

BRITISH FAVOURITES IN BRIGHT TALKIE

Betty Balfour With Gordon Harker in "My Old Dutch"

ALBERT CHEVALIER'S famous song is brought to life once more in the talkie version of "My Old Dutch," the Gainsborough (Gaumont-British) production which is to have simultaneous release at the Civic Theatre, Auckland, and the State Theatre, Wellington, this week. "My Old Dutch," too, brings back Betty Balfour, the popular little English star who won herself millions of admirers by her Cockney portrayals in the "Squibs" series of silent films.

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took the business of making-up seriously, and Julius Knight, even without good looks, was a matinee flapper's idol.

George Cross's hey-day on the stage was about 20 to 25 years ago. His melodramatic heroines usually were Eugenie Duggan, Nellie Renee and in more recent times, Nellie Bramley. His greatest personal successes, he considers, were in "The Prince and the Beggar Maid," and "The Village Blacksmith," in which latter he had a spectacular wrestling bout. Mr. Cross began his stage career with George Rignold, and later played leading parts with Rignold companies, when Rignold himself had retired to character parts. Mr. Cross was the original leading man in "The Squatter's Daughter," a play which was transferred to the screen by Cinesound. It was written by Bert Bailey and Edmund Duggan, then members of William Anderson's company. In "Grandad Rudd," the Cinesound film just completed, Mr. Cross resumed an association with Bert Bailey which had been temporarily severed.

In "My Old Dutch" she starts as a girl of eighteen, sprightly and full of life, and she ages gracefully with the assistance of marvellous make-up.

Co-starred with her is Gordon Harker, as Ernie, a real Cockney character full of pugnacity, but having the traditional "good heart" of his type. Yet another brilliant artist is Michael Hogan. Mr. Hogan wrote a good deal of the Cockney dialogue for the film in addition to playing the role of Bert, Betty Balfour's film husband.

The evergreen Florrie Forde, vaudeville star, plays the role of Aunt Bertha, and delights in the "appy 'Ampstead" sequence with a sparkling rendition of one of the numbers that made her famous, "The Old Bull and Bush." Glennis Lorimer, a Gaumont-British baby star, has her first big part in pictures, while Mickey Brantford, former player of juvenile roles, has a big break in the picture as Jim.

An interesting story attaches to the original silent film version of "My Old Dutch," scenes from which are shown on the screen of an 1893 cinema that is the scene of one of the comedy sequences of the Gaumont-British talkie of the same name just produced. The silent version was made by Ideal in 1915, and was written round Albert Chevalier's song. Chevalier then used the film story as a basis of a stage play. Ultimately the question arose as to who owned the story rights. But before a decision was reached Chevalier died, and the Ideal Company waived all rights in the story as a gesture to Mrs. Chevalier.

In the original version the leading roles were played by Chevalier and Florence Turner, roles played in the present film by Betty Balfour and Michael Hogan.

GANDHI and Christ are like brothers.
—Miss Slade.

LET us not propound schemes of sloppy Socialism and call them Christian politics and economics.—
Dean Inge.

"MISTER CINDERS" AND "JAVA HEAD"

Two Splendid British Films
Are Privately Screened

THERE are a couple of British films tucked up the sleeves of British International Pictures waiting to provide the New Zealand picture-going public with first-rate entertainment. "Mister Cinders" and "Java Head" were privately screened in Wellington last Friday evening. There is no doubt about it that Elstree is now producing films equal, if not superior, to these of Hollywood. The voices of the players in the two films under review were a delight to listen to, polished and sophisticated. "Mister Cinders," as the name implies, is a male Cinderella. From beginning to end the film is one ripple of laughter. This skit on the favourite fairy tale savours of light opera. "Jimmy" (Clifford Mollinson) who is Mr. Cinders, the hero, rescues a millionaire from drowning, but because he has other things on his mind, goes off after the rescuing and his two rich cousins get the credit. The millionaire's daughter, Zelma O'Neal, full of pep with a good dash of mischief, after knocking over a policeman in her car, dresses up in a maid's outfit to put the policeman off her tracks, and from then on she finds herself in the unexpected role of maid to the social-climbing neighbours next door to her new home. She and Mr. Cinders naturally fall in love, and when the rich cousins go to the ball and make Mr. Cinders stay at home, Sarah, the disguised millionaire's daughter acts as fairy god-mother to him. There are comical situations when the mother of the two cousins plans to marry off one of the boys to the niece of the millionaire whom she thinks is his daughter. There is a robbery and poor Cinders, who goes disguised as a famous explorer and dressed in armour is accused of the theft. A bowler hat left at the ball is the glass slipper which proves that Mr. Cinders is the hero. The singing of the two Weston Brothers who play the part of the rich cousins is a feature in itself, and their faces, apart from their voices, should be their fortune.

"Java Head," adapted from Hergisheimer's book, is a tale of the old days with picturesque settings and frocking. The cast of players includes Anna May Wong, John Loder, Ralph Richardson and Elizabeth Allen. An old shipowner has two sons, one who follows his father's tastes and goes to sea, and the other who prefers the land. Owring to a long-standing family quarrel the daughter of the father's rival is separated from the sea-going son. He brings home a Chinese princess as his wife and horrifies everyone in Bristol, the home town. As time goes on he realises he loves the English girl and not his Chinese wife. The latter, learning of this, drugs herself and leaves the way clear for the English girl (Elizabeth Allen). Without any hesitation, whatever, these pictures can be definitely written down on the "must be seen" list.

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