

# At the Theaters

Academy : Bijou : Victoria : Royal : Grand

**ROYAL—"THE KID"**  
They laughed and cried! Then cried and laughed! And left the theater with every emotion from hysterical gales of laughter to the stifled sobs of sympathy completely exhausted.

That was the experience of the audience at the Royal theater last night who went to the second day showing of Charlie Chaplin's new film, "The Kid," which is advertised as First National's six reels of joy. "Six reels of joy" tells but half of it, for while the comedian has never been so mirth-provoking in any previous production, the story which is unfolded contains more real heart-throbs than you usually see in any picture.

Had some one told us before we saw "The Kid" that we could be convinced that the character which Charlie has always represented on the screen could be presented in such a way that we could visualize him as a living breathing mortal, we would have been inclined to doubt it. But here are two doing the course of "The Kid" this comedian made us swallow a lump in our throats and wipe real tears of sympathy from our eyes by the story of his acting, and before our handkerchiefs were back in our pocket it was needed again to dry our cheeks of the tears caused by the shrieks of laughter from the antics of the same actor.

**GRAND**  
The Grand has announced its departure from the Saturday variety bills after today and for the final big bill of mixed subjects has saved the best selection of one and two reel motion picture classics of the entire season.

Today Jimmy Aubrey that sterling comedy artist of the Vitaphone company presents his latest Big V comedy special "Springtime," a comedy with a roar in every single flash of its length. There is a laugh every time to glance at the screen and there are two thousand feet jammed with comedy such as you seldom see.

An all-star cast of actors and

actresses present the latest Universal Western gem, "The Pony Express Rider," a thrill in every flash of its two reels.

Fox News, first run and Topics of the Day will be the other items on the bill.

**BIJOU**  
Thrills that are logical and are a part of the complete story it tells, and that will draw you to the very edge of your seat for a whole half hour, are a part of the treat in store for patrons of the Bijou today who witness Tom Santschi's sterling exhibition in the seventh issue of his series of big two-reel outdoor dramatic gems "The Sage Brush Musketeers," being the title of it. There is a thrill such as you seldom experience in this drama of the great open west.

Hank Mann, who makes his home at the Bijou regularly, comes in one of his greatest two-reelers, "The Paper Hanger." Chaplin once made a picture by this title and you want to see Mann put it over the work Charlie did as a paper hanger.

International News with all the world's news in pictures, will also be an attraction on the bill.

**BIJOU MONDAY**  
While the success of most serials depends upon only one mystery or unknown factor, in Ruth Roland's latest serial, "The Avenging Arrow," the spectator's interest is held from one episode to another by two mysteries of compelling interest, the solving of which carries the audience through a series of thrilling adventures.

The first mystery to be solved is the reason for the existence of the fierce feud that hated which the Traganza family manifests toward the Delgado, while the second enigma is the hiding place of the Delgado nuggets—representing as they do a vast fortune to the person able to locate them.

"The Avenging Arrow," opens at the Bijou Monday.

## Taking Movies in Africa

Dr. Owen Rowe O'Neil has brought to New York from Africa a story of how he persuaded the royal household of Swaziland to sell him the motion picture rights to the coronation in the South African tribal area. He has with him the pictures which bear out the story. Also he produces official documents setting out the coronation ceremonies. Not only did he make the films—which, of course, he intends to show to audience hereabout, he incidentally precipitated, according to his story, a civil war among the Swazis. Having done that, he took pictures of the fighting.

Dr. O'Neil is the son of Boer parents, who were born in the Orange Free State. They were among the early pioneers, he relates, and they survived the diseases, hardships and bloody onslaughts of the Matabeles, Zulus, Basutos, Swazis, Makotese and various other savage tribes of South Africa. Frequently, according to the doctor, entire settlements of Boer men, women and children were completely annihilated by the savage and ferocious Kafirs.

"My nurse was a Mapor woman, my playmates the primitive little Kaffir boys; the first language I spoke was that of the Mapor. It was I who traveled the other day. I wore my first pair of civilized trousers when I was nine years old. My father brought them to me after making an expedition to the coast for the purpose of getting supplies for the colony. They were corduroy trousers and I hastened to put them on and show them off to my little dark-skinned companions. Their eyes filled with wonder and admiration. The murmur of awe ran around the group. There was one of them, Sibajaan (the Skunk), who was a special friend of mine. He and I would go off adventuring together very often. At sunset that day, before returning to our homes, Sibajaan declared, quite as a matter of fact, that it was now his turn to wear the trousers. The arrangement seemed perfectly just to me. I gave him the trousers. He gave me his string of beads. It was thus we proceeded home that evening from the sheep fields. On the way, however, the jealousy and hate arising out of the favoritism which had been shown Sibajaan angered the others. Their ill-feeling was fanned into a rage and a bitter fight ensued. Sibajaan came out of it with both his ears bitten off. I was stabbed in the eye with an assegai (spear), have never recovered from the effects of it.

"I grew up in this environment and came to know the native people and their language. King Buno was the ruler of the Swazis then. He was a constant menace to the surrounding Boer villages. In order to keep the peace with him, Oom Paul Kruger paid him, at each moon, the sum of 2,000 pounds in gold or its equivalent in grain.

My uncle, Tuis Grobler, together with a group of Boer burghers, was commissioned to guard the frontier of the Swazis against a possible invasion by Buno. It was he who carried the money to Buno at each new moon. Tuis and Buno soon grew to be great friends. Buno would prepare a great reception for Tuis at each of his periodic visits. "Out of this friendship arose a queer ceremony, or game, which took place at every delivery of money. Within a quarter of a mile of Buno's kraal, or encampment, there was a huge rock upon which the king loved to sleep, exposed to the sun, during the hottest hours of the day. Upon this rock Tuis would count out the 2,000 golden sovereigns. Buno would dig his hands into the pile of gold several times and let the sovereigns trickle through his fingers. Then he would slap Tuis on the back as a token of good fellowship and say, 'I will scramble you for the gold; what you grab is yours, what I take is mine.'

"Both men were huge and athletic, and the friendly tussle that followed resembled a modern heavyweight wrestling bout. Each deserved every sovereign he won. Tuis was always the biggest financial winner, owing to the fact that he wore a pair of gold-soxets, whereas Buno was naked. During some of the last visits to Buno my uncle took me with him as an orderly. "Buno had 26 wives. One of them was a Zulu princess. It was known throughout the Swazi kingdom that a son born from this union would be the next king of Swaziland. In the prime of his life, Buno succumbed to a snake bite. A son, Sebusa, was born shortly afterward. During Sebusa's childhood the mother of Buno, Labotsibeni, ruled over the kingdom.

"During the greater part of the youth of the crown prince I was away from Africa. I was studying at Edinburgh in the university preparing myself for the doctor's degree. Later I came to Harvard and completed my studies. After being graduated from Harvard I returned to South Africa and took up the practice of medicine among the Boers and natives. I made it my business every year to spend part of the time in the heart of the wilderness among the savage tribes.

"In 1918 I began to hear that it was planned to crown Prince Sebusa during the latter part of the year. The old queen, now more than 100 years old, was blind and feeble. The people wanted somebody young to rule the tribe. Part of the ritual of the coronation in Swaziland is the burning at a pyre of the old rulers. It is thus that they effectually avoid any future partisan troubles. Queen Labotsibeni was naturally loath to accede to their requests for a coronation. Nevertheless, it seemed as though the will of the

people would be paramount. Already the two camps, that of the aged queen and that of the crown prince and his mother, were divided.

"As long as the queen lived, however, she was supreme. Knowing that perhaps never more would there be a coronation of the old savage type, as the English government discouraged any such ceremonies, I decided to go to Queen Labotsibeni and ask her for the motion-picture rights. She didn't know what I was talking about, naturally. I took a camera with me of the ordinary sort and took a number of snapshots of her court. These I showed to her prime minister, who was the eyes and brain of the centenarian queen. They called it 'white man's magic' when they saw the prints. The queen agreed to sell me the rights for 500 pounds in gold, 500 quarts of gin, and 500 head of cattle. A contract to this effect was signed on August 15, 1918. It would seem to a naive observer that the queen was thus signing her death pact. As a matter of fact, she reckoned more wisely than I. Knowing the strength of the English government and its disapproval of the sacrificial rites, she felt that the coronation and her death would never take place. Or, if the coronation did take place, she reasoned that if we valued our skins we had dare to kill her. At all events she would be richer by the agreement.

"Carrying the contract with me I came to America to get capital to support the venture. I stayed here two weeks and returned to Africa with American money, equipment and photographers. Shortly after I arrived our caravan consisting of 32 oxen, seven mules, seven blacks, four white men and an Indian cook, set out for the royal kraal from Ermelo, the last city on the border of the interior. The journey or trek lasted a fortnight. We endured great privation owing to the fever and disease which were raging through the country.

"At the end of two weeks we came within sight of the kraal. Instead of the reception which I had expected, we were greeted with signs of hostility. Food and other necessities of life were refused us. It was made plain to us that if we valued our skins we had better clear out. We did. The only information vouchsafed to us was that the queen had been warned against the coronation and that she felt that I was an instigator of it.

"We left the kraal with no little haste and not much dignity. There I was, with a perfectly good contract in my possession, with men and equipment that had traveled thousands of miles and with signed agreements with the American companies which made it incumbent upon me to produce the pictures! What was I to do?

"I had been accused of trying to overthrow the old queen and place the young prince on the throne. I decided then that I would, in reality, attempt to do this at each of my periodic visits. The caravan was turned in the direction of Lilombo, where the crown prince made his headquarters. The crown prince was in the mountains. I was told, being consecrated for his coronation, I turned to his mother, Tzancen Tzancen, the wife of Buno, and told her what had happened. I helped turn the argument by the gift of a large assortment of 10-cent store jewelry and as much gin as had been given to her aged mother-in-law. It took us a long time to convince Queen Tzancen that there was an effort being made to block the accession of her son and that she would have to fight for his rights. The thing grew slowly, but before we knew it or could control it there was a bloody civil war among the Swazis. It grew bigger and bigger. We had not expected anything like this. But we had our cameras and equipment and we made the best of the situation.

"The impis, or forces, of the crown prince were successful. The aged queen mother was sacrificed on the pyre before we could prevent it, and arrange-

ments were made to proceed with the coronation. By this time the British government had received details of the war and had sent me a message telling me that they would hold me personally responsible for any loss of life. We are still negotiating on this question.

"We took pictures not only of scattered skirmishes, but of the preparations for them, which seems to be the most important part of the battle. Savage dances and ceremonies of the weirdest sort are enacted before the leaders of the tribe. After the war there were more ceremonies to celebrate the victory. The women took part in these.

"The crown prince was made king and is now ruling. Fearful that the influence of the white men who had urged them to take possession would be used against them at some other time, the new queen mother, Tzancen, insisted that they swear allegiance to her and show their good faith by becoming members of the impi. There was nothing for us to do but accept. The initiation into the tribe called forth further celebrations and ceremonies. These, too, were filmed by one of our men."

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Also International News

# BIJOU