

*Hosiery News*

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## The Films

# POP-EYED GHOST

## IF YOU KNEW SUSIE

**E**DDIE CANTOR, the almost forgotten star of such films of the early 'thirties as *Roman Scandals* and *Whoopie*, makes a brief return to the screen in *If You Knew Susie*. It is always interesting to see a screen comedian of past years attempt a come-back (if the word may be permitted here), and in this instance one main conclusion can be drawn. This is that although Cantor—the pop-eyed, bird-like little man, whose sweet sentimental songs and ineffectual attempts to make a go of things, win the sympathy as well as the laughter of the audience—has remained basically the same, he has also suffered with the times. In other words, his particular brand of humour has become a little dated, and the very fact that he hasn't changed prevents him from being the draw card now that he once was.

But that doesn't mean *If You Knew Susie* isn't good entertainment. It is. The laughs are plentiful enough, and there are many good lines, puns, and a general emphasis on verbal tricks which proves that Cantor has learnt a thing or two from radio. The songs and dances are in good vaudeville style, and not too frequent, while the plot is just about what one would expect—little Sam Parker comes into a fortune and then loses it again but proves he's as good as the rest of us in doing so. Joan Davis (Sam's wife Susie) gets her quota of laughs too, and the amount of comedy which she can make out of such an everyday operation as threading a needle is well worth watching.

The film is like that—rather homespun, getting most of its effects without undue striving, and produced (by Cantor himself) with skilful showmanship on apparently a small budget. If it does not aim very high, it does achieve what it sets out to do and that is to give everyone a laugh.

## A DATE WITH JUDY

(M.G.M.)

**JANE POWELL** (as 16-year-old Judy), **Elizabeth Taylor** (her girlfriend), and **Scotty Beckett** (her boyfriend), enjoy themselves over a high-school dance and its consequences at sunny Santa Barbara, California. They are assisted by **Wallace Beery** (Judy's rough-diamond father), **Robert Stack** (the handsome, rather bored soda-jerk whom all the high-school girls fall for), **Carmen Miranda** (who teaches father Beery to rumba and wear loud ties), and **Xavier Cugat**. Everybody and everything is very "nice," including Carmen, and the whole show runs rather like one of the *Andy Hardy* series done over backwards, with Judy (who sings rather well) replacing Andy. Most of the juveniles in the audience (apparently about 90 per cent. of those present between the ages of six and 60) enjoyed themselves thoroughly, and didn't seem to mind the somewhat inferior grade of technicolour in which the film is photographed.

—P.J.W.

## BAROMETER

FAIR: "If You Knew Susie."  
MAINLY FAIR: "A Date With Judy."

## NATIONAL FILM UNIT

**T**RAINING young New Zealanders for the Royal New Zealand Navy is a full-time job at Motu Island, Auckland, where H.M.N.Z.S. Tamaki, the shore training establishment, is situated. In "Young Sailors," the National Film Unit's Weekly Review for the week beginning January 14, the training activities at Motu are well covered. Also included in the reel is a house-building item, "A New Way With Concrete," and "Agricultural Cavalcade," a newsclip from Otago.

## CRUMBED CLASSICS

### To the Editor—

Sir,—I am sure that many lovers of good music must have been disappointed, as I was, to find on seeing *I've Always Loved You* that the piano works named with such particularity in an advertisement in a Wellington paper proved, in the majority of cases, to be included in the film only in the barest fragment. The audience was first presented with the unedifying experience of hearing three young contenders for a scholarship play respectively the first eight bars of Bach's D Minor Organ Toccata and Fugue, Rachmaninoff's C Sharp Minor Prelude, and Mendelssohn's Rondo Capriccioso; and later one had to endure titbits of similar duration from Mozart's C Major Sonata, Schubert's F Minor Moment Musical, and Brahms's Lullaby. And almost without exception the other works named were also presented only in part. The advertisement conveyed a clear impression that these "immortal masterpieces" would in fact be played, and not subjected to rude and tasteless emasculation. If Arthur Rubinstein chooses to lend himself to this sort of thing that is his affair, but at least the public are entitled not to be misled by vague and careless advertising.

APPASSIONATA (Wellington).

## British Cartoon Films

**R**EGULAR readers of *The Listener* will already know something about the British cartoon film industry from the interview with Robert Morrow which appeared in these pages last October. Morrow, who is now living in Wellington and intends to start a series of educational cartoons for the National Film Unit, was one of the original team of British animators which the Rank Organisation assembled in England under David Hand (a top man from the Disney studios), and it should be of interest to hear that some of the first cartoons made by this group will shortly be released in local theatres.

Two of the four films completed, *The Lion* and *The Housecat*, are part of a projected *Animaland* series that aims at bringing to the screen various amusing animal characters, including the cuckoo, the platypus, and the ostrich—none of them, presumably, a great deal different in conception from the familiar Disney creations, as the accompanying illustration indicates.

The other two completed films, *The Thames* and *Wales*, are the first of a

(continued on next page)

