They say Danny Kaye is a changed man since he fell in love.

His new romance is with his audiences, and there has never been a love affair like it in all the history of grand passion. The way Danny and his audiences coo at each other can be positively embarrassing at times.

Danny discovered it was true love when he played the Palladium in London. He was nervous about pleasing the Britishers with his frenetic style of comedy. But they lapped it up, and the ordinarily cold performer melted visibly. They kept him on so long he ran out of routines, filled in with impromptu remarks and bits of business, relaxed and friendly.

You might say he switched from "wowing" the customers to wooing them. They responded with rapture. Everything he did pleased them. He sat on the apron of the stage and borrowed a cigarette from the front row. The audience swooned. He smoked the cigarette. The audience went into ecstasies. The climax was reached when he asked for a cup of tea. Now the audience was beside itself.

Two hours later, Danny and his audience were still there, protesting their mutual affection. In vain Danny pointed out that the witching hour was nigh when the buses would stop running.

"We'll walk," the audience shouted back.

Again Rapture

Back in America, Danny was encouraged, on the strength of his British reception, to repeat his Palladium performance first in San Francisco and later at the Palace Theater in New York. Again rapture. Curiously, this adulation had a humbling effect on him. The brash metallic young man softened into something more humble — and more human.

He had always been a popular comedian. Now he has become a beloved one. Where he always provoked laughter he now generates also warmth and sympathy.

Something has happened to him and to his style. The borsch circuit "boomer" (noise-maker) who raised parlor entertainment, "life-of-the-party" stuff, to a high art has become something more. The gifted mimic has become the gentle comedian.

Trying to pin down Danny Kaye is like pursuing the will-o'-the-wisp. He is easily diverted, small things distract him or stray thoughts; and even when he stays put in the physical sense, his mind will wander off some place where it is impossible to follow. "Elusive," say his wife and friends who love him.

Worse Than Lewis

You never know when he will turn serious on you, or when he will upset a sober situation with clowning.

Danny Kaye, for example, seems to lack seriousness when he works — he wastes more expensive time clowning on the movie set than any comedian short of Jerry Lewis. Miss Fine, who is married to him, and who also writes some of his best material, says his "scat" songs — the stuff that made him fa-