

Home's Where The Heart Is

Robert Taylor has been bombed right off the wall of a Scottish home, the M-G-M star learned when he received a letter from an admirer requesting another autographed picture.

The letter mailed from Scotland, is another example of British calm.

It reads: "A year ago I received an autographed photo of you and I valued it very much. But, unfortunately, not long ago our house was bombed and the photograph, too. I was very disappointed indeed.

"I have been kicking myself ever since for not taking the photo with me to the air raid shelter. So I am putting in my second request for one. I do hope you will send it."

(Continued from previous page)

If you're interested: The Mormons were never as polygamous as is popularly supposed. From 1843 to 1890 only about two per cent. of them practised plural marriage, and the custom was abandoned when the United States Supreme Court declared it illegal. Brigham Young himself married 27 wives, but at the date of the picture's action he had a mere twelve. When he died in 1877 he left £5,000,000 to 17 widows and 56 children. The Mormon sect was founded in 1830 by Joseph Smith who, as shown in the film, was shot by an enraged mob, four years after he had founded the Illinois settlement of Nauvoo. The mantle of Prophet Smith then fell on Brigham Young, one of his first converts, and the great trek westward began in 1846. In making the picture (from a script by Louis Bromfield) Darryl Zanuck had the technical advice of an 80-year-old Mormon, George D. Pyper, a former friend of Young, and so far as pleasing the Mormons he seems to have done his job well.

NO, NO, NANETTE

(RKO Radio)

THERE are two main criticisms which I think should be made about *No, No, Nanette*. First of all, to call it a musical comedy, as some of the advertisements do, is misleading. My second criticism is in a way a variant of the first—I think the title is misleading, since *No, No, Nanette* does connote, in the minds of most theatre-goers, musical comedy. The cast do sing a little, it is true, but hardly very musically, and there are only three songs. As in *Irene*, the musical part of the comedy has been, in the main, quietly shelved—possibly to preserve the prestige of the stars.

But as long as you don't go along solely to see the film version of the musical comedy which happens to have the same name, there is no reason why you shouldn't enjoy yourself.

For there is plenty of comedy in the show, both in dialogue and situation, and the director, Herbert Wilcox, makes the best use both of Roland Young's faculty for embarrassment and Anna Neagle's impish vivacity, not to mention Richard Carlson's naive innocence.

Anna Neagle, of course, holds the centre of the screen and certainly justifies her position there. I should say that the object of the director had been to build the picture around her and to show off her talents to best advantage, and I must say I have no fault to find with the result. One thing which appeals to me in Miss Neagle is her grace of movement (and her English accent—not of Oxford, but something fresh from the provinces). Her grace of movement is fully exploited by the camera to produce scenes of real artistic merit, especially those in the "Dream Dance" sequence.

For entertainment these blackout nights, you could go pretty far and fare a good deal worse than you would do at *No, No, Nanette*. It will be escapism on your part of course, but a bit of escape now and then is essential these days.

PLAY GIRL

(RKO Radio)

THIS little man walking out, is not your conscientious film critic, who stuck it to the final fadeout. But he doesn't advise you to make the same experiment. Some pretty hard things have been done to Miss Kay Francis, but, in my experience, this is the most unkindest cut of all.

DR. CYCLOPS

(Paramount)

MY classical dictionary says that the Cyclopes were described by Homer as a gigantic and lawless race of one-eyed Sicilian shepherds who devoured human beings and cared nought for Zeus. The Dr. Cyclops of the film is a scientist with a German accent who discovers a huge radium deposit in a South American jungle, harnesses its radio active energy and uses it to reduce living organisms to a fraction of their normal size. Having produced a pigmy horse, he next experiments with a too inquisitive party of scientists, whom he reduces to 13-inch midgets. The parallel with classic mythology comes when the angry giant, left with the vision of only one eye, wages war on the pigmies he has created.

If *Dr. Cyclops* was a story in a pulp magazine one would say that it was the product of a fevered imagination. As it is, it is lifted slightly above the class of scientific shocker film only by the novelty of its theme and the fact that it is done in technicolour. If you are technically minded you will be interested in the trick photography which produces some startling effects—a pigmy struggling in the huge hands of the scientist before he is put to death by a few drops of chloroform on a dab of cotton wool; the pigmies cowering in terror before a giant hen, and sawing slices from a sausage as big as themselves.

Albert Dekker is suitably sadistic as the crazed scientist; the rest of the cast are undistinguished.

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