

VIRTUE AND VICE

MY BROTHER JONATHAN

(BEF—Associated British)

TWO British films this week—neither of them out of the top drawer, but both competent pieces of picture-making that offer a lively contrast in method and subject matter. *My Brother Jonathan*, after the novel by Francis Brett Young, is the virtuous tale of a doctor who gives up a brilliant career in order to put his sporting brother through Cambridge. From reel one to reel ten he plods his noble, self-sacrificing way through the usual quota of births, deaths, and other domestic crises, a walking model of rectitude and a credit to the B.M.A. On the other hand, *Good Time Girl* makes capital out of vice by depicting the degradation of a young sybarite who gets involved in a lot of back-alley skulduggery in Soho—a vicious piece of narrative told as a cautionary moral tale by a city magistrate to a would-be offender.

The stuff of *My Brother Jonathan* is familiar enough. Michael Denison as Jonathan is the clever elder son of one of those eccentric English families. His father is a big bearded Robert Browning of a man, a poet *manque* forced to become a corset salesman to keep house and home together, who wastes all his savings in a worthless mine and then gets himself run over, leaving Jonathan half-way to becoming a surgeon but without the cash to complete. Of course he does the decent thing and reluctantly stows away his surgeon's knife to help young Hal (Ronald Howard, recognisable by his face, if not his acting, as his father's son) by immuring himself in a small industrial town in the Midlands. Here he becomes the partner of an old doctor, rather run to seed, who is played with a fine flourish by Finlay Currie, the convict of *Great Expectations*. Not unexpectedly handsome Hal meanwhile wins the girl whom Jonathan has always been in love with, but then War (1914 style) comes, and one by one the various knots of the story disentangle themselves until virtue finally triumphs as it must.

After an uncertain start *My Brother Jonathan* produces some solid acting, by Denison in particular, yet there is little in it that hasn't been done better in

BAROMETER

FAIR: "My Brother Jonathan."
FAIR: "Good Time Girl."

pictures like *South Riding*, *Cavalcade* or *The Citadel*. The young doctor putting his duty to the poor before self and the fleshpots, saving lives nobly in working men's hovels while he fights the corrupt hospital committee and that villainous other doctor across the street; the thrill as he finally defeats them, and the drama of his love for the Other Girl; the cricket matches, Kitchener posters on the wall, and lavish balls in gay, pre-war London—it is all true to type, as nostalgic, patriotic, and sentimental to our eyes as a picture postcard of the Union Jack floating over Buckingham Palace. It is a workmanlike job that suffers most, like all pattern pieces, from not going deeply enough into its material.

GOOD TIME GIRL

(Rank-Eagle Lion)

ALTHOUGH it employs with some success techniques perfected by the Americans, this picture is also as British as a cup of afternoon tea (or should one say a bottle of gin). It is one of those sordid productions that wind in and out of murky police courts, night clubs, and rented rooms, taken over from Hollywood and given its own particular flavour by the British producers. Once again some solid acting is put in by the leading players—Jean Kent as the young delinquent, Flora Robson (very efficient) as the woman magistrate and narrator, Dennis Price as an elegant gent (slightly tarnished, but still solid brass underneath) and Herbert Lom as the compellingly sinister proprietor of a shady haunt in the East End.

Spivs, thieves, black marketeers, razor-slashing thugs, crooked pawnbrokers, and a cash value placed on sex—as a piece of social realism and a picture of the seamier side of life in London *Good Time Girl* contains the sort of thing that was presurably displayed to an intensified degree in *Brighton Rock*. It is not surprising that it was banned in Australia, although it has the advantage over *Brighton Rock* in that it presents its story as an example of what the authorities in Britain are faced with in their attempts "to salvage the wrecked lives of badly brought-up youngsters who drift into crime." The moral of the story is hammered home, although not without dramatic proportion.

The director, David Macdonald, is apparently an American on loan from the British studios of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, and he knows his business well, although he lacks originality. Jean Kent's portrayal of a young girl gradually sliding down the primrose path from irresponsible innocence to irresponsible viciousness is a minor work of art. She gets so much sympathy out of the role that one ends up by condemning the society that connived at her ruin (in the reform school episode for instance) rather than the girl herself, who has in fact anything but a good time.

Like *My Brother Jonathan*, *Good Time Girl* lacks the glossy finish that the Americans put on their best films, but both should have an appeal of their own to a British audience.



JEAN KENT

"Down the primrose path"

Keen on
Swimming?



Your hair gets hungry in this climate. Hungry for the natural oils which sun, salt water and wind draw from your scalp! If you don't replace these oils then you're in for DRY SCALP and "HUNGRY HAIR".

Just a few drops of "Vaseline" Hair Tonic every morning supplement the

natural scalp oils and guard against lifeless "HUNGRY HAIR".

"Vaseline" Hair Tonic helps clear away loose dandruff and leaves your hair well-groomed and protected. Give your hair this special care. Ask for "Vaseline" Hair Tonic. Your hair looks better, your scalp feels better,



Vaseline

TRADE MARK

HAIR TONIC

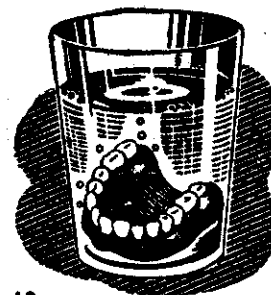
Double care—both Scalp and Hair



Industrial Chemicals (N.Z.) Ltd., Eden Crescent, Auckland, C.I.

C9-5

CLEANS FALSE TEETH



- Kemdex cleans scientifically by immersion. No brushing required.
- 10 minutes immersion and false teeth are cleansed of stains, film and stickiness, also deodorised.
- Kemdex is harmless to all denture material including Acrylic Resin.
- Kemdex cleans by one of the most powerful germicides known—Oxygen.

KEMDEX

Manufactured by reg. user, Salmond & Spraggon Ltd., a Customhouse Quay, Wellington.