

## BAROMETER

MAINLY FAIR: "Three Coins in the Fountain."  
MAINLY FAIR: "Money From Home."

(continued from previous page)

race in which he is himself heavily committed. In the event of default, it is intimated, Mr. Nelson will find himself under Brooklyn Bridge wearing a concrete kimono. To avoid this embarrassing contretemps, Honeytalk calls in his cousin, an apprentice horse-doctor (Jerry Lewis), and that just about puts *finis* to the Runyon element in the story. Lewis's style of mincing farce doesn't mix with Runyon's sharper humour, and from here on the Runyon characters make only fitful appearances. If you like the Jerry Lewis type of comedy, this is the type of comedy you'll like. But I can't say he attracts me much, even in Technicolor.

### "THE 5000 FINGERS"

To the Editor

Sir,—“Youth is too good a thing to waste upon the young—who are not old enough to know how to enjoy it”—so G.B.S. or some other egocentric epigrammatist. The same remark could be made about a picture recently reviewed in your paper, *The 5000 Fingers of Dr. T*. Your reviewer takes this film as entertainment, a spectacle for the young in years and heart. But there are undertones in it which call for an adult appreciation. It is impossible, of course, to say exactly what satirical intent existed in the minds of Dr. Seuss and his associates, but it seems as though some such intent existed. Most of the great American (or even the great New Zealand) way of life gets dragged in and scuffed about a little: motherhood, employer-employee relationship, Fascism, the typical U.S. Army male chorus, college songs, mass production, business executive manners, U.S. university songs, the comic strips, and, particularly delightfully, the atom scare. Terwilliker's muscle man, closing upon the child, asks him what he has in his small, smoking bottle: “Is it atomic?”—“Yes.” *Exunt omnes* in screaming panic.

Surely not enough credit has been given to the remarkably agile versification of Dr. Seuss? Many of his songs deserve to be given a life and popularity apart from their place in this film—but they are not hit parade stuff, and not even the voice and name of Peter Lynd Hayes will carry them.

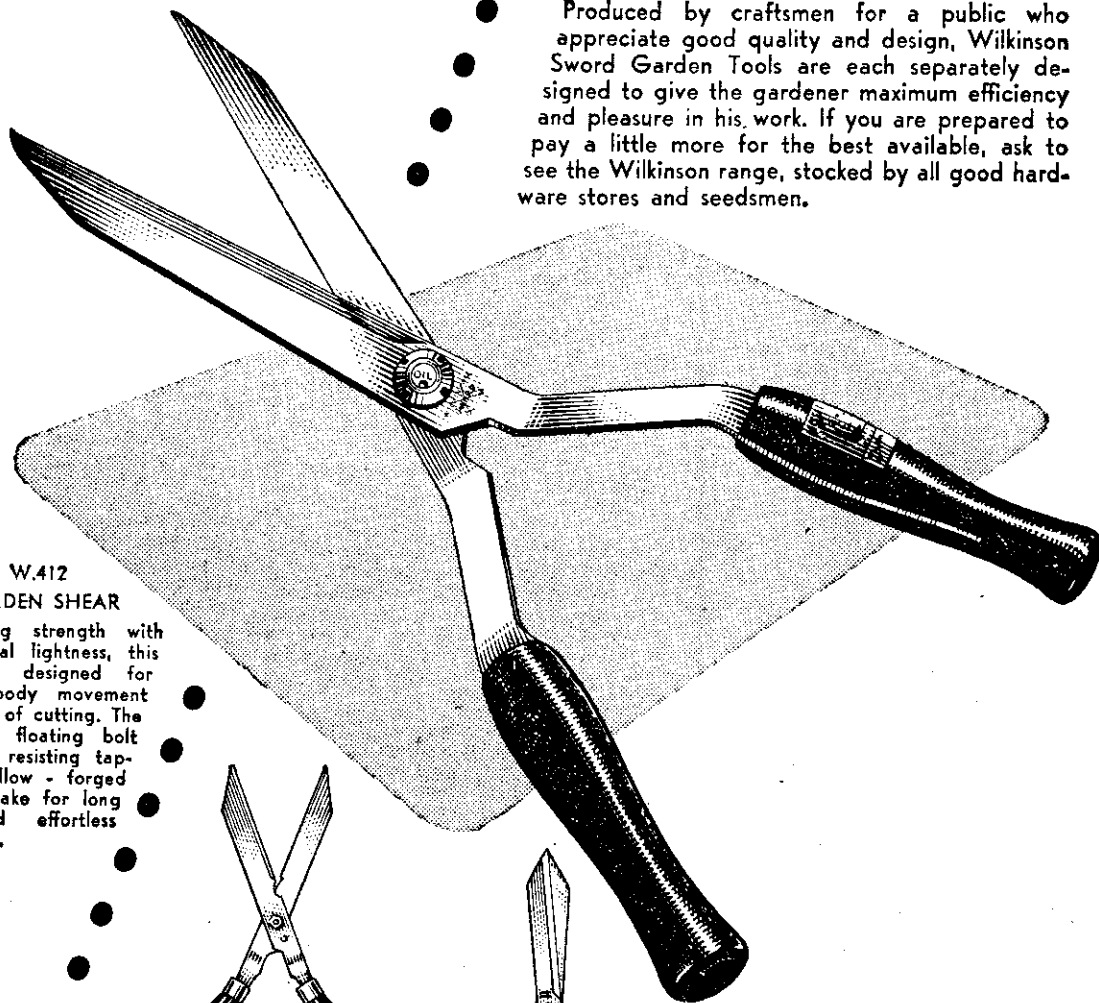
I am surprised to see that your reviewer ignores the remarkable dungeon ballet scene, where the players of all the despised other instruments dance their parts in a non-cartoon Fantasia—a graceful, satirical and witty blending of sound and action. Nevertheless, I am grateful to *The Listener* for giving publicity to a much-ignored and badly-advertised film. It will be another disastrous triumph of the box office mind if this film is never shown in New Zealand again. K. A. BRYAN (Wellington).

(Our reviewer replies: “The treatment given to the film was quite deliberate, because it seemed to me more important to interest parents in something which would give them and their children pleasure, and to suggest an honest and profitable exploitation of the film to exhibitors of goodwill, than to write for a small sophisticated audience. Certainly Seuss is a sophisticated humorist. I enjoy him as such—as I enjoy Lewis Carroll and Lear and Swift—but my children like all four for simpler and, I suggest, better reasons. What kind of publicity would Mr. Bryan write for Danny Kaye that wouldn't leave him stone-cold dead in the market? Motherhood, incidentally, is not an idea ‘scuffed about’ by Dr. Seuss. Perhaps Mr. Bryan is thinking of what Philip Wylie called ‘Mom-ism.’”—Ed.)

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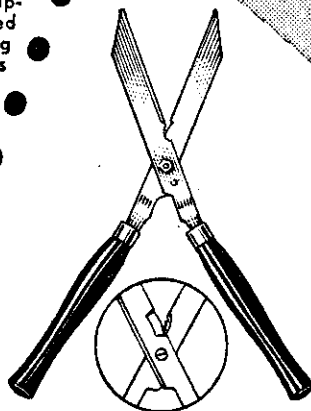
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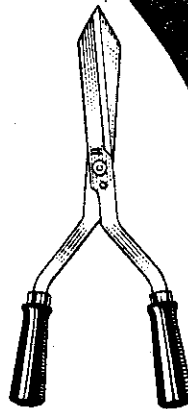
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