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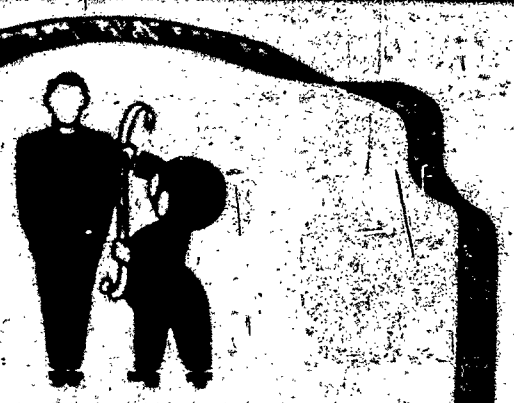

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COURIER'S CURRENT CINEMA COMMENTS

By JOHN SPEAKMAN

(Editor's Note: Listed as three in importance by poll, by the National Legion of Decency this week, is "Corpus Vanishes," the Objection: "Gruesome, gruesome, gruesome and gruesomer.")

"The Eternal Gift," which comes to the Regent Theater this week, is a picture that every Catholic should see. At the time it was reviewed in this column—after the preview held before Easter—we called it "a picture that should be inspiring to Catholics but interesting and impressive to non-Catholics as well." Let's hope that it receives the support to which it is entitled.

Hope, Skelton and Hope Schuyler

Bob Hope and Red Skelton are both involved with secret agents in their current pictures and both have quite a time getting out of scrapes before the plans and strategic mines respectively are delivered into the right hands. Although, superficially, Hope and Skelton are similar comedians working in similar pictures, the resemblance ends there.

Skelton, in our opinion, is still a vaudeville comedian—both in his material and in his heavily mugging manner of putting it over. He is likable and sometimes very funny, but his is an uneven brand of comedy in comparison to the glib suavity of the Hope chatter and patter. And "Ship Ahoy," which uses every old cliche in its unreeling, is a far less worthy picture than "My Favorite Blonde," which has the same subject matter much more ingeniously treated. And where the latter works up a fair degree of suspense, the Skelton picture is a melange of musical numbers, with the story counting for little. It means quite a lot in "My Favorite Blonde."

Madeleine Carroll means a lot, too. It seemed fore-ordained that sooner or later she would get into a movie with Hope, whose public worship of her on the radio has become an accepted part of his program. She plays straight to Hope's clowning in a role that is reminiscent of her part in "39 Steps." There's a helpful penguin named Percy in the picture, too.

Skelton's main assistance in "Ship Ahoy" comes from Bert Lahr, whose appearances — whenever his material gives him the opportunity—are well nigh hilarious. We agree with Amy Croughton that Eleanor Powell has perfected her dancing to an almost mechanical point but we don't agree with the Croughton idea that a metronome would be as exciting. We'll trade our metronome for Eleanor any day. Tommy Dorsey's orchestra plays a lot which is good news for the litterbugs.

Although Hope and Skelton are the news in two of the movies, there is also some to-do in another about a lady named Hope Schuyler. "Who is Hope Schuyler?" asks the title of the picture—and gives you several choices among characters. Chances are you'll pick the right one. And just to keep you up to date on your series movies, you had better be told that "Blondie" of the movies is right up there with her comic-strip sister now. That blessed event which came to the Bumstead home in the funny papers about a year ago has just arrived in the movie family's.

Raye for Vaudeville!

When vaudeville, which used to be a mainstay of any self-respecting movie house, passed out of the picture back in the days of the depression, the second feature came into being. And that's how we were able to get to see such things as "Who Is Hope Schuyler?" and "Brooklyn Orchid." Aren't you glad? Anyway, vaudeville is officially back in Rochester. Chico Marx, Cab Calloway, Ina Ray Hutton—all have been popular draws for the Temple stage and Bill Robinson, who comes next, has always been a big drawing card.

So is Martha Raye, who turned them away at some performances last week with her own peculiar brand of singing and slapstick. Rochester's all for vaudeville if the right bills can be selected. And the bill last week was right in every detail—well balanced, genuinely entertaining and with the piece de resistance of a popular personality doing the things that made her popular. We met Miss Raye very briefly. We said, "How do you do," and she said, "How do you do." Upon which her mother—who is also her manager, maid, secretary and spokesman—proceeded to discuss how busy her "little star" had

(Continued on Page 16)

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