

## THE MAGIC BOW

(Rank-Gainsborough)



ANOTHER famous musician-composer takes a beating from the film industry. This time it is Paganini (Stewart Granger); and this time it is a British studio which is responsible for the third-rate romancing that gets in the way of the music. Since the music is provided (off-screen) by Yehudi Menuhin we should perhaps be grateful for small mercies; but it seems a waste of a fine artist to treat him in this uninspired and discourteous way. I say discourteous because nearly every time Mr. Granger-Paganini seizes his violin and Mr. Menuhin begins to play it, somebody slams a door or files through an iron bar or laughs or sneezes or scratches up an aisle and interrupts the performance.

The film certainly redeemed itself a little in my ears in the final sequence when the Granger-Menuhin-Paganini combination chose what happens to be my favourite piece of music to play at a command performance at the Vatican—the last movement of Beethoven's violin concerto. But even so, one is probably better advised to take this sort of music straight from the radio or the gramophone, without the distractions of fancy-dresses, lavish settings, insipid melodrama masquerading as history, and all those extraneous noises I have mentioned.

However, *The Magic Bow* is the kind of bad British film, ostentatious and wastefully expensive, which (as I was saying last week) one has every reason to hope Mr. Rank will now have to give up making, in view of Britain's economic difficulties.

To the Editor—

### "THE OUTLAW"

Sir,—Many of us, it is said, have sore points which, if touched, make us less balanced and less rational in our judgments and statements than we usually are. I am wondering if that is the explanation of your criticism of *The Outlaw*. When the film first arrived in Wellington I did not give it much more than a passing thought. Then came G.M.'s review in your issue of August 8. After reading that review and noting the very wide divergence of opinion between G.M. on the one hand and the Hay's Office, and British and New Zealand censors on the other, I decided the film was something I must see. I was curious to form my own opinion as to who was right. Now having seen the film, I must confess I side with the censors and wonder what all the fuss and bother was about. The film was no worse than many I have seen and better than some. The story was fair enough as film plots go and it was not without several spots of humour. Certainly what G.M. refers to as the heroine's only two points of interest were more prominently displayed than is usually the case, but if that is the focal cause of the trouble and I cannot help suspecting it is, surely it is not enough to damn the film with such a slaughtering review and at such length unless my first sentence is the explanation. As the local censor said in reply to a complaint about the posters of the film, they are no worse than much of what we see in women's apparel advertisements. Do not the newspapers, magazines, radio, shop windows, etc., tell us ad nauseam that the emphasis is on curves.

C. THOMPSON (Wellington).

### NATIONAL FILM UNIT

NATIONAL Film Unit's Weekly Review No. 313, released on August 29, gives a good coverage of some of the duties of our occupation force in Japan. "Our Part in the Occupation" shows the J Force on the alert when there is a whisper of contraband or black market, their inspection of factories where the Japanese are now turning out civilian goods instead of war products, and the task of the air force. "Forest Nursery," an item from Hanmer, deals with the State Forest maintenance work. The 8,000 acres, with their valuable timber and saplings, require constant supervision.

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