

apparently commits suicide, he even goes so far as to marry Gilda himself, purely for the satisfaction of making her suffer. However, the boss isn't really dead and misconstrues his assistant's motives: and so there's a good deal more violence (various sinister figures with international accents have already been bumped off on the way) before the plot drags to its weary close.

All through the film there has been a lot of philosophical balderdash talked about love being akin to hate and great antipathy being transformed into great affection or vice versa; and at the end we are told, and expected to believe, that although Gilda has been twice married and has played around with half the men in South America, not one man (this includes her husbands) has yet laid a finger on her except in anger. However, in spite of this attempt to white-wash hero and heroine, the ethical content of *Gilda* is strictly minus. There is no moral condemnation—implied or explicit—of the characters and their unsavoury behaviour. The hero, for instance, worships his Fascist boss and seeks to emulate him, taking control of the tungsten empire when the boss's death is reported, and setting out to enlarge it, a course of action of which we are, for all the evidence to the contrary, expected fully to approve. I suppose this film could have been worse—but it would have found it difficult.

### THE MAGNIFICENT LADY

(Universal)

IN the U.S.A., where it was made, this film carries the title of *Magnificent Doll*, and like the picture reviewed above, it deals with a lady possessed of considerable personal magnetism. In this case, however, it would be incorrect to say that "there never was

a woman like Dolly," because there was—one Dolly Madison, wife of the fourth president of the United States and one of the most famous hostesses who ever occupied the White House (1809-1817). Whether she bore much resemblance to the portrait here presented by Ginger Rogers, is, however, quite another matter. According to a contemporary writer, Dolly Madison was a "fine, portly, buxom dame," and although Miss Rogers carries rather more avoirdupois than usual she doesn't exactly tally with that description. According to the film, she was forced by her Quaker father into marrying a man she didn't love, lost him in a Philadelphia plague, turned boardinghouse-keeper, and numbered among her lodgers two such eminent figures of the day as Senator Aaron Burr (David Niven) and Congressman James Madison (Burgess Meredith). Submitting to his passionate advances but nevertheless retaining her political acumen, Dolly recognised in Burr a would-be dictator and enemy of democracy, and turned him down in favour of marrying Madison, who personified the Spirit of Freedom and What America Will Always Fight For. Still according to the film, Burr then plotted the overthrow of the Republic, but Dolly Madison saved the day for democracy by making an "Oh, My Countrymen" speech outside the courthouse where Burr had just been acquitted of high treason. According to history, it didn't happen quite like that. Impressed, however, by Dolly's impassioned harangue, the populace turns its back on Aaron Burr (who was, in fact, a Bad Thing) instead of lynching him; he moves off dejectedly into oblivion; Dolly prepares to move into the White House; and the audience moves off home a trifle bewildered but with the comfortable feeling of having been Elevated and Educated as well as Entertained.

## MORE LETTERS FROM LISTENERS

(continued from page 5)

### EARLY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Sir,—Allow me to state that New Zealand had a first-class symphony orchestra over 40 years ago. At the time of the International Exhibition held in Christchurch in 1906-07, Alfred Hill, the eminent New Zealand musician, composer, and viola player, was given the commission to organise, manage and conduct a symphony orchestra in the specially built hall at the Exhibition. The first few concerts were very poorly attended, but Mr. Hill was not dismayed and though somewhat disappointed, he continued. Within a week the hall was too small to hold the large and enthusiastic audiences, so the management decided to give two performances daily, the most popular of the request items being Liszt's Rhapsody No. 2, Mendelssohn's Concerto in E Minor, "Midsummer Night's Dream" Overture, Wagner's Tannhauser, Lohengrin and Flying Dutchman Overtures, to mention only a few. This experience suggests that if the selection of performers in the National Symphony Orchestra has been strict and the conductor well-chosen, then the future of the Orchestra is assured.

E. D. BERNSTEIN (New Brighton).

### WANG-AREE

Sir,—About the pronunciation of Whangarei: I agree with Mr. Fairburn that the *ei* at the end is not one sound, neither *ree* nor *ray* and yet it was neither two vowels nor yet a diphthong.

Rayee is not exactly correct. The old Maoris shortened the two vowel sounds and tied them together so closely that they were neither two nor one. The Maoris to-day slur them into a diphthong that has exactly the sound that knife has in Glasgow.

Mr. Fairburn says that his father's pronunciation was Whanga-r-e-i. It's very likely it was Wha-nga-r-e-i. The Maoris put the *ng* at the beginning of the syllable, not at the end as we do. Very few pakehas can do it, but it's perfectly easy if you have a good teacher.

The *wh* is a great stumbling-block to all English people who know only their own language. It is a sound quite unknown in ordinary good English, though known and used by Scots, Irishmen, and Maoris and I have no doubt many others. The Scot says what and when. The Englishman drops the aspirate completely and says *wat* and *wen* and doesn't know that he has done so. There is no combination of letters that will show an Englishman how to say what. He simply can't make the sound. Thackeray tried to express it by spelling it *phwat*. The Anglo-Saxon spelling was *hwæt*. That was exactly correct, but we have forgotten it. The true sound of *hw* is familiar to all Scots and Irish, but to the English it is unknown and unpronounceable. The pity is that many of the Maoris now say *Fangara* when they mean *Whangara*. It was bound to come; the correct pronunciation of the Scottish tongue is fading away, even in Scotland.

THOS. TODD (Gisborne).

WEEKLY REVIEW No. 290 from the N.Z. National Film Unit, released on March 21, contains the following items: "Byrd Expedition," with a special interview with Admiral Byrd and showing some unusual glimpses of helicopters, dogs, and penguins on board Admiral Byrd's Polar expedition ship; "Learning to Swim," an interesting film of the Education Department's method of teaching school children from the ages of seven to 13 years to swim; "Samoans Welcomed," in which visiting Samoans from the Legislative Council in Samoa are entertained to tea at Parliament House by the Prime Minister; and an item in which Lord Bledisloe is met at the ship by the Rt. Hon. Peter Fraser and Mr. Holland.

## PHOTOGRAPHY

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## ARE YOUR GUMS RED OR PINK?

The normal healthy gum is firm and pink. Unhealthy inflamed gums (gingivitis) are reddened, tender and swollen. They may bleed, there may be bad breath, dirty tongue and constipation. Take no chances with unhealthy gums. Consult your Dentist for treatment without delay. Practise these rules and keep your gums healthy.

- Brush your teeth and gums regularly after meals and especially before bed.
- Eat plenty of fibrous foods which require chewing, such as vegetables (raw if possible), meat, raw fruit. Bread crusts are good. These foods massage the gums and keep them healthy.
- Eat a balanced diet which includes fresh vegetables and fruit.
- Take plenty of fresh air and exercise.
- Visit your dentist regularly for a check up.

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