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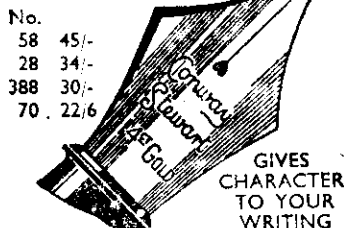
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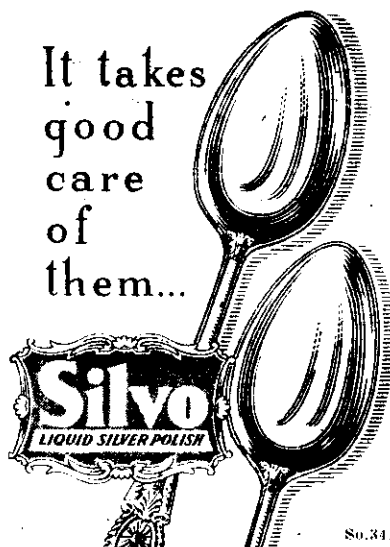
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Film Reviews, by Jno.

THE BONDAGE OF FEAR

**CRY, THE BELOVED
COUNTRY**

(London Films)

There is a lovely road that runs from Ixope into the hills. These hills are grass-covered and rolling, and they are lovely beyond any singing of it . . .

THESE are the words with which Alan Paton began his novel *Cry, The Beloved Country*, and they serve also to introduce the film—as honest a translation of a fine story as you could expect within the limits of the screen; as steady and unflinching a look at one of the great perplexities of our time as the cinema has yet allowed itself.

To apportion fairly the credit for this moving picture—and in places it is moving beyond my power to describe it—is not an easy assignment. Often enough one can say, here is a director's picture, or this or that player carries the show; or it may be the script or the photography that raises a production above the level of the average. But to do justice to those who made this film one must spread the honours more widely. A substantial share must belong to Zoltan Korda, the producer and director, who has handled his characters with understanding and sympathy and extracted the best from his technical assistants. Paton, who adapted his own novel for the screen, has I think improved the story by condensation. *Cry, The Beloved Country*, which is a story of white and black in Africa, differs from the usual American treatment of the same theme in that it deals in anguish rather than anger, in self-searching agonies rather than antagonisms, in that almost insoluble dilemma which Paton describes somewhere as "the fear of bondage and the bondage of fear." But in emphasising the little awkward acts of goodwill that make life at least tolerable for individuals of both races, in seeking to tell a story of "comfort in desolation," the book has many passages that could be called invitations to sentimentality. The film does not ignore this

BAROMETER

FINE: "*Cry, The Beloved Country*."
FINE: "*The Story of Gilbert and Sullivan*."
MAINLY FAIR: "*Young Bess*."

authentic element in the situation, but it does keep it within bounds, and in doing so gains something in unity and force.

The acting is splendid. Canada Lee, as the elderly Rev. Kumalo whose personal tragedy is the thread that binds the story together, has the most exacting role and handles it with restraint and dignity, but the player who forced himself most strongly on my attention was Sidney Poitier. To the part of Msimangu, the young Zulu priest of Johannesburg, he brings a fiery intensity that makes it memorable out of all proportion to its place in the story.

But beyond producer-director, script-writer, and players, there is another credit to be given. *Cry, The Beloved Country* was photographed by Robert Krasker, who was responsible for the camera-work in *Henry V*, *Brief Encounter*, *Odd Man Out* and *The Third Man*. He has made this latest film literally a study in black and white—strong African sun, strong shadows. His pictures of Johannesburg's shanty-town, of sterile slag-heaps and eroded countryside—and of the sweet-grassed uplands, too—are not quickly to be forgotten.

THE STORY OF GILBERT AND SULLIVAN

(London Films)

[F] London Films had not provided me this week with *Cry, The Beloved Country*, which perhaps stands in greater need of introduction and recommendation than *The Story of Gilbert and Sullivan*, I would have had more room to record my enjoyment of the latter. It is a sprightly, witty Technicolorful and thoroughly charming entertainment in which the principal fault is a tendency to whet the appetite then leave it unsatisfied.

Those who followed with delight the BBC's *Story of a Great Partnership* when it was broadcast here some time ago, will have a good yardstick by which to judge the biographical accuracy of the film. The latter, of course, does not tell all the story, and occasionally fiction takes the place of fact, but history is not seriously tampered with, and it is safe to affirm that anyone who enjoyed the radio programmes will be pleased with the screen production—which has the advantage of excellent stage-settings and a large company of interesting faces. As the two oddly-sorted geniuses whose bickering partnership produced the most brilliant flowering of English comic opera, Robert Morley and Maurice Evans are admirable foils for one another. Morley's Gilbert is physically almost faultless—he seems to fix the man as irrevocably as Arliss fixed the features of Disraeli. Remembering the incisive voice of Cecil



MAURICE EVANS, EILEEN HERLIE, ROBERT MORLEY
The BBC has provided a yardstick

(continued on next page)