

## FILM REVIEWS

(Continued from previous page)

as the battle in *Alexander Nevsky*. Personally I got a little tired of them after about half-way through, as the tide of war swayed back and forth across the Ukraine, with the Reds taking a city, losing it, taking it again, and moving on to the next. Yet even so, these Soviet sham fights have a quality of realism which Hollywood seldom achieves, even in its biggest moments.

More to my liking were the individual performances of Honoured Artist Y. Samilov as Shchors, and of People's Artist I. Skuratov as Bozhenko, his jolly and indomitable first-lieutenant. As with most Russian films I have seen—and most English and American ones too, for that matter—the picture adheres to the theory of the superman, creating a heroic character for the central figure and focusing the spotlight upon it; but in spite of this, the star and the chief supporting players manage to preserve a good deal of humanity in their performances. In one instance perhaps a little too much; when Bozhenko learns of the death of his wife, his protracted paroxysms of Slavic grief will, I suspect, move our more phlegmatic audiences to laughter rather than to tears. Before the picture is shown I hope somebody will get busy with the scissors on this scene, and while he is at it, he could with advantage prune a few redundant battles as well. But not, I trust, that sequence where Bozhenko, with superb irony, invites the frightened "capitalists" of Kiev, assembled in the theatre, to contribute something toward the cost of their "liberation." Dare I admit that I found this scene quite the most enjoyable thing in the picture?

Lastly, if I have at the moment any general complaint against foreign films it is that trying to read the English translations on the bottom of the screen gives one such a confounded crick in the neck!

### THESE ARE WORTH SEEING

**MARRIED BACHELOR** (Robert Young, Ruth Hussey). Lively little comedy about a "bachelor husband" with a wife who objects. "B" grade. *Listener*, March 27.

**NOTHING BUT THE TRUTH** (Bob Hope). Good, clean fun, capably acted and directed. "B" grade. *Listener*, March 27.

**TARGET FOR TO-NIGHT** (British documentary). A notable piece of war propaganda, showing what the Bomber Command crews are doing. "A" grade. *Listener*, March 20.

**SERGEANT YORK** (Gary Cooper, Walter Brennan, Joan Leslie). Cooper's Academy Award-winning picture. This factual story of the U.S.A.'s No. 1 hero of the First World War, who entered the army as a conscientious objector, is much less a war story than a memorable personal document of how one man reacted to war. "A" grade. *Listener*, March 13.

**THE LITTLE FOXES** (Bette Davis). Unpleasant but interesting drama of a money-mad family in an American town at the turn of the century. "B" grade. *Listener*, March 6.

**TOM, DICK, AND HARRY** (Ginger Rogers). A delicious trifle, compounded of fact and fantasy, with Ginger Rogers and the others of the cast perfectly suited to their roles. But the real star is the director, Garson Kanin. "A" grade. *Listener*, March 6.

**DR. JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE** (Spencer Tracy, Ingrid Bergman). Stevenson's classic tale of the unfortunate physician and his evil test-tube twin, with the accent this time on psychology rather than on physical horror. Pretentious and painstakingly Freudian, it is

interesting, but not engrossing. "B" grade. *Listener*, Feb. 27.

**SUSPICION** (Joan Fontaine, Cary Grant). Something happens in the last five minutes which throws an otherwise excellent Hitchcock melodrama out of plumb, but it is still well worth seeing—especially Joan Fontaine's Academy Award performance. "B" grade. *Listener*, Feb. 20.

**THE GREAT COMMANDMENT** (John Beal, Maurice Moscovitch). An interesting if rather untimely parable of applied Christianity, showing how the early Christians overcame

their Roman conquerors by peaceful means. Despite some faults it does not forget that the chief purpose of even a religious film should be entertainment. "B" grade. *Listener*, Feb. 6.

**DUMBO** (Disney's fifth full-length cartoon). In which Disney goes back to the animals. More simple than usual but no less effective. "A" grade. *Listener*, Jan. 30.

**HERE COMES MR. JORDAN** (Robert Montgomery, Claude Rains). Rich comedy of a prize-fighter's soul in search of a body. "A" grade. *Listener*, Jan. 9.

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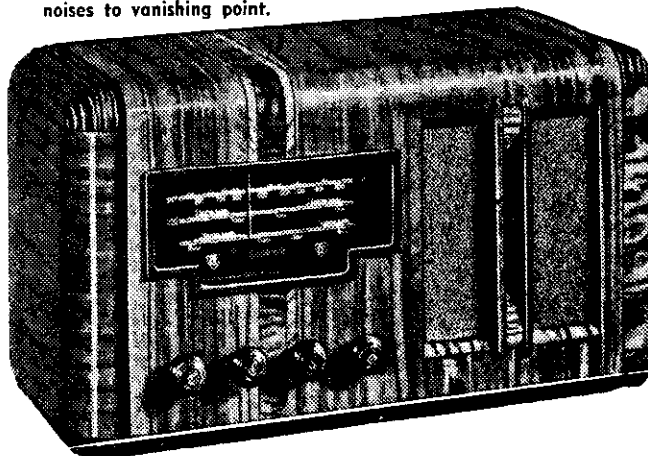
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