

The Daily Movie Magazine

THE MOVIE FAN'S LETTERBOX

By HENRY M. NEELY

J. S. H.—"If you have any influence with the theatre owners, won't you please get them to bring back the 'Loves of Pharaoh'?" Here I was, poor fellow, waiting for the woman during the week planning to go to see it Saturday afternoon, when they withdrew it. I was in a rage. And now I see no signs of its returning. So do tell them what you think of them.

For the Film Fan's Scrapbook



BETTY COMPSON

"And speaking of this article, I wish that you would read further into it and through the paragraph of 'The Hairly Ape.' For in your criticisms of that play you failed me terribly for the first time. Especially when you said that it was a good play to read, did I think that you were carrying your unfairness to Jones to extremes. I think that I have read all adverse criticisms on the subject from Heywood Brown, who, I suppose, might be called the president of the 'Ape-the-Hairy-Ape' fraternity, on down, but aside from the obvious absurdity of the fifth avenue puppets, I have found nothing but praise in his handling of the ape, especially of the stokehole and prison ones.

"Are you so much a disciple of the passing school of realism that nothing but three-sided eggs and real coal in your stokeholes satisfies you? In the face of the admiration you've so often expressed for Callaghan, I can't think this is so, and I'm interested enough in the growing use of impressionistic sets to want to know just what your objections were.

"It is only through a critic's talks that the public becomes conversant with and obtains some knowledge on what is worth seeing, and because I feel so strongly that this town needs a bad jolting out of their morose-like reliquish of hokum, I was keenly disappointed in your attitude toward this play. At least you weren't smug enough to sit behind your tight little moral code and say that Philadelphia repudiated its vainglory by refusing to patronize it.

"After all, my knowledge is only bookish and theoretical beside your practical experience, and I am entirely open to conviction as long as it doesn't conflict with my—er—intelligence."

(I wish I could use the space necessary to answer you—and I wish I didn't have to omit a lot of your very interesting letter, but unfortunately we must confine discussion in this department to the movies, and, until 'The Hairly Ape' is filmed, we can't give it more than passing attention. Briefly, it wasn't the "ape" I objected to, but I found the attempts at impressionism all the way through very unconvincing and the "fantasy" might have been done the same way by a prep school dramatic club.

You don't have to accept my opinion, of course, and it doesn't really matter. What does matter in your letter is what are the fans going to say about your opinion of Philadelphia audiences?)

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