

The First Mr Cheyney

UNEASY TERMS

(Pathe)

ACCORDING to the advertisements *Uneasy Terms* is the first Peter Cheyney story to be filmed. If this is typical Cheyney it would cast no shadow over my film-going future to know that it was to be the last. Not being familiar with this particular masterpiece, I wasn't at all sure when the film opened whether Slim Callaghan (Michael Rennie) was the villain or the hero; and, though I hadn't any doubt about what the film had tried to say, I wasn't much more sure at the end. Poor girl, I thought, as Barbara Allardyce (Moirra Lister), her conversation already showing the influence of associating with this cheap private detective, was carried off by him—poor girl!

Cheap is a word I very much dislike using about people. It suggests a lack of sympathy—a failure to understand—which I'm inclined to regard as the worst crime in the calendar. But I think it can be used of this creation of the late Mr. Cheyney. What makes *Uneasy Terms* so thoroughly objectionable is its attempt to make a film hero out of a character who has a complete lack of respect for other people. After Callaghan's shocking rudeness to several women who cross his path, one would have been surprised not to find him sooner or later in a fight where the boot seems to be the main weapon and the stomach the favoured target—a fight which would be a more disgusting piece of cinema if it were not so absurdly overdone. One feels rather sorry that Inspector Gringall, the only really likeable character in the film, doesn't (as he has threatened to) run this bright boy in for tampering with evidence.

This is a bad film, and I've gone to the trouble of saying at such length why I found it so because it's bad in a vicious, anti-social way.

TRAVELLER'S JOY

(Rank-Gainsborough)

TRAVELLER'S JOY has been adapted from a very successful London play by Arthur Macrae—and looks very much like it. A good part of it, set in hotel rooms, was probably little different on the stage; the smart dialogue goes over in the way we expect of a West End success.

The topical plot is built round the financial difficulties of English business folk abroad without enough foreign currency to pay their way—the "new British paupers," as one character calls them. The principal victims for the purposes of the story are Mrs. Pelham (Googie Withers) and her former husband (John McCallum), who meet in Stockholm and find they have a mutual interest in keeping the jailer at bay when they are unable to pay their hotel bills. Imprisonment for this crime is, one gathers, the not unusual fate of the very best English people in Sweden.

The story becomes quite involved as it proceeds. An increasing number of characters come and go very rapidly—or else linger to let their presence cause hilarious complications. There is some good fun when Pelham unexpectedly find himself playing waiter to his



PETER CHEYNEY
The first should be last

former wife while her latest Swedish currency prospect is doing a heavy line with her. This and other amusing situations (especially towards the end of the film), and dialogue which at its best is very entertaining, helped me to pass a wet Saturday afternoon agreeably enough, and I think they would probably do the same for a good many others.

BEECH FORESTERS

(N.Z. Forest Service—National Film Unit)

I CAN appreciate some of the difficulties of the Forest Service and the National Film Unit in tackling *Beech Foresters*. It cannot be easy to make a film long enough to say anything worthwhile on a subject like this without tending towards monotony in the photography. This is not a very long film, and I'm not sure that all of the difficulties have been overcome. I found the treatment in some cases a little sketchy, though as it happens I know something about the subject, and it's possible that the average filmgoer would not be as interested in detail as I was prepared to be. On the other hand, I don't think *Beech Foresters* could be called monotonous. The camera has been used with imagination in the forest and has found enough related aspects of the subject outside to give variety. This is an interesting film which every New Zealander, as a New Zealander, should find worth seeing.

FILM GRADINGS

GRADINGS of films which have been reviewed in *The Listener* since the last grading list appeared on September 21 are listed below:

Fine: *Fourteen Hours* (12.10.51), *Seven Days to Noon* (19.10.51), *The Men* (23.11.51).

Fair to Fine: *Of Men and Music* (28.9.51), *Moana Roa* (12.10.51), *Trio* (26.10.51), *On the Riviera* (26.10.51), *Apache Drums* (23.11.51), *The Big Carnival* (14.12.51).

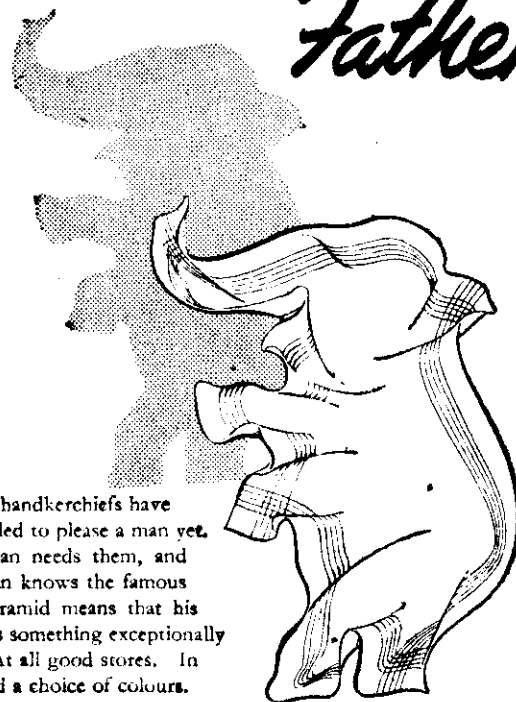
Fair: *Teresa* (19.10.51), *Samson and Delilah* (2.11.51), *The Great Caruso* (2.11.51), *Tony Draws a Horse* (9.11.51), *The House on Telegraph Hill* (9.11.51), *Only the Valiant* (16.11.51), *I Can Get It For You Wholesale* (16.11.51), *The Great Missouri Raid* (7.12.51), *Kon-Tiki* (14.12.51), *Traveller's Joy* (21.12.51).

Mainly Fair: *Lightning Strikes Twice* (28.9.51), *The Lady With a Lamp* (5.10.51), *Go For Broke* (30.11.51).

Overcast: *Waterfront*, *My Daughter Joy*, *Where Danger Lives*, *Soldiers Three*, *Uneasy Terms*.

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