

TALKING OF TALKIES.

“The World Moves On” But Where?

Madeleine Carroll and Franchot Tone in a Film That Gives One
“Furiously to Think”—A Picture That Moves From New Orleans
in 1825 to The Battlefields of Europe.

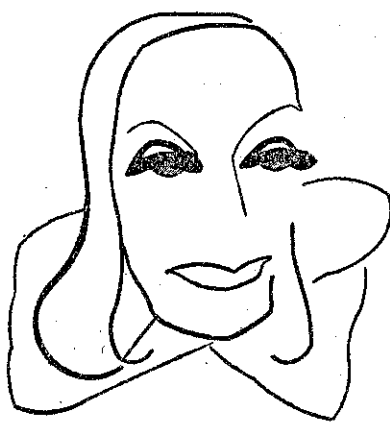
NOEL COWARD might have written synopsis for “The World Moves On.” (Actually it was written by a well-known playwright who spent his early years in Auckland—Reginald Berkeley, the author of “The White Chateau.”) Coward mightn’t have been so obvious, he mightn’t have put into the characters’ mouths the words you expected them to say—but the picture had an inexorable air, an air of carrying on, over and beyond everything, that is not stagecraft, but life.

It resembles “Cavalcade” in that it is the story of a family—not the well-knit family of Coward’s, but the family of George Arliss’s Rothschilds, spreading its net over Europe, making business flourish and keeping later generations together by the bonds of commerce. The Gerards belong to New Orleans, and the picture opens in 1825 with the reading of a will—the will that is to be the cornerstone of family fortunes and family ties. A branch of the business, which deals in cotton, is to be established in Lillie, another is to be established in Dusseldorf, a third is to be maintained in New Orleans. These three businesses are to be in the charge of the three Gerard sons, while a fourth branch at Manchester is to be maintained by a partner, Warburton. The business of Gerard and Warburton flourishes as the bay-tree, and the film moves on to the beginning of 1914, where a family reunion is in progress at the old homestead at New Orleans. The year 1913 has been the most successful in the firm’s history—orders are flowing in from all parts of the world, new factories are going up, old ones are being extended. And the old family ties of Gerard are as strong as ever, even though the German family has changed its name to Gerhardt and the French to Girard. The old toast is honoured—the toast of Gerard—but by this time the name of Warburton has become so indissolubly linked with that of Gerard that the Warburtons too are present—father and daughter.

And a “wedding is arranged,” too, between the son of the German house and a French girl. All the family journey to Dusseldorf, and great are the celebrations there. But it is the last reunion of the Gerards under the old scheme of things. The war comes, and with it the straining to breaking point of family ties. One side is for Germany, another for France, a third for England. And out of the war rides a new morality—a morality based on the “breaking of the other fellow” and the amassing of wealth. Gerard and Warburton come back stronger than ever, and soon business is being discussed in term of hundreds of millions of dollars. Comes another war—1929—a war which killed men beside their firesides and sent women and children into the streets. The Wall Street crash, and with it the dissolution of the Gerard fortune. But, unlike the

young people of Coward’s “Cavalcade,” who “will not build, will not work, will not dream or plan anything,” the people of “The World Moves On” are content

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THIRD.—A clever impression of Greta Garbo, the famous screen star, who has this year risen to third place in popularity among female stars in Great Britain, according to a recent questionnaire.

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to go back to the beginning—the losers of money, but the finders of themselves.

But behind the film is that insistent call, throbbing its cry like the beat of a drum, “Where are we heading? Where are we heading?” From the peace of the New Orleans of a hundred years ago to the March wind madness of to-day seemed not just a century, but a million years. Already the cry of youth, “We need another war to straighten out this mess!”—and the pitying smile of an older generation that knows it was only war and nationalism that made the mess.

Madeleine Carroll shines in this film as she has shone in no film since “I Was a Spy.” She is the wife of Warburton in the nineteenth century part of the film—and she parts from young Gerard in New Orleans to return to England with some reluctance. She is the great-granddaughter of this woman in the twentieth century portion, and she returns with her father to the reunion of Gerards and Warburtons in New Orleans in 1914. Here she meets the great-grandson of the Gerard her ancestor lover—Franchot Tone in both cases. They feel that they have met before, and some of the finest love passages in the film are when these two young people are striving to discover where and how—their looks, the song that is sung at an old piano nearly a hundred years after. The rest of the cast, too, is splendid. Reginald Denny is the son of the German branch of the family; Dudley Digges is the manager of the Manchester branch of the firm.

“The World Moves On” gives one “furiously to think.” Fox gave us “Cavalcade” in 1933, and this film in 1934. Could one praise it more?

ABOUT two years ago a bright little comedy film, “The Guardsman,” was touring the New Zealand theatres. It didn’t do any very good business, for the stars—Alfred Lunt and Lynne Fontanne—were unknown out here. Since then, however, they have achieved great success on the stage in England and America, and have received great praise from Mr. Bernard Shaw. Wellington audiences are lucky that the Wellington Repertory Theatre Society has been successful in arranging for the film to be screened for another week in Wellington, and it is at present showing at the King’s Theatre.

THE combination of one of the most popular stars in filmdom and one of the most popular novels of the last few seasons provides RKO Radio with one of its finest productions in “The Fountain,” which stars Ann Harding. “The Fountain” is an adaptation of the novel of the same name by Charles Morgan, famous English dramatic critic and author, a novel considered by many as the greatest piece of contemporary literature. This story gives Miss Harding every opportunity to display the full range of her fine dramatic interpretation. Opposite Miss Harding’s role are two male parts that also call for the deftest of dramatic interpretations: no finer players could have been secured for these roles than Paul Lukas and Brian Aherne.

JUDGING from the criticisms from the overseas papers Warner Oland’s latest picture, “Charlie Chan in London,” based on the popular novel by Earl Derr Biggers, is by far the most entertaining of the “Chan” thrillers. Warner Oland, whose name has become synonymous with the character of Charlie throughout the series, again portrays the role of the bland Chinese detective. Advance reports indicate that Oland’s portrayal in this film is his most notable to date. In his latest adventure, Charlie Chan invades Sherlock Holmes’s realm and journeys to London to solve the most amazing mystery of his remarkable career in criminology.

MR. ARLISS’S first British film, “The Iron Duke,” is moving smoothly ahead, and the “first gentleman of the screen” is very pleased with the progress. One thing especially has delighted him, and that is the magnificent settings of Alfred Junge; Hollywood sets, according to Mr. Arliss, are vast and stupendous, but they lack personality. Miss Ellaline Terriss, famous stage star, has made an appearance in this film as the screen wife of George Arliss, the Duchess of Wellington.