

# LETTERS FROM LISTENERS

(continued from page 5)

## FILM RATINGS

Sir,—To dispute the decisions of a good film critic can never really be more than a declaration of disagreement. The critic has made his decision honestly and with one thought and comparison, and, this being so, there is really no criterion by which his conclusions can be judged; those who differ from him can never really establish that he is wrong or they right. Nevertheless, perhaps you will allow me to express my mild horror that G.M., according to his index of gradings for 1945, awarded the sit-down clap to *Colonel Blimp* (which is probably the most technically accomplished and faultless film yet seen by New Zealand audiences and, on the positive or creative side, possessed a maturity and beauty entirely its own), to *Double Indemnity* (the best American crime film in years and rated by one critic—"Time and Tide's" Helen Fletcher—as on a level with *Henry V.*), and to *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (which, in spite of the unanimous disapproval of the critics of Britain, America, Australia and New Zealand, was an exactly faithful transcription of Hemingway's extremely good novel); this while awarding the stand-up clap to the charming but totally unreal *Madame Curie*.

ZOILUS (Christchurch).

Sir,—I am more than a little disappointed in your cinema reviewer, G.M. Prior to reading his recent grouping of films I had no argument with him at all. The "anti-American" cry of a few critics was treated by me (as no doubt it was likewise treated by most fair-minded people) as poor tactics. However, I find him absolutely extravagant in placing *Christmas Holiday* in anything above the walk-out. It was natural for the flop handicap and stinker stakes. The point that really rocks me is why such a picture should be classed with *Gentleman Jim*, the latter being an enjoyable film in every detail. Maybe G.M. is kidding when he rates *King's Row* ahead of *Gaslight*, and, finally, no asterisk in the world could save *Meet Me in St. Louis*.

"JOE" (Invercargill).

## RUSSELL CLARK

Sir,—I have a very high opinion of Russell Clark as a painter. He is a figure of quite exceptional stature in New Zealand art. As one who has a fervid admiration for those artists who capture the real New Zealand in their work I raise my hat to him. However, if an artist is to enhance the art of his country, it is incumbent on him to strive for and retain a large degree of that individuality of technique which, together with individuality of subject, will make his work stand out. On this score I feel I have cause for argument with Mr. Clark the cartoonist and illustrator.

We in New Zealand suffer, among other shortages, a severe shortage of good cartoonists. Minninnick slavishly imitates David Low in both style and technique, and A. S. Paterson seems to prefer making a doodle to attempting a cartoon. Mr. Clark should have been

able to outstrip the field by several lengths, but no, he chose to model his style on that of Emmett. There may be room for two Emmetts in the world, but couldn't Mr. Clark have been master rather than pupil? If a cartoon is worth doing even as a pot-boiler, surely it is worth making an original style in which to do it.

I do not suppose Mr. Clark will desert the style of his choice on account of this letter, so I must resign myself to a continuation of my search for that rara avis the New Zealand cartoonist.

M.B. (Wellington).

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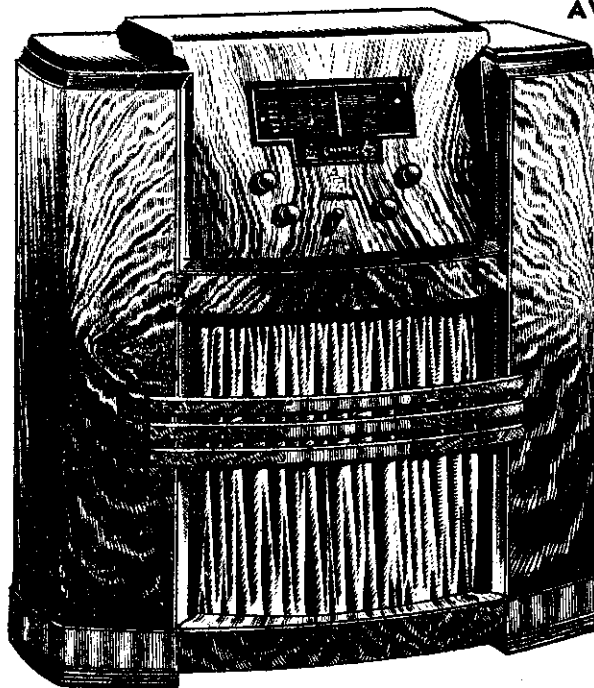
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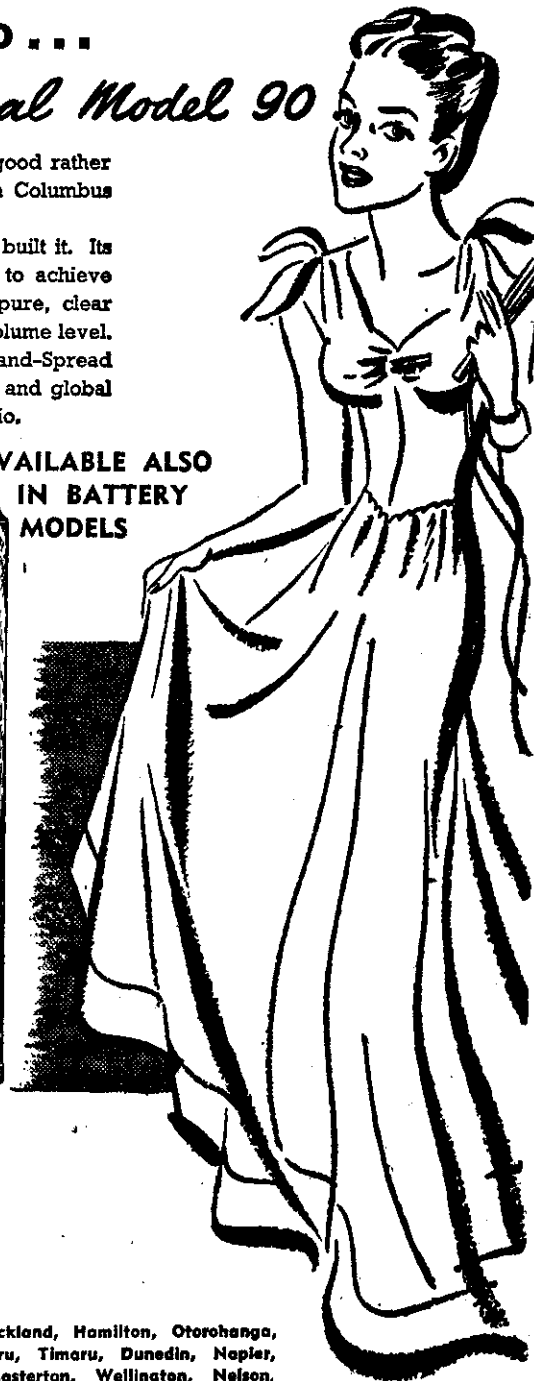
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