

have liked to see tackle *Dorian Gray* was Val Lewton, who makes those fascinating little so-called "horror films" for RKO and who has shown himself such a genius at giving a genuinely literary quality to supernatural themes. He would, I think, have handled this subject more simply and with fewer compromises. After all, when you embark on such a really tough enterprise as this you might as well recognise from the start the futility of trying to play to the gallery. Some of Lewin's concessions to Hollywood convention and allegedly "popular" taste I can sympathise with, and some of his amendments are actually an improvement on the original. For instance, Sybil Vane, Dorian's first victim, becomes a genuine little period piece when played by Angela Lansbury (old George's grand-daughter). Not only the character of the girl herself but the whole situation surrounding her carries more conviction in the film than in the book, especially the scene where Dorian puts her virtue to the test and then destroys it.

But why drag in the statuette of the cat, "one of the 73 great gods of Egypt," as the malevolent agent in the story: can't a movie audience stomach the idea of a young man selling his soul to the devil without some such direct symbolism? This is to reduce an ingenious fantasy to the level of hocus-pocus. And again, it is unadulterated Hollywood, and the worst thing in the whole picture, to introduce a pseudo-heroine in the form of the little niece of Basil Hallward and

have her grow up to fall in love with the unaging Dorian, and he with her, with the result that this miserable, utterly damned sinner comes dangerously near (dangerously near for the story's sake) to redeeming himself by his noble renunciation of her fresh young beauty. The real Dorian had no such scruples; when he did spare one girl—a village maiden, incidentally, not a high-born lady—he did it simply to feed his vanity and to give himself a new sensation; his renunciation was pure hypocrisy and the portrait in the attic showed no change for the better. And when he stabbed the knife into the portrait and so killed himself, he did so not because he wanted to lead a better life but because he hoped to destroy his own conscience. You can't give a story like *The Picture of Dorian Gray* a happy ending; and it was absurd, and might have been fatal, to make even a slight move in that direction.

Still, it is something that the film was made at all. Whatever its defects, *Dorian Gray* is an attempt, and a not wholly unsuccessful one, to produce a film which will appeal at least as much to the intellect as to the emotions.

#### NATIONAL FILM UNIT

WEEKLY Review No. 220 from the National Film Unit, released on November 16, contains the following items: "Trout Hatchery at Rotorua," "Building a Co-op. Shop at Hutt Valley," "Hospital Entertainment in a Children's Ward," and "Navy Arrivals at Auckland and Wellington."

#### Advice on Health (No. 247)

### POPEYE'S DELIGHT

(Written for  
"The Listener" by DR.  
MURIEL BELL, Nutri-  
tionist to the Department  
of Health)



IF spinach is to Popeye-the-Sailorman what the unshaven head was to Samson, we owe it to this vegetable to examine its properties. In the table below it is compared with cabbage—enough of each to make about half-a-cupful when cooked.

According to that table spinach seems to be in the lead. Common to both is the valuable regulatory function due to the presence of insoluble vegetable material, sometimes called "roughage," but containing what they are pleased in U.S.A. to call "smoothage," or soft residue like pectin.

As to its mineral contributions, cabbage wins as far as calcium is concerned, 46 mg. vs. O. The 0.5 mg. of iron in cabbage is 80 per cent. available; the 3 to 4 milligrams of iron in spinach is stated to be available only to a limited extent, because it is in a form that is not attacked by digestive juices and therefore not absorbed.

The figures for calcium need some further explanation. There is an appreciable amount of calcium in spinach, but again it is not absorbed. The reason lies in the presence in spinach of oxalic acid which combines with the calcium to form insoluble calcium oxalate. There has even been a contention that some of the calcium from other foods, such as milk, is precipitated by the oxalic acid in spinach, and therefore, in some countries, advice has been given not to use it in infant feeding. That attitude may be justified in a country where milk is in short supply, but I cannot see that a vegetable that has so many positive virtues should be condemned because of this one disadvantage. If we do decide to condemn it, we must remain logical and condemn wholemeal bread or oatmeal because they contain phytic acid which similarly causes precipitation of calcium. If there is plenty of milk in the diet, there is no need to worry about the oxalic acid in spinach. Some methods of serving it actually combine milk with it. I often wonder why we do not take a leaf out of Continental cookery books, and for example, dredge spinach with flour which thickens the liquor in which it has been cooked, adding milk and garnishing with chopped hard-boiled egg; or making it into a spinach custard. These methods serve to take the edge off its rather peculiar flavour. If anyone is still worried about the oxalic acid, the whole of it can be precipitated by using at most half-a-teaspoon of precipitated calcium carbonate for half-a-cupful of the cooked vegetable; this has been found not to diminish the vitamin C or to alter the taste to any marked extent.

	Calories	Protein gms.	Vitamin A I.U.	Vit. C mg.	Vit. B1 micrograms	Riboflavin mg.	Niacin mg.
CABBAGE	29	1.4	50	50	80	50	0.22
SPINACH	24	2.3	9000	62	100	240	0.68

The Most  
**MODERN  
TOOTH PASTE**

**LISTERINE**

Cleans without harming tooth enamel. Contains "Luster-Foam" which foams and washes away surface deposits from the teeth. Another sensible step is to use Listerine Antiseptic as a mouth wash . . . also see your Dentist twice a year.

The Lambert Pharmacal Co. (N.Z.) Ltd., 64 Ghuznee Street, Wellington.

**LISTERINE  
TOOTH PASTE**

### AND LISTERINE Antiseptic

**MEDICATED  
CIGARETTES**

**SURAMA**

WILL BE FOUND OF GREAT BENEFIT FOR THE RELIEF OF ASTHMA, BRONCHITIS, COLDS, COUGHS, CATARRHS. Obtainable all tobacco outlets & chemists or from JONATHAN & WILKINSON LTD., P.O. Box 188 Auct. Pockets, 10/- 1/1 Tins, 50/- 5/4

### DON'T BE SKINNY!

If you are thin and anaemic you should try a course of "YIM," the Yeast, Iron Malt, Tablets. This amazingly triple Tonic puts on firm, healthy flesh quickly. "YIM" Tablets give clear, radiant skin, freedom from indigestion nervousness and constipation. "YIM" helps build new strength, power and pep. 4/6 (double size 7/6)

POST FREE from  
**CHEMISTS' SUPPLIES CO. LTD.,**  
139a Worcester Street, Christchurch.

My Friends Remark:  
"What is it that  
smells so fragrant in  
your Kitchenette and  
Bathroom?"

writes Mrs U. Mathesons  
Road, Christchurch.  
The answer is



# CHEMICO

## BATH & HOUSEHOLD CLEANSER

Fragrant and Antiseptic. Chemico gives a spotless cleanliness to baths, cookers, wash-bowls, enamelware, paintwork—in fact, everything in the home. Tested and approved by Good Housekeeping Institute.