

# RADIO VIEWSREEL

## What Our Commentators Say

### Insecticide

THERE is a curious propriety in the fact that the Capek brothers took the title of their play *Ad Infinitum* from Jonathan Swift, for now the Insect Play seems to be following *Gulliver's Travels* down the primrose path to Story-Book Land. But in the Capek's case the sojourn is probably not permanent — I merely happened to hear Aunt Molly presenting an abbreviated and bowdlerised version in a 2YA Children's Session. And where children's digestions are concerned half a loaf is often better than the whole, and even in précis form the main theme of "fleas and smaller fleas" emerges comparatively undamaged. In this respect the Capeks are more fortunate than Swift, unnecessarily fortunate

as we feel sure they are less likely to take offence at mutilation than the irascible Dean. But it's early days yet, and once Disney gets round to making a film out of it we'll have story-book versions of the original play *ad infinitum*.

### The Great Gildersleeve

THE only Gildersleeve mentioned in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* is he whose textbook on Latin Grammar is familiar to many students. But it is to another Gildersleeve, that raconteur par excellence, that the title of "Great" is given, and justifiably, we consider, after hearing his version of Rumpelstiltskin from 2YA last Wednesday. The recipe for success in this particular genre appears simple—Wish Wynne knew the secret of retelling the traditional version in the local idiom and aiming it at an adult audience. But it is perhaps the Great Gildersleeve's laugh that is his chief asset. It's spine-chillingly funny, and if we accept Peter Pan's pronouncement on the origin of fairies it seems likely that the Great Gildersleeve's first laugh splintered itself into zombies. Both

the laugh and its possessor seem completely at home in the gargoyle edifices of the Brothers Grimm.

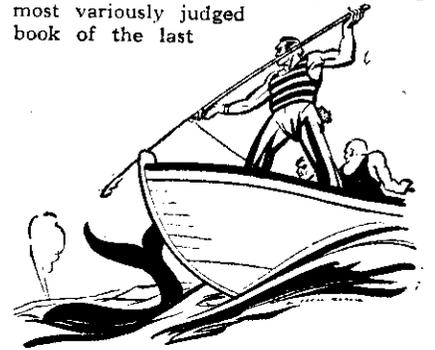
### Rebecca

ONE comforting fact about human nature is that we learn to like what we get used to, or (to plagiarise) familiarity breeds content. We have only to consider compositions such as the "Warsaw Concerto," which appealed to us on its first hearing because it reminded us vaguely of other more established musical offerings, and has now reached almost tear-jerker status because we have heard it so often. So in the literary sphere there is a certain advantage to be gained from presenting familiar material, even in a slightly different medium. Therefore 2YA's new serial *Rebecca* should be popular, since there must be few people who have not either read the book or seen the film twice. The drawback to the use of familiar material is, of course, that listeners will be free to pay more attention to manner than to matter, and will insist on everything being according to Hitchcock. So far, I am relieved to note,

everything has been. The heroine has imbibed her art straight from the Fontainehead, and Mrs. Van Hopper, like her film equivalent, is cramming as much of her undesirable self as possible into the few episodes allotted her.

### White Whale

MR. SIMMANCE chose the other evening to read from Herman Melville's *Moby Dick*. This must be the most variously judged book of the last



century. There on the one hand are those who hold it to be the greatest of romantic epics and on a par with *Faust* and the *Aeneid*; there on the other are massed those who present it to their offspring of school age as a thrilling adventure story. It is not impossible that the work will end as *Gulliver* did,

## My neighbour said the nicest things!

I've never had so many bouquets handed me in five minutes. The man next door caught me doing the usual weekly sweetening of drains and rubbish bin with hot water and Safonia. "If more people would do that there'd be less trouble", he said, and he added "you're using the right stuff, too". Did I beam?



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