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No. 3: 1881-1890



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The Gilbert & Sullivan Operas

In the history of music and the stage there has been nothing to rival the series of operas produced between 1877 and 1889 by W. S. Gilbert and Sir Arthur Sullivan. The operas won immediate public favour, not only in England but in America and in the Colonies. New Zealand playgoers saw and heard "Gilbert and Sullivan" presented by first-class opera companies, while Begg's have supplied music lovers with sheet-music of the favourite songs and melodies.

Here is the order in which the Gilbert and Sullivan operas were produced: 1877, *The Sorcerer*; 1878, *H.M.S. Pinafore*; 1879, *The Pirates of Penzance*; 1881, *Patience*; 1882, *Iolanthe*; 1884, *Princess Ida*; 1885, *The Mikado*; 1887, *Ruddigore*; 1888, *The Yeoman of the Guard*; 1889, *The Gondoliers*. The favourite tunes and songs are among the music that will never die.

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May the day be not far distant when New Zealand will again be welcoming theatrical companies and when Begg's shelves will once more be fully stocked with the musical scores of comic operas new and old, and piled high with sheet music and recordings. Whilst envisioning the glad days ahead for music-lovers, when ships can again travel with safety to our shores, Begg's are carrying on their war-time service to the public with resource and energy. Stocks are limited, of course, but if enterprise can secure you the music you want, you'll be able to get it at Begg's.

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Film Reviews by G.M.

SPEAKING CANDIDLY

THE AFFAIRS OF MARTHA (M.G.M.)



[I]T may have been because the other new films of the week were so mediocre, but I found this a most enjoyable trifle, directed with a light touch and acted by a good cast that is in high spirits throughout. The piquant Marsha Hunt and the promising newcomer Richard Carlson, are the stars of *The Affairs of Martha*, which is not spelt the French way, you will notice, though it might well have been; there is so much climbing in and out of bedroom-windows. She is parlour-maid to a household in a gossip little village, and has written a book about her experiences, which is on the eve of publication. This news gets out, but not the identity of the author, so that every family in the village fears the worst from the impending disclosures (and with some reason). Thus the class-war flares up: employers band together against the threat from the servants' quarters; suspicion seeping down from above produces a United Front in the kitchen. In addition, Martha, who has obviously been behav-

ing Beyond Her Station, is secretly married to the son of the house, though he has got himself "engaged" to another girl.

That's the situation, and the director makes the most of it. Sometimes he makes too much of it, but in spite of this, and in spite also of the fact that any situation involving cooks, parlour-maids and other Domestic Helpers is these days so far removed from reality as to be almost within the realm of the fairytale, I can recommend *The Affairs of Martha* as a good way to take your mind off to-morrow's washing and cooking.

TARZAN'S NEW YORK ADVENTURE (M.G.M.)



[I]N which Tarzan Weismuller, accompanied by Mate Maureen and Cheeta the Almost-Human, climbs down from his African plateau, crams himself into a double-breasted suit, and descends into "the quicksands of civilisation, those places where man's ideas are more tangled than the worst undergrowth of the jungle." I am quoting Mate, whose vocabulary when addressing monosyllabic spouse tends, for some peculiar reason, to become flowery with metaphor. The reason for the descent of the Noble Savage is that bad men have invaded the Garden of Tarzan in an aeroplane looking for lions and have kidnapped Boy. (Mr. and Mrs. Tarzan have still only one child, you'll notice, and not their own either. I really think they should read some of the opinions on Pages 4 and 5). Assisted by a bagful of gold nuggets from them thar African hills and by the imperturbable English aplomb of a Resident Commissioner on the Coast, they arrive without undue mishap in the jungles of New York, where Boy is making a fortune for a wicked circus-proprietor by exhibiting his natural talent as an animal-trainer. Before the reunited happy family can escape from the perils of civilisation back to simple savagery, Tarzan is compelled to break a dozen or so laws (including that of gravity), and as a last resort, has to call on all the elephants in New York (I had no idea there were so many), to lend a trunk. Oh, well, if a film's going to be silly, it might as well make a job of it, and this isn't bad fun at that, if you still have a taste for the serial-story type of Hairbreadth Escape.

SONS OF THE SEA

(Warner Bros.-British)



[T]HIS gives me the impression of being a rather old film, and that not merely because it glorifies the launching of ships instead of the sinking of them. Anyway, if it isn't old, it's certainly old-fashioned in treatment, and a bit stilted and dull as well. It's all about the founding of the Cunard-White Star line last century, and the perils and disappointments that had to be faced before steam triumphed over sail on the Atlantic crossing (a theme which was much more effectively handled by Will Fyffe, Fairbanks junr., and Margaret Lockwood

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