

## The "Fan Disease"

(Continued from page 16.)

forget when Mary Pickford and Douglas Fairbanks attended a garden party and the crowd rushed the gates? Hundreds of people got in for nothing that day.

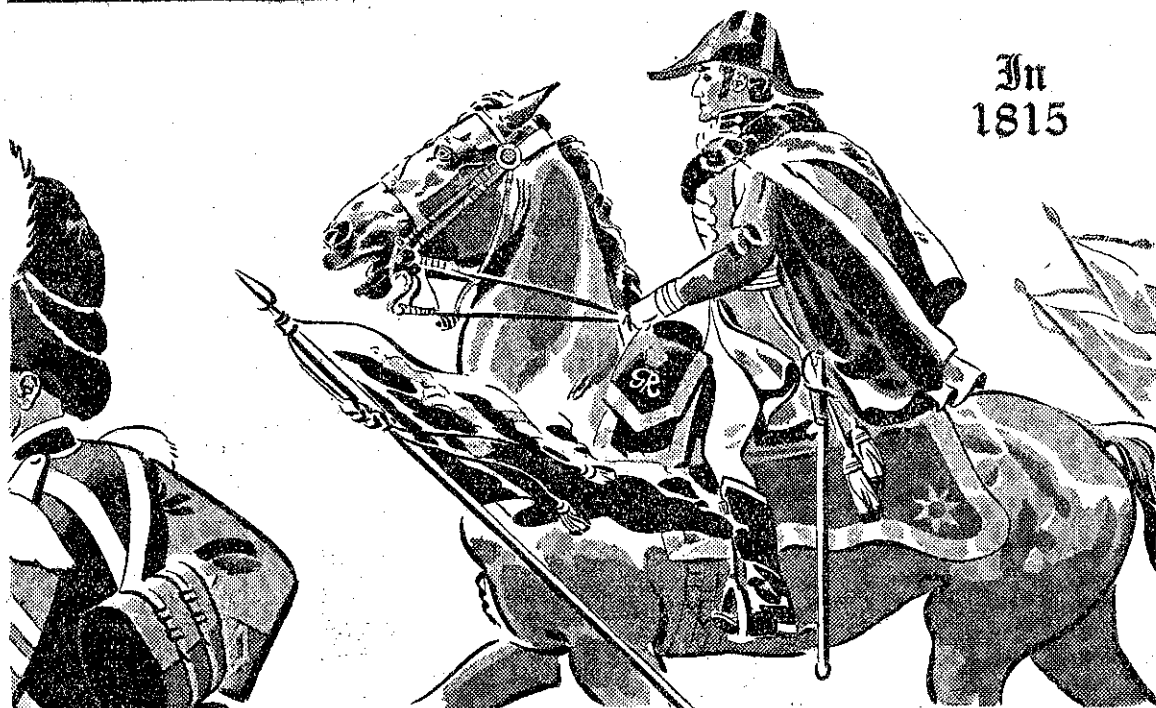
Carl Brisson, the dimpled, smiling Dane, was mobbed everywhere he went. Clubs were formed to honour star after star as they rose in the firmament bounded by Shaftesbury Avenue, Piccadilly, and St. Martin's Lane. Fan-worship became a business. In Hollywood prices were quoted daily for the autographed pictures of movie stars as they rose or fell in popularity.

RADIO artists do not escape the attentions of the fan. How can they when they receive such vast publicity? From early days, broadcasting people have been bombarded by letters of adulation, criticism, and abuse. And it is not only dance-band leaders, crooners, and others connected with the lighter side of radio who have a fan-mail. A mighty following is drawn by less obviously attractive broadcasters who cannot be said to belong to the world of entertainment proper. "The Zoo Man" has his own queer fan-mail—much of it in match-boxes containing strange specimens of insects and moths. A mild but no less enthusiastic company of fans listens for

the wisdom of O. H. Middleton, the gardener's oracle. Read the enthusiastic letters in "The Radio Times" arguing about which is the Best Broadcasting Voice, hotly championing various favourites, and expressing anger, scorn, bewilderment and contempt when other letters don't agree.

One remarkable demonstration of fan-worship at least has been proved sincere. Years after the death of their idol, the admirers of Rudolph Valentino carry on good work in his name. They have built a roof-garden for the Italian Hospital in London; they have endowed beds for unemployed men; they have done innumerable good deeds in memory of an actor who never even made a "talkie."

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