ingredients are still hard to get and supplies are not plentiful at the moment.

Please don't blame your chemist—he'll have supplies later.

Optrex (Overseas) Ltd., 17 Wadsworth Road, Perivale, Middlesex, England.

## XMAS TOYS

**TIP-TRUCK**—All-steel construction and virtually unbreakable. Body, which covers 7in x 4in, tips up to empty load. Smartly painted in combination of two colours; 12in long, 4in wide, 4in high.—Price 11/9 Postage 8d.



SKEATES AND WHITE, LTD., 43, Fort Street, Auckland.

Speaking Candidly, by G.M.

# PORTRAIT OF A FAILURE

## WILSON

(20th Century-Fox)



THIS is the film about which its producer, Darryl F. Zanuck, is reported to have said that if it was not successful from every standpoint, he would never make another movie without Betty Grable in the cast. Well, if the decision rested with New Zealand audiences alone, I am afraid we should have to resign ourselves to a very leggy future, for on the opening night of *Wilson's* season in Wellington there were more wide open spaces in the theatre than I have seen since *Citizen Kane*. Fortunately, the box-office reception of the film in the United States appears to have been such that Mr. Zanuck will be able to recoup enough of his 5,200,000 dollars expenditure on it to divert his attention occasionally from Miss Grable.

It is, of course, scarcely surprising that New Zealand fans have not rushed to welcome this screen biography of President Woodrow Wilson, for the subject, after all, is a very American one. It is, nevertheless, regrettable that so few of them are apparently taking the opportunity to see a really exceptional movie, one of the finest productions of its type that Hollywood has ever achieved. And I say this in spite of the fact that I saw *Wilson* under the most unfavourable circumstances, the front rows of the theatre being occupied by moronic louts who amused themselves and enraged the rest of the audience by rolling bottles around the floor, and by making fatuous, loud-voiced comments throughout the screening. And yet I cannot find it in my heart to blame them utterly: it may have been that these morons were lured by the advertising, which promised them "a cast of 12,000 players and 87 song hits," and went expecting a super-musical show!

ANYWAY, let's forget them and the advertisements and the 87 song hits (I'd be very surprised if there are actually as many songs as that, and in any case they are mostly just snatches of sentimental ditties sung by Wilson and his family round the piano). And let's forget also, if we can, that this is easily the most expensive film ever made, for, in spite of its lavishness, I am glad to say that it doesn't look it. The question of cost is only important in so far as it indicates the price which a Hollywood producer may occasionally be persuaded to pay, partly to gain prestige, but partly also to translate a worthwhile ideal into intelligent celluloid. And let us, since we are not Americans, overlook all the wrangling that has gone on about the "propagandist" aspects of *Wilson*, the Republicans asserting at the time that it was a deliberate election boost for Roosevelt (but conveniently overlooking that Zanuck himself is a Republican and that the chairman of Fox was the late Wendell Willkie, Roosevelt's election opponent!), while the Democrats hailed it as a timely argument for F.D.R.'s foreign policy.\*

\*The U.S. Army, empowered by Congress, banned exhibition of the film to soldiers till after the election, on the ground that it might influence their votes.



KNOX, as WILSON  
As we shall remember him

LET us, then, forget all this, and examine *Wilson* simply as an example of what Hollywood can do in one of its rare moments of insight and intelligence. There may be special pleading in the film: I am not sufficiently versed in the politics of the period to say. There is certainly a forthright general plea in favour of internationalism as opposed to isolationism. I understand also that there is an element of fiction in some of the scenes; for instance, Wilson's biting denunciation of the German ambassador, one of the highlights of the action, has no basis in fact. And I suspect that the script-writer was not altogether fair to Senator Lodge (played by Sir Cedric Hardwicke) in making him the political villain of the piece without adequately explaining Lodge's reasons for opposing Wilson's League of Nations. A still more telling criticism is the deletion from the

version we see here of any sequence showing Wilson as the "political innocent" at Versailles, quite unable to cope with Clemenceau and Lloyd George (the film originally contained one such sequence, which was probably inadequate but better than nothing). And finally, it is a considerable fault that although Wilson drew his strength from "the people" and had a mystical faith in them, they are left completely out of the picture; no reason is given for their failure to support his League plan; we move almost entirely in a realm of politicians, ambassadors, and statesmen, while the common man of America, whose vote ultimately controlled the decision, and possibly the fate of the world, is ignored.

YET the important thing about *Wilson* is that it is a serious and uncommonly honest and courageous attempt to reveal to us in dramatic form one of the least understood figures of our age and the ideas and ideals that motivated him. And even more important, perhaps, is the fact that this is a genuine tragedy—one of the few great tragedies that the screen has ever attempted. There is no shirking of this issue; no effort is made to tone down the bitterness of Wilson's personal defeat and humiliation by suggesting that he may have been wrong. Instead there is only the affirmation that he was unquestionably right, in his final words, "The League isn't dead. . . . And I'll even make this concession to Providence; it may come about in a better way than we proposed."

Now, there may still be argument about whether Wilson was right or wrong, but the point is that this American film is not afraid to take a side and state a case, even though this means that, the

(continued on next page)

## ON THE SPOT WITH UNRRA

THE following is an extract from a report by an UNRRA welfare specialist at a children's centre in Germany. It is the first of a series which we will be publishing to give readers an idea of what UNRRA and its teams of relief workers are doing and the conditions they are facing in various countries. Each item will be an actual experience, taken straight from letters, diaries, cables, and reports written on the spot.

### THEY SCREAMED FOR TWO DAYS

"WE took over the first floor of a factory and all the people in camp soon responded to our call for help. Parties of men and women came and scrubbed and cleaned out the rubbish and debris. To avoid draughts, planks were used, doors taken from other places were put in, glass for windows was taken out of cupboards and the place was fixed up very nicely. On May 8 we were ready to receive the children; to begin with, we took them from two to 12 years of age, and I watched them arrive.

"They entered very timidly, clinging to each other, looking frightened. I welcomed them as best I could and waited. Finally, they turned to me and asked—'What are we allowed to do?' I said, 'Anything you want, this place is your place.' They hesitated, then asked, 'Will you smack us if we scream?' I said, 'No, you can shout as much as you like. . . .'

"Those children started screaming and shouting and kept it up for two whole days. During those first two days, they did nothing but give vent to all their pent-up misery. . . .

"For years they had been forced to be quiet—quiet when mother was out at work, quiet when she returned exhausted. They were smacked if they did not get out of the way of a German, smacked if they dared to laugh or sing—and often just smacked without any reason other than their mere existence. So for two days they screamed maddeningly. We didn't interfere. By the third day they'd had enough and began to play like other children."