

frank and open looks, for Miss B. is a comradely type, and an artist. She is also rich (through inheritance, not art) and commendably open-handed. "When I get excited about anything," she says, "I give it everything I have. I'm funny that way."

Well, nearly everything. She gives Mr. Bogart shelter, and a new suit to take the place of his prison greys, and a smart line in shirts, and a wristlet watch and a cigarette lighter. Then while he is recovering from the attentions of a plastic surgeon who has remodelled his face, she nurses him like—well, like a nurse.

It was this convalescent sequence which gave me the best laugh of the week. For half the film you don't see more than the back of Mr. Bogart's head, then for another thousand feet or two he is wandering round with his head wrapped tightly in surgical gauze and sticking plaster—looking rather like a cross between Boris Karloff's Mummy and the Invisible Man. And then comes the unveiling, the Big Moment. Miss B. snips slowly and deliberately, and the cerements fall away and there—whaddya know?—there is Mr. Bogart, just as he always was. "It's unbelievable," croaks Miss Bacall. Well, almost.

THE VOICE OF THE TURTLE

(Warner Bros.)

THAT it is an advantage in film criticism to be familiar with the source-material of a screen story is not universally conceded by the experts. Some, in fact, contend that it is wholly disadvantageous, that it inhibits consideration of a film on its own merits. Generally speaking, I feel happier if I have some prior knowledge of what a film is about, but it is quite possible that in the case of *The Voice of the Turtle* ignorance was bliss.

In this adaptation of John van Druten's stage-play (the adapting has been done by van Druten himself) there is enough wise-cracking, enough farce, and enough tendency-wit to satisfy most filmgoers who are in search of nothing more than an evening's entertainment. So far as one can gather from the sets it is simply a film representation of the play, but I'm told that the original story has been bowdlerized almost out of recognition. Filmgoers who don't mind a soupçon of mock-turtle, however, could fare worse.

A GREAT DAY

(Wellington Film Unit)

THE Wellington Film Unit (a recently-formed group of enthusiasts) did, I think, allow their enthusiasm to outrun their discretion when they selected Frank Sargeson's brief and bitter story as the subject of their first picture. I doubt if anyone could do full justice in a silent film to an author so pre-occupied with mental states and the exact words needed to communicate them. I doubt, too, if any member of the unit knew what "sustenance" meant, either as a condition of existence or as an essential element in the story. But if *A Great Day* is not a good film, it is at least a beginning. The Unit should now know what they can't do, and that is one step nearer knowing what they can.

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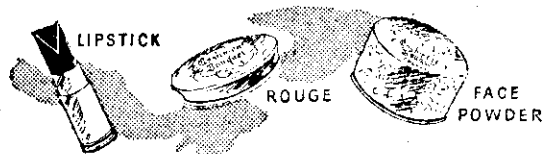
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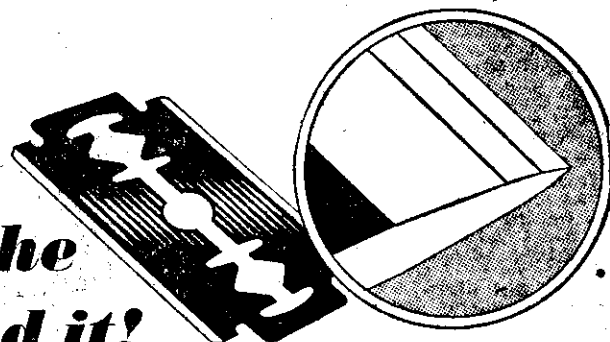


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