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The Films, by G.M,

WHAT PICTURES WOULD YOU LIKE To SEE AGAIN?

ECENTLY Miss C. A. Lejeune, film critic of the London Observer, had the opportunity of inviting her readers to nominate the old films (talkies, not silents) that they would like to see revived. She issued this invitation at the request of an enterprising London theatre manager who, wishing to show a series of return screenings, very sensibly decided that picturegoers themselves were the best people to make the choice.

The response to this appeal was very encouraging and very interesting. If any general conclusion could be drawn from it, said Miss Lejeune, it was that "the best films remain the best films and the best people know them." There was no question at all about the most popular nevivals. Nearly one-third of the letters voted for Un Carnet de Bal. Only 26 votes behind came Citizen Kane (euphemistically described as "queer" by one voter). Another gap of 15 votes, and then close together came the following titles: Mr. Deeds, The Good Earth, Pygmalion, Kermesse Heroique, the Marx Brothers' films (except Room Service), the Astaire-Rogers films (particularly Top Hat and Roberta). Sous Les Toits de Paris, The Petrified Forest, The Lady Vanishes, Mayerling, and -a surprise winner-Winterset.

These, comments Miss Lejeune, were the recurrent favourites. Some way behind them, but still in high figures, were: Mutiny on the Bounty, Our Town, The Grapes of Wrath, Good-bye Mr. Chips, Stage Coach, Green Pastures, Le Million, Pride and Prejudice, Wuthering Heights, South Riding, Pepe Le Moko, Louis Pasteur, The Informer, The Little Foxes, The Ghost Goes West, Pimpernel Smith, One Night of Love, Captains Courageous, Ruggles of Red Gap, Fury, Rebecca and Rembrandt (described by one man as "the film in which beauty of words first came into

There was a small but gratifying steady demand for The River, the Lunt and Fontane film The Guardsman, Berkeley Square, Ah, Wilderness, They Won't Forget, All That Money Can Buy, Here Comes Mr. Jordan, Three-Cornered Moon and A Man to Remember. A number of people asked for "Disney weeks" - Fantasia, The Reluctant Dragon, and Three Little Pigs were the most popular titles. 17.

N reproducing that list, I realise, of course, that its interest is largely academic from a New Zealand point of view. For one thing, it contains the names of a good many films (French ones especially), that have never been generally released in this country; for another, London has a large enough population to make possible the successful operation of the "repertory" type of picture-theatre, catering for the rather specialised demand of people who like the more unusual sort of film. Even in cities like Auckland and Wellington, there is no real proof that there would be big enough audiences to support such theatres for such films. Indeed, the available evidence rather suggests the contrary.

At the same time, readers of this column might be interested to send in their suggestions for revivals. There is absolutely no guarantee, you understand, that anybody will take any practical notice of them, even provided the films mentioned are available for rescreening. But such a list, compiled from a New Zealand standpoint, might put an idea or two into the head of some alert New Zealand exhibitor, especially if he happened to be a bit short of new pictures at the moment, and was looking around for a few return bookings.

MISS LEJEUNE'S list quoted above reminds me of another which she compiled about two years ago when she invented what she described as "the horror parlour game" of selecting the seven films with which you could bear to be snowbound for the winter. Her own list, concocted after much travail and heart-searching, comprised: Snow White, Un Carnet de Bal, Our Town, Stage Coach, The Long Voyage Home, Destry Rides Again, and The Cheat.

It is the same kind of pastime as that once popular among American college students of voting for the film star with whom they would prefer to be shipwrecked on a desert island (Madeleine Carroll was the popular favourite for this remote contingency when the fad was at its height, but tastes may have changed since then). According to Miss Lejeune, who tried it out, hardly anything is more calculated to produce mutual abuse, contempt, and smugness in a family circle than for the members of it to sit down and draw up lists of the seven films they could best endure seeing over and over again until the thaw set in.

If you wanted to vary the game to suit New Zealand conditions, you could make it the films you would like to take with you on extended guard duty at some isolated outpost-or even into gaol for a year's sentence.

Anyway, I pass on the idea for what it is worth. Perhaps one evening when the party is flagging, I may start the game going and produce a list of my

ANSWER TO CORRESPONDENT

N.M.F. (Onehunga): Sorry, no information available about Bobby Breen or Ronnie Sinclair. Yes, Dangerous Moonlight was released in America as Suicide Squadron.

INFORMATION WANTED

A reader wants to track down the name of A reader wants to track down the name of a film. She can remember only one detail, that has been "hammering" in her head: the film began with a child (she thinks), wishing to gather flowers, and a voice chanted repeatedly "The flowers are not for you to pick. . ." She adds that the story may have had something to do with a boy growing up and going to the last war. Can anyone help?

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

H. P. Jotson (Milton), and Joan J. Kay (Dunedin): Thanks you for the cuttings. Very interesting.

"Look After Your Fans" (Dunedin):
Thanks for the suggestion. It may be possible to carry it out in the near future.
G. Gray and A. G. Todd (Ohakea): Comments appreciated, but the subject of "Commandos Strike at Dawn" has now been closed.

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