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Athletic Sissies

The following comments are excerpts from an article "American Athletes Are Sissies," by Don Iddon, British correspondent in the U. S., printed originally in Coronet magazine.

The American athlete has become the spoiled brat of the New World, cuddled and coddled, pampered and petted. Too much money, either in salary or expenses or both, and too much adulation are lavished on him. He has become a prince of privilege in the thriving Republic.

It is my belief that almost every major American sport derives from English children's games. . . . Whenever an American newsreel showing American football players in their outlandish padded costumes and helmets appears on an English screen, the audience hoots with laughter. Why the armor plate? The crash helmet? The shoulder and knee pads? . . . We play a type of football similar to yours. In Britain it is called Rugby and it is a rugged game. No one ever wears any padding or a helmet, and it is even considered affected to put on a pair of shin guards or ear protection. . . . To replace a man because he is playing badly, or even when he is injured, would be unthinkable in Britain. . . .

It seems to me that the strangest phenomenon in American Sports is the coach. Apparently he is regarded as a combination of elder-statesman, father confessor, and mother superior. From what I hear and see, he is also the mastermind, a repository of all the talents. . . . As a British correspondent in the U. S., I have watched pampering and effeminacy creep into your ball parks and football grounds. The colossal cult of the American 'Mom' and her mawkish devotion to her 'boys' are sapping the fibre of the American athlete.

The Daily Tar Heel hastens to point out (before the correspondents can shout the great American slogan, "If he doesn't like it here he can go where he came from") that the above article fairly reeks of an across-the-seas scent.

Nevertheless, a prophet is not without honor, and all that, and it is at least of casual interest to note one educated man's reaction to the great variety show of American football.

But then, our tremendous financial support, gigantic stadia, colossal crowds, enormous flow of publicity, and stupendous half-time performances could hardly exist on the dignified little island that is England.

by John Taylor

Reviews And Previews

In a week notable for its lack of worthwhile, new movies we must look to a re-issue of Shaw's "Caesar and Cleopatra" to find a film of any real distinction. It was presented yesterday at the Carolina.

The filmization of the Shaw classic appeals to a great variety of tastes. For those people who are partial to the "big" picture, it has the grandeur of a Cecil B. De Mille epic, but is flavored with the subtle touch that one expects of a British film-making genius like Gabriel Pascal, its director. For the more serious-minded who prefer movies filled with sharp, witty, intellectual dialogue, it is necessary only to mention that the scripter is, of course, G.B.S. himself. And for the devotees of fine acting, it is sufficient to note that in the cast are such highly acclaimed performers as Claude Rains, Vivien Leigh, Flora Robson, Francis L. Sullivan, and Stewart Granger.

This Shavian boy-meets-girl story sticks closely to the play and hence does not adapt itself as easily to filming as one might think. Any work by Shaw is inclined to be overlaid with talk, and, intellectually stimulating as this discourse is, over two hours of it tends to become somewhat tedious. Only in the battle against Ptolemy's forces and the escape by water from the tower is there any actual physical aggression. But director Pascal has, nevertheless, managed to get a great deal of moving power and pageantry out of crowd scenes and triumphal processions, with which the movie abounds, and so the

end result is pictorially satisfying.

Essentially, this is the story of the aging Caesar attempting to instruct the youthful Cleopatra in the ways of becoming a wise and noble queen. Around this framework are laid a dissertation on the theory of government and the implication of the Roman conqueror's affection for his most prized Egyptian possession. Shaw depicts Caesar, in what many believe to be a self-portrait, as wistful, soft, and paternal, wooing exclusively and platonically with talk. Cleopatra is depicted in moods ranging from childlike fear to mature self-confidence, extreme enthusiasm to sullen pre-occupation. She is not impressed with Caesar romantically (and who can blame her) and longs only for the day when Antony will come to her.

The cast is superb. By skillful underplaying, Claude Rains makes clear all of Caesar's humanity, sense of humor, and tolerance. He handles with sympathy and delicacy the longings of a middle-aged man for youth. Vivien Leigh is a joy to behold both visually and dramatically as the "kitten of the sphinx," turned into the "serpent of the Nile." In this film, made six years ago, she is creating the part that she is currently recreating in New York. She is in turn timid, electric, and drenched with a hot, aggressive nature. Stewart Granger is the epitome of the dandy as Apollodorus, Flora Robson is properly frightening as Ftateeta, and the rest of the cast, including Francis L. Sullivan and Cecil Parker, are fine insupporting roles.

Man And His Machine

Is humanity still possible? This is not a question anent the possibilities of man's surviving the atom bomb, except to the extent to which the atom bomb epitomizes the mutiny of human culture against the humans who created it. The question really intends to inquire, Is it still possible for a man to be a human?

What does it mean to be a human? Being born to human parents is of course a prerequisite, but human birth is by no means tantamount to being human. The human individual becomes humanized only in the dynamic process of active relation to other human beings. We become conscious only by means of the presence of other human selves. Human emotions originate and mature only in a human environment. We are able to love in a human sense only after we have been loved by human love, and were we denied this love this particular emotion would remain at best only brute animal attachment.

Our first and perhaps our enduring convictions, our supreme preferences, are communicated to us by those in the closest personal relations to us. To be human, then, requires that we be related to other humans by social contact as well as by birth; that we participate in the most intimate and frequent interactions of human persons. Human life will live only in a human environment.

It is disturbing, therefore, that we humans have created a subhuman culture which reduces to a minimum those human relationships necessary to the development and perpetuation of characteristically human attributes—such as love, speech, creative imagination and preferability. Man has recently outmoded himself by giving birth to the latest and most complex link in the chain of evolution—the machine. Unlike its evolutionary predecessors the machine cannot survive apart from

man: It does the work of man, making particular men unnecessary, but at the same time it substitutes for human persons in such a way that many hitherto human relationships become its immediate progenitors. The fate of the machine is inseparable from the destiny of man.

Yet the machine makes an insidious two-fold assault on man-to-machine relationships which mechanize man and atrophy his humanity.

The modern man's day is not a day at the office with persons but with machines. You leave home at 7:45 in the morning, station yourself at the corner bus stop till 7:49 when the bus stops right before you and the doors open automatically. (Automatic is our culture's word for miracle.) You would speak to the driver but a sigh tactfully saves you this faux pas by saying, "Do not talk to the driver. Your safety is his job." You are highly honored to have a particular body guard and you proudly reach out your hand intending to give your fare to the man whose job is your safety but a machine intercepts the dime with a couple of mechanical grunts which you interpret to be "thank you" in the Machine Dialect.

You ride the bus to your destination, push a button which somehow informs the man whose job is your safety and he brings the bus to a stop. Due to your childhood conditioning in a superstition-ridden rural community you start to leave the bus by the same door you entered but another polite sign whispers the decorum, "Leave by the rear door." You conform and find the back door as courteous as the front, opening itself for you just at the right time and closing behind you.

You cross the street to the Post Office to get stamps. You don't wait in a long line nor do you linger at the stamp window "chew the fat" with the man behind the window. You go

By Rollo Taylor

Rameses

Some folks have a way of making sheer fun a burden. Take the case of the fisherman. Some of those guys will stand out in a cold stream for hours with a limber piece of steel in their hands and try to lure uncooperative fish onto a hook. They use expensive equipment and need modern transportation to take them to that "perfect" spot. This location is usually 400 miles from the nearest telephone and next door to a fish market. The fish market is a "must" because they can't go home empty-handed.

Now that is no way to fish. Fishing is for relaxation nowadays, since we can go to any food store and buy anything from blue whale to minnows. The food motive is out so we fish to relax. The question is, who can relax in water up to their mid-section and an uncontrollable piece of rod in their hands?

Down where I come from we do it the right way. All you need is a piece of string and a hook. We use cigar butts and roofing tacks for bait and enjoy it. All

you have to do is find a dry place on the bank of a river, throw in your line, and go to sleep. That is relaxation. If the fish is so unkind as to take the bait you can always give him to some fella that is hungry. If the fish decides to let well enough alone, then that's allright. Remember, this is a relaxing sport.

Two of the finest fishermen I ever saw come from my hometown. The last trip they made took three months to prepare. They only had a small boat so they had to apportion weight ever so correctly. They put a case of beer on each side to act as ballast. Up in the front they had a big ice box to keep the nose down a little. After a test run they decided on a couple of more cases just for appearance. Then they lit out upstream and stayed three days. Didn't catch any fish because they left the tackle in the car. "Just didn't have room," was the excuse. Man, that is fine fishing.

straight to a machine, deposit a dime and a nickel and the machine hands you five three-cent stamps, just the number you needed. You stamp your wife's letters, put them back in your pocket and leave.

You look for a newsboy; not one in sight. You swear at the newspapers and the younger generation, starting off down the street, but you are stopped by another understanding sign which says to you, "Good morning, Get your Morning News here. Deposit five cents." You deposit five cents and take your paper from a machine. You stop at the bank but of course no human banker is on the premise at 8:29, but a mechanical receiving teller has been on duty all night. It takes your deposit and you go to the office.

At the entrance of your office building the doors automatically swing open for you and you go straight to the elevator, push a button, the elevator door opens, you get on, push another button and the elevator delivers you to your office. When you arrive your secretary is listening to a machine and of course you are too polite to interrupt, besides being concerned that the secretary type out accurately everything the machine says. So you begin talking to another machine which remembers everything you say and will repeat it to your secretary as soon as you leave the office.

You get tired talking to the machine; you want a coke. You don't go to a fountain where a pretty girl mixes you a drink just to suit your taste and then talks small talk with you for half an hour. Instead you go down the hall to a machine, put a quarter in a slot, get a coke and four nickels in return. For five minutes you stand there drinking your coke, talking to no one, but looking at yourself in a mirror provided by the machine.

At lunch you are in a hurry so you go to an automat, deposit 50 cents and a machine serves you a toasted sandwich, potato chips and a cup of coffee. Since there's no more work for you to do at the office you hurry off to the movie for the afternoon showing of "Marooned on a South Pacific Island with a Robot Secretary."

At the ticket booth you don't stop to flirt with a pretty girl; you just push your money under the window and one machine hands you a ticket and another throws your change at you. You pick up your change off the sidewalk, go in the theater, sit down and a machine starts showing you pictures of better things to come in machines. You are impressed and after the show reluctantly return to the office to sign the letters your secretary has typed for you.

You sign them and put them back on her desk to be licked and sealed. You go home, take a quick glance at the evening paper, hurriedly eat dinner, threaten to slit the throat of anyone who speaks for the next three hours and sit down before a television set for the evening. You have not had a decent conversation with any human being all day; in fact, you have hardly had a minute to spend with people because your affairs are primarily with machines.

by Dr. Edmund Perry