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## FILM REVIEWS, BY JNO.

# Freud on the Quarterdeck

## THE CAINE MUTINY

(Stanley Kramer-Columbia)

I HAVE often thought (perhaps too often; certainly not without some smug Britannic self-satisfaction) that Americans have a weakness for psycho-analysing their emotions and behaviour which is in itself positively Freudian. But the habit can be catching. The practice of it, of course, involves one in the use of jargon. You don't (as I apprehend it) call a spade a spade—it's more likely to become a fertility-symbol, or a fetish-object, or possibly a defence-mechanism. And old-fashioned, home-made (and emotive) words like envy, hate, lust, fear and cowardice give way to streamlined "non-polarised" locutions calculated not to disturb the patient. But while I can't gainsay the dramatic value of the technique (which can blow up a mere pimple of vanity into a volcano of hypertension), I have a deep—and possibly atavistic—distrust of it. In particular, I have usually found it irksome to discover Freud in the fox-holes and fo'c'sles of Hollywood war films. Even Lewis Milestone's *Halls of Montezuma*, in many ways a fine piece of cinema, irritated me with its crop of battle neuroses. I would have felt more at home if they had been plain cases of funk.

And yet, in spite of that overburden of prejudice I must admit that I have

found no novel of the war at sea more engrossing than *The Caine Mutiny*—where the mainspring of the plot is the psychological eccentricity of a destroyer commander. And, with certain reservations, I felt the same about the film. Captain Queeg, of the *Caine*, is nothing short of a naval disaster. He is a petty tyrant where rules and regulations are concerned. He "compensates" for a deep-seated self-distrust by harrying his subordinates, he is mean and shifty-eyed, he is a shocking navigator, he is a coward (or an inadequately adjusted paranoid, if you prefer the terminology of the naval psychiatric board). There is, undoubtedly, something morbid in the fascination of his story. As he flounders from one crisis to another, Queeg is progressively stripped of all semblance of dignity and normality. In the end it is the very nakedness of his shame that wins back a measure of our sympathy.

The novel takes just on 500 pages to tell the story of the *Caine*—and of the "mutiny" that relieved Queeg of com-

mand at the height of a typhoon. Much of the book was unnecessary to the film, (continued on next page)



FERRER, JOHNSON, BOGART  
When is a coward not a coward?

## Family Affairs

THE British Commonwealth is no longer a white man's community. The Asian and African peoples in it outnumber Europeans overwhelmingly, and in resources and political power also the emphasis is swinging away from European leadership towards Asia. This change has been going on at a time when the Commonwealth is more than ever entangled in world issues, while neither any member of the Commonwealth nor the Commonwealth as a whole can wield the power that Britain held only 50 years ago.

These startling changes in the Commonwealth of today are noted by Professor F. L. W. Wood, Professor of History at Victoria University College, in the first of seven talks on *Problems of the Commonwealth*, which are to start next week from 2YA and later will be heard from other National stations. Professor Wood points out that as a result of the changes the older members of the Commonwealth have "a kind of family link" with one of the major movements of world history—the emergence of Asia. A second and "more explosive" result of the changes is that our Asian associates wish to remain in the Commonwealth and of the West, but not fully committed in the cold war. At a time when the world is splitting into a two-party system and the gulf between the two sometimes looks unbridgeable, they have refused to accept the absolutes of either Washington or Moscow, and insist on exploring the possibilities of remaining at peace with everyone. Professor Wood ends with a note on the place of moderates in general at a time when passions run high.

This introductory talk will be followed by two about the new Dominions. The first, by E. K. Braybrooke, a Lecturer in Law at Victoria University College, discusses the constitutional and organisational problems raised when



ELECTION ON THE GOLD COAST  
"The Commonwealth is no longer a white man's community"

non-British countries were granted Dominion status—or, as Mr. Braybrooke puts it, it tries to say "what kind of association the Commonwealth is now and what it is that keeps it together." In the second, K. Bieda, Lecturer in Economics at Auckland University College, examines the political problems—such as India's quarrel with South Africa about the treatment of Indians there—posed by the emergence of the new Asian Dominions.

*Problems of the Commonwealth* will continue with two talks by J. C. Dakin, an adult education officer in Otago. He discusses first the advance towards nationhood of the peoples of West Africa and the Sudan and goes on to examine the development of trusteeship in Africa into a new policy of inter-racial partnership.

Economic problems of the Commonwealth will be outlined by F. W. Holmes, Lecturer in Economics at Victoria University College, in the sixth talk. He will discuss such questions as the dollar shortage, the Commonwealth and the sterling area, the outlook for Imperial preference, and the Colombo Plan.

The well-known *Lookout* speaker R. M. Hutton-Potts will bring the series to an end with a talk on the Commonwealth and the world. This will include an examination of strategic questions and of possible lines of future development open to the Commonwealth.

*Problems of the Commonwealth* will be heard from 2YA at 7.15 p.m. on Thursdays, starting on November 18, repeating from 2YC on Wednesdays, starting on November 24.